The PRESIDENTIAL RECORDINGS

JOHN F. KENNEDY

THE GREAT CRISES, VOLUME TWO

SEPTEMBER–OCTOBER 21, 1962

Timothy Naftali and Philip Zelikow
Editors, Volume Two

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W. W. NORTON & COMPANY • NEW YORK • LONDON

Printed in the United States of America
First Edition

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The text of this book is composed in Bell, with the display set in Bell and Bell Semi-Bold
Composition by Tom Ernst
Manufacturing by The Maple-Vail Book Manufacturing Group
Book design by Dana Sloan
Production manager: Andrew Marasia

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

John F. Kennedy : the great crises.
p. cm. (The presidential recordings)
Includes bibliographical references and indexes.
Contents: v. 1. July 30–August 1962 / Timothy Naftali, editor—v. 2. September 4–October 20, 1962 / Timothy Naftali and Philip Zelikow, editors—v. 3. October 22–28, 1962 / Philip Zelikow and Ernest May, editors.
ISBN 0-393-04954-X
1. United States—Politics and government—1961–1963—Sources. 2. United States—Foreign relations—1961–1963—Sources. 3. Crisis management—United States—History—20th century—Sources. 4. Kennedy, John F. (John Fitzgerald), 1917–1963—Archives. I. Naftali, Timothy J. II. Zelikow, Philip, 1954– III. May, Ernest R. IV. Series.

E841.J58 2001
973.922—dc21 2001030053

W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 500 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10110
www.wwnorton.com

W. W. Norton & Company Ltd., Castle House, 75/76 Wells Street, London W1T 3QT

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Walter Schirra's Mercury mission. Under no circumstances would the high-altitude BLUEGILL shot go up until after Schirra had come down.[49]

Kennedy had one more meeting before the end of Thursday with Arthur Goldberg and Walter Reuther, the head of the United Auto Workers [UAW]. This was apparently the meeting Reuther had requested the previous week to talk about the recent problems between the UAW and the AFL-CIO. This was not taped.

The President left the Oval Office at 7:40 P.M.

Monday, September 10, 1962

The twin pots of Cuba and Berlin continued to simmer. Cuban policy seemed to be increasingly a difficult domestic matter for Kennedy. The administration had managed to keep the congressional resolution for the reserve call-up under wraps until Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield introduced it on September 7. Senate Minority Leader Everett Dirksen had kept the secret, but just as soon as Mansfield made his statement, the Republican leadership began a campaign in favor of much tougher action against Cuba. At the same time, an incident half a world away was also complicating Kennedy's Cuba policy. On September 8 a U-2 reconnaissance aircraft on a joint U.S.-Taiwanese mission had disappeared over the People's Republic of China and was presumed shot down. Given the administration's existing concerns about the consequences of a U-2 incident over Cuba, the event in Asia reopened the debate over what risks were acceptable to maintain surveillance over the island.

The most disturbing news to reach Kennedy was about Khrushchev and Berlin. In his second meeting that year with a high-level U.S. visitor (the first in May, with Salinger and Sorenson), Khrushchev had brought Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall to his Black Sea resort at

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49. Diary of Glenn Seaborg, Entry, 6 September 1962, John F. Kennedy Library. In the end, there would be nine remaining tests in the DOMINIC series. Five of the nine were airdrop tests, of which ANDROSCOGGIN (2 October 1962) and HOUSATONIC (30 October 1962) tested the Ripple II device, and CHAMA (18 October) the Thumbellina device. The ANDROSCOGGIN failed, which may be the reason why there was an extra test in this last group. The four high-altitude tests were CHECKMATE (20 October 1962), BLUEGILL Triple Prime (26 October 1962), KINGFISH (1 November 1962), and TIGHTROPE (4 November 1962). All of the high-altitude tests took place after Walter Schirra's nine-hour Mercury mission on 3 October 1962.

Pitsunda. The Soviet press was about to announce that Berlin negotiations were deadlocked and there would be a pause. Khrushchev now told Udall, who told Kennedy, just what would happen after that pause. He said, "We will give [President Kennedy] a choice—go to war, or sign a peace treaty [ending occupation rights in Berlin]. We will not allow your troops to be in Berlin." Khrushchev added, "if any lunatics in your country want war, Western Europe will hold them back." If that were not enough, "It's been a long time since you could spank us like a little boy—now we can swat your ass. So let's not talk about force. We're equally strong," Khrushchev blustered. "You want Berlin. Access to it goes through East Germany. We have the advantage. If you want to do anything, you have to start a war." But Khrushchev promised a lull before he brought the crisis to a conclusion. "Out of resepct for your President we won't do anything until November [after the midterm elections]." None of this was public. What was public was bad enough. Khrushchev had also met with visiting U.S. poet Robert Frost, who then recounted to reporters (in a cleaned up version of what Khrushchev actually said) how Khrushchev had told him that "we were too liberal to fight."[1]

In Congress, when the talk wasn't on Cuba, there was discussion of a plan to allow the self-employed to build retirement accounts of their own, what would become the Self-Employed Pension–Individual Retirement Account (SEP-IRA), and the President's foreign aid bill.

The President had spent the weekend at Hammersmith Farm in Newport, Rhode Island, catching some of the excitement of the upcoming America's Cup Challenge. Ahead of him this Monday were a series of important meetings, only half of which he would choose to tape.

A sense of history and, of course, politics apparently influenced the President's choice of what to tape this day. Former president Dwight D. Eisenhower remained a special challenge for Kennedy. Enormously respected throughout the world, Eisenhower retained the affection of millions of Americans. Journalist and sometime Kennedy adviser Joseph Alsop once described the difference in the hold that the younger President and Eisenhower had on the American people. Kennedy commanded their minds, but only Eisenhower had been given a place in American hearts. The former president had just returned from a lengthy

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1. Memorandum of Conversation between Khrushchev and Udall, 6 September 1962, in *FRUS*, 15: 309. Kennedy apparently read this document, since he alluded to its contents at least once, on tape, later in the day. On Frost, see Richard Reeves, *President Kennedy: Profile of Power* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993), p. 351.

European tour, which had included a long conversation with the prickly German chancellor Konrad Adenauer. Kennedy needed Eisenhower's blessing, or at least a political nonaggression pact, to keep control of the domestic debate on measures appropriate to the current tensions in Europe. Later in the day, Kennedy would meet with his Berlin team to discuss the latest developments and to hammer out the responses that the Western alliance would make if Khrushchev seized West Berlin.

Possibly just before turning to Eisenhower and these foreign matters, Kennedy called his Secretary of the Treasury to discuss whether to veto the Self-employed Pension Bill.

Time Unknown

Now, what I've got to indicate, therefore, is that I'll veto it if it's hung on this bill and that they've got a better chance to override my veto if it's separate than they have with this bill.

Conversation with Douglas Dillon[2]

Despite overwhelming congressional support for H.R. 10, the Self-employed Pension Bill, President Kennedy felt compelled to oppose the measure. A similar bill had passed the House on three previous occasions but had always been rejected by the Senate. Three days before this conversation, on September 7, the measure gained the approval of the Senate for the first time, and though it emerged in a much diluted form compared to the original House proposal, it appeared headed for only a modest reworking in the House-Senate conference committee. The precursor of the many tax deductible private pension plans of later years, Keogh-Smathers—as it was often called—provided for the partial deductibility of contributions to private pension plans made by owner managers and the self-employed.[3]

2. Dictabelt 3A.6, Cassette A, John F. Kennedy Library, President's Office Files, Presidential Recordings Collection. C. Douglas Dillon, secretary of the treasury. See also transcripts for the President's conversations on H.R. 10 with Albert Gore on 8 October 1962, and with George Smathers on 10 October 1962.

3. The principal sponsors of the original bill were Eugene J. Keogh, Democratic U.S. representative from New York, 1937 to 1967, and George A. Smathers, Democratic U.S. senator from Florida, 1951 to 1969. Under its final provisions, eligible self-employed individuals could deduct 50 percent of their contributions up to an annual maximum of $2,500 or 10 percent of

Having received estimates that it would produce a revenue loss of $100 to $125 million, Kennedy expressed a private desire, soon made public, that he would prefer to veto the legislation.[4] The Treasury had also weighed in against the bill and had recommended a veto on the basis of the expected revenue drain and on the realization that the lion's share of benefits under the measure would go to wealthy physicians and attorneys. Only the likelihood of near unanimous congressional support and a potential veto override gave the President any reason to consider signing H.R. 10.[5] And though Kennedy believed that the bill was, indeed, based on a principle of taxpayer equity (since it provided some private pension plans with tax benefits comparable to those enjoyed by public pension plans) and that it might be worthy of consideration in a larger package of tax reform, the estimated revenue loss and the status of its expected beneficiaries convinced him to issue a veto threat.

While it eventually would be passed as a separate bill, some of its champions in the Senate launched a preemptive, and ultimately abortive, search for the appropriate "veto-proof" legislation on which to add, by amendment, the provisions of H.R. 10. In the following conversation with Treasury secretary Douglas Dillon, Kennedy ponders a strategy by which the administration could convince supporters of the bill not to hang it on other more favored legislation.

Douglas Dillon: [*Unclear*] allow me to say that . . . even if he's retiring in due course—[6]

President Kennedy: Yeah.

Dillon: [*Unclear*] will be chosen shortly—

President Kennedy: Right.

Dillon: [*Unclear*] wait until after Congress has gone home.

President Kennedy: Right. OK . . . fine. Good.

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their annual income, whichever was less. In addition, the tax benefits would not be granted to an employer if he did not offer the same partially deductible retirement contributions to all employees. The original House version allowed for 100 percent deductibility up to the $2,500/10 percent limits. A Senate floor amendment by Senators Russell Long (D-Louisiana) and Eugene J. McCarthy (D-Minnesota) changed this to 50 percent.

4. The estimated revenue loss in the original House version was $365 million.

5. It passed the House unanimously and garnered only four no votes in the Senate: Paul Douglas (D-Illinois), Albert Gore (D-Tennessee), Pat McNamara (D-Michigan), and Wayne Morse (D-Oregon). The final version of the bill that emerged out of the Senate-House conference committee also passed unanimously in the House and received only eight no votes in the Senate.

6. "He" is unidentified.

Douglas Dillon: You don't have to worry about that.

President Kennedy: OK, good. Now, let's see . . . this problem of H.R. 10. They . . . see, [Everett] Dirksen and everything, they're arguing that unless they hang it on this bill, that I'll veto it.[7] Now, what I've got to indicate, therefore, is that I'll veto it if it's hung on this bill and that they've got a better chance to override my veto if it's separate than they have with this bill. It's rather . . . it may not be right, but that's the only way. Because, otherwise, they're going to hang it on this bill.

Dillon: Yeah, although . . . you think they . . . you don't think they have the votes?

President Kennedy: Well, I . . . they won't unless they think I'm going to veto it.

Dillon: I see.

President Kennedy: So, I'm giving the impression that we're going to veto it, and I thought the Treasury people ought to at least have that line—

Dillon: Yeah, fine.

President Kennedy: —that this would be too much of a revenue loss, it doesn't belong in this bill, and we just have to veto it.

Dillon: Yeah, the same sort of thing we said about the Cannon amendment.

President Kennedy: Yeah, right.

Dillon: That [*unclear*].

President Kennedy: OK, good.

Dillon: OK.

President Kennedy: All right. Thank you.

At 12:30 P.M. the former President arrived at the White House through a side door. Minutes after Eisenhower's arrival, the Reverend Billy Graham paid a call on both Presidents in the Oval Office. Graham was just returning from a visit to Latin America and had some news to bring the President about the strength of Fidel Castro's supporters in South America. President Kennedy tapes the meeting through the receiver of his telephone. He rarely used this method of taping.[8]

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7. Everett M. Dirksen was a Republican senator from Illinois, 1951 to 1969, and Senate Minority Leader, 1959 to 1969.

8. It is possible that the conversation on Dictabelt 3A.7, which has not been found, was the object of President Kennedy's effort to tape. Ending that conversation, the President might have forgotten to switch off the dictabelt machine and thus this room conversation was picked up by either an open receiver or the telephone speaker.

12:35–12:40 P.M.

And the anti-*Communist forces are getting hysterical because they feel that we're not defending them like we ought to, right or wrong.*

Meeting with Billy Graham and Dwight Eisenhower[9]

The Reverend William Franklin Graham, Jr.—more popularly known as Billy Graham—paid a brief courtesy call on the President before departing for the second half of his 1962 Latin America tour. Relations between President Kennedy and Graham, the most popular Protestant evangelist of the era, had never been close, in part because of the minister's friendly relations with both Dwight Eisenhower and Richard Nixon. Eisenhower's arrival for his luncheon with President Kennedy allowed the brief exchange of greetings. Graham took the opportunity to reiterate the importance of Latin America's problems. Although Latin America was an overwhelmingly Catholic region, Graham was deeply concerned that Communist inroads posed a general threat to religious freedom in the area. This short conversation begins with Graham discussing his experiences during the first portion of his Latin American tour in early 1962, when his proselytizing campaign encountered resistance by local authorities and violent demonstrations. It was recorded on the Dictaphone connected to the President's telephone and, therefore, is of poor quality.[10]

Billy Graham: There are these guerrillas up in the mountains in Colombia. I was there. They killed 32 in the town I was in the night I

9. Including President Kennedy, Dwight Eisenhower, Billy Graham, and Evelyn Lincoln. Dictabelt 3A.8, Cassette A, John F. Kennedy Library, President's Office Files, Presidential Recordings Collection.

10. In January and February 1962, Graham toured Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Chile. Then beginning in São Paulo, Brazil, on 25 September 1962, he toured Brazil, Paraguay, Argentina, and Uruguay. "Billy in Catholic Country: He Collides with Clergy," *Time,* 23 February 1962, pp. 77–78; *Current Biography Yearbook, 1973* (New York: H. W. Wilson, 1974), pp. 151–54; Marshall Frady, *Billy Graham: A Parable of American Righteousness* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979), pp. 441–46; Billy Graham, *Just As I Am: The Autobiography of Billy Graham* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1997), pp. 188–92, 199–206, 356–57, 360–68, 389–402; Carroll Kilpatrick, "President Confers With Ike 2 Hours," *Washington Post,* 11 September 1962, pp. A1, A6; *New York Times,* 24 January 1962, p. 3; Wallace Terry, "Billy Graham Condemns Sterilization," *Washington Post,* 11 September 1962, p. A6.

was there.[11] And they swooped down. They've killed over 300,000 in the last 14 years.[12] And they claim now that Castro is in control of these guerrillas.

Unidentified: In what? In Colombia?

Graham: In Colombia.

And he says the way to the United States is through the Colombian Andes. And hoped [*unclear*] get organized and give weapons to [*unclear*]. And so, the infiltration is tremendous. And the *anti*-Communist forces are getting hysterical because they feel that we're not defending them like we ought to, right or wrong. And I know it's a very delicate problem.

Dwight D. Eisenhower: But it isn't easy. [*Unclear.*] But these ones, the 20[,000], the 25,000 . . . but a . . . but, the main thing . . . that they charge . . . American policy is that [we support] an oppressive regime . . . the supporters, that is . . . [we're] keeping them down, and . . . And, therefore, America is *wrong*. "America ought to give us the weapons and not to our bosses." And [*unclear*] . . .

Graham: And how to get it to them—

Eisenhower: And [*unclear*]. . . . [*Unclear*] we were discussing, however, on the telephone today [*unclear*] pushing, pushing for them and I'd like to take them on the ears: What do you mean by it?

President Kennedy: As matter of fact from Bogotá [*unclear*]. The, a, there's no a . . . the a . . . Colombia actually has, you know, [Alberto] Lleras Camargo, he's a first-class [*unclear*] government—[13]

Eisenhower: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. They [*unclear*]. *The tape skips.*

Unidentified: —The [*unclear*] president [*unclear*] the same thing. The person was asked if he had been asked to help finance the [*unclear*] to help them to get out of the [*unclear*].

Graham: Right. [*Unclear exchange.*] If you can do the same thing somehow in Brazil.

Unidentified: We've diversified the problems down in there [*unclear*].

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11. Graham refers to his visit to Cali, Colombia, during his Latin American tour earlier in 1962. In his autobiography published in 1997, Graham records the incident slightly differently, reporting that the guerillas killed "fourteen people not far from where we were staying" in Cali (Graham, *Just As I Am*, pp. 364–65).

12. From 1948 to 1962, Colombia endured *La Violencia*, a period of intense violence between Liberal and Conservative political factions that left over 200,000 Colombians dead.

13. Alberto Lleras Camargo, who had just stepped down after his second term as president of Colombia (1945–46, 7 August 1958 to 7 August 1962), was a strong supporter of Kennedy's Alliance for Progress.

Graham: Well, I was sure delighted to see you. Please give my regards to the Mister Vice President.

Graham starts to leave, causing a number of people to speak at the same time. Someone says "Nice to see you."

Graham: Thank you very much. Nice to see you. [*Multiple voices continue.*]

Unidentified: . . . in Georgia.

Graham: [*Unclear.*]

Unidentified: Oh, I see.

Graham: He's playing golf—

Unidentified: Oh. Oh.

Graham: —in North Carolina right now. Good-bye. Thank you.

Unidentified: All right, Mister Graham. All right.

Graham: Fine. Thank you.

Evelyn Lincoln: Have a good evening.

Graham: Thank you. I'm *so* glad to see you.

Again the sounds of a number of people saying good-bye to Graham. Someone says "Thank you very much," *and another says to Graham* "Well, we'll wish you [*unclear*] Vice President."

Graham: Yes. [*Unclear.*] [*Laughter.*] Bye. Thank you. Bye.

Unidentified: May I, Mrs. Lincoln?

Evelyn Lincoln: Sure, sure.

Unidentified: The Attorney General won't be here until about one. And he'll stand by and then he'll [*unclear*] unless of course the [Attorney General] judge. He'll go over the canal about 20 minutes to seven. Then we're bringing him back for a short tour [*unclear*] Billy Graham later that [*unclear*].

President Kennedy: All right.

Unidentified: . . . and for his pictures [*unclear*].

President Kennedy: Are you gentlemen all set? [*Two voices agree simultaneously.*]

Unidentified: Thank you, General Schulz from the rest of us.[14] [*Pause.*]

Unidentified: We'll need a ride. [*Unclear.*]

Unidentified: No. Leave that right there. [*Unclear.*]

After Billy Graham left the White House, Kennedy and Eisenhower met in the Oval Office to discuss Eisenhower's trip to West Germany.

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14. Brigadier General Robert L. Schulz, retired, longtime aide to General Eisenhower.

12:40–1:02 P.M.

You can't go up the autobahn waving an atom bomb. . . . [T]he first time . . . a bridge is blown out in front of you, you can't begin a nuclear exchange with the Soviet Union over getting to Berlin.

Meeting with Dwight Eisenhower[15]

In late July, President Kennedy's predecessor, Dwight David Eisenhower, made a six-week trip to Western Europe. On his return, President Kennedy wrote him and requested a meeting. The two Presidents were not only from different generations but also from different political parties. President Kennedy felt that Eisenhower found him young and inexperienced even though Kennedy himself thought the older man woefully uninformed. In explaining why his brother often conferred with Eisenhower, Attorney General Robert Kennedy recalled that "feeling Eisenhower was important and his election was so close—he always went out of his way to make sure that Eisenhower was brought in on all matters and that Eisenhower couldn't hurt the administration by going off and attacking."[16]

On September 10, the two Presidents met at the White House. Eisenhower brought Kennedy a copy of a memorandum about his conversation with West German chancellor Konrad Adenauer on August 2.[17] In the discussions before lunch, the two U.S. Presidents dealt with the topics from that memorandum, which covered primarily NATO issues. Kennedy was interested to discover whether Eisenhower might cause him political trouble by criticizing his European defense policies. He need not have been worried. There was a large degree of continuity between the two administrations' West European policies.

The heavy financial load that the United States carried for the mili-

15. Tape 21, John F. Kennedy Library, President's Office Files, Presidential Recordings Collection.

16. Edwin O. Guthman and Jeffrey Shulman, eds., *Robert Kennedy in His Own Words: The Unpublished Recollections of the Kennedy Years* (New York: Bantam Books, 1988), p. 55.

17. "Conversation with Chancellor Adenauer," 2 August 1962, Dwight Eisenhower papers, post-presidential series, Box 27, folder: Principal file, 1962, Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library.

tary defense of Western Europe, which had so vexed Kennedy during August, remained on his mind. Kennedy was interested in hearing Eisenhower's thoughts on pressing for greater allied contribution to a conventional ground force buildup in Europe.

For President Kennedy, the ongoing Berlin crisis necessitated a NATO strategy based on graduated military responses in order to limit a war before it escalated to nuclear conflagration. President Eisenhower had also grappled with the crisis over Berlin.

West German chancellor Konrad Adenauer questioned President Kennedy's commitment to Berlin and resisted the U.S. insistence on a conventional force buildup in Central Europe. Adenauer feared that a NATO strategy that stressed conventional defense below the nuclear threshold might make war more likely and thus expose West Germany as the probable chief theater of war.

President Kennedy and Eisenhower believed that French president Charles de Gaulle was capitalizing on Adenauer's anxiety and disenchantment with the United States. The two American Presidents feared that de Gaulle's vision of Europe was anti–Anglo-Saxon in outlook and threatened the integrity of NATO. They speculated about the various implications of the Franco-German rapprochement, ceremoniously signaled on September 14, 1958, at Colombey-des-Deux-Églises, where the two European statesmen met. Periodic meetings between the West German chancellor and the French president had continued. Most recently, in July 1962, Adenauer had spent three days in France. Then in September, de Gaulle had visited Bonn.

Another problem that had carried over from the President's August meetings on Berlin and Europe was a change in the U.S. military command. Adenauer worried that it signaled a shift in U.S. nuclear strategy toward greater reliance on conventional weapons. In late July, the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR), General Lauris Norstad, had announced his resignation, effective November 1, 1962.[18] His intended replacement was the present Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Lyman Lemnitzer. Kennedy had nominated General Maxwell D. Taylor as General Lemnitzer's successor. Norstad had enjoyed a special relationship with the Europeans because he had conceived SACEUR's role as increasingly independent of Washington and had envisioned NATO as a fourth

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18. Norstad's resignation was eventually postponed to 1 January 1963 because of the Cuban missile crisis.

nuclear power. His departure, amidst a controversy over the deployment of a land-based medium-range ballistic missile (MRBM) force under SACEUR's direct command, fueled West German and French resentment of U.S. hegemony.

The tape recording begins as Eisenhower commiserates with Kennedy about the European allies.

Dwight D. Eisenhower: For now, as I mentioned in my note, I think that events have sort of overtaken—

President Kennedy: Well, I wrote him a letter, and he wrote back a very nice letter. I talked to Globke here the other day, and evidently he [Adenauer] goes into these fits of depression.[19] Whether it's their sort of overdependence upon us, which makes them particularly sensitive to what we do, but . . . I find that—I'm sure you did—somewhat harassing because here we do these things . . . we keep our forces there. The French have only a division and a half in West Germany instead of four.[20] The Germans just cut their defense budget from 17 billion down to 15.8, which means they aren't going to reach the figures that they originally said they would.[21]

Eisenhower: I know. They told me they wouldn't.

President Kennedy: Yeah, well, they just cut it within a two- or three-week period. I think, since your visit there. The finance minister [Ludwig Erhard] made [West German minister of defense Franz Josef] Strauss cut it so that this has dropped—so now we're going to appeal to them. Well, with all that, and the fact that the British, the Army of the Rhine is not to NATO standards—

Eisenhower: Yes, yes.

President Kennedy: I feel that sometimes that they place more burdens on us than they're entitled to do.

Eisenhower: That's correct and, I'm going to tell you, Mr. President, when I went through in 1951—January—I went around to all these, every one of these places. I said, "Now as far as I understand the policy of my government"—that was Truman's plan. I said, "This is an emergency effort to get you people a chance to get on your feet. You've got 225 mil-

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19. Dr. Hans Globke was state secretary in the office of Chancellor Adenauer.
20. As set forth by NATO Policy Directive MC 26/4 in the summer of 1961.
21. The West German Ministry of Defense had requested 18.2 billion deutsche marks. The West German Bundestag approved a defense budget of 14.97 billion deutsche marks.

lion people. We know you've got a collective labor force about twice the size, in skilled labor, twice the size of ours. There's no reason why you people can't keep the ground forces. Now in the meantime, the United States has got to keep the deterrent—*all* the big bombs and all the rest of it. We've got to keep the big thing and an enormous air force. Your expenditures in those things don't need to be very heavy, but you've got to begin to produce these conventional and land forces."

"Well," which they said, "Well, you want us just to be the ol' land man and you come in and be the . . . you know, the glamour boys."

I said, "To the hell with that, we're trying to find the . . . how can we put together our assets to have the best defense." Now I tried to sell—I sold this idea. I mean, they said they accepted it.

But as time has gone on, and for eight years, I desperately tried behind the scenes to get these people to admit we ought to begin to get out; they wouldn't do it. And I'm afraid that just through custom they have thought of the—begin to think of the thing as their right, that this is just their . . . And if you say, "Well, you now ought to do a little more, that you ought to pay for this or that [or anything]." Oh, they get very emotional.

But Mr. Adenauer started off to tell me about relations between France and Germany. These he said were improving markedly and rapidly, and that both he and General de Gaulle were committed to a complete rapprochement, and that his own trip through—about six or seven days through France—had been almost a triumphal tour. He was very pleased.[22] And he said he thought that this was going on to . . . so that very soon, they would be allowing all people to go back and forth over their borders without even, without cards, like we demand up in . . . cards you carry between Mexico and so on. He says it's all just free circulation.

I said, "Well, if you start the intermarrying, then you'll have union, and be all right."

He is *very* keen on this and, really, I think, is now looking upon French-German friendship, and a sort of an entente, as a new type of, almost an axis of influence in that area. This was what he said was the encouraging part about the European thing and he thought this also of the Common Market.[23]

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22. Adenauer made a state visit to France in early July 1962.

23. Signed in 1957, the Treaty of Rome established the European Economic Community (EEC), also referred to as the Common Market, and the European Atomic Energy Commission

And I—we—had a long talk about the Common Market, which seemed to have no—nothing—no application to defense.

Then he came . . . the next thing that bothered him though very very much was the relief of Norstad.[24] And he told the long story of the—about this being a surprise and everything else. And he was very unhappy—first, that he was leaving. He said, "Norstad has gotten to be an influence that we think is almost necessary—backup." I told him then of my friendship with Lemnitzer, and I said, "I don't see how you can get a better man. Now, he hasn't had quite as much experience in this kind of thing [as] Norstad."[25]

But he was. . . . I sent Lemnitzer over to [British field marshal Sir Harold] Alexander as his operation officer in a big army group, and, I said, "He does know something about allied work together."[26]

Now, he said, then, but he [Adenauer] said, "By and large, we see this as two things. You're putting in . . . you're sending Lemnitzer out and Norstad out because they apparently have not understood the policies, or not have followed the policies that America is now adopting. And you're putting in General [Maxwell] Taylor."[27] Then he reached over and got a book, and this book was [*laughs*] General Taylor's book.[28]

And he said, "Now I must tell you, General," he said, "I tell you as your friend, if this book—if the philosophy of this book—is going to be adopted in Europe," he said, "I am afraid there will be disastrous consequences in Western Europe."

And I said, "Well, you better go ahead, Mr. Chancellor."

"Well," he said, "well, the philosophy of this book is that we should

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(EURATOM). The original six signatories were Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands.

24. General Lauris Norstad, Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR), 20 November 1956 to 1 January 1963.

25. General Lyman Lemnitzer was Norstad's successor as SACEUR, 1 January 1963 to 1 July 1969.

26. Then Brigadier General Lemnitzer was Alexander's U.S. deputy, his deputy chief of staff, for the 15th Army Group during World War I.

27. Reference to General Maxwell Taylor, Lemnitzer's successor as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Taylor served as U.S. Army chief of staff under President Eisenhower from 1955 to 1959 and emerged as a leading critic of the Eisenhower administration's policies.

28. Reference to Taylor's *The Uncertain Trumpet* (New York: Harper, 1959), a landmark study of U.S. military security needs, which indicted Eisenhower's national security policy, generated considerable controversy around the 1960 election, and popularized the term *flexible response* to describe the need for limited military options short of nuclear war. See "Meeting about Berlin," 6 August 1962, for a discussion of West German anxiety.

not depend on atomic bombs." And he said, "we're going to—we shouldn't fight and strive to fight our wars by conventional weapons." He said, "If we do this, and if we adopt this kind of philosophy, this means that America is again ready to see Europe overrun. Then we will start—starting way back to where we were in 1942—to go back and plan [to retake a Soviet-occupied Europe] and after all of this destruction and occupation." And he said, "This time it won't be as easy as it was under Hitler." And this should, by and large, he said, he saw this as a very strong evidence of an enormous and revolutionary change in American policy, defense policy in Western Europe.

And I said, "Well, now, I'm not going, I can't quarrel about that. I mean I can't argue the case because I am not privy to exactly to the inner circles of portions of what you're saying. But I do know this. They've [the Kennedy administration] said they're spending a good many billions to keep our deterrent in a very top shape, and the missile work as far as I can see is not only going ahead but, from all that my G-2 friends tell me from time to time, our strength is growing up even more rapidly than what we thought, first calculated, and to greater value.[29] Therefore, I can't see that any of our, any government—any American government—is discounting the effect of the deterrent or its need to use it in the face of overwhelming strength.

Now, shortly after that, that was the gist of his talk, although he brought in all sorts of details and, you might say, auxiliary sort of reasons to support this. But then I got a word. It came out from one of his friends, one of his people, that reached me, oh, a week later. Said that General Taylor had given some testimony that greatly reassured him.[30] Now, I didn't read this testimony; I didn't want to . . . But apparently . . . The German said, that spoke to me said, that apparently General Taylor no longer believes exactly what he said in his book because he had changed his mind. So, the big, real thing, was when I saw this in the paper and then this German came to see me and told me this. I said, "Well, I think maybe there's no need for telling you because

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29. The abbreviation G-2 is used in the Army to refer to staff intelligence personnel.

30. On 9 August, while Eisenhower was touring Europe, the U.S. Senate by unanimous vote confirmed Taylor's nomination as Chairman of the JCS. The action followed a hearing by the Senate Armed Services Committee. At one point, Taylor assured the committee that "I am not returning, if you gentlemen confirm me, as a crusader for change but rather one to make the present system as effective as possible" (see *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report,* 24 August 1962, p. 1421).

it's probably something you'd write about a friend with and knew about the change."

President Kennedy: Well, I think that . . . Of course, I think they misstated Taylor's position. As you know, Taylor's been very strong on tactical atomic weapons.

Eisenhower: Yes. Oh, yes . . . Oh, yes . . .

President Kennedy: And I, so I . . . there's in fact . . . Norstad . . . I think it's a great loss—Norstad. For example, last spring . . . As you know, [General Lucius] Clay and Norstad had a rather difficult time.[31]

Eisenhower: Oh did they? No, I didn't know that.

President Kennedy: Yeah. Well, there was a good deal of tension there.

Eisenhower: Hmm.

President Kennedy: For example, last spring, General Clay wanted to have the civilian—at the time buzzing was taking place take place in the corridor—he wanted a fighter escort at that time.[32] General Norstad disagreed. And we went with General Norstad. And I think it was the right thing, as [a] matter of fact. They, as you know, they called the buzzing off. But there was a good deal of . . . I don't know whether it's wanting to go back to other times—but there was a good deal of friction.

Eisenhower: I didn't know that.

President Kennedy: But I think that Norstad is first class, but when he came back last winter, he said . . . I guess he's had what—two heart attacks—or one?

Eisenhower: Yes, that's right.

President Kennedy: So he said he wanted to resign at the end of this year. So, then when General Lemnitzer's time ended [as JCS Chairman], I was either faced with having him reappointed again or putting him back, so this seemed to be the best arrangement.

But it was unfortunate that General [James] Gavin left in September, who had been identified with support for the French nuclear effort.[33] And General Norstad left. General Lemnitzer went in. And these things are regarded, I think, as quite significant. And the chancellor is 86. But as I say, I find—I think that the criticisms, which are traditionally leveled at

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31. General Lucius D. Clay was the President's special representative in Berlin until May 1962, thereafter special consultant to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Clay was chosen for his symbolic role as the hero of the 1948 Berlin airlift while he was the U.S. military governor for occupied Germany.

32. Reference to Soviet harassment of Western aircraft.

33. General James Gavin was the U.S. ambassador to France until mid-September 1962.

the United States, when you think that the amount of ground divisions we have there, the amount of effort we're putting in various places.

Again the French—a division and a half in West Germany. I talked to Ambassador [Hervé] Alphand this morning, and I said, "I don't understand."[34] I said, "This French-German rapprochement is wonderful, but here the Germans, who have been quite critical of us this summer, as I say, have *cut* their defense budget in the last month even though they've got a very strong economy. And the French have a division and a half even though your minimum goal is four under NATO, and you really should have six."[35]

He said, "Well, we've got them for the defense of France."

But I said, "Well, look, you can't have two divisions here [in Western Europe] and two others . . ." The British are—

Eisenhower: That's right.

President Kennedy: [*Unclear*] on us. So I think that the press, particularly some feed this, these European criticisms of our efforts—I think that considering the load we carry compared to the load they carry . . .

Eisenhower: That's right.

President Kennedy: It's incredible.

Eisenhower: I would agree, and, a matter of fact, I would . . . I tried my best, although every time I did the diplomats always said, "Now you do it, you're going to lose Europe now; that's all there is to it because their temper and this and that and the other thing and the psychological reaction."

But I tried every possible way. I said, "Well, now let's make these smaller divisions. Let's *begin* to show them that *we are concerned* about this big spending." After all, we built almost unaided that great infrastructure that starts right at the ports and goes all the way through the place. We've got airfields. We've got everything and, of course, de Gaulle did not . . . De Gaulle didn't talk to me substantively at all. He just proved very nice, very hospitable, and all that, very kind, but we didn't talk about it. And he wouldn't, you know. He's a very very [*unclear*] man.

But, on the other hand, the German gave me the understanding that not only were they going to go right up to their target. But I said, "Of course, your target is too small. You are a people of still only 60 million.

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34. Hervé Alphand was French ambassador to the United States. President Kennedy and he met between 11:05 and 11:34 A.M.

35. Four divisions were specified under NATO Policy Directive MC 26/4.

You're right there on the firing line. Our country, which is, I say, three times the size, is doing much more than three times what you're doing, and you people ought to be waking up to this." But I'm astonished that they cut their—

President Kennedy: Yeah. Well, Bob McNamara is coming over to give you the figures on it.[36]

Eisenhower: Well, I think when I write to Adenauer I'm going to tell him that I'm astonished.

President Kennedy: That would be very helpful. I think we'll get Secretary McNamara to give you the figures. I think that . . . Your talk was very helpful, too. Of course, he has great regard for you and John Foster Dulles—[37]

Eisenhower: We've always been very friendly.

President Kennedy: Yeah. So I think the fact that you . . . That helped reassure him very much, especially when you spoke about Lemnitzer and Taylor.

Eisenhower: Oh yes. Oh, oh, Lemnitzer . . . to hell with it.

President Kennedy: Yeah, that's right.

Eisenhower: And I said, "I just can't believe that you'll have anything but satisfaction." Now, he did bring out that . . . before he gave me all the circumstantial evidence that showed that what's his name, Norstad, knew nothing about his immediate relief. Because he . . . Norstad, only by happenstance had been there about five days earlier. And was talking with him, the plans that they were going to do together, and so I said well maybe he was under a . . .

President Kennedy: Well. . . . No . . . That's right. We gave him . . . It was only five days before his relief because he came back here about a month in July. He came back in July, and we talked about this. He had earlier said that he would like to resign between August and September and the next January—he gave a four- or five- month period. Well, we picked October—the first of November because of the Lemnitzer, Joint Chiefs . . .

So when he came back here in July, we talked about whether we ought to go to January, and he said no. And he also said he'd like to come out right away because otherwise it would be rumored and his influence would

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36. McNamara joined Kennedy, Eisenhower, and Secretary of State Dean Rusk for lunch and then met in the Cabinet Room with General Marshall Carter, deputy director of the CIA, and the two presidents.

37. Dulles was secretary of state under Dwight Eisenhower until his death from cancer in 1959.

be nonexistent. So that we moved it, at Norstad's own suggestion, with a good deal of speed. Now they may have felt that that indicated that we were . . . Quite the reverse, I'd give anything to have Norstad there because I think we're going to have a terribly difficult time with Berlin and I think Norstad has so much experience and they have so much confidence in him. It's a very tough job for Lemnitzer to go in after him.

Eisenhower: That's right. And not only that, but, at this stage, I'll say this: Norstad is a very tough fellow, when he [makes a] commitment. He's a very great supporter of his own convictions, and normally, I must say, I think [*unclear*]. Well, now, I can disabuse you of Laurie [Norstad] . . . Of his mind on that particular thing because he thinks that we were—that is our country—was trying to put them in sort of a secondary position—take it and like it. See we started . . . It happened when Mr. Truman called me and asked me to go over there. He . . . The great argument, he was . . . "unanimously these 12 countries," Mr. President, "12 countries have asked for you."

And I said, "Well as long as they've asked for me in person, Mr. President, I mean duty is you will have to send me over." But God, how I'd hate to leave home. [*Laughs.*] I did.

So then we . . . when I was leaving. I was going out . . . and I finally agreed to come over here and stand for this Republican nomination. And I said to him I would be . . . "It must be done unanimously; it must be done correctly."

So I gave plenty of warning, and they worked and they so . . . and, I wanted, what's his name—

President Kennedy: [General Alfred] Gruenther.[38]

Eisenhower: Gruenther.

They decided to take Ridgway because Ridgway was coming out of Korea, and I think they wanted to send him over.[39] I don't think that Ridgway was the temperament for that kind of a job. But anyway, he didn't . . . He came back and became the chief of staff about a year later. But both saw . . . all we did was done unanimously [*unclear*] by requesting the President to do this. He knew all this past history, and that bothered him because he said it looked like their opinions weren't very

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38. General Alfred Gruenther was a close personal friend of Eisenhower and served as his chief of staff while Eisenhower was SACEUR, 1951 to 1952. Gruenther was then SACEUR himself, 11 July 1953 to 20 November 1956.

39. General Matthew Ridgway was commander of the U.N. Command in the Far East, 11 April 1951 to 30 May 1952. He was SACEUR, 30 May 1952 to 11 July 1953, and served as U.S. Army chief of staff, 1953 to 1955.

important. But I told him that just had to be something that was mechanical . . . No one would do that deliberately. He seemed to take that—

President Kennedy: Well, Norstad wanted us to move because he thought there would be rumors about . . . As I say, Norstad asked—told me—that he couldn't, that this was what his desire was when he was over in the winter.

Then when he came in July, and he talked to me about what our timing was, he said he'd like it to come as quickly as possible. So what we did was announce Norstad and then say that if we were asked to submit somebody, we would submit the name of General Lemnitzer and put it up to the North Atlantic Treaty Council.

Well, of course, the French are attempting always to justify the need for their own atomic [force], independent of us.[40] So, I think, they raised some difficulty about it but . . . I don't know what—where these—when you think, as I say, what the United States has done for 17 years in Germany, I think that—

Eisenhower: There's one point that I do think we've got to remember. These people have . . . They were in an awful shape; then the Marshall Plan of course got them back, and they recognize that. I'll tell you the nation that speaks more publicly and openly about the help of America, American help, is Germany. You never hear of this brought up in France or Britain—sometimes in Britain. But up in Germany, it's almost a religion. Everybody that comes to you says, "Well, now, of course, we realize what we owe to America."

But the effort to get these people to doing their own part—I just don't know beyond this very argument. If it were the six divisions there—with the little bit that, the 12 that Germany will have, the one that France, so on. You're bound to be back to the Rhine before you can collect yourself.

President Kennedy: Yeah . . . yeah . . . yeah . . .

Eisenhower: You see. Unless you go into this atomic business. And if that's going to be true, you've got to have greater strength that can be deployed rapidly. Well, if they're going to cut down . . . There's just . . .

President Kennedy: Yeah . . . yeah.

Eisenhower: There's something wrong here. I don't know just what it is. I hadn't heard this. I was hopeful . . . I knew that when de Gaulle brought back his Algerian army, he was going to put most of his

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40. Since assuming power in 1958, de Gaulle had declared unequivocally and repeatedly that France would achieve independent national nuclear capability.

Algerian army in France. But I never dreamed that he wouldn't go and fulfill his commitments—[41]

President Kennedy: Well, I agree. That's what I said. I said to [French ambassador Hervé] Alphand, "This great Franco-German . . . We are always subject to very sharp criticism by the Germans for not doing one thing or another." I said, "But we are doing everything we committed to under NATO and in addition carrying SAC, and in addition the navy, and in addition Southeast Asia." I said, "Now, France isn't even fulfilling its NATO commitment."

But, of course, the reason is that they know that they don't depend on the French and they depend on us. So, therefore, they're always concerned about our intentions because they realize that without the United States, they would be exposed. The fact is that he would be perfectly right about in talking about our immediate use of nuclear weapons, it seems to me, if we didn't have the Berlin problem, because then obviously any Soviet intrusion across the line would be a deliberate one and would be a signal for war.

When we have this problem of maintaining our position in Berlin, where you may be using sort of gradually escalating force to maintain yourself in Berlin, you can't suddenly begin to drop nuclear weapons the first time you have a difficulty. That would really be the only—and it's a very valid reason for our emphasizing the necessity of their building up conventional forces. When I saw Clay, he said, "You can't go up the autobahn waving an atom bomb. And say, the first time you put a . . . a bridge is blown out in front of you, you can't begin a nuclear exchange with the Soviet Union over getting to Berlin."

Eisenhower: Well of course, on that one, Mr. President, I've personally, I've always long thought this from the beginning. If they believe there is no amount of strength you can put in Berlin, they can say that. I would think that you could . . . What's his name—Khrushchev—said to me at Camp David.[42] He was talking about [The United States's] needing some

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41. In 1958, de Gaulle returned to power to end the French-Algerian war. Peace talks began in March 1961, but bloodshed continued until Algeria gained independence on 1 July 1962. In September 1961, de Gaulle had begun withdrawing French forces from Algeria. Under NATO policy directives MC 70 and 26/4, France was committed to contribute four divisions but had produced only two and one-third divisions to that point.

42. Rural retreat of U.S. presidents in northern Maryland, 70 miles northwest of Washington, D.C. Established in 1942 as "Shangri-La" by Franklin Roosevelt, Eisenhower renamed it for his grandson in 1953. When Khrushchev visited the United States in September 1959, he and Eisenhower had several discussions at Camp David.

more troops [in West Germany]—there was somewhat at that time in the public about more, a couple more divisions, and so . . . He [Krushchev] says, "What are they talking about?" He says, "For every division they can put in Germany, I can put ten, without any trouble whatsoever."

And I said, "We know that." And I said, "But we're not worrying about that." And I said, "I'll tell you. I don't propose to fight a conventional war. If you declare . . . if you bring out war, bring on war of global character . . . There are going to be no conventional, nothing conventional about it." And I told him flatly.

And he said, "Well." He said, "That's a relief. Neither one of us can afford it." "Yes," I said that, and I said, "OK, so I agree to that, too." [*Laughing.*]

President Kennedy: Right. Right.

Eisenhower: But, you see, what these people are afraid of . . . I mean the essence of his argument was, if you try to fight this thing conventionally from the beginning, when do you start to go nuclear? And this will never be until you yourselves in other words become in danger and he said, "That means all of Europe is again gone." And that—

President Kennedy: But, of course, we've got all these nuclear weapons, as you know, stored in West Berlin. All we are . . . What they are really concerned about is that the Russians will seize Hamburg, which is only a few miles from the border, and some other towns, and then they'll say, "We'll negotiate." So then Norstad has come up with this whole strategy. I think the only difficulty is that no one will . . . That if we did not have the problem, I say, of Berlin and maintaining access through that autobahn authority, then you would say that any attempt to seize any part of West Germany, we would go to nuclear weapons. But, of course, *they never will!*

But it's this difficulty of maintaining a position 120 miles behind their lines—

Eisenhower: Mr. President, I'll tell you . . . Here's something, I can't document everything . . . but Clay was there. Poor, poor old Smith is gone.[43] We begged our governments not to go into Berlin.

We . . . I asked that they build a cantonment capital, a cantonment capital at the junction of the British, American, and Russian zones. I said, "We just don't, we can't do this. . . . " Well, it had been a political thing that had been done first in the Advisory Council, European Advisory Council, in London. And later confirmed and . . . But Mr. Roosevelt said to me this

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43. Eisenhower was probably referring to Joseph Smith, who as an Army brigadier general, had been headquarters commander for the Berlin airlift of 1948–49.

twice—I'm talking about my concern. And he said, "Ike"—and he was always very, you know, informal—he said, "Ike," he said, "quit worrying about Uncle Joe. I'll take care of Uncle Joe."

That's exactly what he told [me]. Once in Tunis and once when I came over here about the first or second or third of January of '44. That's the last time I ever saw him. Now he just wouldn't believe that these guys were these tough and really ruthless so-and-sos they were.[44]

There's one other thing that Adenauer brought in that you might have interest—more than I would—under the security standpoint. He was talking about the French problem and about bringing the British into the Common Market.[45] And he got into, you might say, into the same nest. Now he said, "You know, just a few years, when you were here, General, France wanted Britain in this whole—you might call it 'association'—in order to balance off Germany.[46] Now what they're frightened of, is that Britain comes in and Britain will have greater influence in the association than will France."

Now he said, "This is a . . ." He cited plenty of evidence there. But he said, "One of the reasons they're making it so difficult for you to come into the Common Market . . ." And he said, more or less, as a suspicion of his, that they were going to be able to prevent [British entry into the

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44. Eisenhower did travel with Franklin Roosevelt in Tunis on 21 November 1943. He also met privately with Roosevelt at the White House on 5 and 12 January 1944. There are no records of those conversations.

In March and April 1945 Eisenhower had refused to divert his forces to a race to capture Berlin before the Russians, partly because he knew the postwar occupation zones had already been decided. Later criticized for this judgment, he tended to be defensive about it [see Stephen Ambrose, *Eisenhower, vol. 1* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983), pp. 391–404]. In now recalling how those zones, and Berlin's place in them, were originally determined, Eisenhower mixes memories of general conversations with Franklin Roosevelt about future relations with Russia in November 1943 and January 1944, when there was probably little or no specific discussion of Berlin, with the memory of his own subsequent early-1944 proposal for a "cantonment capital." Eisenhower made that proposal at a time when Roosevelt still toyed with the idea of connecting Berlin to the edge of a sketchily imagined U.S. occupation zone. Under pressure from the British, the Soviets, and his diplomats, Roosevelt gave way later in 1944 to the scheme which neither he nor Eisenhower had originally supported but which was finally adopted [see Herbert Feis, *Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957), pp. 360-65; Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Waging Peace: The White House Years, 1956–1961* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965), p. 335 and note 5].

45. On 31 July 1961, Prime Minister Harold Macmillan announced Great Britain's bid for accession for the EEC. De Gaulle rarely disguised his reluctance to accept Britain's entrance.

46. During the negotiations for the Treaty of Rome, which established the EEC in 1957, de Gaulle supported Britain's entrance. The United Kingdom, however, decided against joining the Common Market and formed the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) with Austria, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland.

Common Market] because they would make it impossible really for Britain to come in, except at the price of complete desertion of the Commonwealth.

"And you know," he said, very . . . very wisely, he said, "You know today, if I were prime minister of Britain, I would not know what is the answer here." He says, "For immediate, economic advantage, they should come into the Common Market. But when you think of all the tradition and all of the connections they would have to sever and the bad will that would be engendered throughout the [*unclear*]," he said, "Oh, this is a tough problem for them."

President Kennedy: He doesn't really want them in? He thinks because it will weaken the [*unclear*] the British and just us.

Eisenhower: No, I think . . . I think he would like them in. But he doesn't think France wants them in. Because the French . . . He said France is finally getting into a position they've been wanting . . . to get some kind of a lever on all of Western Europe—where they're really bigger . . . big shots.

President Kennedy: And once the British come in they'll have a—

Eisenhower: That's right. They become sort of a [*unclear*].

An unidentified speaker interrupts the conversation to tell Kennedy that his lunch companions have arrived.

Unidentified: Secretary Rusk and Secretary McNamara are over at the House.

President Kennedy: OK. We'll walk over.

Unidentified: And General Carter had to come from CIA, as you know . . . and he . . . Mac Bundy said that he could—

President Kennedy: I'll tell you what we'll do—we'll get right after lunch.

[*speaking to Eisenhower*] I just had General Carter . . .[47] I just wanted him to show you the Cuban SAM sites. . . .[48]

Eisenhower: I'd like to see them.

President Kennedy: [*speaking to an aide*] So right after lunch if he could just . . . We'll meet him in this office.

Unidentified: You'll meet him here?

President Kennedy: Right. In this office. Yeah. [*Conversation begins to fade as they depart.*] Why doesn't he come because I'd like to have

47. Lieutenant General Marshall S. Carter was deputy director of the CIA.
48. Surface-to-air missiles.

Secretary Rusk and Secretary McNamara . . . We'll all meet here right after lunch.

Unidentified: Fine.

President Kennedy: It'll be about 2:15.[49]

Unidentified: Fine. [*Door shuts.*]

Tape recording continues for several minutes until someone enters the room and turns off the switch. Following lunch in the Mansion, Kennedy, Eisenhower, Rusk, and McNamara joined Marshall Carter in the Cabinet Room. Kennedy did not tape that meeting.

On September 12, 1962, Eisenhower drafted a letter to Chancellor Adenauer about the points discussed between the two U.S. presidents. Eisenhower ended his letter with a passage meant to calm the aging chancellor's anxiety about the U.S. commitment to the defense of West Germany: "Please do not bother to reply to this document. As a friend of yours and your countrymen and as a loyal citizen of my own I have tried only to act as a messenger of thoughts expressed to me personally (by each of our two nations' respective leaders) on subjects to which I have adverted."[50] On September 14, Kennedy and Rusk approved this letter before it was sent to Adenauer.

After Dwight Eisenhower left the White House, at about 3:00 P.M., Kennedy returned to the family quarters for a hour. He had a series of meetings before him that afternoon, none of which he taped. For an hour he spoke with the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, Harry F. Byrd of Virginia, a staunch opponent of anything that smacked of deficit spending. Next there came a group led by the outgoing secretary of labor, Arthur Goldberg; the secretary of the Navy, Fred Korth; the secretary of commerce, Luther Hodges; the solicitor general, Archibald Cox; and the attorney general, Robert Kennedy. Hodges stayed on after this meeting and was joined by Senator Robert Kerr, Theodore Sorensen, and the White House domestic team. At 6:00, Kennedy huddled with Clark Clifford, the Washington lawyer and intelligence community wise man,

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49. Kennedy is referring to the time of the intelligence briefing set up for President Eisenhower in the Cabinet Room after lunch.

50. Personal letter, Eisenhower to Adenauer, 12 September 1962, Dwight Eisenhower papers, post-presidential series, Box 27, folder: Principal file, 1962, Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library.

who in early August had pushed for the establishment of a CIA unit to help investigate press leaks.

Finally, from 6:28 to 6:45, the President met with Rusk, McGeorge Bundy, and Robert Kennedy. Although no memorandum of conversation exists for this meeting, its subject was almost certainly sending U-2s over Cuba. A week earlier the Soviets had protested the straying of a U-2 over Sakhalin Island, and just the day before a U-2 piloted by the Nationalist Chinese under arrangement with the U.S. government had been shot down over Communist China. Nevertheless the CIA was requesting two extended flights over portions of the island not covered by the flights of August 29 or September 5. Fearing another U-2 diplomatic incident, Secretary Rusk had concerns about flying over a country that now had Soviet surface-to-air missile batteries. There was reason to believe that the recently discovered SAM sites, which were in the eastern and central portions of Cuba, might be operational. Bundy had called for a 5:45 meeting of CIA representatives with Rusk; Lansdale; James Reber, the head of the Committee on Overhead Reconnaissance (COMOR); and the Attorney General in his office to discuss the Secretary's concerns. Rusk, Bundy, and Robert Kennedy came directly from that meeting to see the President.

The President agreed with Rusk. The White House apparently ordered a worldwide stand-down for all U-2 flights until September 16. When U-2 flights resumed over Cuba, they were to be quick missions, termed in-and-out flights, that photographed small parts of the island of particular interest to the agency without coming near known SAM sites. Due to unexpectedly bad weather the in-and-out flights would be further delayed until September 26 and 29. As for the central and eastern parts of Cuba, the areas with known SAM sites, there was, as yet, no agreement to take the risk to photograph them.[51]

A gathering of the administration's Berlin team followed. Kennedy

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51. The story of Bundy's 10 September meeting was reconstructed after the fact by two CIA officers during congressional investigations in 1963 into the intelligence background to the Cuban missile crisis [see Ernest deM. Berkaw, Jr., to the Executive Director, CIA, 28 February 1963, *FRUS*, 10: 1054–55 (The *FRUS* version indicates this memorandum was prepared in 1963 but carries the date of 10 September 1962, giving the impression this document was backdated for the CIA's records.); Lyman Kirkpatrick, Memorandum for the Director, "White House Meeting on 10 September 1962 on Cuban Overflights," 1 March 1963, in *CIA Documents on the Cuban Missile Crisis 1962*, Mary McAuliffe, ed. (Washington, DC: CIA, 1992), document 21]. The results of the later Oval Office meeting can be inferred from Gregory W. Pedlow and Donald E. Welzenbach, eds., *The CIA and the U-2 Program, 1954–1974* (Washington, DC: CIA, 1998), pp. 199–211.

decided to tape his advisers explaining this particular national security headache.

6:45–7:15 P.M.

[T]he planning that goes into this preferred sequence will be extremely valuable to governments when we have to make the decisions nearer to the time.

Meeting on Berlin[52]

Since President Kennedy's meetings about Berlin in August, the administration's contingency planning had progressed. His chief advisers now encouraged him to approve a proposal on "Preferred Sequence of Military Actions in the Berlin Conflict," which largely drew on the Berlin and maritime contingency (BERCON/MARCON) plans discussed in August.[53] Now President Kennedy needed to approve the sequence of military actions before the Washington Ambassadorial Group and the NATO Council convened later in the month.

Earlier that day, McGeorge Bundy had sent Kennedy a draft of the paper and a cover memorandum that explained disagreements about the use of nuclear weapons and the wisdom of specifying in advance a sequence of actions.[54]

The President began recording as his advisers outlined the differing views among the Departments of State and Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe.

Dean Rusk: [*voice fades in*] . . . as simply a part of a catalog of plans. A year ago the North Atlantic Council asked me and [SACEUR General Lauris] Norstad to undertake such planning with regard to Berlin, and

52. Including President Kennedy, McGeorge Bundy, Mike Forrestal, Martin Hillenbrand, Lyman Lemnitzer, Robert McNamara, Paul Nitze, and Dean Rusk. Tape 22, John F. Kennedy Library, President's Office Files, Presidential Recordings Collection.
53. Draft not found. For the revised military subgroup proposal for the Washington Ambassadorial Group on the preferred sequence of military actions in a Berlin conflict, see *FRUS*, 15: 315–20.
54. *FRUS*, 15: 313–15.

these BERCON/MARCON plans on which you agreed—long ago—are a result of that.[55] Norstad feels that he needs a general planning type of approval from the North Atlantic Council, and [the] Council ought to know what's going on. I do think that it is important for the North Atlantic Council to . . . members of NATO to . . . know what may in fact lie ahead if this Berlin matter gets, you know, more difficult because they may be living in a kind of a dream world, and some of them may not be facing up to the fact that this could get very tough indeed if the situation develops further.

Now, on the interallied discussions there are two points on which there may be some disagreement among the four principal powers. The first would be the timing in the application of maritime sanctions. The British are inclined to hold that off longer than we think we ought to. We, the Germans, and the French have pretty well agreed to move on those fairly early. But the British will want to delay for long-standing attitudes toward maritime matters.

Secondly, there is some, there may be some difference in the stage at which some type of nuclear weapon would be involved. I think Mr. [Paul] Nitze could indicate the views of the different national delegations on that. Otherwise, I think the general approach is agreed among the Four, and it would be a very sobering thing for the North Atlantic Council to get into. The actual BERCON/MARCON plans themselves have been already discussed with the North Atlantic Council, I believe. Isn't that correct?

Paul Nitze: The views of the standing group . . . the standing group has sent its comments to the North Atlantic Council.

Rusk: Oh. Well, the governments though . . . have had means of becoming familiar with that, with the nature—

Nitze: That's right.

Rusk: I think it ought to be pointed out to you, Mr. President, that Norstad is concerned about the North Atlantic Council seeming to . . . putting too much emphasis on what we refer to as the preferred sequence of those reactions. He does not feel that the circumstances of the time, or the action of the enemy, would make it clear enough that this is the way the scenario's going to unfold. Now, we think it must be underlined to the North Atlantic Council that we can't guarantee our preferred sequence, but that the planning that goes into this preferred

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55. For the BERCON/MARCON contingency planning discussions, see "Meeting on Berlin," 3 August 1962 and 9 August 1962.

sequence will be extremely valuable to governments when we have to make the decisions nearer to the time. Of course, all these matters are subject to later decisions by government in light of the circumstances.

President Kennedy: What is the obligation of the other NATO powers in case any of these . . . What are we asking of them? They've got a Berlin commitment too, haven't they?

Rusk: Well there's, there's for example, there would be . . . For example in Phase I, there would be mobilization, alert and mobilization activities which would . . .

President Kennedy: By all of the NATO powers?

Nitze: Phase II.

Rusk: I'm sorry, I thought that was certain mobilization mentioned in Phase I, Paul, is that not right?

Nitze: [*Unclear.*]

Rusk: I beg your pardon . . .

Nitze: [That] supposes it to have already taken place as a result of our [*unclear*].

McGeorge Bundy: We're in Phase I.

Nitze: Yes.

Rusk: Yes, I'm sorry. It's Phase II, isn't it . . . [*flips through pages*]. Paragraph 2 at the bottom of page 3 . . .

President Kennedy: Under [*unclear*] and then to instruct. Now, do we know what it is we want each one of these countries to do? For example, Belgium, what kind of mobilization, a gradual military buildup of naval measures and air measures including repressive measures? Do we know sort of what we'd want each of the . . . program to be?

Nitze: Long term is we want them to meet their force goals, we know what divisions we want them to call up, and what we want them to do, in broad terms, but in specific terms we have not . . .

President Kennedy: Let me say force goals—

Lyman Lemnitzer: Within NATO there are specific measures, what he calls an alert, steps which they should take to move forces, to call up [*unclear*] character.

Nitze: But, for instance in Phase II we would expect the British to call up their territorials, and then to move over the top the forces that are necessary to bring them up to the three divisions to which they are committed by the NATO MC 26/4 force goals.

President Kennedy: Of course, isn't that a peacetime goal? Or is that the alert goal?

Lemnitzer: No, it is a peacetime goal, but they are not up to it.

Nitze: They are not up to it.

President Kennedy: What country in NATO is up to its goals, except for the United States?

Nitze: Canada.

President Kennedy: Canada?

Lemnitzer: Canada and the United States.

Unidentified: Well, Belgium is pretty well up to its commitment. So, there are varying degrees . . .

Rusk: And the Netherlands are not too far away . . .

Robert McNamara: Well, none of them are up to it in terms of proper logistical support. None of them are ready to fight, Mr. President, and each of them would have to call men to active duty in Phase II in order to prepare for the action in Phase III, and as a matter of fact, it would be the calling of reserves to duty in Phase II that we would hope would deter Phase III. But I think it's fair to say none of the NATO forces are properly equipped with combat support and logistical support forces.

President Kennedy: All of ours? Ours are?

McNamara: [*Unclear*] ours.

Nitze: And we would contract; perhaps reinforcing the forces we've got there now. We've got the two division sets of equipment and we might want to fly over . . .

McNamara: Yes, and almost certainly in Phase II we would call up additional air squadrons.

Rusk: We nonetheless suddenly we have . . . We have column one and column two. Column one was the Third Division force.

McNamara: Yes.

Rusk: And column two showed the additions we would hope that the different countries would make to that. Presumably we would press pretty early for the column two.

McNamara: Yes, but we would first press to move to column one, which they have not moved to as yet.

President Kennedy: Well, the only thing is, do we want to say this, on page 4, where it said, "Should the risk of loss be too great, extended flights would be suspended." Do we want that on any record?

Nitze: Well, there's an important point involved here. . . . If the Soviet Union were to use their ground-to-air missiles in the corridor, we couldn't continue flights in the corridor without going after those ground installations. And, if you go after the ground installations, you also go after the airfields from which the Soviet planes come up, would be an expansion of the activity beyond what we contemplated in Phase I and would really involve very serious risks of the conflict becoming a big

one. And the thought was that you'd better take these mobilization measures which are contemplated in Phase II before you go that far.

President Kennedy: This Phase II, though, we're talking now really about Phase II, aren't we?

Lemnitzer: Yes.

Nitze: Yes, during Phase II, you would continue the flights as long as you could, but if they started using these ground-to-air missiles, or put in a—

President Kennedy: It seems to me we ought to maybe consider rewording that sentence because I think it sounds like maybe they will try and then they'll knock us down and then we'll stop and then it will be up to NATO when we start again. Don't you think we ought to put it a little more . . . we will cease and mobilize and then—

Bundy: And [many] steps will be taken.

President Kennedy: Prepare to commence again rather than sort of leaving it more questionable.

Nitze: I think that the British are going to come in with some suggested amended language for that particular sentence. And I think their government has approved the whole document except for that sentence and I think they're going to come in into our next meeting with a slight change in it. I think they'll make the same point that you have in mind, Mr. President.

President Kennedy: Could you keep that in mind . . . the NATO decision? Couldn't we say NATO would have to face the necessity, in light of stated military preparedness for air action, beyond the scope of Live Oak operations, in order to reestablish air access after suitable concentration of forces has taken place?[56] This other thing, they get it all, in the end.

Garbled exchange between Bundy and an unidentified speaker. Sound of pages being turned.

President Kennedy: Now, when we say the three powers would, if necessary . . . what are we . . . What do we want to call in the . . . Have you got that? When do we call on NATO to make its forces, air forces available?

Nitze: The concept is that as long as the effort is purely on the air corridors along the autobahn, that this is a tripartite responsibility. The

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56. Live Oak was the planning group created by SACEUR Lauris Norstad to deal with the military aspects of the Berlin problem. Headed by a British major general, it also included U.S. and French officers and a West German observer.

moment it spreads beyond the air corridors or autobahn, then it becomes a NATO responsibility.

President Kennedy: I wonder if there's something we could impress upon the other NATO [countries] about what their obligations will begin to become; or do you think they'll be impressed enough with the prospect that it might escalate into nuclear, to be willing to participate fully in any support they can give us short of nuclear action? In other words, this doesn't seem to ask very much of NATO except for this, really, almost information sheet. Isn't it for them, for the other members of NATO aside from the British and the French and Germans?

Nitze: They would have to participate fully in the buildup to Phase II. All the actions in Phase III and in Phase IV would be NATO action.

Rusk: I think we might knock out that four, the last line on page 3, for example naval measures, national, tripartite and NATO, because naval measures would be themselves outside of the corridor—

Nitze: Well, we'd wanted really to have some degree of flexibility so that the three powers could do naval harassment and even some forms of encroaching blockade without the possibility of being vetoed by NATO. But I think you should still . . . could take out the *or* without. [*Unclear*] I think.

Rusk: I don't think the . . . that the veto . . . that unanimity is going to deal with these in places in time and it's necessary [*unclear*].

McNamara: The paragraph requiring the action by the other members of NATO, Mr. President, is the second paragraph on page 4. . . . Perhaps it is sufficiently self explanatory, and can certainly be enlarged—

President Kennedy: [*Unclear*] mean "to mobilize and deploy jointly additional military forces"?

McNamara: It means . . .

President Kennedy: [*reading*] "Achieving the force levels and state of readiness necessary to the defense of NATO and the launching of BERCON/MARCON operations." It doesn't say what—

McNamara: Yeah.

President Kennedy: Of all M-day forces.[57]

Bundy: Theoretically, the M-day forces go well above the 30 division levels or any current levels.

Nitze: Yeah.

President Kennedy: We wouldn't want to state what those additional military forces would be?

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57. The abbreviation M-day forces stands for Reserve Forces.

Bundy: Well, they know what they are, Mr. President. Under the existing NATO planning, they would total, if they all were produced, something like 47 divisions, if I remember the figure correctly. General Lemnitzer will have it in mind.

Lemnitzer: I am not sure of the total. We will check it.

Bundy: But it implies a NATO-wide mobilization, and they will all know that that is what is implied under existing contingency plans on a NATO-wide basis. This document, it is important to say, relates to an existing NATO strategy. This is simply the Berlin strategy within existing NATO strategy.

Martin Hillenbrand: We have another paper which will be considered by the NAC [North Atlantic Council] at the same time, and that relates to the specific question of tripartite-NATO relationship, and what parts of these operations will be under necessarily under tripartite control, and where the obligation is for NATO as a whole.[58]

McNamara: Which we could declare by saying a major element of military action will be for each of the Western European members of NATO to mobilize and deploy. . . . Make it more specific.

Bundy: Under NATO M-day plans.

McNamara: Yes.

Bundy: Yeah.

McNamara: [*whispering*] We also hope each of the NATO nations contemplate through the use of [*unclear*].

President Kennedy: Do the words on page 5, "the initiation of some form of nuclear action" . . . has the word *initiation* got anything to do [with] [*unclear*] [*sounds of flipping pages*] at the bottom? If our continued impression would be observed, it would be the realization of the imminence of nuclear war?[59] Or is *initiation* satisfactory? [*Unclear exchange.*]

Nitze: The point we were trying to get across here was that the other NAC members would have to realize that we might be faced with a situation where we would have to initiate. If we could take out the words

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58. The tripartite powers were the three Western powers with treaty rights and obligations in West Germany—Great Britain, France, and the United States. The defense of the Western position in Berlin would start as a tripartite responsibility and then expand to involve all of NATO. The involvement of the entire NATO alliance would occur if the Soviet challenge exceeded a certain threshold.

59. Kennedy is hinting at the possibility that the Western powers might have to be the first to use nuclear weapons in a conflict with the Warsaw Pact over Berlin. They would preempt the Soviet use of nuclear weapons because of the "realization of the imminence" of total war.

initiation of, and it would still be implied when you say "will be some form of nuclear action."

Bundy: I think that's better.

Nitze: "Resort to."

President Kennedy: Yeah.

Nitze: We can just take out the *initiation.*

Bundy: I think "resort to" is pretty good.

President Kennedy: Yeah.

Nitze: "Resort to."[60]

President Kennedy seems to take a phone call, not related to the discussion at hand.

President Kennedy: Right, OK, . . . Huntsville [Alabama]? Yeah, which day can you do it? Next week? Why don't you check that out and . . . Let me see, I'll be in Huntsville Tuesday, this week. Because it looks like I'll be down there this Sunday. What about the [*unclear*] burning of those things [*unclear*]? Yeah . . . have you announced how many FBI you've got; or are they putting in helicopters. Yeah, OK, fine. Right. OK. Good. Bye.[61] [*Hangs up phone.*]

President Kennedy: You are going [to] change that to make it . . .

Bundy: We're going to say "resort to," simply—

President Kennedy: "Resort to."

Nitze: It would be "to resort to."

President Kennedy flips his copy of the document, searching for the offending phrase.

President Kennedy: All right, then.

Rusk: Mr. President, it's the very last paragraph, on page 6, [*unclear*] language [*unclear*] because it would be too much of a row to NATO, the North Atlantic Council. Paul, I don't see any particular point, from our point of view, in hanging on to it. We might as well drop it.

Nitze: Apparently, the Germans have also said they wanted to drop it. I'm not quite sure why they want to drop it.

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60. The critical sentence in this planning document thus read: "If the course chosen [by NATO] were conventional action and this fails to make the Soviet Union back down and has not precipitated general war, the last remaining pressure to be exerted will be to resort to some form of nuclear action" (*FRUS*, 15:320).

61. On 11 September 1962, President Kennedy planned to visit defense facilities at Redstone Laboratories in Huntsville, Alabama. He would be accompanied by British defense minister Peter Thorneycroft, who was visiting the United States 9 to 17 September. On Sunday, 16 September, Kennedy was expected to be in Newport, Rhode Island, with Thorneycroft as his and Mrs. Kennedy's guest.

Rusk: Well, apparently, there is [*unclear*] some of these big power decisions here, this in effect, the Council is going to have to arrive at rapid decisions at the time of execution. I think that's really what . . .

Bundy: In realistic terms, it's not accurate, that paragraph.

Unidentified: Yeah.

Bundy: You ought to know, Mr. President, that General Norstad himself is worried about the restrictiveness of this paper in terms of the use of nuclear weapons. The reason this is important is that he will be making a presentation on his views, at a certain stage. I don't know just when this will, how this will work. But the Council has asked for his views on the general issue of the future of nuclear weapons in NATO, and this connects closely to this general question of when they will be used in the minds of Europeans who are hesitant about what they perceive to be changes in our policy.

President Kennedy: Well, you know that President Eisenhower's conversation with Adenauer [*unclear*] some confusion, and all the rest.

Bundy: Yeah.

President Kennedy: He's going to give . . . is General Norstad going to give the . . . policy?

Bundy: The presentation of his paper will be handled, as I understand it, by Paul Nitze, isn't that right?

Nitze: No, Tom Finletter.[62]

Bundy: Tom Finletter.

Nitze: [I'll] bring Tom up to date on the . . .

Bundy: What will Norstad's relation to this paper be?

Nitze: I don't think he will have a relationship to it. He's already expressed his views to the Joint Chiefs on the paper. His views have been taken account of by the Joint Chiefs [of Staff].

Lemnitzer: Yes, he's also . . . That's right, and we've recommended, concerned with most of them and a good many of his views have been incorporated into this paper. Not all of them, but . . .

Nitze: I think the most important one is the . . . is the second sentence, in the second paragraph on page 1.

Lemnitzer: The Joint Chiefs are most concerned [*unclear*] get the idea that we were going through step by step by step.

President Kennedy: Have you tried ever [*unclear*] avoid the subject? Is that the one?

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62. Thomas Finletter was the permanent representative to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Bundy: Yeah. [*Unclear.*]

President Kennedy: [*reading*] "Nations may render [*unclear*] of nuclear weapons. . . ."

Rusk: Point out the standard [*unclear*].

Nitze: This we thought met his major point. . . .

President Kennedy: Will he at some time talk about the failure of the NATO people to come up with their, let's say, with General Eisenhower [*unclear*] . . . Adenauer complaining about us?[63] Well, I think it would be well to have these other points made.[64] Did somebody make these? Or will General Lemnitzer do that?

Lemnitzer: Well, he makes them continually, to most of the nations particularly the British. He's been after them for several years.

President Kennedy: What's your impression of them?

Nitze: At the moment the French have won the most in their conversations [*unclear*].

Lemnitzer: [*Unclear.*] I think he's already given up on the French for the time being, for more divisions, but as they come back from Algeria, I think that we would have to continue to press the French.

President Kennedy: Is he going to talk about medium-range ballistic missiles?[65]

Bundy: At a certain point, he's under obligation, really, to talk to NATO. He put that off earlier on so as not to have any confusion about his views and his retirement. But this is a separate issue. The only reason I mentioned it is slightly cognate in the minds of many of the Europeans, because our instinct of holding off this decision till the latest possible moment is related in their minds to what they take to be our lack of enthusiasm to General Norstad's modernization program.[66] He will defend his point of view on modernization in medium-range ballistic missiles at some point before the council. I don't know the date of that.

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63. "He" is General Norstad.

64. Kennedy is referring to the inability of NATO allies to meet the conventional force goals set in the fall of 1957 by MC 70 and again in the summer of 1961 by MC 26/4.

65. For Norstad's views on the deployment of MRBMs in Europe, see the "Meeting with Dwight Eisenhower," 10 September 1962.

66. Bundy is referring to the Kennedy administration's foot-dragging in establishing a European land-based MRBM nuclear force. Many administration officials, especially in the Department of State, opposed a land-based force because the allies would demand control over the missiles in their territory. State preferred a sea-based multilateral force (MLF), which would avoid the issue of national control entirely by employing mixed NATO crews. Kennedy held a dim view of the MLF. Although the President shared State's concerns about allied pressures for their own national nuclear forces, he doubted the MLF was a viable alternative.

President Kennedy: I think it would be helpful if he put in the, why he regards conventional forces, and their buildup, to be completely consistent with his view on . . . because he knows I want to make an exclusive . . . I'd like to have it, so that their . . . Also it affects—

Rusk: They're going to jump on his bandwagon as an excuse for not going ahead with a conventional buildup.

Bundy: Yeah. Well, they do this in their own minds . . .

Unidentified: Right.

President Kennedy: Well, I think if he says that, he's regarded as very pure on the subject, we're not, if he would say it, and explain it. Could we suggest that he make that part of his presentation?

McNamara: I hope to avoid that presentation as long as possible, Mr. President, and to the best of my knowledge it isn't scheduled at the present time.

Lemnitzer: Well, there's one on the 25th of September; that was sort of a tentative date. I don't know whether it's been firmed up. I don't [know] what the status of that one is, Mr. President.

President Kennedy: OK, [*unclear*] now we've got to go to . . . [*to McNamara*] You're coming tomorrow?

McNamara: Yes, I think so. I'm worried about [British defense minister Peter] Thorneycroft . . .

President Kennedy: Is he not—

Bundy: Isn't Mike coming, too?

McNamara: Yes I believe so, Mac, but we have a problem that Dave Ormsby-Gore is having a dinner for him tomorrow night.[67] I don't know if that gets us back there in time for—

President Kennedy: You've got to get back in time for that.

McNamara: Yes, I'm taking him out for dinner tonight in lieu of—

President Kennedy: We'll just send you to Huntsville—

McNamara: We could have limited [*unclear*]—

President Kennedy: —dinner Wednesday or is that Albert?

Bundy: Don't know myself how high—

McNamara: The surgeon general sent me [*unclear*]. [*Laughter.*] I don't know.

Bundy: I think they would relax to just have this dinner without Thorneycroft or even give up the dinner; that would be great!

Mixed exchange amidst continued laughter. Someone says, "Thorneycroft can come late."

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67. David Ormsby-Gore was the British ambassador to the United States.

McNamara: I said we would talk to him tonight. Just say we can be back here by nine tomorrow night, and leave with you [*unclear*] an hour . . .

President Kennedy: An hour isn't . . . it seems to me you can cut it an hour short, we've been through that so much.

McNamara: I haven't—

President Kennedy: But he—

McNamara: And he hasn't either.

President Kennedy: So it would be . . .

McNamara: It's probably desirable to do it. I'll talk to him and see what his preferences are . . .

Bundy: I do think the dinner is a trivial matter.

President Kennedy: Who did you get, some congressmen and senators?

Bundy: No, just Thorneycroft and his party.

President Kennedy: Is his party all coming with us?

McNamara: No, only two or three.

President Kennedy: These are—Is [*unclear*] coming with us?

Bundy: I don't know, Mr. President. You've got a lot of problems. [*chuckling*] I wouldn't try to manage that dinner. Nobody else can.

President Kennedy: [*Unclear*] give my speech . . . Is Chip [Charles] Bohlen [*unclear*] is much more familiar with our whole scene than Tom Finletter would be but perhaps Tom would—[68]

McNamara: Finletter, . . . I think it is a forum where he'd do it and he has asked if Paul can come over to acquaint him with it so that he had [*unclear*]. [*Garbled exchange.*]

Nitze: Well, we've considered it to be the natural thing that the U.S. would put this forward.

President Kennedy: I mean, aren't the British and the French [*unclear*]?

Hillenbrand: We'll put it forward as our view, and then the British, French, and Germans would all support that.

President Kennedy: [*shuffles papers while talking*] . . . after the presentation of the four-power military set group proposal.

Nitze: NATO cost us a little jealousy in the Four Power, in the Ambassadorial Group. [*Laughter.*]

President Kennedy: All right.

McNamara: Mr. President, Lem[nitzer] and I met with the Senate committee this morning and this afternoon. I don't believe we'll have any

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68. In October Bohlen is expected to leave for Europe to replace General James Gavin as U.S. ambassador to France.

problem in putting a resolution through the Senate. Senator [Richard] Russell has planned to do that very promptly. His [*unclear*], as a matter of fact, was talking this afternoon and I believe it was unanimous.[69]

Rusk: I'll [*unclear*].

McNamara: We're scheduled to go before the House . . .

President Kennedy: So would they get that, including particularly Khrushchev's conversation with [Secretary of the Interior Stewart] Udall about America [*unclear*] divided.[70]

McNamara: I think it'd be extremely helpful. We'd go before the House on Thursday; we'll have more trouble there. The process is becoming a real controversy.

Lemnitzer: The more individual opinions in the House, with 37 members, everyone has got some particular angle to follow. . . .

President Kennedy: They can all vote for it.

McNamara: I'm sure they will. I'm sure they will.

Nitze: I think so.

President Kennedy: I would like to get, you know, this statement [*unclear*] passed to them about the backlog in foreign aid; I'd like to get what they at the Defense Department . . . if you did the comparable statistics, you know . . . he's got this thing where he just would [*unclear*].

McNamara: Yes there is roughly 2 billion dollars of other than fiscal '63 [*unclear*]. Now he adds fiscal '63, whatever he's thinking of a billion-two, perhaps, to the two billion, so he probably comes up with three billion two or three billion four.

President Kennedy: But, I mean, if you took your total, I'm talking about the total Defense Department . . . what is your budget?

McNamara: Oh, I can't tell you that . . .

President Kennedy: Seventy or 80 billion?

McNamara: Oh, I can't answer the question, Mr. President.

President Kennedy: Mac, [*unclear*]?

Bundy: Can I [*unclear*] the problem?

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69. President Kennedy had asked Congress for standby authority to call up 150,000 reservists for one year and to extend active duty tours without declaring a state of emergency. On 24 September, the House of Representatives granted him that power.

70. On 29 August, Secretary Udall arrived in the Soviet Union for an 11-day visit to see hydroelectric projects. On 6 September, Udall met for two hours with Khrushchev. During their conversation, Khrushchev raised the subject of Berlin and informed Udall bluntly that the Soviets would not allow Western troops to remain in Berlin and that the United States and its allies would not dare to go to war over this. At one point, Khrushchev told Udall that Kennedy was not in a position to reach an agreement over Berlin because he lacked support in Congress (see *FRUS*, 15: 308–10).

President Kennedy: Yeah, yeah. But in other words . . . [*Garbled exchange.*]

McNamara: . . . in the Defense Department. We have it for so many years back [*unclear*].

Bundy: We might get Charlie Hitch to do something.[71]

McNamara: Oh, yes, it's all available, and we'll get out a quarterly report on it.

Meeting breaks up. Voices, milling around, slamming doors, laughter. Multiple conversations taking place. The following statements can be heard.

Bundy: Lifetime obligation to [*unclear*].

Lemnitzer: [*Unclear*] back here, but I'd like to set it up under you.

President Kennedy: Would you set it up and send me a cable?

Lemnitzer: [*Unclear*] all I can get, I will. I'll get it to you on [*unclear*] 11th.

President Kennedy: That's fine.

Lemnitzer: Right.

Unidentified: [*Unclear*] unless he's coming back here. The President . . .

Nitze: Are you going back to the building or not?

Lemnitzer: Yes, I am, Paul.

Nitze: Could you take my . . . this with you?

Lemnitzer: Well, I don't want to lose it.

Nitze: Well, look, I see [*unclear*]. I'll . . . let me take it home and put it in my safe.

Unidentified: So you're going right to your office [*unclear*].

Nitze: Yeah, but probably not to the Pentagon.

Lemnitzer: I've decided to be there [*unclear*].

Nitze: I can just put it in my safe.

Lemnitzer: OK. All right. [*Unclear.*] See you later.

Nitze: Yeah.

Bundy: Mr. President, have you got a minute?

The President goes out, leaving the machine on.

On 13 September, the Ambassadorial Group met to discuss the paper further. The group made only minor revisions, as Rusk persuaded the

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71. Charles Hitch was assistant secretary of defense for budgetary affairs. McNamara admired Hitch, the former head of the economics division at RAND, for his efficiency and innovation. Hitch devised the Planning-Programming-Budgeting System (PPBS), which centralized planning in the Office of the Secretary of Defense and reduced the independence of the service secretaries.

allies that NATO acceptance of the preferred sequence would demonstrate to the Soviets that any threatening move in Berlin would meet with unified Western resistance.

Following the Berlin meeting, the President went for his evening swim. Then it was time to return to the Executive Mansion.

Thursday, September 13, 1962

The President arrived in the Oval Office at 9:40 A.M., after breakfast with the Democratic legislative leadership. It was his first full day in the White House since Monday, September 10. Early Tuesday Kennedy had flown to Huntsville, Alabama, for an intensive two-day tour of the heartland of the U.S. space program, where he received a series of briefings on the status of his goal to put a man on the moon. By the time of his return on Wednesday night, he had visited the Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville; Cape Canaveral in Florida; the NASA facility in Houston, Texas; and the McDonnell Douglas plant in St. Louis, which had built the Mercury capsules and was now working on the Gemini program.

Kennedy had a press conference scheduled for Thursday evening, and most of the morning was spent preparing. After signing a bill extending federal protection to the Point Reyes seashore in northern California, Kennedy met for a few minutes alone with Secretary of State Dean Rusk before heading into a longer meeting with Rusk and a group of key advisers to review what might be discussed at the press conference. While Kennedy was on tour, the Soviets had issued a strong response to the President's September 4 statement on Cuba and the administration's announced intention to call up 150,000 Reserves. The Soviet Union raised the alert status of its forces and warned that it would protect Cuban sovereignty. President Kennedy had every reason to expect questions about this in the evening.

Walter Heller then came into the Oval Office for about half an hour, presumably to help with any domestic economic questions. Finally, before going to a luncheon in honor of U Thant, the acting secretary-general of the United Nations, the President welcomed the members of the U.S. delegation to the 17th U.N. General Assembly. Senator Albert Gore of Tennessee, who had been named to the delegation, brought along his daughter, Nancy, and his son Al, a future vice president.

After lunch, just before dropping in on a group of Jewish leaders meet-