

S/O:GER:Nejins:dma:clj
(Drafting Office and Officer)

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

EXCERPT

DATE: Tues., Nov. 21, 1961
11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
President's Office
Same as last night's meeting

SUBJECT: Private Conversations between the President
and Chancellor Adenauer

PARTICIPANTS: GERMANY

UNITED STATES

Chancellor Adenauer
Mr. Weber (interpreter)

President Kennedy
Mrs. Lejins (interpreter)

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The Chancellor opened the conversation indicating that he felt the most important thing about the agreements to be reached at the present time was that they should be as flexible as possible.

The President agreed. He felt that the question of access to Berlin is the key issue and this matter should be worked out in as much detail as possible. He felt that the experience of the Federal Republic and the people of Berlin should be helpful in working out all the necessary details on this question prior to the meeting of the Foreign Ministers in Paris.

The Chancellor made the statement that the people of Berlin had grown overly sensitive, owing to the tense situation under which they had been living for so long. If the final results of negotiations with the Soviets made for improved living conditions for the people of Berlin, along with maintenance of their freedom, then the U.S. need not fear any difficulties from the German side.

The President then indicated that there was one matter which he would like to discuss with the Chancellor. He made reference to an article by Walter Lippman in this morning's paper and asked whether the Chancellor had, per chance, read it. The article stated that the German people have come to realize by now that it has become impossible for the West to gain the reunification of Germany in the face of Soviet opposition. The Soviet Union would always attempt to maintain East Germany as a separate entity. This

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testing, the tests would most likely begin in March and would run for several months. All in all we would not contemplate exploding more than 10 megatons altogether as opposed to the more than 100 megatons the Soviets had exploded.

The Chancellor stated that he was convinced that the Soviets had continued their nuclear tests all during the period of supposed cessation. He felt it indispensable that the US resume and continue to test also or else lag behind the Soviets in nuclear achievements.

The President agreed that it was quite certain that the Soviets had continued large-scale laboratory tests all the while, since those were easy for the Soviet Union to conduct. Then he stated, however, that there was a point beyond which one did not need to go. There was no point in blowing up a country twice if you can blow it up once. The US at this stage was interested in smaller scale testing, for instance, in order to test the effect of nuclear explosions on radar and the like.

The Chancellor agreed that this was absolutely necessary and an actual must for the US. He had no doubt about that.

The President reiterated his hope to be able to use Christmas Island.

The Chancellor was a bit doubtful, since he realized that Mr. Macmillan would like to stay out of trouble at home.

The President understood Macmillan's position, especially in view of the Labor Party's stand. He then inquired about the Chancellor's opinion on the desirability of Western Germany continuing to adhere to the declaration that the Federal Republic renounce experimenting with nuclear, biological and chemical weapons--how did the Chancellor feel about this?

The Chancellor pointed out that he was the one who had made this declaration. He had done so at a conference in London, at which time he had said that Germany renounced the production of ABC weapons. The occasion had been the establishment of the Western European Union. After he had made this statement, Mr. Dulles had come up to him and said that this declaration was of course valid only as long as circumstances remain unchanged. Nevertheless, the Chancellor, said, Germany had not undertaken anything in this respect as yet.

The President expressed the opinion that as long as the NATO organization existed as presently constituted, and as long as the US had its weapons stationed in Western Germany with agreement on how and when these were to be used in the defense of Europe and West Germany, he felt that it was highly

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desirable for conditions to continue as stated in the Chancellor's declaration. He feared that if Western Germany were to begin nuclear experimentation, the danger of war would sharply increase without providing additional security compared to what we have at present.

The Chancellor stated that Germany was not considering any nuclear experimentation.

The President then made reference to a recent speech of his in Ottawa, in which he had spoken about the US turning over Polaris submarines to NATO. The purpose of this had been to lessen the feeling which he felt existed in Europe that each individual NATO country ought to begin to develop its own nuclear capacity. The President wanted to know the Chancellor's opinion on whether this proposal had been helpful in easing the pressure existing in Europe for the development of unilateral nuclear capacities.

The Chancellor stated that he was convinced that it had achieved its purpose, but there was one question he wished to discuss with the President. It was a purely military one, namely: can the President of the US be reached at any time? This was a point made by General Heusinger, who had indicated how very decisive even one hour could be in nuclear warfare. This concern had resulted in the proposal made by General Norstad to the Eisenhower Administration, but it had not been taken up by the Eisenhower Administration any more. This was, in other words, a purely military concern which the Chancellor was in no position to judge. But he felt that he had to rely on the judgement of his military experts and their evaluation of possible developments along these lines.

The President inquired what proposal the Chancellor had reference to.

The Chancellor answered, the NATO Fire Brigade.

The President then indicated that 50% of SAC is even now on 15 minute alert and some of SAC is in the air 24 hours a day. When he is in the White House, the President can be reached at all times, when he leaves the White House there is two-way radio connection every two minutes, and there is two-way connection from the air. The President's various residences have a direct telephone line to the White House and to SAC. The requirements of our own national defense, the President stated, do not permit him to be further than two minutes away at any time. The President then stated that he does not know what the telephone connection between Bonn and Washington is. In theory at least, there is direct telephone between London and Washington and Paris and Washington. If no such connection exists with Bonn, it would be

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well if such were established, so that communication can be established within seconds.

(The next few minutes of transcript stricken at President's request.)

The Chancellor then told about an interesting case which had come to his attention very recently in Germany. Before one of the high courts of Germany a case is pending now, involving a Russian who killed a leading Ukrainian refugee in Germany by order of the Soviets. He used an entirely new method of killing the man, so that at first it was believed the victim had succumbed to a heart attack. No weapon had been used. After the murder the Russian had returned to the Soviet Union and had received a high decoration for his deed. Later he became fearful of his life and had returned to Germany, given himself up to the police, and was now in the hands of the court. The Chancellor cited this example in order to prove his theory that the Soviets were capable of any crime and he warned the President to be extremely careful. The President asked whether anyone had any idea how the man was killed. By poison?

The Chancellor stated that no one seemed to know how the deed was done. All he knew was that the murderer met the victim, a former President of the Ukraine, on the steps or in the hallway of a building. He did something, perhaps on the order of an injection, and the man collapsed and immediately died. None of the doctors had been able to establish what happened.

The President inquired whether the matter had received much publicity. The Chancellor replied only during the past two or three days. The President then stated that he might ask Allen Dulles for a report on the case. Then he asked whether the Chancellor was not afraid of a Soviet attempt on his life.

The Chancellor smiled and said that he was not as important as the President of the US. But he agreed, the Soviets would no doubt be happy to do away with him. As a matter of fact, a number of attempts had been made on his life, which had been frustrated, and they had not been given much publicity. However, the Chancellor felt, if someone really wanted to kill someone, they would find a way of succeeding. He then smilingly continued that Khrushchev had recently sent him a dozen bottles of Soviet champagne, which had all been poured out. The President then made the remark that Khrushchev had told him that Russia had now discovered a way of making vodka out of natural gas. The Chancellor replied that Khrushchev preferred to drink brandy.

In a more serious vein, the President then pointed out that the extraordinary thing about Khrushchev is his compulsion to feel that everything he has is better than everybody else's. No matter what one tells him, he

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