

The
PRESIDENTIAL
RECORDINGS

JOHN F. KENNEDY

➔➔➔➔ *THE GREAT CRISES, VOLUME ONE* ➔➔➔➔

JULY 30–AUGUST 1962

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Monday, July 30, 1962

The President awoke this morning at the Kennedy home in Hyannis Port, Massachusetts. Boarding Air Force One at a little after 9:00 A.M., he flew to Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland, where Marine One, the presidential helicopter, was waiting to ferry him to the White House. President Kennedy entered the White House from the South Lawn at 10:25 A.M.

He went straight to work. Turning left in the hall that bisects the ground floor, President Kennedy walked through a short lobby to the Colonnade connecting, along the fabled Rose Garden, the Executive Mansion to the President's working office, the West Wing. On the right of the Colonnade, he passed the swimming pool, the french doors of the Cabinet Room, and then those belonging to the office of Evelyn Lincoln, his secretary. Walking through Lincoln's office, or perhaps opening his own Rose Garden door, he entered the Oval Office.

The taping system had been installed over the weekend. The President had had a switch placed under his desk in the Oval Office and another under the portion of the long conference table nearest his chair in the Cabinet Room.

Kenneth O'Donnell, the President's appointments secretary, had not scheduled any meetings for the first 90 minutes of this otherwise busy day. The President had time to acquaint himself with the new taping system before catching up on his mail and telephone calls.

11:52 A.M.—12:20 P.M.

[W]e may very well want them [the Brazilian military] to take over at the end of the year, if they can.

Meeting on Brazil¹

President Kennedy used his taping system for the first time to capture his conversation with the U.S. ambassador to Brazil, Lincoln Gordon.² Gordon was in Washington to discuss the most recent political crisis in Brazil.³ The largest country in South America, Brazil was considered by U.S. officials as a major test of the Alliance for Progress, the centerpiece of the Kennedy's administration's efforts to encourage economic development and political stability in Latin America.

In Brazil the Alliance for Progress took the form of a \$274 million joint U.S.-Brazilian development project, for which the United States pledged \$131 million in grants and loans to develop the drought-stricken and impoverished northeast region.⁴ Kennedy had taken a personal interest in Brazil, especially the activities of João "Jango" Goulart, Brazil's charismatic president. Goulart was a puzzle to Washington. Since coming to power in August 1961, Goulart had adopted a self-described "independent foreign policy" that involved maintaining good relations with Fidel Castro. At the January OAS foreign ministers' meeting at Punta del Este, the Brazilian foreign minister Francisco San Taigo

1. With President Kennedy, McGeorge Bundy, Richard Goodwin, and Lincoln Gordon. Tape 1, John F. Kennedy Library, President's Office Files, Presidential Recordings Collection.

2. Lincoln Gordon was ambassador to Brazil, August 1961 to January 1966. An economist at Harvard and Oxford before and after World War II, Gordon helped develop the Marshall Plan, advised NATO in the 1950s, and soon after the 1960 election was appointed a member of a Latin American Task Force organized by president-elect Kennedy. After playing a prominent role in the organization of the administration's Alliance for Progress, announced to the world in a White House speech by President Kennedy to the Latin American diplomatic corps on 13 March 1961, Gordon was appointed ambassador to Brazil. From January 1966 to January 1967, Gordon served as assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs, resigning that post to become president of John Hopkins University.

3. Gordon was in Washington from 26 July through 1 August. William H. Brubeck, Memorandum for Mr. McGeorge Bundy, 25 July 1962, "Brazil" folder, National Security Files, Box 13, John F. Kennedy Library.

4. "Northeast Agreement," Cable to Brazilian Government, 9 April 1962, "Brazil" folder, National Security Files, Box 12A, John F. Kennedy Library.

Dantas had led the opposition to sanctions against Cuba. Besides the confrontation over foreign policy, relations with Goulart were strained because of a series of high-profile expropriations of U.S.-owned Brazilian subsidiaries. Yet when Goulart visited the United States in April 1962 he had made a good impression on President Kennedy. The Brazilian president had two private sessions with Kennedy, gave a speech to a joint session of Congress, and visited New York, Chicago, and the North American Air Defense Command in Colorado. A high point of the tour was Goulart's offer to buy out foreign-owned public utility companies on negotiated terms, a reference to the dispute with U.S. giant IT&T, whose telephone company had been taken over by the state of Rio Grande do Sul. Both leaders appeared pleased with the visit and President Kennedy promised to go to Brazil in July or August.

Kennedy never made that visit. By the summer of 1962, Brazil was in the grip of a constitutional crisis born of the strange circumstances surrounding Goulart's rise to the presidency. In 1960, Goulart, a Labor Party leader, had been elected to the vice presidency. Under the Brazilian constitution of 1946, separate elections were held for presidents and vice presidents. The elected president, Jânio Quadros, stunned the nation a year later by resigning in what appears in retrospect to have been a monumentally unsuccessful play for more power. Assuming that the military would never support Goulart, who would succeed to the presidency if Quadros's resignation were accepted, the president expected the Brazilian Congress to agree to a broad delegation of powers as a way of persuading him to revoke his resignation. Instead the resignation was accepted at face value with Goulart the beneficiary.

As Quadros had predicted, the leadership of the Brazilian military was not happy, and a civil war was averted only by a congressional compromise that limited presidential powers even further. The Brazilian constitution was amended to transform the government into more of a parliamentary regime, modeled after the West German constitution. A disciple of the legendary Brazilian leader Getúlio Vargas, Goulart dreamed of revoking this parliamentary democracy to return to the strong presidential state of the 1930s and 1940s. Vowing to recapture those powers, Goulart once quipped to Gordon, "I do not intend to be the Queen of England."⁵ By the terms of the new constitution, a plebiscite on restoring presidential powers was to

5. Timothy Naftali Interview with Ambassador Lincoln Gordon, 3 August 2000.

be held in 1965 just before the next presidential election. Goulart did not wish to wait that long.

The U.S. government watched warily in June 1962 as Goulart launched what the U.S. diplomats thought was an attack on the Brazilian parliamentary system in June 1962. Congressional elections were scheduled for October, and the constitution provided that anyone in public executive office who wanted to run for congress had to resign his office four months before election day. Goulart used the fact that the Brazilian cabinet had to resign to maneuver the congress into advancing the date of the referendum on presidential powers. He also forced out a center-right prime minister in favor of a little-known left-leaning candidate, Francisco Brochado da Rocha. Brochado da Rocha was no stranger to the U.S. Embassy. As secretary of justice in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, he had played a very active role in the IT&T telephone expropriation, which despite Goulart's promises in April had not come any closer to resolution.

Goulart's political gambit worried Washington and President Kennedy's visit was postponed.⁶ Brazilians friendly to the United States warned that the political crisis of July was a "Garincha" play, named after a celebrated Brazilian soccer player "whose style is to take great risks in the hopes of great gains."⁷ This manufactured crisis would allow Goulart to make a successful bid for dictatorial powers. Brochado was a close associate of Leonel de Moura Brizola, the governor of Rio Grande do Sul, who was considered to be a man of the far Left. Brizola was also Goulart's brother-in-law. Brizola and the federal foreign minister Dantas were considered by some Americans as dangerous influences on the Brazilian president. The rise of Brochado was just the latest in a series of developments that portended an anti-U.S. turn by Goulart. That summer the Congress had passed a remission of profits bill which taxed foreign subsidiaries heavily and seemed to discourage any further direct investment by the

6. "Background on Current Situation in Brazil," attached to State Department memorandum for McGeorge Bundy, 28 July 1962, John F. Kennedy Library. Written on the top of the document is the note, "Send to O'Donnell Mon. A.M." For the CIA's views see two reports that predated the Goulart visit to Washington: "Brazilian President João Goulart," Office of Current Intelligence, CIA, 30 March 1962, and "The Situation in Brazil," Office of Current Intelligence, CIA, 2 April 1962, "Brazil" folder, National Security Files, Box 13, John F. Kennedy Library.

7. Philip Raine, counselor of embassy for political affairs, U.S. Embassy, Brasília to State, "Goulart Plan to Change Parliamentary System in Brazil," 20 July 1962, "Brazil" folder, National Security Files, Box 13, John F. Kennedy Library.

United States. In July Gordon spoke by telephone with President Kennedy to outline his concerns and the White House asked for more detailed information about the political situation in Brazil.⁸

Even before Gordon's return to the United States, the Kennedy administration decided to act. The CIA station in Brazil, with the support of Ambassador Gordon, drew up a plan to influence the congressional elections, scheduled for October 7.⁹ It was feared that the Left, which controlled between 80 and 100 seats in the 326-seat legislature, would make significant gains. The policymaking body for covert action in the Kennedy years, the Special Group (Augmented) of the National Security Council,¹⁰ apparently approved the plan by late July, though the details, including the amount of covert funding to be funneled into the election, had still to be worked out.¹¹ This would occur while Gordon was in Washington.

Among the factors in this political crisis, the Brazilian military was known to be friendly to the United States. Any effort by the Brazilian army, the strongest and most politically significant of the services, to oust Goulart would require a response from Washington. The Kennedy administration had an inconsistent policy toward military coups in Latin America. In April the United States had recognized the government of José María Guido of Argentina, a civilian who had been installed by the Argentine military. Yet three months later, Kennedy had made a public stand against the new military junta in Peru, breaking diplomatic relations with Lima when its constitutionally elected president was overthrown. The inconsistency of the Kennedy administration's approach reflected a deep ambivalence about the nature of the threat to U.S. interests in the hemisphere. Washington's dilemma was how to navigate between a desire to neutralize Castroist or Communist influence in Latin America while remaining true to its preference for constitutional liberalism in the Americas. Already dissident members of the Brazilian military were sending feelers out to the United States to determine whether a Brazilian coup would be accepted like the coup in Argentina or denounced like the junta in Peru.¹²

8. Naftali Interview with Gordon, 3 August 2000.

9. Ibid.

10. The Special Group (Augmented) comprised the under secretary of state, U. Alexis Johnson; the attorney general, Robert Kennedy; the deputy secretary of defense, Roswell Gilpatric; the director of central intelligence, John McCone; and the special assistant to the President for national security affairs, McGeorge Bundy.

11. As it appears from the transcript of this July 30 conversation.

12. Sometime in the late spring, Gordon had a meeting with Admiral Sylvio Heck, a former

Kennedy started taping as Ambassador Gordon described his meeting on July 23 with President Goulart.

Lincoln Gordon: . . . [unclear] we're still on very good terms personally, which is a good thing and I think he's very candid. We had a long talk on Monday about his political organization.¹³ I said I would have to explain to various people, including you, how it is that his new foreign minister¹⁴ says that the Alliance for Progress is a wonderful thing, but his political party's strategy is being planned now by his brother-in-law, [Leonel] Brizola,¹⁵ a young, very far left-wing Labor Party fellow; and [Francisco] San Tiago Dantas, who's moved far to the left since you saw him, with anti-Americanism and anti-Alliance for Progress as a major plank in their platform—

President Kennedy: Did they announce it as anti? Or is this just by indirection?

Gordon: [Unclear] Brizola's speeches essentially are very bad. One after another on television . . . lots of money. It started as being just anti-American business. Now it's become anti-American government on the theory that you are in the pocket of American business. I haven't yet been attacked personally, but I expect that one of these days. But it's sure. [They said things like:] The United States is draining the country; American business is draining the country. We are responsible for all the delays in Brazilian development. They're an economic colony of the United States. We are responsible for infant mortality, every damn thing under the sun." Such . . . completely irrational and highly emotional [unclear].

Now Goulart's answer to this was that that left-wing group in the Labor Party is 30 percent of the party:¹⁶ "I really sympathize with the 70

minister of the navy who had opposed the Goulart succession in 1961. Heck had requested the meeting to ask whether the United States would support the military overthrow of Goulart. Gordon recalled that he was not authorized to give a response. Washington only expected an assessment of the seriousness of Heck and his group. The embassy's political experts doubted Heck could organize a successful coup (Naftali Interview with Gordon, 3 August 2000).

13. Monday, 23 July 1962. Highlights of that talk were cabled to the State Department, which passed the report along to McGeorge Bundy at the White House. See Gordon to SecState, 24 July 1962, in "Brazil" folder, National Security Files, Box 13, John F. Kennedy Library. There is a check by "Bundy-P" indicating perhaps this was shown to the President.

14. The new foreign minister Afonso Arinos, whom Gordon met on 21 July, promised that he would abandon the term *independent foreign policy* (Gordon to SecState, 24 July 1962, "Brazil" folder, National Security Files, Box 13, John F. Kennedy Library).

15. Leonel Brizola, Goulart's brother-in-law and governor of Rio Grande do Sul.

16. The left-wing group was known as the Compact Group in the Brazilian Labor Party (PTB).

percent, which is very much more moderate, that is my personal position; but I stand at the moment between these two because the conservatives in the country are all against me and I need this left wing as my shock forces against the parliament[ary] majority.”¹⁷

That is Goulart’s position up to election time. I don’t know what the hell he’d do if he got more power. He wants more power desperately. In this hour and a half, he was like a Victrola record: he came back twenty times to say that the [parliamentary] regime is no good. It’s fallen [unclear]. I don’t have any equal power to get at the [unclear].

President Kennedy: I suppose that’s true, isn’t it? He doesn’t have anything to do with [a] party.

Gordon: He has a helluva lot of influence.

President Kennedy: Yes.

Gordon: If he wanted to work with a cabinet, it would work. But he doesn’t want to work that way, I don’t think. This is clear, this is distinctive. [Unclear.]

President Kennedy: Do you think he knows what he wants himself? Or is it just, sort of, he floats with the waves? Or has he really got an objective, a long-range objective?

Gordon: I don’t think he has any long-range objectives. No, I think, he wants more power.

President Kennedy: Is Salasman—is he the finance minister?¹⁸

Gordon: He accepted. He accepted—

President Kennedy: Well, [will] he come up here to see us at all?

Gordon: I don’t know.

President Kennedy: Have we got any new financial deals that we’re supposed to . . .

Gordon: We have been discussing this in the last couple of days. I saw Salles on Sunday, while he was still trying to make up his mind—¹⁹

President Kennedy: Did you tell him all these things that you have said to me?

17. Gordon is repeating here the gist of his memorandum on his meeting with Goulart that he cabled on 24 July 1962. “On own political orientation Goulart placed himself in middle between left-wing compact group and moderate right-wing, whose present strength he appraised as 30 to 70 [percent]. Said large moderate parties irreconcilable [sic] opposed to him, supported by conservative press and business interests, and he intended to fight them. PTB compact group were his shock forces in this fight. Sees need for non-Communist but radical new political force for drastic social changes. . . .”

18. Kennedy means Walter Moreira Salles, the former Brazilian ambassador to the United States who was known to be pro-United States.

19. Sunday, 22 July 1962.

Gordon: Oh, indeed, oh yes. There is no problem about where he stands. He stands—

President Kennedy: Yes, but I mean the fact that we can't—you know, they send up these fellows to see us who are very reasonable and of course we go ahead with them and then it just goes down the—

Gordon: Well, he asked—

President Kennedy: —drain.

Gordon: Well, he said he was making a condition of his acceptance, a very vigorous anti-inflationary program. And he said that, "if I really do that and get the condition accepted, do you think that there would be any chance of American support?" And I said, "In light of what happened in the last two months, I think he [President Kennedy] would appreciate it; but this time there really must be some performance." And he said, "A promise is just—isn't going to convince anybody."

My own feeling is that what we should do is probably go easy on stabilization assistance and probably do nothing to stall it off. But to push on certain types of projects, which could be advertised, which could be made into concrete manifestations of the Alliance for Progress.

The only trouble with stabilization assistance, you know, [is] we get no credit for it—

President Kennedy: That's right.

Gordon: —except with a handful of bankers and economists—

President Kennedy: That's right. I agree I think we ought to forget that.

Gordon: —and—

President Kennedy: Have we got any stabilization assistance still to go?

Gordon: We've got left over about 90 million dollars from the package negotiated here.

President Kennedy: And how much have we given them in the last 12 months?

Gordon: Well, we've released—the whole thing was 328. So, we've released—what's the difference of that?

President Kennedy: Two hundred million. Just vanished isn't it?

Gordon: That's right. Absolutely. And at the moment either balance of payments support or budgetary support is like just pouring water into a sieve. I mean they've got more or less—

President Kennedy: [Unclear] have we just frozen it? I mean are we not going to give it now? Should we take any steps to prevent any more from running—

Gordon: Oh yes, oh sure. Just before the president came in April, we

released 30 million roughly and we said that the rest, the remaining 90, would depend on performance or the performances of factories, and so on.²⁰ It's been highly negative.

One of the projects, [in] the northeast, for example, I think we should push ahead. There are certain governors: Governor Rio Grande del Norte . . . I don't think he saw you, Aluisio Alves, but he saw everybody else in town. He was up here about three weeks ago. This is a hell of a good fellow. . . .

President Kennedy: This is Vicente—this not Rio, is it?

Gordon: Rio Grande del Norte.

President Kennedy: This is Rio.

Gordon: It is a little state in the northeast.

President Kennedy: Oh, I see. No, I didn't see him.

Gordon: This is a little state in the northeast. This is a 40-year-old fellow, energetic as can be, not a demagogue, honest. He's—

President Kennedy: How strong are the Communists there?

Gordon: As such, the party is weak.

President Kennedy: But it is just they've got them out—

Gordon: [Unclear] we like.

President Kennedy: But now they've just taken over a lot of the Left?

Gordon: They have taken over a lot of the Left. And they are in some key spots and they have been organizing . . .

President Kennedy: Goulart gives them shelter?

Gordon: He gives them shelter both in the government and in the trade unions.

Richard Goodwin: And they haven't—

Gordon: [Unclear] on the trade unions guise at the moment, but perhaps even more.

Goodwin: And they're allied with the nationalists in a lot of key areas, who are not Communists themselves but who have mutual objectives at this point in time.

President Kennedy: I just read some of the stuff in the *Washington Post* this morning with these visiting students up there—

Goodwin: Yeah.

President Kennedy: —about . . . the reason was . . . in other words . . .

Gordon: Well, there's [mumbles].

President Kennedy: What?

Gordon: There is a visiting student group here.

20. President João Goulart visited the United States 3 to 7 April 1962.

Goodwin: That's the one.

Gordon: Is that the one? [*Mumbled agreement.*] I didn't see the *Post* story. They're making a tour of the White House tomorrow morning between 9:15 and 9:50. And I would hope very much that you would be willing to give them five minutes just to shake [hands]—

President Kennedy: Who are they?

Gordon: They are seventy students from four different states.²¹ They were recruited by an extremely energetic American lady, Mildred Sage, a Bostonian, a girl who'd been married to an American businessman or some fellow. She raised 90 percent of the money from mostly the American business community down there, the other 10 percent came from the State Department. They have been up at Harvard for two weeks. They run all the way from strongly democratic, pro-American to almost Communist, highly nationalist but anti-American. Sage got them all together.

I was with them at lunchtime on Saturday talking about [*unclear*] for an hour or so, asked them how things went at Harvard. They said, "Very well. We learned a lot, and we were not being propagandized."

I think it's good. I think we made some headway with them. They're going to meet with Ted [*Moscoso*] this afternoon for an hour and a half and with regional aid people. They are meeting with HEW this morning and meeting with the State Department tomorrow afternoon. And then decided we'd [*unclear*] at two [*P.M.*]. But I think if you could step out into the Rose Garden . . .

President Kennedy: OK. If you can arrange that.

Tell me, what is their complaint about American business. Is there any legitimate complaints?

Gordon: No. Not significant. The myth has developed that the remissions of profits are draining the Brazilian economy. This is almost pure myth.²² There is Brazilian documentation as well as our own.

President Kennedy: How much do we take out a year?

Gordon: We take out officially something like 40 million dollars and

21. This group of 76 Brazilian university student leaders was sponsored by the Inter-American University Association of São Paulo.

22. The Joint Committee of the Brazilian Congress on the profits remittance bill reported that between 1954 and 1961 the net inflow of private direct investment was \$721 million as compared with an outflow of profits and dividends of \$269 million (Memorandum for the National Security Council Executive Committee, Meeting of 11 December 1962, 10:00 A.M., "Proposed Speaking Paper," Robert F. Kennedy Confidential File, Box 7, Cuban Crisis 1962, Executive Committee, NSC-62, John F. Kennedy Library).

there may be disguised profits, with a maximum of another 20. The total of 60 is not just American, but all foreign investors. We have perhaps 60 percent of it.

President Kennedy: So, in other words, we are taking out about 30 million dollars a year?

Gordon: [*Unclear*] No, it's actually—

President Kennedy: And actually we have been putting in?

Gordon: It's actually peanuts, you see.

President Kennedy: And we have been putting in?

Goodwin: Even private investment is putting in that much.

Gordon: Now, they have—somebody handed me this morning, these figures.

President Kennedy: Well, what happens when those figures are pointed out? Nobody points them out?

Gordon: Yes, people point them out—

President Kennedy: You mean, private investors are putting in almost that much; in addition we are putting it in aid and all these other things, and in addition we are buying their coffee.

Gordon: Many of these people either don't believe the figures or they haven't been pointed out sufficiently or effectively. This is something we're going to try to take care of in briefings during this week, with—to tackle this one head on [*unclear*].

President Kennedy: With who—briefing with who?

Gordon: Well, this would be with AID and State.

President Kennedy: But I mean, can't we get everybody—?

Gordon: With these students, I mean, these students—

President Kennedy: Oh, yeah, but hell they're just—

Gordon: I know.

President Kennedy: —they're just a fraction. But I mean is there anybody down there that can bother to point out these figures?

Gordon: Well—

President Kennedy: [*What*] the United States has given in aid in the last two years; the profits that have been taken out are so much; the amount of purchases from the United States . . .

Gordon: This was done extremely effectively by the reporter for the Joint Senate and House Brazilian Committee on this remissions of profits bill and they [*unclear*]. But these fellows will say, "Oh well, you know, he's a tool of the trusts. He's a reactionary. He's . . ." There is a senator from Rio Grande do Sul . . . Brizola and . . .

President Kennedy: What's Brizola's job now?

Gordon: He is still governor.²³ He will be governor until January. He is running for the Congress from Guanabara.²⁴

President Kennedy: Now, we've, of course, indicated that if they want to buy up [the American utility companies] . . . What percentage of American investment [located] there is [in] the [unclear interjection by Gordon] utilities?

Gordon: Not that [unclear].

President Kennedy: They haven't done anything about buying those up, have they?

Gordon: No, I talked with them about this last week when the new government got started on meetings [unclear] with the American Foreign Power group, [unclear] the biggest, who have a new proposition [unclear] discussing.

Goulart feels a strong personal commitment to you about this. And he says he is going to push it. And I think there is a chance that he can get this thing. All they did was to establish this commission, which is supposed to negotiate an effective treaty but they never really got it going. There's been little action on it, at least from [unclear] since the April talks. This is—

President Kennedy: Is there big discouragement in Brazil [among] all the moderates?

Gordon: Ah, they're not discouraged to the point of giving up. They're very unhappy. The way this political crisis was handled was extremely bad.

No, a fellow like Aluisio Alves wants to organize a strong center, a strong slightly left-of-center. And, I think, we ought to support this absolutely to the hilt.

Six seconds excised as classified information.

Gordon: We reviewed this at length just before I left. I think he's become more rather than less important. There was a little period when we were getting a bit complacent. We have passed through that. We can't afford to be complacent. I think we have to do more and I think we probably have to do more with a little bit less concern about possible wastage and control. The boys have a little bit of a GAO [General Accounting Office] philosophy. You know they want to be awful careful about making

23. Governor of Rio Grande do Sul, which is the southernmost state of Brazil, on the Brazilian-Uruguayan border.

24. Guanabara was a state in the southeast. In 1974 it was fused with the state of Rio de Janeiro.

sure that their money is rightly spent. Well, that's a good prejudice to have, but we've only got two months left.²⁵ We have this organization called IPES, for example, which is a progressive [unclear] organization which needs some financial help; it's got [unclear] support and I think we should help them.²⁶ We won't be able to get a detailed account of withdrawals and how every withdrawal in particular will be spent. I just don't think we can afford to take risks.

Unidentified: I agree with the substance . . .

Gordon: We've got—

Goodwin: I think the elections really could be a turning point. Linc is analogizing to the Italian elections of '48.²⁷

President Kennedy: I know. Well, how much are we going to put in?²⁸

Gordon: Oh, this is a matter of a few million dollars, say.

Seven seconds excised as classified information.

President Kennedy: That's a lot of money. Because, you know, after all, for a presidential campaign here you spend about 12. And our costs—so that I don't think—that's 8 million dollars, would be an awful lot of money in an election.²⁹

Gordon: That's right.

President Kennedy: [Unclear.]

Gordon: It's an incredibly complicated political scene—

President Kennedy: Well, now, is it really being spent now? Are you going ahead with it?³⁰

25. Until the October election.

26. The IPES was the Instituto de Pesquisas e Estudos Sociais. Established in late 1961 by a group of business and civic leaders to lobby on behalf of liberal democracy and private enterprise in Brazil. It became the principal channel through which U.S. money flowed into the Brazilian elections of 1962. Naftali Interview with Gordon, 3 August 2000; and Ruth Leacock, *Requiem for Revolution: The United States and Brazil* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1990), pp. 111–13.

27. Fear of a Communist victory in the 1948 Italian elections led to the first massive political covert action by the U.S. government. The brainchild of George Kennan at the State Department and Frank Wisner of the fledgling Central Intelligence Agency, this operation involved providing financial and strategic assistance to pro-Western personalities, primarily A. de Gasperi and other representatives of the Christian Democratic Party [see Evan Thomas, *The Very Best Men: Four Who Dared: The Early Years of the CIA* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), pp. 28–29]. Deemed a success, it apparently became the model for similar political action in other countries.

28. What is interesting here is that President Kennedy's question implies that this covert action has already been approved without his direct involvement.

29. In a published interview in March 1977, Lincoln Gordon estimated that the U.S. government spent \$5 million to influence the Brazilian elections of 1962 (see Leacock, *Requiem for Revolution*, p. 120 and p. 277, note 54).

30. Again, it seems that though the Special Group has apparently approved an operation without his knowledge, the President is not perturbed.

Thirty-nine seconds excised as classified information.

President Kennedy: Well, now there's nothing I can do about, with Goulart is there? There's nothing—

Gordon: Well, I think there is. This is the point of strategy in general, I think, is this. One thing I wanted to alert you to is the, is the possibility of military action. This is, this is quite possibly in the cards.

President Kennedy: Well, now let me ask—we have of course been very critical of Peru's military action—³¹

Gordon: [*Unclear*.]

President Kennedy: —which is entirely different. We might not be quite as—The military did a pretty good job a year ago.³² It all depends on the circumstances of the military action.

Gordon: I think, I think—

President Kennedy: In other words, we were against military action in the Dominican Republic. We have been reserved about the military after they arrested Prado, and so on.³³ But we are going to go back and recognize them next week, or this week; but the question really is, how we . . . what our attitude towards it would be.³⁴

Gordon: Well, I think that what we should do . . . This is a very delicate business and we have to protect ourselves very carefully about this. I don't think we want to try to encourage a coup.

What we really want to do with Goulart, I think, is two things: we want to make use of the fact that he does have a tremendous regard for you. And he is really very proud that this relationship with the U.S. [*unclear*] has been established. And there are certain things . . . I think we'll get this IT&T case settled and soon and finally [*unclear interjection by President Kennedy*]. We got your letter to Goulart. I talked with him again Monday. I think you'll get that fixed. I hope we can avoid other expropriations this time. I think we can make some headway on the utility thing. It's mostly negative, but I think we've got to use as much as we can.

The main thing is at the same time, to organize forces which are both political and military to, either to reduce his power . . . in an extreme case perhaps to push him out, if it comes to that. And this would depend on some overt action on his part. He's playing, he's quite prepared to [*unclear*].

31. The United States has not yet recognized the military junta in Lima, Peru, which took power 18 July 1962.

32. Kennedy is referring to the Brazilian military's role in easing the transition to Goulart after Jânio Quadros's surprise resignation in August 1961.

33. Manuel Prado y Ugarteche was the president of Peru until the 18 July coup.

34. Toward a military coup in Brazil.

Goodwin: Has he changed a lot of commanders, military commanders in the garrisons?

Gordon: He's changed a number and he's threatening to change others. How far he goes on those changes depends a little bit on the resistance of the military.

I think one of our important jobs is to strengthen the spine of the military. To make it clear, discreetly, that we are not necessarily hostile to any kind of military action whatsoever if it's clear that the reason for the military action is—

President Kennedy: Against the Left.

Gordon: —he's giving the damn country away to the—

President Kennedy: Communists.

Gordon: Exactly. And there is a lot of evidence that Goulart, willingly or unwillingly, has been [*unclear*] that.

A few weeks ago just after Dantas was defeated in Congress,³⁵ he [Goulart] had a specific plan, which he told Kubitschek.³⁶ Kubitschek told me this firsthand. A plan to nominate a cabinet of his own without a prime minister. He told the Congress that he wouldn't expect this Congress to ratify [it], but he hoped the next Congress would, which is going to be elected in October. And to call for a plebiscite now for a return to a presidential regime in October.

Kubitschek took this to thirty high military officers and they told him unanimously that this was obviously unconstitutional and if Goulart tries it, they would oppose him. He asked whether he could tell Goulart that. They all said yes, and some said, "Well, it would be better to sign our names to a statement." And he went back to Goulart and Goulart withdrew.

You see the kind of thing that's in his mind. This is . . . he's thinking actively about a kind of white coup, as they call it. And if the military are too frightened . . . if they feel that there is no support anywhere, inside or outside, especially outside—which means us—if they take action, then they . . . They were, I am told . . . I was unfortunately sick in bed the week before last, just gradually getting on my feet—

President Kennedy: Yeah.

Gordon: —this last week before I came up on Wednesday. I did man-

35. In June, the Brazilian Congress had refused to accept Francisco San Tiago Dantas as prime minister.

36. Former president Juscelino Kubitschek de Oliveira, arguably Brazil's most popular politician, could not succeed himself in 1960 but remained a strong future contender for the presidency.

age to see Goulart, and the new foreign minister and the prime minister Tuesday night, and Walter Moreira Salles on Sunday.

Eleven seconds excised as classified information.

Gordon: The military, I can see that they are very friendly to us: very anti-Communist, very suspicious of Goulart. And they expressed great dismay at our position on Peru.

Well, I can explain to them what the political circumstances are. I think it's important that we should make it clear, to these friendly people, the ones we really know are friendly—

President Kennedy: But by the—

Gordon: That the Peruvian case is not necessarily—

President Kennedy: Yeah. But by this week we'll be right back recognizing the Peruvian government.

Goodwin: Well, I think it—as long as they understand that a military action to save constitutionality—

President Kennedy: [*Grunts.*]

Goodwin: —is fine. Then I think that that's why we can't have the OAS meeting because this would really discourage the military.³⁷ If you start getting all these countries together and—

President Kennedy: Yeah.

Goodwin: —passing resolutions against—

President Kennedy: That's what I want to say today at this [*unclear*].

Goodwin: Because we may very well want them [*the Brazilian military*] to take over at the end of the year, if they can.

Gordon: We have that military front. And as I see it their function is first to keep Goulart on the rails—

President Kennedy: What kind of liaison do we have with the military?

Gordon: Well, it's pretty good.

The military's not united. This is one of the things that make it complicated. There are a few officers who are strong left-wingers themselves, including a couple in quite high positions: commander of the first army, which is in the city Rio de Janeiro . . . a very dangerous fellow. Goulart toyed with the notion of making him minister of war and then withdrew because there was a hell of a lot of [*unclear*].

President Kennedy: Do you think if Goulart had power—

You know you get into these fights with Congress and just about use anything to get your way.

37. The abbreviation OAS stands for Organization of American States.

Do you think if he had the power, would he relent? Or is this just a tactic?

Gordon: I'm afraid that—I doubt whether he's, I don't believe the man is a Communist. I think what he would probably do is something like . . . more like [former Argentine dictator Juan] Perón. A kind of, a kind of—

President Kennedy: Personal dictator.

Gordon: —a kind of populist personal dictator.

President Kennedy: Yeah.

Goodwin: Well, I don't . . . I think that you gotta remember that he may not have a purpose but Dantas has a purpose. And Brizola has a purpose and that purpose is not Peronist, it may be Nasserist or Titoist, eventually. And I think that their presence, that they [have], and the intellectual domination that they might have would move him. Because there's no . . . if you're going to play a part on the world scene, you know, today you can't be a Perón. You have to go further and that's what they want.

President Kennedy: Yeah.

Goodwin: No doubt about—

Gordon: They want it. Goulart doesn't give a damn about foreign policy, actually, he's—

Goodwin: Well—

Gordon: —he's interested in [unclear]—

President Kennedy: Vanity.

Goodwin: —well, you know, he is a man of great vanity and of desire for power.

President Kennedy: [Unclear.]

Goodwin: No, I think the chances are 80 percent that he would push pretty far to the left with these two fellows.

Gordon: Well, I don't believe that [unclear]—

Goodwin: He would not be a local dictator, not be satisfied with [unclear].

Gordon: There's a good chance that they would push him out—

President Kennedy: Dantas?

Gordon: No, that they would try to push Goulart out in certain circumstances.

President Kennedy: Yeah, but Dantas is . . . Now, what is it we ought to do? I think that we've got this problem of how much we do against Goulart and how much we try to do with him.

Gordon: I think we have to try—

President Kennedy: How about what we ought to do about getting the word to the military that—

Goodwin: I think, strengthen our relations with the military; we're making our position fairly clear to them. Maybe McNamara ought to review the people he has there and see if he can [unclear].³⁸

Gordon: Well, we need, we need a new Army attaché badly.

Goodwin: You see, is there anything else—

Gordon: The Army is much . . . that's the . . . most important [of the three Brazilian services]. This is the key fellow in the relationship.

President Kennedy: Our fellow, is he good?

Gordon: Our present fellow is . . . he's nice but fairly stupid.³⁹ I talked with General [unclear] about it.

President Kennedy: But, of course, we don't have many fellows who can speak Portuguese, do we?

Gordon: Well, there are a few around, not many, not many. But I think that McNamara—

President Kennedy: All right. Now let's have a—When are you going back there?

Ten seconds excised as classified material.

Gordon: Yes.

President Kennedy: When do we get a look at it now before we—so we know where we are going?

Goodwin: Well, you have the last—

President Kennedy: Like this Army—Who are you talking to about changing the Army attaché?

Gordon: I talked to General [unclear].⁴⁰

President Kennedy: Well now, is there any use in changing a fellow, when within three months you may be able—to have to—can he establish his links within three months?

Gordon: Uh, yes.

President Kennedy: Is there anybody that's ever been there before, that's had good relations we could send back?

Goodwin: What about this Eisenhower [unclear]?

Gordon: Dick Walters?⁴¹

38. Robert S. McNamara was U.S. secretary of defense.

39. Colonel Stanley N. Lonning was U.S. Army attaché in Brazil.

40. In an interview with Timothy Naftali on 3 August 2000, Ambassador Gordon recalled that before returning to Washington in July 1962, he had spoken with General Andrew P. O'Meara, the commander in chief, Caribbean, about changing the U.S. Army attaché in Brazil.

41. Colonel Vernon Walters. A linguist, fluent in seven languages, Walters had served in Italy during World War II as the U.S. Army's combat liaison officer to the Brazilian Expeditionary Force. He went to Brazil for three years after the war as assistant military attaché in Rio de

Goodwin: Dick Walters.

Gordon: He is in Rome.

President Kennedy: Does he know anything about Portugal?

Goodwin: He knows Portuguese fluently.

Gordon: Oh, he speaks Portuguese fluently. He's a hell of a good fellow; he's got a good political sense, too.

Goodwin: He was Eisenhower's interpreter down there, wasn't he?

Gordon: Oh yeah, oh yeah. He would be marvelous. He was—

President Kennedy: Now, what are you going to do about that? I mean, who are we going to get? We gotta get somebody down there who can establish liaison quickly . . . you got to speak Portuguese.

Goodwin: Why don't we talk to Ros Gilpatric or somebody.⁴²

President Kennedy: OK, well that ought to be done today.

Fifteen seconds excised as classified information.

President Kennedy: You say there's no need my writing Goulart again, to ask him to do anything?

Gordon: No. No.

Goodwin: You know, your brother sat in on the initial meeting that set up this political program. It was basically from his push that it got going anyways.

President Kennedy: Yeah.

Gordon: Now.

President Kennedy: Is he going to be at the meeting tomorrow?⁴³

Goodwin: Might be a good idea.

President Kennedy: Would you, would you tell him? Yeah.

Gordon: There's one—there are two other little problems I have here on my plate.

Kubitschek has written you a letter, which I have here.⁴⁴

President Kennedy: Well, is he supporting Goulart?

Gordon: No, no.

President Kennedy: Is he disturbed?

Janiero. A stint with the Marshall Plan in Paris followed, where Walters met Lincoln Gordon for the first time. Joining General Dwight Eisenhower's staff at NATO headquarters in 1951, Walters later served as interpreter to President Eisenhower and Vice President Richard Nixon. In July 1962, Walters was Army attaché in Italy.

42. Roswell L. Gilpatric was deputy secretary of defense.

43. Special Group (Counterinsurgency) meeting.

44. Gordon brought the original with him. Meanwhile the U.S. Embassy cabled to the State Department an informal translation of Kubitschek's letter to President Kennedy. "Informal Translation of Letter from Ex-President Kubitschek to President Kennedy," 25 July 1962, "Brazil" folder, National Security Files, Box 13, John F. Kennedy Library.

Gordon: He is supporting—he is disturbed as hell. He is supporting Goulart only on the idea of returning to the presidential [unclear]. He wants it in '65.⁴⁵ He would like to do something about loosening the Alliance for Progress politically all over Latin America. I think we should encourage him.

This letter says very little. [*A piece of paper is flipped.*] That's the translation. What we have worked out with Ed Martin is,⁴⁶ he's going to see Lleras Camargo in Bogotá,⁴⁷ and then we'll come and see Kubitschek in Rio . . . an idea for trying to pick up this initiative. It was written by Schmidt, of course, who always writes these letters.⁴⁸

Goodwin: Yeah.

Gordon: It practically says nothing, except that this can't just be a technical program, it needs to have some political emphasis and he's right. But he doesn't say how to do it.

I think we must take advantage of the Kubitschek—

Goodwin: You know . . . with the Monnet Action Committee idea.⁴⁹

Gordon: Yeah.

Goodwin: I think he might accept that.

Gordon: Right. I tried this out on Schmidt last week and he was down on it. Schmidt has a great prejudice against Ted Moscoso because he thinks—he's prejudiced against all Puerto Ricans, by definition.⁵⁰ Quite unjustified, actually, but . . .

President Kennedy: What does he want us to do, I wonder?

Gordon: Well, what he would really like is for us to set up under the OAS some sort of general political coordinator for the Alliance for Progress and put Kubitschek in that job.

That can't be done this year, I think. I think it might be good idea, but I don't know whether Kubitschek would be the man or not. But I think we have to work up to this by stages and some sort of action committee maybe with some blessing—

President Kennedy: What way are we going to change it again? Tell me. What is it they want us to do?

45. The 1946 Constitution forbade immediate reelection but permitted a second, nonconsecutive term.

46. Edwin M. Martin was assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs since May 1962.

47. Alberto Lleras Camargo, president of Colombia 1945–46 and 1958–62, had recently left office.

48. A. F. Schmidt was aide to former Brazilian president Kubitschek.

49. Jean Monnet. Kubitschek's idea was inspired by the Marshall Plan for Europe.

50. Teodoro Moscoso was U.S. coordinator of the Alliance for Progress.

Gordon: What they would—at the moment, the formal structure of the Alliance for Progress is the OAS council—

President Kennedy: Yeah.

Gordon: —and the Inter-American Economic and Social Council, meeting at the ministerial level once a year, on a lot of technical issues. What they would like is, something like what was done with the Marshall Plan at a given point. We've got [Dirk] Stikker, the former Dutch foreign minister, to be a sort of political coordinator for the Marshall Plan and he got a formal job; he was the permanent chairman of the Council, and what they would like is something like that—⁵¹

President Kennedy: Well, would Kubitschek be good for that?

Gordon: I think he would be good but he wouldn't have complete receptivity in the Spanish-speaking countries.

President Kennedy: Yeah.

Gordon: And there's always a certain—

President Kennedy: So what is it you suggest I do about this letter?

Gordon: Well, let's work on an answer for it. I think you ought to do nothing until Ed is out of these preliminary talks with about 25—

Goodwin: We thought that something like the Monnet Action Committee.

Gordon: What it would actually do—

Goodwin: Lleras Camargo, heading it might be good. Or something that is not official or not sponsored by us or—

President Kennedy: By private citizens.

Goodwin: Yeah . . . by private citizens, industrial groups, political people. . . .

Gordon: What might get some kind of . . . I think, to tie it in somehow informally to—

Goodwin: To the OAS.

Gordon: —the OAS. . . . I think this would be good, [unclear] we can get it.

President Kennedy: I think that's a good idea about getting a private group talking about the—

Goodwin: There is no equivalent of a Monnet subgroup at all. This would be—the only people with real stature—only about a half a dozen that you can name would be Galo Plaza, Lleras Camargo, Kubitschek.⁵²

51. Dirk Stikker was NATO secretary-general.

52. Galo Plaza Lasso was the former president of Ecuador, 1948 to 1952. He lost the election of 1960 to José María Velasco Ibarra.

And they're about the only—You don't have any nonpolitical person of the Monnet type; but one of these fellows . . . I'd like to tie Kubitschek in with Lleras Camargo because Kubitschek's running for president of Brazil and Lleras Camargo is running for nothing.

President Kennedy: That's right. Well, can somebody come back to me with this?

Goodwin: Yes.

McGeorge Bundy: [*referring to the letter*] That's the original.

Gordon: One other thing, Mr. President. My northeast program needs a new director.

President Kennedy: Yeah.

Gordon: The one we tried was a failure. The best-qualified man for this job is a man called Warren Wiggins, who works for [*Peace Corps director*] Sarge Shriver.

President Kennedy: Why not get him? You want to tell him?

Goodwin: OK.

President Kennedy: Does he speak Portuguese?

Gordon: No, but he speaks Spanish and [*unclear exchange*].

President Kennedy: What's he do for Sarge?

Goodwin: He's one of the associate directors; job's pretty important.

President Kennedy: OK. Well, let's get him. Yeah. Just tell Sarge we need him and we'll figure out . . . If there's any question, let me know.

Goodwin: All right.

President Kennedy: Will I see you? I won't see you before you go? Would you let me know, if I should . . . Call me on the phone before you go.

Gordon: Yeah.

President Kennedy: [*Unclear*].

The meeting ends. Gordon and Goodwin are heard talking in the hall. Then Kennedy shuts off the machine.

Gordon arranged for the visit of the Brazilian students. The next morning, the President would spend 22 minutes with them.

Lincoln Gordon and Richard Goodwin did not leave the White House. Kennedy had a brief meeting scheduled with representatives of the Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A.; then Gordon's and Goodwin's Latin American expertise would be needed again.

12:25–12:57 P.M.

It looks like we're being more Peruvian than the Peruvians, more democratic than they are, and we've now got to think about how we are going to protect our own prestige.

Meeting on Peruvian Recognition⁵³

Brazil was not the only Latin American country in crisis in late July 1962. On July 18 the Peruvian military drove a Sherman tank into the presidential palace in Lima and arrested President Manuel Prado y Ugarteche. Ambassador James Loeb of the United States had tried to forestall this military coup, which had been rumored for months. In March, following a meeting with President Kennedy, Loeb warned the Peruvian military that were it to stage a coup to erase the results of a presidential election scheduled for June, it could not count on U.S. recognition. The Peruvian military openly stated that it would not accept the election of Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre, the leader of the liberal American Revolutionary Popular Alliance (APRA), who was the favorite to win. Haya's anti-Communist credentials were well established, but the army hated APRA for a bloody attack on a military barracks in 1932. Peru's troubles worsened in the summer. The results of the June election were inconclusive. None of the candidates won the required 33 percent of the share of the popular vote to be elected. As the military began making noises that it would nullify these results and restore order, Loeb asked again for permission to warn the Peruvian army that the United States would view dimly any intervention in Peruvian politics. This time Washington said no. Dean Rusk cabled back, "Flexibility is necessary to U.S. policy interests."⁵⁴

In this case *flexibility* was a code word for indecision. Once the coup happened and Washington observed the arrest of Prado and the establishment of a 12-person junta under General Ricardo Pío Pérez Godoy, Kennedy returned to his earlier policy of defending democracy in Peru

53. Including President Kennedy, Ward Allen, George Ball, McGeorge Bundy, Richard Goodwin, Lincoln Gordon, James Loeb, Edwin Martin, and Dean Rusk. Tape 1, John F. Kennedy Library, President's Office Files, Presidential Recordings Collection.

54. Department of State (Rusk) to American Embassy Lima, 16 July 1962, "Peru" folder, National Security Files, John F. Kennedy Library.

by containing the army. The United States suspended diplomatic relations with Peru on July 18, keeping its embassy open in Lima. And the next day, Kennedy publicly condemned the Peruvian coup, describing it as a “setback” for the entire region and denouncing the junta for violating “the purposes inherent in the inter-American system.”⁵⁵ The State Department then suspended all U.S. aid.

The President apparently was not comfortable for long with this policy. While receiving support from the liberal constitutionalists of the region, Rómulo Betancourt of Venezuela and José María Figueres Ferrer of Costa Rica, Kennedy’s nonrecognition policy proved unpopular with the United States’s European allies and some Latin American states, which viewed it as a form of intervention in domestic affairs. Even in Peru, there appeared to be little opposition to the junta. An attempt at a general strike fizzled. Soon some officials at State and the President himself began to worry about the long-term consequences of alienating the Peruvian military, which appeared to be in control of the country.

Caught between seemingly conflicting goals in Peru, the administration employed two channels to try to communicate to the Peruvian junta its willingness to restore diplomatic relations in return for the establishment of some sort of constitutional regime with free elections and civil rights for the Peruvians. Ambassador Loeb was empowered to present this case in Lima (and in his absence, Chargé Douglas Henderson); while in Washington, the President turned to his old friend, Charles Bartlett, the Washington correspondent for the *New York Times*–affiliated *Chattanooga Times*, to make the pitch to the Peruvian ambassador, Fernando Berckemeyer.⁵⁶ Over the weekend this policy seemed to bring its first results. The junta restored some civil rights, indicated it would soon release former president Prado, and promised elections by June 1963. It was now time for President Kennedy to reconsider his diplomatic boycott of Peru.

55. Press Conference, 19 July 1962, “Peru” folder, National Security Files, John F. Kennedy Library.

56. On Loeb’s efforts in Lima see Department of State (Ball) to American Embassy Lima, 23 July 1962, “Peru” folder, National Security Files, John F. Kennedy Library, as cited in “Idealism in Crisis: John F. Kennedy’s Alliance for Progress and Military Coups in Latin America, 1961–1962,” Laura Moranchek, unpublished paper, 1999. For information on the Bartlett channel, see Handwritten Notes [early August 1962], “Peru” folder, National Security Files, Box 151; Interview with James Loeb, 12 November 1967, John F. Kennedy Library; Timothy Naftali Interview with Charles Bartlett, October 1999.

The President began taping as he asked the assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs, Edwin M. Martin, to brief the group on the status of U.S. policy toward Peru.

President Kennedy: [Unclear.]

Unidentified: [Unclear.]

President Kennedy: [Shifts in his chair.] How are we now?

Edwin Martin: Mr. Secretary—

Dean Rusk: Well, Mr. President, I think that there are three different things that we might remind ourselves about.

One is the effect of whatever we have done so far in Peru and I think we have nothing to be ashamed of or nothing to worry about as far as the situation up to this point is concerned because this junta has taken over; there are civil liberties. They have worked out some working relationships with heads of the parties. They arrested the President, but didn't try him and execute him, and there's a little restraint there which I think has been a dividend from the attitude of the hemisphere up to this point.

The most immediate thing is the meeting of the OAS this afternoon, primarily insisted upon by the Venezuelans.⁵⁷ We had thought on Saturday that we had the Venezuelans in a position to let the OAS [unclear] committee to consider the Venezuelan motion, and they'd pull it back. But apparently the Venezuelan [representative] over the weekend, [unclear], had a talk with Betancourt, [and] is going to propose that a committee be established simply to set a date for a foreign ministers' meeting.⁵⁸ And the plan is that the OAS chairman, the Colombian, would ask them to—

President Kennedy: What?

Rusk: The OAS chairman, who is a Colombian—

President Kennedy: Yeah.

Rusk: Simply would ask that now it be put over for a week to ten days in order to give delegates a chance to get instructions. And get that—

57. The Venezuelans wanted to convene a meeting of foreign ministers to condemn the junta. The OAS in 1962 had 21 members and 11 votes were needed to call this meeting. This initiative was a problem for the United States. If Venezuela failed to get the 11 votes, then the junta might have interpreted this as a weakening in hemispheric opposition and reneged on its promises. On the other hand, if the meeting occurred and a resolution passed, the United States would not be able to recognize the regime without severe criticism in Latin America.

58. Rómulo Betancourt had been the president of Venezuela since 1959.

President Kennedy: What is it they're going to ask, the Venezuelans, to do?

Rusk: They are going to ask for a meeting of the foreign ministers, primarily. But, procedurally ask for a committee to meet to actually set a date, or recommend a date. Now, this is not something we can support. If we have a vote on that, we have to vote against it.

President Kennedy: On what grounds?

Rusk: On the grounds that we don't think this is an appropriate action.

President Kennedy: Who will represent us at the OAS—

Martin: Chep Morrison is on three weeks' military leave.⁵⁹

President Kennedy: I see.

Ward Allen (?):⁶⁰ On the grounds, sir, that the point of setting such a date, prior to a decision favorable to convening the foreign ministers—which has not yet been made—we think therefore such action would be premature.

President Kennedy: So that will be defeated, will it?

Allen (?): I think, yes sir, and I think that in any event we can talk the Venezuelans out of it, beforehand.

President Kennedy: OK, so what will be the next hurdle that . . . ?

Rusk: That would be all for the day.

Allen (?): Right. They would table their proposal to call a meeting of foreign ministers. They would speak to it. Then—our hope is, I would speak, and simply say here: It is the objective of the [unclear] that this is an important matter which requires consultation of government. We propose therefore that this meeting be suspended and another meeting be called in a week to ten days to consider the matter further.

And we would hope then that that would end it. We are trying to get some of the others who are opposed to a meeting not to get so involved with the wrong group.

President Kennedy: Now, what about the Wednesday meeting?

Martin: This is in place of the Wednesday meeting. [Someone else says, "This is it."]

59. DeLesseps "Chep" S. Morrison was U.S. permanent representative to the OAS.

60. Ward Allen's voice could not be identified. He is listed in the President's Daily Appointments Diary as having attended this meeting. Allen headed the Office of Inter-American Regional Political Affairs, Bureau of Inter-American Affairs in the State Department. Not only is this the only voice at this meeting that could not be identified, but the substance of his comments is consistent with what could be expected from a person in Ward's position. Therefore the editor has made a tentative identification.

President Kennedy: I see.

Martin: The Venezuelans jumped the gun on us [unclear] go ahead.

President Kennedy: Well, that will take care of that.

Now, then, what is our general attitude about resuming relations with this junta? Will we expect some Latins as well as others to resume relations this week?

Rusk: [to Martin] Would you run over the situation and . . . [unclear].

Martin: As of today, Haiti has resumed. Paraguay has indicated that she would have in a day or so, but we think this was probably because she expected Argentina to do [it], which at one time was also interested in going on Saturday.

We have conveyed your request that you gave to me after you saw Alsogaray.⁶¹ The Argentines have responded and said, "Please tell the President that we will not resume immediately, but will hold off for a considerable period of time, if necessary." We think at least—the Chileans have said, and I talked to Bill Cole this morning who is back, that they would probably be third or fourth or fifth, but they would wait on some others.⁶² On this basis, unless something now unforeseen should happen, we do not anticipate that anybody except Paraguay is possible or probable this week. And Paraguay will not set much of the ten pins in motion, I think.

Rusk: Mexico said they would be one of the last.

President Kennedy: [under his breath] Good.

And what does it look [like] . . . How would you sum up after this week, on the restoration of relations?

Martin: I think the British will restore, probably today, and it may well be that the French, Germans, and Italians will follow suit before the end of the week. [Unclear.]

President Kennedy: Any other Latins this week?

Martin: No Latins this week, as far as we can know.

President Kennedy: What is the advantage of waiting?

Martin: Except Paraguay.

President Kennedy: What is the advantage of waiting this week? What is it we are trying to get from them, that we have a chance of getting but we haven't gotten?

Martin: This leads into the other major question. Do you want us to go ahead, Mr. Secretary?

61. The President met with Argentina's minister of economy, Alvaro Alsogaray, on Wednesday, 27 July 1962.

62. Charles W. "Bill" Cole was the U.S. ambassador to Chile.

Rusk: Go ahead.

Martin: Well, I think that, as far as we're concerned, we ought to wait until a number of other countries are ready to go with us. And that we ought to use this period to see whether or not we can get anything additional. I think from the reactions we have had from our chargé, one can't be overly optimistic.⁶³ There are some private channels that are somewhat more optimistic. But it's clear the current junta still feels some pressure on them. I think what we want as a minimum is a real guarantee that they will hold elections and abide by the results.

President Kennedy: Even if the date is as originally set?

Martin: Even if the date as originally set. I think we should continue to see if we can move up the date. But I don't think that is as important as being sure that they are held and the results accepted.

President Kennedy: Have they indicated they would hold—they have indicated of course they would hold the elections?

Martin: On June 9th, and that they would accept the result. They've said this.

President Kennedy: Now what kind of . . . more guarantee would you get?

Martin: Well, I would like to have them say that again to us after discussions in some fashion; but more importantly we feel that it would be desirable to try hard to see if they would be willing to have an OAS election observer team or some multilateral hemisphere operation in connection with this, as an assurance of their good faith in the matter and that this is something we should see. I think these are the important things. I think we ought to privately—

George Ball: Plus [unclear] absolute assurance of the maintenance of civil liberties.

Martin: Well, the maintenance of civil liberties—They have, as you may know, restored civil liberties fully over the weekend. First they had a 30-day suspension, which they have now pulled back.

President Kennedy: You might get me a memorandum, Ed, before my press conference Wednesday on the things which the junta has done in the civil liberty areas to which we can partly claim some responsibility—⁶⁴

Martin: Yes. I can do that.

Rusk: These three points, the maintenance of civil liberties is much better now—

63. Douglas Henderson was chargé d'affaires, Lima, since 26 July 1962.

64. Wednesday was 1 August 1962.

President Kennedy: They've got the maintenance of civil liberties, they have set the [election] date for June, we don't expect they'll change the date for June, they have said they will abide [unclear]; now if they say it again, [unclear] more power to it.

Martin: If they could say [that] to some kind of an OAS body and then welcome some kind of OAS team watching the situation, et cetera. I think this would give us more assurance.

We would also like to talk to them about the Communist fact—particularly the Communist trade union leaders and the effect on APRA and make sure that they don't get fooled by this one.⁶⁵ This is certainly where the Communists [unclear]—

President Kennedy: Well . . . what do you see as our schedule for resuming relations?

Martin: My own thinking is that probably sometime early next week, we would probably, we would need to make a decision and the decision should probably be affirmative. We have done what we can do.

President Kennedy: But you expect probably that—you don't expect this week other Latin American countries to go ahead.

Martin: No. No.

President Kennedy: Then what will you do—send out a notice to our . . . saying that we'd like to notify [unclear] everybody [in the hemisphere] that we are planning on going ahead and recognize?

Martin: [Unclear] in the Argentine, which worked rather well, was that he suggested a couple of days' notice. And we'll probably want to do it on Wednesday. We'd be quite agreeable if a few other Latin Americans did [it] between now and then, and we have suggested to one or two of them [unclear] with the same goal, to do it themselves.

McGeorge Bundy: Did we formally suspend relations with the Argentinians?⁶⁶

Martin: Yes.

Bundy: In the same fashion?

65. The American Revolutionary Popular Alliance (Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana, APRA) was led by Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre.

66. On 29 March 1962, the Argentine military removed democratically elected President Arturo Frondizi. The president of the Senate, José María Guido, took the presidential oath of office that day. The coup caused a sharp debate in the Kennedy administration. Secretary Rusk, the Argentine team at State, and the U.S. ambassador in Buenos Aires, Robert McClintock, all favored recognizing the Guido government. Assistant Secretary Martin and Special Assistant to the President Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., were against recognition. President Kennedy waited until some large Latin American countries had recognized the new regime and then did so in mid-April 1962.

Martin: In exactly the same fashion.

President Kennedy: Will you give me also in this memorandum, Ed, what we did with the Argentine; because I understand the difference, the only difference so far, is my statement.⁶⁷ Or is there any other difference?

Martin: Your statement and the suspension of aid.

President Kennedy: That wasn't done in—?

Martin: That was not done in the Argentine case. We proposed that and you and the secretary decided against it.⁶⁸

President Kennedy: OK, I see. Is that the reason we've gone ahead in this case because we said we were going to? Is that correct? Is that why we're doing this?

Martin: Partly, we said we were going to; and partly because there was no observance of the constitutional norms or protection of civilian government as there was in the Argentine case.

President Kennedy: I see. Well, this is what we want to get down now for this press conference . . . this point here.

Unidentified: There was a Supreme Court decision in Argentina. [Unclear.]⁶⁹

Rusk: Also when we acted we did not know what the conduct of the junta was going to be.

Martin: No, that's true.

Bundy: All we had to go on was the tanks banging through the presidential gate.

President Kennedy: Yeah, but they also had seized and imprisoned the—

Martin: And they had imprisoned the president and—

President Kennedy: They are going to say, "Well, you mentioned the imprisonment of Prado and everything." [Unclear] Prado and Frondizi are in prison. I'm going to have to say what they've done.

Now, as I say, the only thing that's [unclear] about—

Martin: Frondizi would be allowed to get out of prison in Argentina the minute he agrees not to live in Argentina. The problem is that he doesn't want to leave the country. . . .

Bundy: [aside] Pretty thin difference.

67. The fact that on 19 July President Kennedy took a public stance against the Peruvian coup.

68. Martin and Rusk were on different sides in the recognition of Argentina debate.

69. The Argentine Supreme Court cloaked the March coup in constitutional legality by ruling that Guido's succession was constitutional because Frondizi had been out of the capital. In fact, Frondizi had been under arrest.

Richard Goodwin (?): In effect, to me, this is a double coup: the coup against [unclear] in order to prevent the result of free elections and [unclear] it really [unclear].

Unidentified: That's right.

Rusk: Mr. President, another thing in the picture here, as to how we do that—this business of [unclear]. We don't want to lose, if we can avoid it, the very definite "plus" opinion we've had around the hemisphere on our attitude toward the junta. And secondly, we've got to find some way to give [Rómulo] Betancourt a chance to pull back out [unclear], to give him some of these points that he can—

President Kennedy: Yeah, but on the other hand, we have got to be concerned about our own—we can't look like we've embarked on a road [unclear]. Better not [unclear] in the hemisphere either.

Rusk: Right. That's right.

President Kennedy: And that's what I am most concerned about right now: Is to get out of this in a—we are going to have to resume relations and it's going to look like the United States has encountered a stronger man and they weren't able to implement it and then had to back down. Now these things that Prado agrees [with]: to the gradual points of a civilian restoration that we are sort of [unclear], I am not even aware of much of them and no one else is.⁷⁰ So we are going to have, we are going to have quite a time trying to make it look as if we haven't gotten the air kicked out of us.

Ball: Well, Mr. President, [this is] consistent with the junta's claim that what they were doing was moving into a situation where there had been dishonest elections in order to preserve the kind of caretaker so they can hold new elections. And if they were to do these three things you've said: the maintenance of civil liberties, the bringing in of somebody to observe, some third party to observe the elections—

President Kennedy: When they take place? When they take place?

Ball: When they take place. Plus the assurance that they will support any government that comes out of those elections. This is consistent with their thesis. Now if we can get them to make this very clear in a way which makes it also appear that this is the result of the kind of pressure we've been doing. I think this gives us . . .

President Kennedy: That's right. Now how do we get . . . Two of

70. The President meant the head of the military junta, General Ricardo Pío Pérez Godoy, not Prado. Prado was the ousted president.

those they have already said and we have to get them to say again the third—about bringing the OAS group in.

Rusk: Well, I think the fact that the Venezuelan motion will be before the OAS gives us the chance to say to the junta, “Now look, you’ve got to have some way to manage this problem in the OAS; now here’s a way to do it.”

President Kennedy: But is [there] any new word in from Lima?

Martin: [Unclear.]

President Kennedy: Now how are we going to be in touch with the junta? Is this the most effective way, [via] our chargé? Or should we be in touch with one of the Peruvian embassies of another state?

Allen (?): I think, Mr. President, that if they can do it in Lima, I think there might be circumstances in which, for example, if the British recognize today that the British [unclear] very effectively.

Martin: If we had difficulty.

Allen (?): If we had difficulty. But I think there’s a broader spectrum of contacts in Lima than there would be here, which is just through Ambassador [Fernando] Berckemeyer.

President Kennedy: Now will we send another message through our chargé, sort of restating how we felt about [unclear] these things? You know, in other words, what we want to do is sort of restate them, two of these three things—

Allen (?): Right.

President Kennedy: —which you’ve already got again. And we put it in one package and the third thing we would [unclear] on their own—not as the result of compulsion—is the OAS to observe the election. Is there any information for us to believe that they will do that?

Martin: Well, we also had an indication through the Sears channel—⁷¹

Unidentified: Sears? No, I haven’t heard from him [unclear].

Unidentified: This was in the press.

President Kennedy: As I say, I think we’ve got to be putting our minds now that this Peruvian thing has taken place, there is no evidence of public disorder. . . . It looks like we’re being more Peruvian than the Peruvians, more democratic than they are, and we’ve now got to think about how we are going to protect our own prestige. [Martin agrees.] That’s what I’m most concerned about.

Martin: That’s right. Well, I think the message that went out on

71. Unidentified.

Saturday is pretty clear on this, what we were anxious to do. And I think Jim [Loeb] and my press conference . . . we got this across and the press stories over the weekend both here and in Lima, on the U.S. side, were good on this score. But I agree, this is the key—

President Kennedy: That's the problem now.

Martin: —problem in the lineup.

James Loeb: I'd like to, on this score, I haven't said anything, but we did gain a major victory both in Peru and in the continent. I think the problem is, without being evicted . . .

President Kennedy: How did we gain a victory in Peru, though, Jim? There doesn't seem to be—at least the stories I read coming out of there indicates a rather [unclear] attitude toward our action.

Loeb: I think they're wrong, Mr. President. I think that we . . . when we took the stand, we never had any slight idea that we were going to overturn the junta—the junta was the entire armed forces and the navy.

President Kennedy: What did we think we were going to do, then?

Loeb: We—Prado has been released, civil liberties have been restored, I think the secretary . . . they have made more concessions than they ever would have made if we hadn't taken that stand.

President Kennedy: Why—how do we get that over?

Loeb: Well, we're trying to get it over. I think Ed and I partially did. I think we ought to—

Martin: Sir, we also put out a Voice piece on Saturday on this whole . . . of our Latin American [unclear].⁷² [Unclear interjection.] [Unclear] he canceled this morning because he's tied up with [unclear].

Unidentified: We should see if can get somebody up on the Hill to make a speech about some of these things.

President Kennedy: We have [unclear]?

Unidentified: No. No.

Rusk: Manny might [unclear],⁷³ or Mansfield.⁷⁴

President Kennedy: I think either one of them would be fine, Wayne is chairman of the committee, if he would—Doc [Martin], why don't you get ahold of him—⁷⁵

Martin: The committee's scheduled tomorrow after [unclear].

72. Likely the Voice of America.

73. Congressman Emmanuel Celler.

74. Mike Mansfield was the Senate majority leader from Montana.

75. Wayne Morse was the chairman of the Subcommittee on Latin America of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

President Kennedy: He shouldn't attack the junta; he should just say that the result of our policy has been the following and so we begin to lay this groundwork. And I can do something about it on Wednesday.

Now the other thing is that I talked to Linc Gordon this morning, and he is very alarmed about events, as you know, in Brazil.⁷⁶ And he thinks the army may be an important factor there to prevent a real Communist takeover there. He says the army is very discouraged now because of our stand against the army takeover in Peru. How would we prevent the army from becoming completely demoralized if they become the only [unclear]? He made the point to some of them that we opposed the army takeover in Peru because it was against constitutional government, against a free election.

Bundy: And in fact it is at least [unclear].

President Kennedy: Yeah. Of course. It has that clear difference. That is a factor in Peru; but in Brazil the army may be all that we're going to have left three months from now, the way it's going.

Martin: We got a question Saturday, "Does this mean we would never want the army to intervene in a [unclear] situation?" And I said there are no rules and regulation in the future as our policy is flexible.

[Unclear] are really two or three democratic, constitutional governments.

President Kennedy: Well, now, you might speak again to Linc about this—

Martin: Yeah.

President Kennedy: —to figure out what the line's going to be. And then probably what we ought to do . . . another thing, Ed, he wants to change the Army attaché down there, which he is going to check on; but I think, he may . . . you ought to tell him to let his army people and the military attachés sort of have this line because, you know—

Martin: Yeah.

President Kennedy: You don't want to have them . . . That is one country where the army may be important.

Twenty-seven seconds excised as classified information.

Loeb: Well, I think, one difference, Mr. President, is that the Communists in Peru had one objective which they have never been able to accomplish, which is to break this anti-Communist force. The military, in effect, is trying to accomplish what the Communists had not succeeded in accomplishing. This is an entirely different situation in Peru. It

76. Lincoln Gordon was the U.S. ambassador to Brazil. See "Meeting on Brazil," 11:52 A.M.

was fuzzy a little bit in Argentina; but in Peru it was clear on one side. It might be clear on the other side in Brazil.

Martin: My sense [unclear] I think we've got to have an even better probable basis in distinguishing because first of all, [unclear] yesterday. Goulart will not be able to accomplish what he may be trying to do, [unclear] he thinks is satisfactory, without some constitutional break—

President Kennedy: Yeah.

Martin: —which he has been rather [unclear]; but he will have to take a [unclear] which is really unconstitutional, [unclear] to get back powers which the Congress won't give him or to dispense with the Congress, which is still essentially conservative. And this would give us a—

President Kennedy: Well, I—

Martin: —a different framework in which to act.

President Kennedy: That's right. Well, I think Linc has a major job doing this. Especially [unclear] I talked to him again about giving the army a little bit without getting caught. And so, I think we've got to—

Martin: Well, I'm—I rather expect to be down there next week for this conference on world tensions also, and I'll talk to some [unclear].

Rusk: Can we have a meeting this afternoon or tomorrow morning before . . . on Brazil about—?

Martin: We'll be seeing [him] at two tomorrow afternoon, now I—

President Kennedy: Let me just say now as I understand it, then, we are going to try to get the Venezuelans to withdraw this or else to get it tabled—

Rusk: Get them to withdraw their proposal.

President Kennedy: All right, then our chargé, we'll have to send him another clear—

Martin: We will.

President Kennedy: —instruction saying what we would like now is, number one, a restatement of the package; number two, [unclear] these things that are done, you see, done in a way that hasn't been dramatic. It seems to me [unclear], perhaps we ought to say, one, that civil liberties [have] been restored [unclear] maintained. Number two, whatever it is they've done that is useful, let them say they have done it in one [unclear]. And then . . . Not looking like they've done, with the impression [unclear] civil liberties restored, number two, they've set this date, which they will abide by for a free election. Then, if possible [unclear] to try to get this in [unclear] and inviting the committee in. So, they may not be willing to do that because they may be doing [unclear]. [Unclear] because the British go

ahead. Our friends the British, are they worried about that dam up there or something?⁷⁷

Martin: That's been a factor.

President Kennedy: [*cynically*] The British . . . ask us to do something good. [*General laughter, followed by an unclear comment by the President.*]

Martin: [*Unclear.*] They have a recognition policy as evidenced by Communist China, which is fairly inflexible.

President Kennedy: I think we're all going to recognize them [*unclear*] them.

Martin: That's right.

President Kennedy: All we ask is that they [*unclear*].

Unidentified: It took us three weeks in Argentina, sir.

Martin: We'll get that thing done. [*Unclear.*]

President Kennedy: [*Unclear.*] As I say now, even if we get [*unclear*] I think our central problem is to protect our prestige, which is involved in this struggle, because if we don't, whatever goodwill we've gotten in Latin America . . . we don't [*want it to*] look like we have gotten a licking from [*unclear*].

Bundy: [*Unclear*] say we get out of Latin America [*unclear*]. We can do that right away at [*unclear*] time. I am not myself aware of it; but an awful lot of other people are [*convinced*] that our diplomatic action . . . it would seem to me, the aid suspension is precisely the same as in Argentina and the Argentine suspension lasted three weeks [*unclear*].

President Kennedy: Well now, my brother Teddy who was down there, said to me last night, "How do you explain the contrast between the ambiguity about your policy in Argentina and in Peru?"⁷⁸ Well, I started to try to explain it to him. The point is, he watches it carefully and as a candidate therefore wants to go over his answers, and he doesn't know. And, now, if he doesn't know, and I must say that I only know when I think about it for a while. [*Laughter.*]

We're going to have a chance to get it at the press conference Wednesday. But that indicates that we are in some trouble, I think, on this one.

Martin: I think, Max Frankel had some of this in his story yesterday, which we gave him on Saturday.⁷⁹

77. Unidentified.

78. Teddy is Edward M. Kennedy, Democratic nominee for the U.S. Senate from Massachusetts.

79. *New York Times*, 29 July 1962.

Loeb: One of the problems is the interaction here. The last time, when I came up, Mr. President, to talk to you in early March, before I could get back to talk to the generals to give them the answer, Argentina's taken place, and [unclear] looked awful thin on it. So, I think, the Argentine thing did affect them, they didn't believe it. As a matter of fact our Army attaché went to see General [Rijos],⁸⁰ the head of the military school, one of the plotters. And he looked at the paper and said, "Don't tell me you're not going to help us; look what you're doing for Argentina. Of course you will."

Rusk: We did make a pretty strong effort here to prevent this from happening [murmur of agreement] and in that circumstance when it happens despite your efforts to prevent it, then you expect a response, for prestige. [Unclear.]

Loeb: That's right. I mean, you can't [unclear].

President Kennedy: What happened, of course, what really adversely affected them was the closeness of the election, the junta. If it had been a clean victory, we would have had a somewhat—

Loeb: Are you sure?

President Kennedy: What? [Unclear exchange.] Well, they would have seized it; but the point is, then, our protest would have been [on] much sounder ground.

Unidentified: The resistance would have—

President Kennedy: Would have been sounder.

Unidentified: There wasn't any resistance, of the real kind. There wasn't any real resistance. . . .

Loeb: The military really prevented a solution to the problem. Belaunde⁸¹ would have been president with APRA's support had the military not told him, "Don't take it."

Bundy: You don't mean Belaunde, do you?

Unidentified: [Unclear.]

Loeb: Yes, they would [unclear] actually completed negotiations, [unclear] the military—

President Kennedy: I think the problem is here that the stories out of there looked like the Peruvians and the . . . hypothetically [unclear].

Three seconds excised as classified information.

Martin: One hundred forty-four Peruvian—

President Kennedy: Well now, I didn't even see that.

80. Unidentified Peruvian general.

81. Fernando Belaunde Terry was the presidential candidate and leader of Acción Popular.

Martin: I'm rather optimistic.

President Kennedy: I didn't even see that—as I say, I think we got, let me . . . I'm very concerned about our problem now because I think that it affects us not just the United States but [unclear] all through the hemisphere. People say it's good, America is noble but not very effective anymore. That's what I think. In fact there was an article to that effect by Warren Ulmers or something that the United States no longer can . . . and this has proven it and that's not very good.

Loeb: I would say just a word in defense of the Peruvians and their resistance. The army—

President Kennedy: [Unclear] to resist it.

Loeb: The army has created a circumstance where these Peruvian workers were asked to go out and fight and die for the former dictator because they had eliminated Haya. So, this was the issue. You [unclear] past Thursday, then you have to—

President Kennedy: Where is Haya now? Who's there? The Scotty Reston article.⁸²

Loeb (?): No.

President Kennedy: But the point is, Jim, as I say, the story in the *New York Times* as well as in other papers. Was it Saturday or was it yesterday?

Loeb: There was a Friday one.

President Kennedy: That's what I'm concerned about, that it's going to be interpreted as a licking. I think, as I say—where I think we went wrong was my statement. I should have kept out of it unless we were sure of a success. That was a mistake; but that's in the past now. Now the problem is how to see about getting these fellows to do this in a way that we want them [to]. And I think that we can just say to them, we've got to go ahead on recognition. Because [unclear] about everybody's going to recognize them and we're going to have to. On economic aid and so on, then we're not going to be cooperative. But even that, we don't play too many cards with because they can give us a screwing that way—American profits and so on.

Unidentified: Yes, sir.

President Kennedy: We're holding up American aid, aren't we?

Martin: Yes, sir.

President Kennedy: Let's not go ahead on that for awhile. Well, now

82. James Reston, "JFK's Sudden Diplomacy in Latin America," *New York Times*, 27 July 1962. Having ascribed to Kennedy "the habit of talking and acting in a hurry when things go wrong in Latin America," Reston predicted that the President would soon regret his policy of non-recognition in Peru.

two of the three things we wanted, they have already done. It shouldn't be very difficult to ask them to redo their package. The other thing they may or may not do.

Martin: Do we have to restore all the aid when we renew [unclear]?

President Kennedy: No, I think we just . . . we'll have to talk about that.

Unidentified: What is the—

President Kennedy: We'll have to take a look at it and see how we sort of dragged it. It shouldn't look like we just sort of dragged it out.

Meeting breaks up. The President huddles with a smaller group.

Martin: [Unclear] press conference. [Unclear.]

President Kennedy: Yeah, I saw that.

Unidentified: [Unclear.]

Unidentified: The red one?

Unidentified: Yeah. Red one?

President Kennedy: I just want to keep that chargé. I saw his answer back and it kind of gives them the flavor of what we're thinking about, to a certain extent.

Martin: We'll send a memo just to make sure he's seen it.

President Kennedy: Right. I think the only thing that he may not realize is this problem [unclear] explaining to [unclear].

Bundy: [engaged in a separate conversation with George Ball about the British and European trade negotiations] You can't do anything about it.

President Kennedy: [Unclear] that's critical of the United States [unclear] understand [unclear] want a restatement of the [unclear] elections and these other things which have sort of slipped out, which have not been particularly dramatic. And they [unclear] try to get that which they already [unclear] dress it up as a pretty good package and give us the key, then we're moving in.

Bundy and Ball continue their side conversation as the others file out.

Bundy: [Unclear] on trade [unclear] I'm not sure that the [unclear] Agriculture Department [unclear].

Ball: I think this [unclear] other there.

Then they ask the President if he could turn his attention to European matters for a moment.

The Peruvian policy group left. Following the President's instruction, Edwin Martin and Ambassador Loeb headed off to draft a cable to the chargé d'affaires in Lima, Douglas Henderson. The cable laid out the administration's desire for three concessions by the junta as the price for

recognition: a guarantee of continued civil liberties; a guarantee of free and fair elections before June 9, if possible, but not later; and an invitation to the OAS to send an observer team to monitor the election. The first two points had already been agreed to by the junta, but President Kennedy needed them restated more forcefully to influence world opinion. The third might pose a problem. Fearful of the loss of prestige in the region, however, Martin and Loeb stressed that Washington “wished to expedite solution in such [a] way as not to leave the United States isolated or to give the appearance of U.S. capitulation.”⁸³

As the Latin American specialists were filing out of the meeting, Bundy pulled Rusk and Ball to one side to discuss some foreign economic matters with the President.

12:58–1:10 P.M.

I just see an awful lot of fellows . . . who don't seem to have cojones.

Meeting on Europe and General Diplomatic Matters⁸⁴

From time to time, President Kennedy dropped his cool demeanor and slid into more colorful language. What started out as a quick strategy session to determine the U.S. line on the then-current Common Market negotiations in Europe deteriorated into something else entirely. Kennedy had a lot on his mind. The struggle over Berlin worried him. But in this brief conversation, Kennedy spent most of his time giving an unvarnished critique of the U.S. foreign service. As a young man, Kennedy experienced embassy life firsthand when his father, Joseph P. Kennedy, was ambassador to the Court of St. James. Evidently the ambassador was not the only Kennedy to have left that London experience with some sour memories. Behind the withering characterizations of U.S. diplomats there was also, no doubt, some presidential frustration over then-current dealings with dictators in the Soviet Union, Cuba, and the determined junta in Peru.

83. Rusk to Henderson, 30 July 1962, 9:17 P.M., *FRUS*, 12: 869–70.

84. Including President Kennedy, George Ball, McGeorge Bundy, and Dean Rusk. Tape 1, John F. Kennedy Library, President's Office Files, Presidential Recordings Collection.

Before the end of this conversation, the Harvard faculty, especially one economist, would also be the target of some presidential ire.

McGeorge Bundy: Well, do you want to take a minute?

Door closes. Dean Rusk and George Ball have remained behind with Bundy and Kennedy in the Oval Office.

Bundy: This is this question.

George Ball: This question—

Bundy: Whether you go in in writing on our view of the Common Market negotiations.⁸⁵

[*to the President*] I don't know whether you have had a chance to—

President Kennedy: I haven't read that paper. I'll do it by lunchtime and I'll call you this afternoon.

Ball: All right, it's . . . My own recommendation would be that we don't give them an aide-mémoire, but that we instruct the ambassador simply to go call on the governments tomorrow morning. Tomorrow is a crucial day because they go back for the—

Bundy: —final round.

President Kennedy: What do you want to say in it?

Ball: Well, it simply defines what, with more precision in the light of the developments of the agreement, exactly [*Bundy tries to interject*] what the American trade position is, particularly with regard to common agriculture products. Now this is really—the only reason for doing this—we are not going to change the result at all; but we want to be able to assure the American agricultural interests that there was no ambiguity about our position with the Europeans—

President Kennedy: I'll read this now.

Bundy: I think it best to do it this way, Mr. President. If George could get a draft ongoing in a final form, that's the easiest way to get the President's mind on it.

Ball: Well, actually this is—

Bundy: It can be just the same as the one you had over the weekend.

Ball: No. I'll get it over to him—

Bundy: Might do that.

Dean Rusk: There ought to be some strong introduction there so that no one on the inside can use this move as a—

85. The six original members of the European Economic Community were negotiating with Great Britain to admit it into the Common Market.

Bundy: Excuse.

Rusk: —for responsibility or failure.

Bundy: What we really want is a copy of the outgoing cable to show people back here. Nobody in the chancelleries has any doubt what our view is.

Ball: That's right. Yeah.

President Kennedy: We'll get that out before we—

Bundy: Yeah.

Ball: Right. I'll get it over to you.

Nine seconds excised as classified information.

President Kennedy: There's nothing else we have to do in Berlin. Looks to me, like all that stuff that—my weekend—that Sunday intelligence thing about what they're doing to the Wall, doing to the autobahn and the shipment of fighters and all the rest sounds to me like they're ready to do something [unclear].⁸⁶

Bundy: [to Rusk] We have, as I told the President this morning, an understanding that the Berlin task force is working hard on the whole business of “after an announcement of a peace treaty.” On the other hand, I am inclined to think that Thompson's—when does Tommy get back?⁸⁷

Rusk: On the sixth of August.

Bundy: That his assessment from Copenhagen—did you see that in the brief?—that on the whole Khrushchev doesn't want a grand caesura.⁸⁸

President Kennedy: I saw that. Yeah. Now, Ed⁸⁹ said something to me on Sunday about sending Jim Loeb back there [to Peru].⁹⁰ And I said, “Well, he's persona non grata,” and he said, “It's much better to have them declare him persona non grata.” I don't think that's so, then we would have to withdraw him. I don't think we ought to send Loeb back there. We ought to get his family out of there. Put the chargé [d'affaires] there, then send an ambassador down—

Bundy: [to Rusk] Why don't we live with a chargé for a while? There's a lot of advantage in that.

86. Every weekend, McGeorge Bundy prepared a collection of classified materials for the President to read. This intelligence report was not found.

87. Llewellyn E. “Tommy” Thompson, Jr., retired as U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union on 27 July 1962. See “Meeting with Llewellyn Thompson on Khrushchev,” 8 August 1962. Thompson had served in Moscow since 1957.

88. On the way home from Russia, Thompson sent a cable to Dean Rusk arguing that Khrushchev “did not intend [to] push Berlin question to point of real risk of war” (Thompson to Rusk, 28 July 1962, *FRUS*, 15: 255).

89. Edwin Martin was assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs.

90. James I. Loeb was U.S. ambassador to Peru, 31 May 1961 to 26 July 1962.

Rusk: Well, I think we ought to—

President Kennedy: The question really ought to be whether we . . . I can send Jim anyplace else or whether he retires from the foreign service. I think probably we ought to offer him something; maybe Honduras or something [unclear].

Rusk: Let me take a look at that business. I don't know enough about it. . . .

Bundy: Did Bill Art get a chance to speak to you about Canada this morning?⁹¹

Rusk: No, I asked Robin.⁹²

President Kennedy: It follows [unclear] we are going to have one more request before the . . . to see whether, what's his name?

Bundy: Irwin [Prescott].

President Kennedy: . . . of Harvard Law School wants to go. If he doesn't want to go, then—

Bundy: [Unclear.] You might want him checked out. I'm going to ask Bill to check that.

President Kennedy: He'd wanted to go to Australia, which we didn't do. Otherwise you might as well send a career man.

Rusk: He probably wanted to go. But I would think that since he had a special interest in Australia and was lukewarm about that—

Bundy: Was he?

Rusk: Yes, and regrets he was faced with that.

President Kennedy: Well, Mac can check [that] today; otherwise it can actually go to a career [unclear].

Rusk: [Unclear.]

President Kennedy: That Iranian did not overly impress me, that fellow we had from Iran. He came in to see me . . . right out of that school.

Rusk: Iranian?

President Kennedy: Mustache . . . No, our ambassador to Iran.

Ball: Did Calvin go home? [Mixed voices.]

President Kennedy: I mean Iraq.

Bundy: Jernegan?⁹³

Rusk: Oh, Jernegan? Well, it depends on how you look at it, Mr. President. He's a pretty crack officer.

91. Unidentified.

92. Unidentified.

93. John D. Jernegan was U.S. ambassador to Iraq, 12 January 1959 to 11 June 1962. He visited Kennedy in July 1962 after having been declared persona non grata by the Iraqi government.

President Kennedy: Is he?

Bundy: He did one thing, Mr. President. He never got into a lather over the fact that these relations were going sour and he never became their man in a rather difficult period.

President Kennedy: I agree. I mean, I understand that I can't judge these things.

Rusk: I have known Jernegan, Mr. President, quite a long time and in the situation where there is real trouble I would rather have him there than many.

Bundy: If the Foreign Service knew how much you plead their case over here, Mr. Secretary, you'd be in like Flynn.

President Kennedy: I'd just like to have—who is on the selection board now, this year, that is our man?

Rusk: Well you mean, for selecting our chiefs of mission?

President Kennedy: No, the new ones.

Bundy: The promotions.

Rusk: Oh, the promotions.

President Kennedy: And the new recruits to the missions.

Rusk: Oh, they have got a whole series of boards, for different grades, and each one of them have a couple of people on them.

President Kennedy: Yeah, but [unclear] take a look as long as [unclear] new people coming in—I just see an awful lot of fellows who, I think—

Bundy: You mean the cream of the crop?

Rusk: The class A people?

President Kennedy: [dropping his voice] No, I don't think so . . . people . . . who don't seem to have *cojones*.

Bundy: Yeah.

President Kennedy: Really what I think [unclear] as a group. If I had to generalize—you never want to generalize—I think surely the Defense Department looks as if that's all they've got. They haven't any brains. [Laughter.] But I mean, can't we get a spine to [unclear]? Huh? That's where your problem is. They all come in here . . . even though we've replaced the fellow we sent to the Sudan.⁹⁴

Bundy: That's not [unclear], the other fellow.

President Kennedy: [Unclear.]

Rusk: Rountree.

Bundy: That's Rountree.

President Kennedy: Now Rountree just doesn't present a very virile

94. William M. Rountree was the newly nominated U.S. ambassador to the Sudan.

figure, that's all. Maybe that service doesn't—maybe that work doesn't require it.

Bundy: It doesn't attract.

President Kennedy: Albrecht, Rountree.⁹⁵ I mean what . . . even that very nice fellow, Woodward, they all look sort of—and he's one of the best.⁹⁶ They don't have very many, sort of—what is it?

Bundy: Charming . . .

President Kennedy: You don't agree with that?

Rusk: I don't agree with the—

President Kennedy: McClintock in the Argentine.⁹⁷

Rusk: —with the assessment of the overall makeup of qualifications and I think that the—

President Kennedy: Why is it that that particular—I think, my judgment is because these are all fellows who went in, in the 1930s and '20s, when this was a very very specialized, rather precious career. And that isn't what you are getting in now. I don't [*unclear*] joining the Peace Corps. They all look kind of . . . the same type of fellow who you'd want to have later in the Foreign Service. They all look very rugged, an American type, who seem to be both bright and physically with some vitality and force. But when you're talking to, these days . . . when you're talking to so many people who are dictators, who sort of come off in a hard and tough way, I don't think it makes much of an impression on them if some rather languid figure—Again that's my generalization and I'm sure it's grossly . . . [*unclear*].

Rusk: Well, I think it is true, Mr. President, that—

President Kennedy: Well, I mean you couldn't get a better man, in my opinion, than Freeman, for example.⁹⁸ He isn't that way at all. [*Unclear*] Colombia [*unclear*]. He's first class. Hell, I'd send him anywhere.

Bundy: Tom Mann or [*Llewellyn E.*] Thompson.⁹⁹

President Kennedy: Or what's his name—the fellow we had in Canada?¹⁰⁰

Bundy: [*Unclear.*]

95. Albrecht is unidentified.

96. Robert F. Woodward was U.S. ambassador to Spain, since 10 May 1962.

97. Robert M. McClintock was U.S. ambassador to Argentina, since 14 February 1962.

98. Fulton Freeman was U.S. ambassador to Colombia, since 16 June 1961.

99. Thomas C. Mann was U.S. ambassador to Mexico, since 5 August 1961.

100. Livingston T. Merchant was U.S. ambassador to Canada, 15 March 1961 to 26 May 1962. He had been U.S. ambassador to Canada for the first time in the Eisenhower administration.

Rusk: Livingston Merchant.

President Kennedy: I mean . . .

Rusk: Well, it is true, Mr. President, that you, if you said two years ago—

President Kennedy: Or the fellow in Italy is very [unclear].¹⁰¹

Rusk: Two years ago if you started at the top of the foreign service list and looked at the people that take on the top jobs, you'd have to eliminate about 60 percent of those in career ministerial ranks: you just couldn't do it. Now this has been pared down enormously, now I think we are far—

President Kennedy: Now the fact of the matter is that when we [unclear] however [unclear] more people, career people, in Europe, in my opinion, than [ever] in this century. I thought there was [unclear] . . .

Rusk: At no time in history would an important post be filled by so many nonpolitical people.

President Kennedy: That's right. And now we ought to [unclear] there. Therefore having done that it seems to me we've got a right to be rather tough about where they all . . . You know, I think it, [unclear]—like Dobrynin makes an impression, because you think there is a very—¹⁰²

Bundy: [He laughs.] Aircraft engineer.

President Kennedy: —self-assured and very competent, bright fellow and that makes an impression the Russians are some sort of . . . A fellow walked in like McClintock, you'd think, "Guys, is this the United States?"

Bundy: McClintock was a good soldier in the Lebanon, you know.¹⁰³ The appearance is somewhat deceptive there.

President Kennedy: Remember, all their appearances are deceptive. Let's get some guy [laughter].

Rusk: Despite [unclear. *There appears to be a short break in the tape.*] I would guess the appearances don't produce necessarily the results.

President Kennedy: That's correct. But I don't think you can generalize, I agree, I know that. I understand that a lot of fellows who look very deceptive out there and [unclear] long experience helps. And I know that you get all this sort of virility over at the Pentagon and you get a lot of Arleigh Burkes: admirable, nice figure, without any brains.¹⁰⁴ We all know

101. G. Frederick Reinhardt was U.S. ambassador to Italy, since 17 May 1961.

102. Anatoly Dobrynin was the Soviet ambassador to the United States, since March 1962.

103. Robert M. McClintock was U.S. ambassador to Lebanon during the crisis of 1958, when Eisenhower sent U.S. Marines into Beirut.

104. Admiral Arleigh Burke served as Chief of Naval Operations, 1955 to 1961.

that. But that, we don't want that. But the problem is, there must be somebody . . . you can't separate it, so much. I just think there is too much of that thread running through.

Bundy: Well, Mr. President, I really think the problem is—

President Kennedy: [*Unclear.*] I don't think they have to be that way. But there's an awful lot of them. [*Unclear.*]

Rusk: Yeah. Well, I must say that in saying goodbye to the lot that are retiring [*unclear*].

Bundy: You ought to see the ones that got away! [*Laughter.*]

Rusk: We've retired an awful lot of good prospects for retirement all right. [*More laughter.*]

President Kennedy: I remember Herschel Johnson.¹⁰⁵ You remember Herschel Johnson?

Rusk: Yes.

President Kennedy: He was with my father. He used to call my father Jeeves, which drove my father mad. Herschel was an Old Lady if you ever saw one.

Rusk: Sir, I [*unclear*].

President Kennedy: But he was celebrated a lot.

Bundy: I think we have got a real problem with our DCMs in Western Europe, because they're trained by our chiefs of mission.¹⁰⁶

President Kennedy: The second people?

Bundy: Yeah.

Rusk: Well, I think that—

President Kennedy: Cecil, you're getting Cecil home, aren't you?

Rusk: We're going to get him somewhere else.

Bundy: You can't fire him without a letter from Joe Grew in the papers.¹⁰⁷

Rusk: Well, we got Leoville Patterson. [*Unclear.*] He does not have the strength of Joe in [*unclear*].

Bundy: Thank God.

Ball: By the way, who is the very distinguished Harvard economics professor who just made a speech to the German bankers, saying that the dollar is 10 percent overvalued?

105. Herschel Johnson was counselor at the U.S. Embassy in London, from 8 July 1937 to 11 February 1941, then minister counselor until becoming U.S. ambassador to Sweden in October 1941.

106. The abbreviation DCM stands for Deputy Chief of Mission.

107. Cecil is unidentified. Joseph Grew was the former U.S. ambassador to Japan.

President Kennedy: Who said this?

Ball: It is in the *Journal of Commerce* this morning.

President Kennedy: A distinguished economics professor?

Bundy: Hockelick?¹⁰⁸

Ball: It may be Hoteler; he just two days . . .

Bundy: Was there a name in this?

Ball: No, it was Wallich's piece.¹⁰⁹

Bundy: I am no longer able to account for a lot of the professors in the economics [department.]

President Kennedy: He made this, he made this in Germany?

Ball: In Germany, to the group of—

President Kennedy: Well, that's just Harvard. I'd take his passport. I mean, imagine the son of a bitch doing that.

Bundy: [*sarcastically*] You get his name, [*unclear*].

Ball: Well, it continues some serious—

President Kennedy: That's the nearest thing to treason.

Bundy: That's right.

Ball: Of course, bankers today [*unclear*] money because they thought he would be brought here to spend [*unclear*].

President Kennedy: He's talking like in a classroom: it is 10 percent overvalued. [*Bundy agrees.*] That would be great to devalue by 10 percent, that would do us a lot of good. What would that do? Based on other currencies, it may be 10 percent overvalued. . . .

Bundy: In the end, it doesn't work that way.

President Kennedy: George, you're working hard on this thing in spite of the Treasury opposition.¹¹⁰

Ball: We're not . . .

Bundy: The Treasury's not going to—

Ball: The other day we had a meeting; it was the most constructive meeting we've ever had on this thing. And Bob Roosa was there and he was full of ideas.¹¹¹ He seemed to me enthusiastic toward going right down this program.

Unidentified: We all are.

President Kennedy: Right. Good. I'm very interested.

108. Hendrik Houthakker, later on Richard Nixon's Council of Economic Advisers.

109. Henry Wallich, chairman of Eisenhower's Council of Economic Advisers and former Yale professor, was then writing for *Newsweek*.

110. The President is referring to the Treasury's opposition to a State Department plan to stabilize the U.S. dollar by negotiating an end to European purchases of gold.

111. Robert Roosa was assistant secretary of the Treasury.

Ball: We're working very closely together, very hard on this thing.
Discussion ends. All leave through the door. The President is on his way to the swimming pool.

President Kennedy's official day was usually less than eight hours. At lunchtime the President would often go to the pool for a half hour of swimming. Then he would retire to the family quarters for two hours, including lunch. Today he returned to the Oval Office just before 4:00 P.M. for a meeting on the federal budget.

4:00–4:55 P.M.

. . . you got anything to do about the Small Business Administration getting more money in there?

Meeting on the Economy and the Budget¹¹²

The President's frustrations this day were not solely in the area of foreign policy. Current news magazines were full of criticisms of the administration's handling of the economy. Growth rates were flat and unemployment was rising. President Kennedy needed to meet with his budget director, David Bell, and others to discuss the administration's budget proposals for fiscal year 1964. Working from a joint Treasury–Council of Economic Advisors (CEA)–Bureau of the Budget monthly review document, Kennedy aimed to produce a budget proposal that served three major purposes. It had to appear, on the surface, to be a product of surpassing frugality. It had to include new outlays for programs that genuinely interested the President and his chief economic advisers. And, in what was fast becoming President Kennedy's theoretical outlook, the budget had to also possess a critical mass large enough to propel the economy in at least a modest upward trajectory, despite its relatively trim appearance.¹¹³ Banking on

112. Including President Kennedy, David Bell, Henry Fowler, Walter Heller, Arthur Okun, Theodore Sorensen, and Robert Turner. Tape 2.1, John F. Kennedy Library, President's Office Files, Presidential Recordings Collection.

113. Memorandum for the President from C. Douglas Dillon, Walter W. Heller, and David E. Bell, 27 July 1962, Departments and Agencies: Bureau of the Budget, July 1962–November 1963, President's Office Files, Box 71, John F. Kennedy Library.

a general tax cut at some undetermined point in the near future and on relaxed political and economic budgetary limits beyond that point, President Kennedy hoped that these budgetary changes would take place amid economic growth rather than decline.

The most recent economic indicators were not encouraging. Having missed their forecast for the first two quarters of the year by predicting more growth than actually occurred, Kennedy's Council of Economic Advisers, represented here by Chairman Walter Heller and staff economist Arthur Okun, had just issued a much gloomier report, forecasting an increase in the unemployment rate and the distinct possibility of a recession before the end of the year.¹¹⁴ The Republican opposition girded to attack on two grounds: that the economy was faltering somewhat after an all too brief period of renewed growth and that, at the very least, the Kennedy performance had fallen considerably short of the lofty goals set by the President himself in the campaign and throughout 1961. And while the Treasury, represented here by Under Secretary Henry Fowler, offered a much more sanguine view of the near term, they forecast little more than modest growth and a stable unemployment rate. At approximately 5.5 percent, the unemployment rate stood well above the 4 percent goal Kennedy and his advisers hoped to reach sometime in 1963.¹¹⁵

With plans for a tax cut—either immediate and temporary, or delayed but permanent—as the backdrop to these discussions, caution and deliberate formulation prevailed. Much of the President's reluctance, explained Walter Heller, “was simply a political sensitivity to the sting of Republican charges of fiscal irresponsibility and a consciousness that tax cuts did not fit his call for sacrifice.”¹¹⁶ “The Republicans would kick us in the balls on that one,” Kennedy reminded Paul Samuelson.¹¹⁷ Political opposition notwithstanding, Kennedy had by this time settled on the economics of the Keynesian tax cut proposed by nearly all of his economic advisers. Only uncertainty in the prevailing economic fore-

114. Though officially recognized as a staff economist, Okun, along with fellow staff economist (and future Nobel laureate) Robert Solow, became, according to CEA member James Tobin, additional members of the council in all but name [see James Tobin and Murray Weidenbaum, eds., *Two Revolutions in Economic Policy: The First Economic Reports of Presidents Kennedy and Reagan* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988), p. 4].

115. A goal reached by Kennedy's successor, Lyndon B. Johnson, in December 1965.

116. Walter W. Heller, *New Dimensions of Political Economy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 30.

117. Quoted in Richard Reeves, *President Kennedy: Profile of Power* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993), p. 319.

casts forced the President to consider a temporary “quickie” tax cut designed to stave off an immediate recession.

Plans for tax cuts, in general, otherwise focused on *permanent* tax code revision, the eradication of the “fiscal drag” blamed for the economy’s underperformance, increasing demand as a catalyst for new investment, and a full-employment goal of no more than 4 percent unemployment.¹¹⁸ Despite conspicuous hesitation regarding the timing of a tax cut and the associated political difficulties related to deliberate deficit financing, the President and his advisers were unwavering in their preference for these goals, even if the more pessimistic forecasts were to be proved wrong and a recession deemed unlikely or impossible.

As a result of these concerns, the President and his advisers devoted much of this meeting to a survey of the budget numbers and their economic impact. What should be counted and when it should be counted became questions of paramount significance. Kennedy understood that the answers would tell him much about the economic impact of the budget and the outlook for the economy at large. And perceptions also mattered. How the budget was perceived—by the public, by the political opposition, and by the press—was just as important to the President and his economic advisers.

Recording begins with a broadcast of the major league baseball All-Star game heard in the background and on the left channel.¹¹⁹ The conversation between President Kennedy and his advisers begins soon after this broadcast is cut off and is recorded on the right channel.

[Broadcaster] Vin Scully: . . . Bill Mazeroski of Pittsburgh at second, Dick Groat of Pittsburgh at short, and Ken Boyer of the St. Louis Cardinals at third. Tommy Davis of the Los Angeles Dodgers—

David Bell: [Unclear] differently or you’re going to get caught that

118. Fiscal drag is a phenomenon produced when government (mostly federal, but also state and local) fiscal policies take in, either in the form of excessive tax withdrawals or insufficient spending (or a combination of both), more than they send out.

119. This All-Star game, played at Chicago’s Wrigley Field, was actually the second of two played in 1962. Two All-Star games were played annually from 1959 to 1962, with proceeds from the second contest earmarked for the recently established major league pension fund. The American League defeated the National League 9 to 4 in this game on the strength of Rocky Colavito’s three-run home run in the seventh inning, and \$216,908 was raised for the league’s pension fund.

same way. These are very small percentages of the total, and that you . . . I don't know whether we can count on doing much better . . .

Henry Fowler: We've been basing it all on contract letting, from Defense and other large contract-letting departments in—

Bell: [*Unclear.*]

Fowler: —May and June.

Unidentified: But you can still count on—[*Recording goes off and comes on again.*]

Unidentified: We've done that and while we have a little—

Unidentified: This pattern of—

Bell: The accuracy of the [*unclear*].

Walter Heller: There are some fairly good ones . . . [*Unclear background conversation.*]

Fowler: These figures on goals, that is, are generally . . . are not in favor of, say . . . The things that are associated with large defense contracts and all the good goals show a drop-off in June, whereas normally you expect a rise such as [*unclear*]. [*Unclear exchange.*]

Unidentified: You do the same thing—

Bell: Prices go up.

Unidentified: Unless you—

Bell: [*Unclear.*] Contract letting or [*unclear*].

President Kennedy: But they should proceed here?

Unidentified: Yes, sir.

Bell: That there it is, related to the three-party monthly reviews, and . . . We sent you a copy on Friday. I don't know whether you had a chance to look at it or not. This one, has the key element in it that, looking forward into fiscal '63 we get a split verdict from Treasury and from the council.¹²⁰ And that they make . . . they have different assumptions about the . . . what the economy is going to do in the early part of calendar 1963.

Thirty-two-second pause.

President Kennedy: It's a big difference. The CEA projection for the second quarter of '63 is 559 billion.¹²¹

Bell: Right.

President Kennedy: While the Treasury projection for the same is 581?

Bell: Yes, sir.

120. Council of Economic Advisers.

121. Figures drawn from Memorandum for the President from C. Douglas Dillon, Walter W. Heller, and David E. Bell, 27 July 1962, Departments and Agencies: Bureau of the Budget, July 1962–November 1963, President's Office Files, Box 71, John F. Kennedy Library.

President Kennedy: It's a major—

Bell: It is. Actually, the difference of view as to what's going to happen to the economy after the first of the year—

Fowler: The detail of that is indicated on page 2 in the economic outlook under "Housing," "Plant and Equipment," and "Inventories."¹²² We will summarize—

Bell: All the Council is saying [is] that the economy is going to start sliding downward after January, and the Treasury's saying it's going to continue slightly upward after January.

Twenty-nine-second pause.

President Kennedy: How many copies of this have you made, Dave?

Bell: Well, they're all here in the room, sir, except, for about three more that are in our . . . in Bob Turner's office.¹²³ This was handled the way—

President Kennedy: Yes.

Bell: —each of these things has been handled over the last number of years.

President Kennedy: The estimated budget deficit . . . under the Treasury is 7.4, and 8.3 under the CEA model.

Bell: Yeah. You see there isn't much difference. Those two figures are not really far apart.

President Kennedy: Increased expenditures 1.2. That would be what? Agriculture? And it's Postal? Is that where we're seeing it?

Bell: It's an increase since the last . . . yes, since the January budget.

President Kennedy: That would be the . . . primarily on page 4, these increased expenditures?

Bell: Those are about 600 million, resulting from the modifications that we have made since the public works bill and the breaks entered under unemployment compensation . . . recommendations from some of the [unclear].¹²⁴ Now, that's only a net 450, but it shows here 600 million, the difference between the payment and the receipts side. The other 600 million dollars . . . we anticipate a farm bill that will not cut expenditures

122. On housing starts, for example, the joint memorandum reads: "The Treasury foresees some decline in housing starts from the high levels reached in the second quarter of calendar 1962, but feels that a ready availability of mortgage funds, some upward trend in family formation and increases in additions and alterations will help sustain total housing expenditures. CEA expects that the slackening of income gains will lead to a decline in housing activity during the first half of 1963."

123. Bob Turner was assistant director, Bureau of the Budget.

124. The public works bill was the Public Works Acceleration Bill, signed by President Kennedy six weeks later on 14 September 1962.

the way yours would have. A delay in postal rates going into effect, probably next January rather than July 1st so that we get some in the budget.¹²⁵ And the U.N. bond legislation hitting '63 instead of '62.¹²⁶ Possible larger pay raises.¹²⁷ And this public welfare bill you signed a couple of days ago has a hundred million dollars plus in it that was over and above what you recommended.¹²⁸ That's where the billion-two comes from. I don't think any of it, we can do much about it at this stage, with the exception of what Congress is doing with your various recommendations.

Theodore Sorensen: At least, Mr. President, in our [unclear] to you, we found an outstanding—

President Kennedy: Does this go . . . We assume that you are going to take a billion dollars off foreign aid. They've taken 500 million off of the shelters, that's a billion and a half. That's not—¹²⁹

Sorensen: Let's put it in there—

Bell: We have assumed that there will be about a 500 million dollar net cut in expenditures in, stemming from the Congress's actions on appropriations. If they cut foreign aid, the effect of the cut will be felt only partly in fiscal '63 and partly in fiscal '64 because they enacted obligational authority to make loans. Much of the expenditures in '63 will stem from loans that are already being made or have been made, so that, the Congress's action on foreign aid will have a minimal . . . a smaller effect in '63 than the gross amount that they cut. And along with the rest of the budget, as you know, they move up a lot of things, as well as moving some down.

125. Postal rate increases were attached to the Pay Bill (H.R. 7927) signed by President Kennedy on 11 October 1962. This legislation increased the first-class postage rate from 4¢ to 5¢.

126. Legislation to authorize the U.S. purchase of \$200 million worth of 2 percent interest U.N. bonds, designed to help the United Nations out of its precarious financial situation. This legislation was delayed because of strident opposition in Congress and was eventually altered to authorize only \$100 million in bond purchases.

127. Potential federal pay raises attached to the Pay Bill, note 126. It increased salaries of non-postal employees by approximately 10 percent and those of postal employees by approximately 11 percent. The administration proposal was replaced by a substitute bill, introduced by James Morrison (D-Louisiana), that substantially increased the costs of the Pay Bill relative to the administration's first projections.

128. The amount authorized in the new Welfare Bill was \$2.8 billion, a \$300 million increase from the previous year and \$100 million more than requested by President Kennedy. Attracted to its self-help provisions and to the imposition of new penalties for parental misuse of Aid to Families with Dependent Children funds, conservatives supported the bill openly and contributed substantially to the drive for additional funds.

129. This was federal aid for the construction of radioactive fallout shelters. President Kennedy had proposed a \$568 million fallout shelter program; Congress scrapped the proposal, appropriating only \$10 million to undertake a study of the potential need for such a program.

President Kennedy: Let's see, [reading] "On a consolidated cash basis, the estimated excess of payments over receipts is \$8.2 billion."¹³⁰ It's 6.9.¹³¹ That doesn't seem to me very much different from the . . .

Bell: Not very much different. That's right . . . this particular year.

President Kennedy: I wonder why that is?

Heller: Well, because the most of the impact of . . . on revenues is delayed for some time, and our divergence in the GNP developments is really only after the close of this calendar year.

Unidentified: Most of the revenues—

Heller: Most of the revenue impact will come in fiscal '64. That'll be a much bigger divergence if [unclear] those plans with those figures. Our set of figures is essentially a sort of a high-level plateau in GNP, but with unemployment rising, with the gap between what we could do and what we are doing widening. I think yours is more of a plateau of unemployment. Your . . . you keep, what, 5½ percent unemployment right straight through, and your gap between the actual and the potential [output] would be about steady.¹³² We see—

Fowler: We feel it will begin to come out and move up in the fourth quarter of this calendar year and the first quarter of statistical . . . but at a slightly higher rate in the movement from the first to the second quarter of the second year.

President Kennedy: Well Dave, are we going to do anything about our budget? Changing the budget form? Are we going to put it in different forms, like the consolidated cash?¹³³

Bell: Well, we've got, as you know, we have a study underway on this.

130. A consolidated cash basis is a method of computing the budget by which Social Security and other trust fund receipts and disbursements are included in the total. Total trust fund activity in 1962, which included Social Security, highway grants-in-aid, unemployment compensation, and a few others, amounted to approximately \$25 billion.

131. The \$8.2 billion was the CEA deficit estimate and the \$6.9 billion was the Treasury estimate, both on a consolidated cash basis. See note 134 on the consolidated cash basis and other methods of government budgeting.

132. *You* refers to the Department of the Treasury.

133. Four different methods of computing the federal budget were in use at this time and were given active consideration as the official method. The conventionally accepted method, known as the administrative or bookkeeping budget, excluded trust fund receipts and disbursements and classified all investments as expenditures. The consolidated cash budget differed from the administrative method by including trust fund receipts and disbursements. The national income budget also included trust fund transactions but did not classify some investments as expenditures. It also recorded transactions when liabilities were incurred (accrual basis) but not when cash changed hands (cash basis), and it omitted transactions in financial assets and already existing assets (government loans, for example). The capital budget, like the adminis-

Just . . . I guess, I'm going to have to put it to these fellows within the next week or two because I think we have a different suggestion. I think they would like us to go to a capital budget, and we're going to come down against it. We'll be bringing this to you, fairly soon.

President Kennedy: What would be, in short, your reasons against it?

Bell: Well, there are two or three points involved. Now, the first is that the . . . it seems to me it tends to create a bias in favor of physical public works and against actions which are maybe more important and necessary, like increases in expenditures for education and research. It looks as though you are saying, "Don't worry about how much you spend on public works, worry only about how much you are spending on your current outlays." Some of the current outlays are more important than the public works in terms of their contribution to the growth of the country.

The second principal problem is that it looks as though you're saying . . . the . . . we should plan typically to budget for borrowing to cover capital expenditures, whereas the decision whether or not we should have a budget deficit and therefore a net borrowing, in an economic sense, really has nothing to do with that whatever. That's strictly an irrelevant fact. The economics of the situation depend on the entire drift of the . . . The criteria for decision in economic terms are the impact of the federal fiscal actions on the economy. In some years you want to budget for a deficit and for borrowing that is much larger than the amount of capital you happen to have in that year's budget. Other years you don't want to borrow, you want to budget for no borrowing whatever, even though you do have some capital outlays.

Heller: May I interrupt to say I agree a hundred percent with that point, and that, that doesn't need to be dictated by the size of the capital budget . . . but that's getting into—

Bell: Yeah.

Heller: On this we'd have a 100 percent agreement . . . this second point.

Bell: Well, it doesn't really affect the question here, but we will indicate why—

President Kennedy: But how can we get a budget that will not put in more, extract more without really having any effect upon the . . . Now, as

trative budget, excluded trust fund transactions but placed capital outlays into a separate account. All but the capital budget were produced in the 1962 *Annual Report of the Council of Economic Advisers* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1962).

I understand it, for the last, what, four or five months we've been taking more out than putting into the economy by how much? How does it run for a year, the 12 months, from July to July, isn't it? [*Unclear exchange.*]

Bell: My economists . . .

Fowler: Mike can tell us about [*unclear*] . . . he said that's gone up.

Robert Turner: That's on the national income account basis, though.

Fowler: That's on an income and product account basis, we have not been—[*Unclear exchange.*]

Bell: On the income and product account basis, we have not been drawing out more than we've been putting in. We've been drawing a small deficit each quarter.¹³⁴

Arthur Okun: It's not seasonally adjusted.

Turner: [*Unclear*] and on a cash basis it's extremely hard to put together . . . roughly it is close to 2 billion dollars in the second quarter in surplus, but—

Bell: Yeah.

Turner: —we've been trying to put a precise figure together . . . hoped to have it here today, and it probably—

President Kennedy: This is on the [*consolidated*] cash [*basis*], is it?

Turner: This—

Fowler: This is income and product account that you have there.

Okun: Those probably aren't seasonally adjusted. They are—

Bell: The cash—

Okun: Those are—

Bell: The cash figure, Mr. President, would show a surplus in the spring and a deficit in the fall . . . seasonal.

Okun: Right.

Bell: The question is whether that has any economic meaning.

President Kennedy: Yeah, well . . .

Fowler: We usually attribute the economic meaning to the incoming tax year.

Bell: To these figures here. The reason being that the swing, the tem-

134. It was the contention of Kennedy's economic advisers that this method (national income) of budgeting produced figures that most accurately reflected the economic impact of federal government operations. Use of the accrual method and the inclusion of the trust fund transactions, for example, reflected transactions with clear impact on private spending decisions. Since corporate income taxes were normally paid more than six months after the liabilities were incurred, actual payments could run well below accruals in times of rising economic activity, yet the sum of the accrued liabilities tended to determine corporate cash flow and spending practices. This difference for fiscal year 1962 was estimated at approximately \$3 billion.

porary . . . the seasonal surplus in the spring, the deficit in the fall, I think—

Unidentified: Sure.

Bell: —has to do with when you collect your corporation tax receipts. In the fall, even though you're not collecting them, the corporations know that they are accruing them, and they are setting aside cash funds. They could be buying Treasury bills, or some other handy device to keep the money liquid, you see. Therefore, since they are putting the money aside, taking it out of the normal stream of their private business activities, it has roughly the same effect on the economy as if we were getting it in taxes. So that even though there is a seasonal swing, it's questionable whether it has any very large economic significance. These figures, which most of the economists look to as the real indicators of the government's effect on the economy, do not show the same kind of a swing. They are normally—

Fowler: On a cash basis, for example, this fall we'll have a very substantial—

Bell: Deficit.

Fowler: —deficit.

Turner: Ten billion dollars.

Fowler: Ten billion dollars.

President Kennedy: You don't think that's any help to the economy?

Turner: A little.

Bell: Yes, a little. But not that much.

Fowler: But not as much significance as what these figures would show.

Bell: Our private income and product [*unclear*] figures will show deficits in the fall of probably, oh . . . 2½ percent.

Heller: The quarter's changing so that's right.

Bell: Now, 2½, during the fall actually . . . roughly. Though it should be—

President Kennedy: Well, this says here, it might be 5.1, isn't it?

Turner: That's an annual rate.

Fowler: These are annual rates, Mr. President, they're projected on an annual rate basis. Fifty-three point . . .

Bell: Now, the main . . . the third question on the capital budget, sir, and again, I'm not going to argue the case now, but, this is what we will be talking about, is that if you would propose a capital budget, it seems to me you're very likely to be in a logical position of having to defend the point of view that the federal debt can rise indefinitely. This is purely a political point. The economics of that doesn't bother me in the slightest. I think that's correct, as an economist. The federal debt should rise indefinitely.

But politically it's a rather difficult position. And yet that's the implication of a capital budget against which you would . . . you would regularly cover your capital expenditures by borrowing. Now as, as Walter says, that isn't the only kind of a capital budget [*unclear*.]

Heller: No, well, you could run a surplus on the current account.¹³⁵ Then fiscal policies, hopefully, offset whatever excess you have in the deficit on the capital account.

Bell: But these are the considerations being—

Fowler: Mr. Stans has devoted his last two weekly articles to this capital budget question.¹³⁶

Bell: Oh, has he?

Unidentified: Yesterday, in your—

Bell: I stopped reading them months ago. [*Quiet laughter*.]

Fowler: The last time I think it came up for any brief consideration on the Hill, that was when Ruml proposed it.¹³⁷ I think, there was the usual blast from Senator Byrd, and then it kind of evaporated.¹³⁸ But that was a very brief encounter, though. It wasn't a well-developed, well-designed push through.

Bell: We had some small approach to the capital budget in the income and product account figures, because they do leave out federal lending activity, and, I think, there's questions we'll have to consider when we come to these bills, and we may have to bring judgments on them as to whether or not it's a sufficient basis of change, to enable you to present the budget figures from that . . .

135. Expenditures category in a capital budget for operations and not investments.

136. Maurice Stans was budget director in the Eisenhower administration and later secretary of commerce and finance chairman of the Committee to Re-elect the President in the Nixon administration. Stans had been hired by the *Los Angeles Times-Mirror* syndicate to write a weekly column on economics and economic policy. Syndicated in 46 newspapers by this time in 1962, Stans's column had surveyed issues such as the rising tide of personal bankruptcies, the ongoing corporate profit squeeze, the loss of U.S. gold reserves, and other similarly gloomy topics.

137. Beardsley Ruml was a Carnegie Corporation executive, director of the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial (which he transformed from a modest social work program into a major research agency), dean of social sciences at the University of Chicago, Macy's Corporation treasurer, Federal Reserve Bank of New York director, and unofficial adviser to Franklin Roosevelt (particularly during the late 1930s period, often termed the Second New Deal). In concert with Harry Hopkins, Leon Henderson, and Aubrey Williams, it was Ruml, along with Marriner Eccles, who convinced Franklin Roosevelt in the midst of the 1937–1938 “Roosevelt recession” to ignore Treasury Secretary Morgenthau's urging of a balanced budget and to create additional purchasing power through government deficit spending instead.

138. Harry F. Byrd, Sr., was a Democratic senator from Virginia, 1933 to 1965, and chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, 1955 to 1965.

Fowler: We haven't considered this at any length, Mr. President, over in the Treasury. I have discussed it informally with Secretary Dillon, and I have the feeling that some consideration ought to be given to, if you are going to move forward on that, on having some kind of outside economist . . . organizational analysis before you jump.¹³⁹

Bell: You mean as, as window dressing or for a real purpose?

Fowler: Well, a little bit of both.

Bell: But, the . . . we're already moving . . . the President has asked the chamber of commerce to give us some advice, or to consider these questions which are—

Fowler: That's right. I think we might—

Bell: That's under way.

Fowler: We . . . we probably have to anticipate—

Bell: If we think the prospect of getting—

Fowler: —yours would be one way or the chamber's would be another in some kind of amalgam in between.

Bell: We also have to consider the related question: whether the whole budget should be put on an accrual basis rather than a cash basis.

President Kennedy: That's what I . . . I had a bill to that effect. It passed the Congress, and the appropriations committees objected.

Bell: We didn't realize that.

President Kennedy: That was . . . that was the one the Hoover Commission made public—¹⁴⁰

Unidentified: [*Unclear*]

Bell: No, that's the accrual accounting—

President Kennedy: Yeah.

Bell: —accrual accounting. The accrual accounting part of it was all right, but what the Hoover Commission recommended was what they call accrued expenditure limitations.

President Kennedy: Yeah.

Bell: Which would mean that the Congress would vote limits on the expenditures that any agency could make in a given year. The trouble with that is that the expenditures simply flow on out from the commitments that have already been made and made earlier. And, therefore, you can say—to the defense of the department—that we've got an accrued expenditure limitation of so much in this fiscal year. If that is less than

139. C. Douglas Dillon was secretary of the Treasury.

140. See *Budgeting and Accounting, Letter from the Chairman, Commission on Organization of the Executive Branch of the Government* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1949).

the bills that will be coming due, under the contracts that they have . . . that they have been authorized to make, then you have got to consider how to make some private contractors wait for their money. It doesn't have any real effect on their making the volume of commitment, which is the point of effective control.

So, that in particular, that's a lesser . . . a separate . . . a separate point. But we have been . . . the government in the budget, with that bill, which you introduced, the government has been going out on an accrual accounting basis. And nearly all the departments now can provide accrued cost figures for our use. In fact we understand that their [*unclear*] will remain. The main impact of it, though, would be on the receipts side.

Unidentified: Yeah.

President Kennedy: What do we have to decide today? No, this is just really—

Bell: This is the best . . . this is the information. . . . Having noted that there's a difference between the council and the Treasury at this point, I—

President Kennedy: It's rather large, isn't it? Now, tell me again, what is the reason for a difference of almost 30 billion dollars for . . .¹⁴¹

Fowler: Well, in each of the three sectors that are discussed on page 2 and 3—housing, plant and equipment, and inventory planning—there is some substantial difference of view. I think the differences are somewhat marginal on housing, but on plant and equipment we stick, more or less, to the premise of the budget last January that given the depreciation changes, given the investment credit, there will be a push forward in the plant and equipment field.¹⁴² We see no reason to back away from that judgment, which was made then collectively, insofar as the first six months of 1963 are concerned. I think it's too early to anticipate very much in 1962, and I wouldn't on that score, but we do think given the enactment of the investment credit, that the combination of the two things will be of some significance in the first six months—

141. Gross national product (GNP) projections.

142. Earlier that year, by executive order, President Kennedy had enacted accelerated depreciation schedules for plant and equipment, which allowed businesses to write off the cost of these investments at a faster pace than before. The Kennedy administration had also submitted legislation introducing a 7 percent investment tax credit for the purchase of new plant and equipment. The investment tax credit would be signed into law on 16 October 1962 and, together with the new Treasury Bulletin F depreciation schedules, would increase corporate cash flow over the first year by approximately \$3 billion.

President Kennedy: Well, we'll have three budget deficits . . . aren't we? But there's nothing we can do about that [unclear] as far as I can tell [unclear].

Fowler: Well, I think it's worth noting, however, that the amount of the deficit already cranked into the situation ought to provide some, at least, retarding effect on any, on any fall back, you see, so . . .

Heller: Yeah, there's some cushioning. Well, we went back to check what we said on that and that's exactly what we said.

Fowler: There is a cushion there, but—

Heller: Cushioning, but not, not that it'll [unclear] push it back up.

Fowler: You get about the same amount of cushioning for . . . on our projections now as the Eisenhower deficit provided in 1958 or '59.

President Kennedy: Six point three this year . . . an estimated, what, seven billion next year? Nothing . . .

Unidentified: Yes.

Heller: That's seven billion.

Unidentified: Seven to eight.

Unidentified: Right.

Heller: Seven to eight.

President Kennedy: Well, all right, say eight. . . . Let's just [unclear].

Fowler: The last element, Mr. President, is on inventories, and, there, we take the view that, inventory accumulations which have dipped some, and will dip a little bit more for the remainder of the year, will probably increase moderately in 1963. We think inventory levels are quite low now compared to sales. We don't have any picture of excessive inventories having built up. They've been really held back, whether it's due to judgment or due to new techniques of measuring inventories and using better calculating methods for procurement. . . . But, anyway, there is a lot of room there for continued inventory accumulation in early '63. On the other hand, the council's judgment is that very conservative inventory policies are likely to be maintained even though there is an advance. And I think—

President Kennedy: Can I . . . can I just ask, what was our deficit for last year?

Bell: Three point nine, sir. You mean fiscal '62?

President Kennedy: Yeah.

Bell: —'62?

President Kennedy: Yeah.

Bell: I mean '61.

Unidentified: Fiscal '61.

President Kennedy: Oh, yeah.

Bell: That, of course, you count that as an Eisenhower year.

President Kennedy: Yeah. Well, it's . . . I was going to say, in the year, how much did we . . . added to . . . How much did his . . . based on the amount of increases in the program, how much did we add to that deficit? [*Unclear exchange.*]

Unidentified: It depends on how much [*unclear*] in the [*unclear*].

Unidentified: Sounds incredible.

Unidentified: Right.

President Kennedy: OK, that's a drop in . . . his estimates were wrong on income and his programs were wrong. But we added something to it in agriculture, didn't we, and something in defense?

Unidentified: [*Unclear.*]

President Kennedy: What?

Unidentified: I'll tell you [*unclear*].

Bell: We would have added, you know. . . . They can . . . it's right up to a billion dollars, to 3.9. Could have been—

President Kennedy: Ours?

Bell: —logically argued at the time . . .

President Kennedy: Well, all right. I want to thank you for these figures.

Bell: Mr. President, there is in this difference, in the anticipation of what happens in . . . in January. Beyond January it appears, in some [*unclear*] they're probably waiting on, deciding on the tax cut.

Sorensen: The best I can say, Mr. President, our arguments may be able to show the difference in the Treasury and the CEA aggregate unemployment numbers. It's the largest—

Unidentified: The CEA—

Sorensen: The CEA predicts unemployment's going to go up to 7 percent.

Bell: Look up to C-1.¹⁴³

Sorensen: The statement . . . table and statement at C-1 . . . 7 percent compared to 5.5 percent. And the difference is—

President Kennedy: By what date do they think it's 7 percent?

Unidentified: That's 7 percent in August.

Unidentified: Seven percent in [*unclear*].

Unidentified: So that's the middle of May [*unclear*].

Unidentified: —in the second quarter.

Heller: [*to himself, quietly*] [*Unclear*] 1963, again [*unclear*].

143. Attached statement in which the Treasury projected the GNP for the second quarter of calendar year 1963.

President Kennedy: These figures are [unclear]? OK.

Heller: Also, possibly, we should go over, but aren't prepared to today, is the relationship of the deficits of fiscal '63 and fiscal '64 on our tax cuts and no tax cuts. That we're ready to say whether the deficits for the two years are now going to be getting larger or smaller with the stimulus of the tax cut. And I think that's an open question.

Bell: The memo I just handed to you, sir, has been pending since July 12.¹⁴⁴ It was prepared originally for . . . that one.

President Kennedy: This one?

Bell: Yeah. For the meeting with Wilbur—

President Kennedy: OK.

Bell: —but, [unclear] with Mills.¹⁴⁵ Now, that recommends some action on expenditures, for the second half. You already know about and have approved the Veterans Administration's dividends.¹⁴⁶

President Kennedy: Right.

Bell: It's being looked into.

President Kennedy: Right.

Bell: Now, on page 3 . . . two other . . . recommendations that we propose to you, make to you, one is to accelerate Defense Department procurement of general and medical supplies which they would be buying any way, but which they could buy a little earlier.

President Kennedy: For this fall?

Bell: Right . . . well, it'd be, yeah, for this coming fiscal year. Place the orders as soon as they can.

President Kennedy: And that's, what, 50 million dollars?

Bell: Well, it may add as much as 50 million, I don't know.

President Kennedy: Are you checking into that, then?

Bell: Yes, sir. We will if—

144. The memo was Bell to President Kennedy, "Possibilities for Increasing Government Outlays in the Short Run," 12 July 1962, Departments and Agencies: Bureau of the Budget, President's Office Files, John F. Kennedy Library.

145. Wilbur Mills was the chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, with whom President Kennedy would meet one week later, on 6 August 1962. See "Meeting on the Tax Cut Proposal with Wilbur Mills," 6 August 1962.

146. This was an acceleration of life insurance dividend payments. Officially announced on 22 November 1962, it advanced payments of \$222 million on National Service Life Insurance policies (to be paid in January 1963, rather than throughout the 1963 calendar year) and \$15.6 million—disbursed also in January—to holders of U.S. Government Life Insurance policies. As Budget Director Bell noted in his memorandum, this infusion, being a trust fund item, would not affect the administrative budget but would nonetheless provide a small stimulus, a suitable initiative, then, for the political environment in which the President and his advisers operated.

President Kennedy: Yes.

Bell: —you agree. Then point three, there are certain speedups in contracting and procurement in other agencies. There isn't much money involved, but this again can help a little bit . . . if you'd like us to pursue that. We could also speed up the food stamp plan. I don't, personally, think that's a good idea. I think Ted may . . . may be for that. I'm not sure.

Sorensen: Well, we're about to announce an expansion of the food stamp plan into more communities, but that was decided upon earlier.¹⁴⁷

Bell: But that's part of the normal program. This would be an additional expansion. They, in effect, can, you know, can enlarge this quite rapidly.¹⁴⁸

President Kennedy: Where are we putting it now? We have it in how many communities now?

Sorensen: Well, we have 8 until—

Bell: That's right.

Sorensen: —last year and we're about to announce at your next press conference, Mr. President that they're—

Bell: Going up to—

Unidentified: To 20?

Bell: —[unclear] 20.

Sorensen: Well, no [unclear] what an addition of 20 . . . At any rate—

Bell: Yeah.

Sorensen: —it's a very popular program, both on the Hill and in the communities where it's taken—

President Kennedy: What are you . . . you got anything to do about the Small Business Administration getting more money in there?

Bell: Well, that's the other thing we have in here for current decision. It's on page . . . page 6.

147. Instituted in 1939 and discontinued in 1943, the federal Food Stamp Program was reinstituted in 1961 as a pilot program in selected counties and municipalities. Changed fundamentally at this point from a program that was designed to distribute farm surpluses to one that focused more on improved nutrition, it grew markedly as it expanded to cover more people and a greater variety of foodstuffs. On 2 August 1962, only three days after this meeting, President Kennedy issued a statement calling on the Department of Agriculture to expand the Food Stamp Program to an additional 25 areas in 18 states [see "Statement by the President on the Food Stamp Program," *Public Papers of the Presidents, John F. Kennedy, 1962* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963), p. 599].

148. Many counties and municipalities had requested new pilot programs. The Food Stamp Program would continue to function as a pilot program and would continue to operate as a subsidy, rather than a grant, program until late in the Johnson administration.

President Kennedy: Well, now let's see, there's some more here. Well, let's let the Food Stamp go, then . . . not accelerate; increase this, or . . . Ted, this is number four: "Expand Food Stamp."

Sorensen: [Unclear]

President Kennedy: [reading] "Using Section 32 funds . . . of doubtful desirability once expanded, it would be difficult to retract. Would have no . . . virtually no stimulating impact on private investment," but they would on private . . . on production.¹⁴⁹

Bell: Well, it's essentially simply a matter of using up some of the agricultural surpluses. There's no net stimulating effect, and you don't want to have any stimulating effect on agriculture output. [Quiet laughter.] OK, fine.

President Kennedy: OK, well, now, the other one . . . the next one I think we ought to . . . "Accelerate placing contracts."

Bell: But to this point it is, that Bob . . . in that case would go into a new set of circumstances, when the appropriation bills are enacted—

President Kennedy: [reading] "Accelerate in the first quarter . . . repay VA [Veterans Administration] insurance dividend normally payable in the full year."

Bell: That's one that would be coming up, as of January 1st, isn't it?

Sorensen: Yes.

Bell: That's right.

Unidentified: OK.

President Kennedy: [Unclear] new authority to request it—

Bell: Now, then you get to some things if you want to ask Congress for more money. But I'm assuming that you do not want to make that decision today.

President Kennedy: There's one like this already.

Bell: Right.

President Kennedy: Right. Now, this is the . . . "that will increase rate of extension of credit, considerable authorities, in the case of variable rates, have been granted which can be used . . . which [unclear] have very little economic effect. . . . Small business loans . . . from all of . . ." They're financed by appropriations, aren't they?

Bell: Yes, sir, and revolving funds. And here, they have, in effect, a limitation, on the size of the loan. Their statutory maximum has been 350,000 dollars per loan. They have been operating administratively at 200,000 dollars as part of the cutback exercise which we put in last fall.

149. The reference here is to the proposed expansion of the Food Stamp Program.

They recommend, and we concur, that it's time to lift that back to 350,000 dollars, if you agree. You should be aware, however, that if you do that you're committing yourself to—

Sorensen: If you're—

Bell: —sending up a \$60 million supplemental along about in January. Now it may not turn out to be exactly 60, but we've got to look at it, at that time. It may well be 60.5.¹⁵⁰

President Kennedy: Now, first off, who can get something from the Small Business Administration that they can't get from their local bank? What . . . what . . . how much of a difference is there?

Bell: The theory is that nobody gets anything from the Small Business Administration unless they can't get it from their local bank. It's supposed to be a lender of last resort. Now, in practice there's some skepticism, and what entitles some skepticism is that whether the bank in every case is, you know, just doesn't get interested in this particular fellow and his project, and therefore, says, "Well, you can go ahead to the Small Business [Administration], and I'll say that I wouldn't make the loan." The . . . nevertheless, I suppose a reasonable assumption is that 50 percent of them—

President Kennedy: How have we been doing this? The credit rating's been good?

Bell: Well, it's been fine in recent years, you see, but that's because the economy's been, by and large, been moving pretty well.

Sorensen: [Unclear] Wall Street, to about 4½ percent.

Bell: But, if we were in a time of real difficulties, their loss ratio would jump sky high.

President Kennedy: What's the loss ratio of a regular bank?

Sorensen: [Unclear.]

Unidentified: And this is 4½ percent.

Bell: In pretty good time. But that's, you see . . . that's the theory, I think. You're supposed to make loans that are—

President Kennedy: Anybody got any thought about this?

Sorensen: I think it's . . . it will add some . . . enough stimulus to the rest of the economy and it's worth going ahead on, Mr. President. You know that the 60 million sent up in January is not going to improve [unclear].

Unidentified: Let's go on.

150. President Kennedy approved raising the cap for small business loans and sent up a \$40 million supplemental appropriation to pay for the prospectively increased outlays.

President Kennedy: OK. Let's go with that.

Bell: [Unclear] and I think the prospect [unclear] how its going to end.

President Kennedy: All right, then, the other is financed biannually . . . that you borrow from the Treasury, from the Farmers Home Administration.¹⁵¹

Bell: Yeah.

President Kennedy: Only 275 million dollars.¹⁵²

Bell: Now—

President Kennedy: Leaves us with 600 million left.

Bell: Well, this is—

Unidentified: You could easily opt—

President Kennedy: They think big over there.¹⁵³

Bell: [Unclear] yeah, at this stage . . . yeah.

President Kennedy: That would be . . . We would . . . I'd have . . . there's a supplemental request for 325 million dollars.

Bell: Well, we back them up on that, at the present time. There are two different programs. The one you're looking at is the operating loans program, the other is housing. We're going to come back to that. We recommend no action to you on either one at the present time. Now—

President Kennedy: VA. I see . . . yeah.

Bell: VA housing also we recommend no action at the present time. But you should be aware that they are . . . they are there to be used at any stage you want to.

President Kennedy: Yeah, but your point is that in both of these, it looks like you're substituting public loans for private loans.

Bell: Yeah . . . right.

President Kennedy: What would be the other one?

Fowler: You've got aid—

Sorensen: I hope the Treasury's right.¹⁵⁴ [Unclear exchange.]

Fowler: So do we. [Laughter.]

Heller: I must say, we do, too.

Bell: But, let's get to the last page, then, Mr. President. This is on the public works . . . the standby public works.

President Kennedy: [Unclear] now, you designate it as—the . . .

151. Post-World War II successor to the New Deal Era Farm Security Administration which administered farm ownership and production and subsistence loans.

152. Farmer's Home Administration operating loans were limited at this point to \$275 million; the Department of Agriculture proposed raising the limit to \$600 million.

153. *They* refers to the Department of Agriculture.

154. In their projection for GNP.

Bell: The Secretary of Commerce . . . But the question here is how you would want the standby public works bill operated, if it's enacted. We're all . . . everybody's in agreement, now, that this isn't the way to do it. The House bill has a public works coordinator who would be established—

President Kennedy: Yeah, that's what we were talking about this morning with Lee White.¹⁵⁵

Bell: Some of us are anxious to see that, I guess.

President Kennedy: You can probably take that out, I think . . . if Bobby wants it in, but . . .¹⁵⁶

Bell: Yes, he does.

President Kennedy: Is that the public works coordinator in the Department of Commerce, isn't it?

Bell: Not the way they write it. They want it in your office.

Turner: But they . . . you know, the bill doesn't put it anywhere.

Unidentified: It then creates—

President Kennedy: And, well, I suppose you got a half billion—

Turner: Because they are assuming that it would be in the Executive Office of the President.

President Kennedy: You might want to get this sort of instruction, in any case, to Hodges.¹⁵⁷

Bell: Yeah . . . right. The assumption that—

President Kennedy: The main response, so you can get a coordinator, now, to work with whoever—

Bell: Somebody's going to have to be ready to go right up there with them on appropriating more—

President Kennedy: Yeah . . . well, now, Dave, what do you want to do about this?

Bell: If you'll agree with this—

President Kennedy: Yeah.

Bell: We'll . . . we'll tell him that—

155. Lee White was deputy special counsel in the Kennedy administration who advised the President on civil rights and urban affairs. White later served as chairman of the Federal Power Commission from 1966 to 1969.

156. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy.

157. Luther Hodges, former governor of North Carolina (1954–1961), was appointed secretary of commerce by President Kennedy in large measure to assuage business fears of the incoming administration. An active promoter of increased exports and increased trade with the Soviet Union, Hodges remained secretary of commerce under Lyndon Johnson until retiring to the directorship of the Financial Consultants Mutual Fund in December 1964.

President Kennedy: OK.

Bell: —you know, we'll go around and . . . a letter will be prepared. Of course, it's a hell of a—

President Kennedy: Now, what about the dunes?¹⁵⁸ Does it have anything to do with what we've been talking about?

Unidentified: Yeah.

Bell: Well, I think . . . I don't know what . . . Did Lee report to you on that session that he and I both attended in Senator Douglas's office?¹⁵⁹

President Kennedy: Yeah.

Bell: I think there's no question but what—

President Kennedy: I must say, I come down on the side of jobs, now, rather than recreation at this point.

Bell: Well, the question is whether any jobs are in it, Mr. President. The Indiana folks think so, but, there are jobs there only if the steel companies are going to expand their facilities. And, it's really . . . there's room for plenty of skepticism that the steel companies will do that.

President Kennedy: Well, if they don't, then what happens?

Bell: Then we're building a harbor, and—

President Kennedy: Well, don't we have any commitments? Isn't there any way to get a commitment out of steel before we build the harbor?

Bell: Oh, yes. That's in there. The . . . yes, the arrangements that the engineers propose is that they wouldn't start work on the harbor until the steel companies had formally and firmly committed themselves to build their part of the harbor, which is the piers, along both sides.¹⁶⁰ We would build the breakwater and do the main dredging, and they would build the dock facilities. They on the sides, and the state of Indiana on the . . . on the south end of the harbor.

Everybody would have to have his money ready to put into the kitty, before any work were undertaken. And, therefore, if the steel companies backed off what it would mean is you'd have a harbor authorized for quite some time, but it wouldn't be constructed. The likelihood, I sup-

158. There was a legislative battle involving Senator Paul Douglas, who championed the preservation of Lake Michigan's Indiana sand dunes; Bethlehem and National Steel companies, who hoped to build steel mills at that point on the lakeshore; and Indiana state officials, who favored, at the same site, a new lake port and expanded industrial development in general. After years of struggling for it, Douglas secured, in November 1966, the passage of legislation creating the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore.

159. Lee is Lee White.

160. The engineers are the Army Corps of Engineers.

pose, is, you know, anybody's guess. . . . It doesn't seem, to me, likely that there would be substantial expansion in new steel works over the next two or three years, but—¹⁶¹

President Kennedy: Of course, if we . . . if we knock it down, it will look like we're the ones that—

Bell: I agree entirely. I agree entirely.

President Kennedy: If they don't build it, then you've still got your recreation, haven't you?

Bell: You've got the status quo. I don't think there'd be any actions undertaken. I don't know what would happen. There might be some of that land that could begin to . . . to be put into other kinds of industrial facilities, but not very much, I should think, because there's many involved—

President Kennedy: When are you going to come forward with your . . . As I say, I'm great on recreation and all the rest, but I do think if we're talking about the number of jobs which they're talking about that I won't be sympathetic to . . . that number of jobs in that place, that's all.

Bell: Well . . .

President Kennedy: These days.

Bell: I think the problem is essentially political. I don't think there's any doubt that, what the—

President Kennedy: Well, politically, if we could get that back, you'd say, you would go ahead, because it's Indiana versus Senator Douglas.

Bell: No, I think that the merits of the case strongly argue that if you're putting the whole thing into recreation, in 25 years there isn't any question that the value to the nation will be far superior on that side.

Heller: There's no doubt about it.

Bell: In the short run, this case about jobs is not too clear. If the steel companies were ready to go ahead and invest, then there would be jobs.

President Kennedy: Now, don't we get . . . what kinds of assurances can we get out of the steel companies before we set it aside for productive use?

Bell: The steel companies are so badly caught between the two opposing political sides of this thing, I don't think we can get anything out of them that tells us anything we don't now know—as to the likelihood that they will, in fact, be ready to invest at any given date. They

161. This meeting followed the widely publicized administration showdown with the steel companies in April 1962 regarding steel company pricing. In that event it became clear that most steel companies were operating well below their productive capacities.

have said, to the state of Indiana, "Yes, we do plan to use these sites for steel works." They have not said, "We are prepared to commit ourselves to take action as of 1 January 1963," or something like that. And I don't think we could get any such commitment. Nor, I think, we're . . . are we likely to get the opposite, because then the state of Indiana would be all [unclear], saying, but they've said, "No, we don't plan to do anything with that land for the next four years." So I just think they're gonna stand right where they are in saying, "We bought the land to build steel plants. If you want the harbor, go ahead. One of these days, we'll build the steel plants."

President Kennedy: Now, can't we say that we'll go ahead with the harbor if we could only get some indication that you'll build the steel plant? Otherwise, why are we going to build the . . . How much are they sticking in the harbor? The steel companies?

Bell: About 5 million dollars.

President Kennedy: And we're putting in how much?

Bell: Twenty-three, I think.

President Kennedy: Fine, and how much is the state putting in?

Bell: Well, the state puts in about 35, eventually. I'm not quite sure how much—

President Kennedy: Well, they're not putting much in, so—¹⁶²

Bell: No, they're not.

President Kennedy: —the companies, but . . . I mean, they can probably afford to put in 5 million to get this. It adds to the value of their land, anyway, doesn't it? Do they use some land there?

Bell: Yes, they do, and I suppose it does, in the sense that it would be valuable industrial land.

President Kennedy: So it—

Bell: I don't . . . I'm not sure they would put up that \$5 million. They're pretty . . . you know, steel companies are pretty funny folk.

President Kennedy: Well, I'm all for that. But anyway, so we [go] in for that figure. The United States government and the state of Indiana go in for a combination of 55, 60 million . . .

Bell: There is another . . . another big question mark here. Douglas is saying . . . his engineers say the state of Indiana will never be able to float the 30 million dollars of revenue bonds. The state of Indiana has a constitutional prohibition against general purpose bonds, or whatever you call them. Is that right?

162. *They* are the Bethlehem and National Steel companies.

Unidentified: Yeah.

Heller: General obligation . . .

Okun: General obligation bonds.¹⁶³

President Kennedy: How do we get into . . . as I say, I haven't followed it closely. Can't we get an understanding from everybody—the steel companies, the state of Indiana, et cetera—and then say, "If you . . . if these understandings are any good, we can go ahead. If they're not, then . . ."

At least, then, we're not going to have everybody saying that it's because the administration failed to provide dollars for—

Bell: Now, that's the position of Indiana. The state of Indiana says, "We do want to go ahead." And we say, "We can float the revenue bonds. The steel companies say, "Yes, we do plan to use this."

President Kennedy: Were we given that in writing and so on?

Bell: It's in writing. They plan to use it for—

President Kennedy: Do they say when?

Bell: No, they do not.

President Kennedy: Well, couldn't we find that out and ask them when they plan to go ahead?

Bell: We can try. I don't know.

President Kennedy: I mean, I think we ought to put the . . . If we're not going to . . . we ought to put it on the . . . If there's a legitimate question here, we ought to put it on *their* backs.

Bell: This is precisely what I meant by saying that the problem is essentially political.

President Kennedy: Well, we ought to say, "We're prepared to go ahead with the land . . . with the thing, and if this is what sounds reasonable, and the thing, but we're not going to go ahead unless we have the assurances from the companies, now." If the companies are not going to give us any assurances, then it's back on them.

Bell: Well, let me talk to Lee about this.¹⁶⁴

Fowler: [Unclear] the article [unclear] after that or the next day. I don't know whether it's good or bad, or whether you saw it or not . . . in the *New York Times*.¹⁶⁵

163. General obligation debt is secured by the full faith and credit of the state's taxing authority, whereas revenue bonds, the other major type of state debt instruments, are secured by revenues from the projects financed by their proceeds.

164. Lee White.

165. Probably James Reston, "Kennedy Takes His Battle to the Nation," *New York Times*, 29 July 1962, p. 8E; or Joseph A. Loftus, "Economic Indicators Hold Key to Tax Decision," *New*

Bell: Can't we do that? We can't send them that one budget item.
Twenty-eight-second pause.

Unidentified: Yeah, I think that [*unclear*].

At this point, the meeting ended and the President began speaking with Robert Roosa, Henry Fowler, and an unidentified adviser about recent newspaper stories. His brief conversation with Roosa appears to be a discussion of reported developments in the steel industry. "Beth Steel Profits Off, Spending Up," read one headline; "Lag in Profits," read another.¹⁶⁶

After their attempts at an industrywide, across-the-board price increase in April 1962, eliciting the famous showdown with the Kennedy administration and the eventual rollback of the increases, U.S. steel companies appeared to be initiating a new public relations blitz designed to tell a tale of woe and to garner support for prospective price relief. And it was a portrayal that seemed to be garnering sympathy despite the reality that poor U.S. performance actually reflected vigorous foreign competition and relatively high U.S. producer prices.

Reflecting on several issues and several articles at once, Kennedy also referred, briefly, to a separate article on the U.S. balance of payments problem and the potential weakness of the U.S. dollar.

Roosa: [*Unclear*] You asked me to contact Clark Clifford [*unclear*].¹⁶⁷ I have an appointment with him for Friday. I've got the whole dossier here, if you have a—

York Times, 29 July 1962, p. 5E. Reston noted that much of Kennedy's legislative difficulties stemmed from the complicated and abstruse character of many of the issues and proposals he championed. Loftus summarized by writing, "The information here is that the report Mr. Kennedy is waiting for to decide on the tax cut is the report that only Chairman Wilbur Mills of the Ways and Means Committee can give." Curiously, one relatively trivial point raised here by Loftus, that July's economic indicators tell you little about current trends—due to vacation absences—is one repeated by Wilbur Mills in a meeting with President Kennedy on 6 August 1962 (see "Meeting with Wilbur Mills on the Tax Cut Proposal," 6 August 1962).

166. Christina Kirk, "Beth Steel Prices Off, Spending Up: The Homer Plan to Ease Squeeze," *New York Herald Tribune*, 27 July 1962, p. 20; Christina Kirk, "Lag in Profits," *New York Herald Tribune*, 29 July 1962, 5:7.

167. Clark Clifford was former special counsel to President Truman, who, since 1950, had become a partner in a Washington, D.C.-based law firm that specialized in corporate tax and legal problems. A member of Kennedy's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board (and its chairman after April 1963), Clifford was, at the time of this meeting, employed as an adviser to several large U.S. steel companies.

President Kennedy: There's another one in there this morning, you know.

Roosa: I saw it. That one's not quite so bad.

President Kennedy: No?

Roosa: But, I think, maybe they're . . . they're starting to relent. The only way you're going to see any or all of this is broken down into groups and . . . I'll leave it with you. I had intended to, do a little—

President Kennedy: Obviously, the dollar, in Sunday's paper, is hopeless.

Roosa: Yeah.

President Kennedy: [reading] "The dollar under fire in Britain."

Roosa: That's . . . that was the essence of it.

President Kennedy: Did we ever find out whether he's got any conflict of interest in this, the price we're paying at this time is what? [Unclear]

Roosa: They really do that.

President Kennedy: Beautiful job. Hopeless is the word here. Because they are—

Roosa: Yeah, he is.

President Kennedy: Is there any . . . did you tell me there was someone—

Unidentified: Douglass Cater's looking into it.¹⁶⁸

President Kennedy: Who is?

Unidentified: [Unclear], Cater. Douglass Cater's looking into it with *The Reporter*.

Fowler: [Unclear] report in the *Journal* calm you down today?¹⁶⁹

President Kennedy: Paul Boyd's article today—

Unidentified: Yes.

President Kennedy: —in the *Tribune*, was quite an article about *their* troubles.¹⁷⁰

Fowler: Yes. The economics [unclear].

President Kennedy: Their market has gone down 40 percent in two years, isn't it?

168. Douglass Cater was Washington editor and then national affairs editor of *The Reporter*. Dean Rusk hoped to name Cater as assistant secretary of state for public affairs but lost out to Press Secretary Pierre Salinger who selected Roger Tubby for the post. In May 1964, Cater became a special assistant to President Johnson. Hired chiefly as a speech writer, he was soon drafted to help frame education policy in particular and health and education proposals in general.

169. Perhaps a reference to "U.S. Chamber Urges Higher Interest Rates to Restrict Flow of Gold to Other Nations," *Wall Street Journal*, 30 July 1962, p. 5, especially if Fowler was being facetious.

170. The steel companies.

Roosa: Yes, sir.

President Kennedy: Forty percent, isn't it?

Bell: It's forty?

Sorensen: That's fantastic.

President Kennedy: Why are they so bad off [unclear]?

Roosa: Well, they've tried to play it both ways, and now they're planning a lot of the expansion.¹⁷¹ And to get prices to increase, they're trying to clamp down on it, and the events being as crude in its effect as the original increase.¹⁷²

President Kennedy: As what?

Roosa: It's as crude in its effect as the original increase. They're trying to tighten up without having the instruments for doing it gradually and effectively.

President Kennedy: Add some [unclear], boy, are they getting cocky. Sixty-two outward . . . an upturn in business. [Unclear.]

Roosa: Well, we've got a separate section on some of them. They're indicating that, in general, we've been —

President Kennedy: Ninety-eight point four.

Roosa: —primarily, we've handled them one at a time.

President Kennedy: [Unclear], you say Dave Cater's looking at it in the . . . ?

Unidentified: Yeah. Yeah. He's looking at the one in the national [unclear].

Unidentified: I'll be back in [unclear].

President Kennedy: [Unclear.] It's what?

Unidentified: It's really—

The President's careful discussion of federal budgetary accounting practices was excellent preparation for his next meeting. As the economists left the Oval Office, Kennedy walked over to the Cabinet Room to set the negotiating strategy for the next round of talks in Geneva on a nuclear test ban.

171. As the Bethlehem story, above, explained, most U.S. steel companies professed a need for increased capital spending as a way to break out of their sales and profit slumps. Accompanying this profession was a parallel call for greater corporate cash flow, ostensibly the only way to finance the modernization the industry required.

172. The original increase was most likely the rescinded mid-April round of price increases led by U.S. Steel.

5:00–6:48 P.M.

If we put in a number n , the Congress will say it should be $2n$ and the neutrals will say it should be $\frac{1}{2}n$, and we will have a hell of a war over something that doesn't do us any good at all if the Soviets stick with zero.

Meeting on Nuclear Test Ban¹⁷³

In 1962, nuclear testing was the issue on which people focused their fears and concerns about the global nuclear arms race. Advocates of a test ban made various arguments: a test ban might hinder the development of yet more nuclear weapons and relax superpower tension; a ban at least on above-ground tests might do away with their hazardous radioactive fallout; and a test ban might keep even more countries from joining the nuclear club which already included the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain, and France.

John F. Kennedy wanted a comprehensive test ban treaty. He emphasized the last argument—the risks of nuclear proliferation. A test ban was, however, very difficult to negotiate. Although nuclear tests in the atmosphere, underwater, and in space could be detected by devices under U.S. control, it was not possible to monitor effectively underground tests without an intrusive verification system. Since March 1962, the Kremlin had opposed any verification that involved inspections on Soviet territory.

Within his administration, Kennedy faced strong opposition to a comprehensive test ban. Some opponents believed that a test ban treaty was unenforceable. Others believed that the outlawing of testing would cause harm by discouraging scientists from staying in government laboratories and foreclosing the development of possible new weapons perhaps producing little or no fallout or producing intense radiation without the accompanying blast and firestorm effects of existing weapons. Confusingly, some of these projected new weapons were sometimes labeled fusion bombs even though existing thermonuclear weapons were fusion weapons, and some

173. Including President Kennedy, Vice President Johnson, McGeorge Bundy, Arthur Dean, Adrian Fisher, William Foster, Leland Haworth, Carl Kaysen, Lyman Lemnitzer, Franklin Long, John McCone, Robert McNamara, Paul Nitze, Dean Rusk, Glenn Seaborg, and Jerome Wiesner. Tapes 2 and 3, John F. Kennedy Library, President's Office Files, Presidential Recordings Collection. For a copy of a memorandum on this meeting, see Memorandum of Meeting with President Kennedy, 30 July 1962, *FRUS*, 7: 520.

were called neutron bombs even though considerably different from the neutron bombs or enhanced radiation weapons developed later in the 1960s.

Since the spring of 1961, when John Kennedy first employed the Attorney General to explore with Soviet representatives the possibility for a test ban agreement, the President was active in seeking ways to break the diplomatic stalemate in Geneva and the political logjam at home. He resorted to both orthodox diplomatic contacts and special back channels to find common ground with Moscow. For these efforts the President had but 15 months of failure, not in the least because he faced a reluctant partner in the Kremlin. But President Kennedy's foreign frustration was not simply because of Khrushchev. He found it hard to maintain a united front with his allies, especially the British, who were, if anything, more willing to take risks to achieve a comprehensive test ban than he. World opinion was also shifting against the President. Despite the fact that John Kennedy himself was a strong advocate for a test ban and the Soviets had shown no flexibility in their unwillingness to allow foreign inspections, the United States was viewed by many neutral nations as the greatest obstacle to achieving a test ban.

Scientific innovation in the summer of 1962 complicated the politics of the test ban even further. Over the weekend of June 28–30, two Air Force experts determined through a reassessment of data from the Soviet blast of February and the French tests in the Sahara in May that the United States could detect underground blasts with a system that was less than 20 percent the size of the huge verification system proposed at Geneva and would require far fewer on-site inspections.¹⁷⁴ Not only could underground tremors be detected more easily, but scientists could more reliably distinguish between the seismic and the nuclear test-related explosions.¹⁷⁵ These new criteria, which were referred to as the VELA test results, called into question the U.S. negotiating position and put downward pressure on both

174. Dr. Doyle Northrup and Dr. Carl Romney worked at the Air Force Technical Applications Center. Their assessment of seismic capabilities was part of the VELA Program, overseen by the Pentagon's Advanced Research Projects Agency and designed for the "evaluation and development of methods of monitoring a treaty of test cessation." "Nuclear Test Program," (undated 1961), *FRUS*, 7: 178. The Geneva system, first elaborated in 1958, comprised 180 land-based control posts, of which at least 110 were to be on continents.

175. This was the result of two new assessments. The first was the new confidence in the achievement of a long-range seismic detection capability which would make it possible to detect events in the Soviet Union from stations outside the country. The second was the determination that the number of earthquakes that might produce unidentified events comparable to an underground nuclear test of a given magnitude had been substantially reduced since the previous estimate—by a factor between 4 and 5.

the number of monitoring stations and number of on-site inspections that would be required to maintain a watch on all underground explosions above a certain magnitude. Not all underground tests could be detected, given available technology; but most of them could.

The Kennedy administration initially mishandled this new scientific data. The Pentagon released it on July 3 without any diplomatic or political preparation, placing the White House in the worst possible position with critics at home and abroad. On the one hand, the Pentagon was now saying that it did not need as much help to verify an agreement. On the other, the State Department was still pushing the pre-VELA diplomatic package at the talks in Geneva. The State Department then succeeded in making the situation worse. The U.S. negotiator in Geneva, Ambassador Arthur Dean, misspoke on July 14, telling a group of reporters that the new data probably implied that the United States might not require any monitoring stations on Soviet soil anymore. Although the secretary of state would quickly correct the ambassador, the impression was out that the U.S. position at Geneva was soft. At home press criticisms rose among opponents of a comprehensive test ban; while congressional opinion—especially among the members of the Joint House-Senate Committee on Atomic Energy—reflected the lack of any political preparation by the executive branch and moved decidedly against changing the U.S. negotiating position. On July 25, Senators Chet Holifield and Henry Jackson of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy made clear their opposition to any new concessions to the Soviets based on the Pentagon's new analysis: "There could be nothing more dangerous than to make a hasty change in the fundamental principle of arms control because of a preliminary scientific finding."¹⁷⁶

Now three weeks after the release of the new data, the administration was finally getting around to a full-fledged test ban policy review. Kennedy's decision to start secret White House taping coincided with the final stages of the process. The first two phases of the review, a meeting of the U.S. government's top nuclear test ban experts—the Committee of Principals—on July 26 and this committee's meeting with the President on July 27, were not taped. But when President Kennedy reconvened this group on July 30 to discuss the rough consensus reached the week before, recording machines were whirling in the basement.

The test ban issue would challenge the President's grasp of technical detail. Not only would he need to understand the bases of his advisers' disagreements over the detectable versus the nondetectable; but the

176. Chet Holifield, joint committee chairman, and Henry M. Jackson, chairman of the Subcommittee on Military Applications to President Kennedy, 25 July 1962, *FRUS*, 7: Supplement.

President was called on to assess the possible future effects of a test ban on U.S. weapons development. In this vein, there was more bad news for President Kennedy. Problems were cropping up with the DOMINIC atmospheric test series, which the United States had launched in April 1962. On July 25, a nuclear test of a Thor missile from Johnston Island, known as the BLUEGILL shot, experienced a catastrophic failure. The missile exploded shortly after ignition and caused major damage to the launch pad and radioactive contamination of the surrounding area.¹⁷⁷

President Kennedy brought his nuclear test ban experts to the White House, including Arthur Dean who was flown in from Geneva on the weekend, to formulate a coordinated response to these missteps and challenges. The President wanted modifications in the U.S. negotiating position, and this meeting was designed to formalize the preliminary conclusions reached at the two earlier meetings. The basis for conversation was a summary drafted by William C. Foster, director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA).

Foster's recommendations contained new proposals. The administration would accept the principle of control stations that were manned by nationals of the country in which they were located so long as they could be supervised and their data analyzed by some kind of international commission. Knowing how politically delicate verification was, the State Department and ACDA recommended putting forward a test ban agreement that did not require verification—a partial or atmospheric test ban. Finally, Foster's paper suggested that the number of these internationally supervised nationally manned control sites could be reduced from the Geneva number of 180 (with 19 on Soviet soil) to about 25 (with 5 in the Soviet Union). For the time being, this was to be an internal U.S. number to be brought out only when the Soviets would accept the concept of some foreign inspection.¹⁷⁸

The President's special assistant for national security affairs McGeorge Bundy tried to orchestrate this meeting so that Arthur Dean would emerge with his instructions for Geneva. Before the meeting the President received William Foster's paper and was told by Bundy what to expect from the rest of the group.¹⁷⁹ At first the

177. *FRUS*, 7: 520, note 1.

178. Memorandum from the Director of Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (Foster) to President Kennedy, "U.S. Program Regarding a Treaty to Ban Nuclear Weapons Tests and Other Disarmament Proposals" (as Revised), 30 July 1962, *FRUS*, 7: 517–19.

179. Bundy to the President, "Agenda for 5 P.M. Meeting Today," 30 July 1962, "Nuclear Weapons" folder, National Security Files: Box 100a, John F. Kennedy Library. This document and the transcript that follows provide a wonderful case study of how high-level meetings can go awry.

Department of Defense would make the argument for a comprehensive test ban. A scientific representative from the Atomic Energy Commission would then explain the effect of a test ban on U.S. technical development. Then Foster would run through his recommendations, which Bundy assumed the President would accept. Next week the United States would offer a partial test ban to the Soviets while sending signals that a comprehensive test ban might be possible, with a lower number of required inspections and even nationally manned monitoring stations, so long as Khrushchev returned to his pre-1962 position of supporting the concept of foreign inspectors in the Soviet Union. However, the meeting would not go as planned.

President Kennedy started taping before formally calling the meeting to order. He is overheard asking Glenn Seaborg, the chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, for information about how long it would take the United States to complete the DOMINIC test series in view of the loss of the launch pad on Johnston Island. President Kennedy was evidently concerned that the U.S. series should be completed as quickly as possible and certainly before the current Soviet tests ended. He did not want to be negotiating a test ban while the United States was the only superpower exploding atomic weapons into the atmosphere.

The tape quality is poor.

President Kennedy: [Unclear] I think [unclear] to repair that pad out there?¹⁸⁰

Glenn Seaborg: Yes.

President Kennedy: Let me say again, the only problem that we're going to have is if their tests are over; so they can tell people that their tests are over . . . ready to go in a few months, is that correct?

Seaborg: That's right, the 27th.

President Kennedy: Seven to eight weeks, yeah?

Seaborg: Yes.

President Kennedy: Yes, and then we get [unclear] and then as we, we're also saying, [unclear] won't be finished until October 25th, the following day.

Unidentified: [Mumbles.]

Unidentified: What's that?

Franklin Long: There's only one.

180. The pad on Johnston Island destroyed by test failure on 25 July.

William Foster: There is only one pad. [Unclear.]

President Kennedy: Can I fire it from any other pad you've got?

Unidentified: The only way [unclear] there's no other way of doing it.

President Kennedy: Well, the only problem that I see is when we start firing that thing after they get finished [unclear].

The conversation gets choppy. Kennedy and Wiesner may have been distracted as the rest of the group settles into their seats.

President Kennedy: . . . probably, because [unclear] that went over.

Jerome Wiesner: I want to get rid of—

Paul Nitze: They've said—

Unidentified: They're waiting . . . They want to launch September 1st or November 4th might be as long—

President Kennedy: August 5th, September 5th, October 5th. The earliest, the closest thing, isn't it. [Unclear] only three tests we're talking about?¹⁸¹

Unidentified: Three tests, yes.

McGeorge Bundy: Mr. President, we thought that we might actually sit down and wrestle with that problem for a few minutes after this meeting today because it is a tough one.

President Kennedy: OK.

Wiesner: Have you seen the amendment?¹⁸² They're trying to get us in a box and keep us from getting the information.

President Kennedy: Yeah, but we're not right . . . The fact that . . . OK. *A short indistinct conversation follows on this point. The Secretary of State interjects, "Suppose they take our absolute advantage? Maybe that means we'd offer . . ."*

Foster: [in response to an unclear comment] October 20th, we might agree, is still in that area.¹⁸³

Dean Rusk: As I think about it, it's a fairly remote—

Unidentified: Yes, I think. [An unclear exchange follows.]

McGeorge Bundy, the President's special assistant for national security affairs, signals the formal start of the meeting.

Bundy: Mr. President, we thought we'd begin this afternoon by reviewing some of the studies that you asked to have done over the

181. The President has walked into a minefield. There is a dispute among his national security advisers as to how many U.S. nuclear tests remain in this series. The Defense Department, for example, would like to add new airdrop tests.

182. Unidentified amendment.

183. On 20 October the Soviets were expected to complete their then-current atmospheric test series.

weekend. Two were done by the Defense Department and two were done between the Defense Department and the AEC.¹⁸⁴

Then, Secretary McNamara, if you would speak right at the beginning, if you would, and then Commissioner Haworth might certainly follow him.¹⁸⁵

Unidentified: Which statement are you on?

Robert McNamara: Mr. Nitze will comment on the work we did for the President.

Nitze: Mr. President, you asked us to look at what the world would look like if there was a longer [unclear], if there were no test ban.¹⁸⁶ We looked . . . One of the problems we looked at was the problem of diffusion, what would happen with diffusion of nuclear weapons, and first of all as to what the technical capabilities of various countries were, and we found there were 16 countries that had the technical capability to produce at least a few nuclear weapons within the next ten years. These are 16 in addition to the 4 present nuclear countries.¹⁸⁷

And the cost of getting into the nuclear business for them might be on the order of [unclear] typically 175 million dollars each. The cost of a delivery system would be much more, but they might have just a rudimentary delivery system that could deliver these small number of weapons over a [unclear]. And the time from initiation of an advanced program to completion might be three to seven years, something on that order.

We also looked at the motivation that these [unclear] have to get into the business, and the restraints on their getting in. The restraints against their going into the business, if, in general, if they haven't got a clear military need—for instance, Canada doesn't need nuclear weapons—but there are pressures today in the international community against their going in.

184. "The U.S.-U.S.S.R. Military Balance with and without a Test Ban Agreement," "The Diffusion of Nuclear Weapons with and without a Test Ban Agreement," "Maintaining Readiness to Test During a Test Ban," "Relative Technical and Military Advantages of Testing or Non-Testing Under Various Testing Constraints," Departments and Agencies: ACDA, Disarmament, General 7/29-31/62, National Security Files, Box 256, John F. Kennedy Library.

185. Leland Haworth was commissioner, Atomic Energy Commission.

186. "The U.S.-U.S.S.R. Military Balance with and without a Test Ban Agreement," and "The Diffusion of Nuclear Weapons with and without a Test Ban Agreement." As of August 2000 both reports remain classified. As of August 2000 the only two reports that had been declassified were the memorandum on maintaining readiness and the memorandum on relative technical and military advantages of testing or not testing under various testing constraints.

187. The United States (1945), the Soviet Union (1948), Great Britain (1952), and most recently France (1960).

The pressures *for* their going in are: the prestige of [the] military—a seeming military requirement, in the face of [unclear] their own people.

But after looking at the capabilities and the restraints, we came to the conclusion that the ones that would most likely develop a nuclear capability in this sphere were China,¹⁸⁸ and perhaps Sweden and India,¹⁸⁹ and that might lead also the Australians and the Japanese to try to get into the business, and one couldn't exclude the Union of South Africa,¹⁹⁰ from perhaps wanting to get into this business in a ten-year time frame. I'm not sure that Egypt [unclear] get in in this ten-year time frame.

The pressures on both Germany and Italy to either get a capability of their own or to acquire weapons or to share the control of nuclear weapons would be very great. But if they go forward with some kind of a multilateral form or if the Europeans do, this might take that pressure off.

But if you look at the period beyond 10 years, up to an additional 15 years, then the possibility becomes much higher, and obviously less predictable. The important point is that if both we and the U.S.S.R. continue testing, then it is possible that the cost of producing weapons will go down substantially. It might go down by a factor as large as ten or a hundred, so that it will cost really very little to produce nuclear weapons, if both tested to perfection a nonfission trigger, which you can do with cheap materials therefore. And furthermore, the diffusion of nuclear technology is to be anticipated if both of us test this knowledge, the technological knowledge exists in our and the Russian technological communities. This does seep out.

Also, the proliferation of peaceful reactors will cause people to have more knowledge about nuclear matters. They will probably have nuclear power plants to convert plutonium from those power plants. So the ease of getting into the business in the period beyond 10 years, up to 25 years, would be far greater.

Furthermore, if some of the smaller countries begin to get them, then this induces other countries to get them, so that looking forward to a 25-year period, we would consider, in the absence of a test ban, the risk of diffusion to be very great indeed.

Of course, the question arises as just the degree to which a comprehensive test ban would, in fact, limit that diffusion. If it's our idea that a comprehensive test ban is a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition

188. China tested its first atomic device in 1964.

189. India tested its first atomic device in 1974.

190. The Union of South Africa developed atomic weapons in the 1980s.

to inhibiting, and slowing, the dispersal of nuclear knowledge and the problem of nuclear testing, I think it would probably require a degree of collaboration between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. to really inhibit the further spread of nuclear weapons, even if you had a comprehensive test ban.

If this were merely an atmospheric test ban, it was our conclusion that there wouldn't be much inhibition to the further spread of weapons because testing underground would be legal and most countries could probably develop underground tests if they were strongly motivated to getting into this business.

President Kennedy: Does that increase the—By what factor does that increase the difficulty, if the fellow could go underground?

Nitze: I think Glenn [Seaborg] could speak to that . . .

Long: Against the total development costs, Mr. President, very little.

President Kennedy: So, in other words, even if the country had not done any atmospheric testing they could test underground. . . .

Seaborg: Oh yes, it would slow them down a few years, I suppose.

Bundy: Not that long.

Seaborg: Not that long.

Bundy: If you make your preparations ahead of time—the French, for example, [unclear interjection] were in their primitive stage of doing underground testing recently, and . . .

Seaborg: Well, it depends on how long a program and [unclear] about how sophisticated, and how far they're going, and so forth.

McNamara: For most of these cases, we are estimating five or six years of development and [the need to test] underground might add a year to it.

Unidentified: [Unclear.]

Wiesner: They knew they had to do it from the start because while they were doing all their other things, they'd be learning how to do underground certainly, too.

A fragmentary side conversation arises over how to determine when a country goes nuclear.

Leland Haworth: Well, we had some limitations and we totaled the results, et cetera.

Unidentified: This total is true.

Bundy: Yes, but if all you want to know is: Did it go? Is what you want to know . . . in 1945?

Haworth: Yeah, but you don't need to go back so very far. That's not what we're talking about here.

Bundy: You're talking about the first nuclear weapons.

President Kennedy: [*The President restores order so that Secretary Nitze can finish his presentation.*] Right. OK. Fine.

Nitze: We also did a study on what the effect of continuing testing would be upon the relationship between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., and there, I think, in the summary, we said that continued testing should lead to growing equality between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. Today, they're probably as far, if not further, along in high-yield, efficient weight-to-yield ratios. Below the high yield, we have a decided advantage today, and what our advantage today rests . . . not only upon a more efficient, smaller set of warheads but also upon the more sophisticated general technology: hardened, accurate, sophisticated weapons. If they continued testing, there would be a trend toward their knowing whatever it is we know. There would also be greater knowledge of effects of weapons, and there would be a risk of the unforeseeable, things that you can't today foresee.

President Kennedy: What about the fusion . . . If you had a test ban, where you would . . . your chance of getting a fusion bomb would be?¹⁹¹ [*Unclear*] not the [*unclear*] [*bomb*].¹⁹² In any case . . .

Unidentified: Oh, if there was a complete test ban, including a ban on underground, yes, that could be.

Bundy: You could do it by cheating.

Unidentified: Well, I think this is an important point, if you want them to take one [*unclear*] against cheating.

McNamara: At the threshold proposed, it would allow development of the fusion bomb if one was to cheat under that threshold.¹⁹³

President Kennedy: Under the threshold of what [*unclear*]?

Bundy: It depends, Mr. President, with any [*system*], it depends what you test in.¹⁹⁴ We've talked about approximately up to 10 kilotons in alluvium—the estimates are that, especially as systems of testing become more sophisticated, you could learn all you need to know for an all-fusion weapon, assuming that you didn't get caught [*testing devices having an explosive force of less than 10 kilotons*]. Now, statistically, if

191. The President is possibly referring to the development of a fusion bomb with a fusion trigger, which might create very little fallout.

192. The President probably is making clear he is interested in discussing the development of new kinds of fusion bombs and not the existing hydrogen bomb, which is also a fusion bomb.

193. The Secretary of Defense is warning the President that even under a comprehensive test ban, states could develop more-advanced kinds of fusion bombs. The manufacture of a fusion bomb requires very low yield nuclear tests, which would not be detected by the various monitoring systems proposed by the United States and Great Britain to verify a comprehensive test ban.

194. *It* refers to the ability of control stations to detect the blast.

you run a big series through time, there are lots of reasons that might . . . that will open a bigger field of debate as to whether you could or couldn't get away with it. Different people will take different views.¹⁹⁵

President Kennedy: Would the [unclear] consider the development of the fusion bomb . . . Would that [unclear]?¹⁹⁶

Unidentified: Yes, sir.

Nitze: Yes, it might reduce the cost of weapons by a very large factor, and would reduce the cost in terms of plutonium or other fissionable material . . .

Unidentified: Not according to—

President Kennedy: Once you have the weapons, does it really, is it . . . and all these things that have to go into that equation, but once you have the weapons, and you've paid the costs, and you have the material, is it . . . Starting over again would be a big saving. But if you've got to . . . given our position, the stockpile of the Soviet Union, the stockpile of the nuclear club, [is it] worthwhile enough for us not to have a test ban?¹⁹⁷

McNamara: Mr. President, it's very difficult for me to put down on paper the military advantage associated with one side having a fusion bomb and the other side not. I know that [unclear] but I haven't been able to put down on paper, a clear analysis of why the fusion bomb, possession of it exclusively, provides one with a substantial military advantage, assuming that the other side has a large stock of nuclear weapons. [*Unclear exchange.*]

Wiesner: One of the great dangers here is that this is a specific example of general [unclear] a continued research and development [unclear] on our part makes the diffusion easier. If we learn how to make these weapons, [initially] by fission triggers, presumably it will be easier to make and cheaper to make, and both easier and cheaper for other people, too. So that if you won't accept Bob McNamara's statement that it is essentially hard to see the real advantage of a fusion weapon once you have the enormous stockpiles that the world has, it seems to me a kind of a disadvantage to development.¹⁹⁸ [Unclear] technical and other [unclear] to development. I think that [unclear] there's probably a

195. Apparently even if a single blast were undetectable by a control station, a long series of these small tests might be detectable.

196. According to Seaborg's notes, "The President inquired as to the value of the fusion (neutron) bomb, which might be developed in underground testing" [Glenn T. Seaborg, with Benjamin S. Loeb, *Kennedy, Khrushchev and the Test Ban* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), p. 166].

197. Kennedy wants to know whether the advantages of the neutron bomb, whose development would be illegal under a comprehensive test ban, outweigh the strategic advantages of a comprehensive test ban.

198. *It* refers to a comprehensive test ban.

tremendous incentive on the other side to cheat on this particular prototype.¹⁹⁹ And even if they did, it's hard to see that it could imbalance the military situation.

President Kennedy: General, do you want to say something about this?

Lyman Lemnitzer: Based on the characteristics of fusion weapons, there's some difference of opinion on the characteristics. We believe there's [an] advantage to having it.

Wiesner: Can I add something, for just a moment? There was a couple of years ago a general belief that the fusion weapon was a special kind of battlefield weapon [unclear], because the nuclear fusion weapon would be used to kill troops without doing blast damage and without leaving radioactivity behind. There was a smaller, detailed study of it made last year that turned around this, to give you more light, showed that this was a mixed blessing. Because while it killed a few people close in rapidly, it was really a time bomb in the sense that most of the people who got the neutron blast that were not killed instantaneously, were, in the fact of the matter, in bad health, but were going to die in a period from 12 hours to 2 weeks. So that what you would be creating on the battlefield was essentially a kamikaze situation with troops, and it would have to be . . . So we're not going to do that. I think the [unclear] many of these people who were saying that this is a very unique close battlefield weapon withdraw from that position. And I think the designers are likely to feel very strongly [unclear] that this is an important role for the . . .

President Kennedy: Well, let's proceed on [unclear].

Before Commissioner Haworth starts, there is an indistinct exchange over something that the AEC might summarize for the President. Kennedy also asks McNamara whether he has any papers that would summarize this matter. McNamara says that he does. Just as Haworth begins to speak, someone asks for a brief adjournment. Perhaps in response to the previous unclear exchange, Haworth is heard discussing estimates of the amount of time it would take the United States to resume nuclear testing in the event that the Soviets or anyone else suddenly broke a test ban. The issue of keeping some U.S. testing capability, even under a test ban, leads Haworth to raise the question of using Britain's Christmas Island testing facility.

Haworth: [Unclear—almost inaudible.] There are four facets. Before we . . . the most important of these is Christmas Island. Because we are not sure they would release their [island] for any weapons tests. We believe

199. A fusion (neutron) bomb.

that if at all possible, we should try to procure it with very few limitations of the [unclear] should be restrictive. But other than that, we ought to try to be part of a long-term agreement in which we are both free to do the things we want to do, and not be committed to [unclear] British.

We believe that with this maintained state of readiness, that as far as the field is concerned we can then have about a two- to three-month response time in any case of an abrogation of a treaty. If we spent several million dollars to improve it, we might reduce that down to 60 to 90 days. In the—

President Kennedy: Sixty to 90 days?

Haworth: Yes. I'm sorry, just 30 to 60 days. We believe, though, at the same time in working on developing an airborne, all airborne [unclear] for [unclear] tests we've done some of that in the current series, and believe therefore the whole purpose might well [unclear] to get it, and even though we [unclear] on this issue, he was working on the instrumentation and so on.²⁰⁰ [Unclear] If we should have another atmospheric series [unclear].

President Kennedy: We'll talk about that this afternoon.

Haworth: Then we should fix up and maintain Johnston Island for the special effects tests that it's being used for now. We should [make ready] the pad, and still another for the same technique [unclear], that sort of test [unclear] the other, but probably [unclear] do [unclear], and find this sort of the analogs of the airborne capability for weapons development. The Navy is studying our shipborne capability for the launch pads' effects. And this kind of limiting factor [unclear] Johnston Island. One of the things that impresses about the airborne and shipborne capabilities is that you can make yourself more independent of weather and other considerations [unclear]. Well, so much for the [unclear] as I say, we—

President Kennedy: But we are in touch now with the . . . We are [unclear] to [unclear] an alternate land site where we could duplicate the Christmas tests. In other words, [unclear].²⁰¹

Haworth: Yes. Just maintain that we have any jurisdiction over or [unclear] jurisdiction over the island.

Bundy: It's an island which is no good for anything else, Mr. President. That's all I'm saying.

Haworth: Except for scientific tests.

200. Nuclear tests that do not require a launch pad, such as airdrop tests, would not need as much startup time in the event that a test ban were suddenly broken.

201. In case the British decided not to allow the United States to maintain a workable launch site on Christmas Island as insurance against a future Soviet treaty violation.

President Kennedy: Well, we'll see what they say. If they refuse to give us this long-term agreement, then we'll [unclear].

Haworth: Now turning to the other paper, it had to do with—where is that?—possible technical developments in these areas, so long as there is a [test ban] treaty or [there is] not to be all-out testing, or testing development and so forth. A lot of it has been said already around the table, so I'll try to be very brief.

We considered the case of a total test ban, by that I mean a really effective total test ban, and I think that our conclusions are the same as Mr. Nitze's with respect to different [unclear]. So we then looked, Mr. President, at a comprehensive test ban with cheating. We considered two levels of cheating, one below 10 kt. and one below 3 kt. I think that one can summarize it very quickly by saying that, at either of these levels, one can study most of the phenomena of the basic underlying physical things.

He can, of course, develop devices depending on the level at which he [unclear] tests.²⁰² He can develop devices, small weapons, a combination of larger weapons. He can make tests that he can later extrapolate to still larger weapons. And it depends then on just how far he dare go. It's an important thing, I think, though, that at 10 kilotons—for example, one can probably, by the scheme known as the [Choctaw] test, you could get the trigger of the secondary of a thermonuclear weapon—he can probably be pretty sure of having designs that he could trust up to several hundred kilotons, even though he'd only [have] done a 10-kiloton test.

That's typical [unclear]. Then there's the all-fusion thing that's been already mentioned. I believe that the most important aspect of that is the fact that it might unbalance the unbalance that now exists between the Soviets and ourselves on quantities of that material [unclear] values that we can measure.

President Kennedy: What we need—

Haworth: Well, we have much more fissionable material than anybody.

It seems to me that these improvements in efficiency, all the way down to the all-fusion weapons, are, from this point on, probably more important, from that standpoint, than even from the standpoint of light-weight and the other military-type device.

President Kennedy: I don't see the . . . I see the advantage for them to cheat, but I don't see that that makes for much of an advantage for us, does it?

202. Referring to a cheater country.

Haworth: No. Well, but we have been considering how the Russians see this.

President Kennedy: But in other words, though, whether you have an agreement or not have an agreement—[*Unclear exchange.*]

Haworth: Yes, I see. Right. I think it's an additional reason to be very careful with the recommendations [*unclear*].

Then we considered the case of no restrictions on underground testing, and there, of course, you can do more of the same, plus the fact that you can then begin to do what are called reduced-yield tests for very large weapons, and in all probability in a year or two one can do tests up to a few hundred kilotons, and those could incorporate, then, these reduced-yield tests which would enable you to design weapons up to several megatons, or a few megatons, entirely underground.

Now, with respect to the underground, the total comprehensive ban, and the possibility of cheating, I actually believe the most important thing is the point that Dr. Seaborg made in our last meeting, namely, that the fact that the cheater would keep his laboratories going, doing tests and experiments.²⁰³ There'd be a core of ideas that would keep the whole subject alive, would make the field more attractive to good, aggressive people. I think that is the most important thing.

And of course it has a big impact on the thing I personally am most worried about, and that is the effect of a later abrogation, that it seems to me that our greatest danger—and I'm not saying the most likely danger, but the one that would have the biggest effect—would be if we would go downhill in our capability, the Russians would then after three or four or whatever years, bring a surprise abrogation. They would have two advantages: one, if they had wanted to cheat in the meantime and keep going, they could have some technical advance, plus this liveliness that I spoke of a moment ago, plus, of course, the fact that they would have planned it for a particular time and so forth. So I think that the one that—

President Kennedy: What might they find out, though? Let's . . . Given the kind of possibilities of cheating under this agreement [*unclear*] more reasonable. Obviously, they're not going to take unreasonable risks, [*unclear*] people will test, but they're [*unclear*] and abrogate in five years. What does it take to find out [*unclear*]?

Haworth: Well, from the point that I spoke about earlier [*unclear*] . . .

President Kennedy: Yeah, but they might . . . But I don't see that any of the ones that you talked about, are really decisive.

203. The President last met with this group on Friday, 27 July 1962.

Haworth: They're probably not decisive. I don't believe that underground cheating would be decisive. That's one of the reasons why I say that I think these indirect effects, this effectiveness and morale of the laboratories and so forth, is more important than any technical advances that they would find out. And then I think that was, in turn, most important if it is leading up to an abrogation.

Wiesner: Technically, people know that even if this situation developed and there was an abrogation, and we lost a year or two, that this doesn't mean we've lost a military advantage. Now, [there are] so many other dimensions that this nation has an option on, if you want to, to move in.²⁰⁴ For example, we can increase the number of missiles. There are so many responses we have which you could do quickly. The problem is to make it obvious to them that increasing their arsenal would [unclear] respond [unclear] if they do abrogate the treaty. I think you have to have [unclear].

Rusk: [to Wiesner] Are you and Dr. Haworth [saying] the same thing . . . that it would be difficult to maintain a central core of men who give this their full intellectual attention [unclear] . . . ?²⁰⁵

Haworth: For a long period of time, actually. I think irrespective of magnitude . . . I think a formal treaty [unclear]. If it were a real treaty I think people would be rather willing to take [unclear].

President Kennedy: I think. . . . Let's see now . . . [Unclear.]

Sounds of papers being shuffled. Participants look at Foster's memorandum.

Foster: We have read them and [unclear] generally agree with these [Defense and joint Atomic Energy Commission–Defense] reports. I think the first [unclear] basic report which was expressed [unclear] in general terms last week, and following these studies, we would recommend in effect that you do a [unclear] we're going to [unclear] in order to get the advantage in timing, we recommend that we table an atmospheric, outer space, underwater test ban treaty.²⁰⁶

204. Wiesner was talking about ways the United States could blunt the strategic consequences of a Soviet test ban violation.

205. Rusk is referring to the problem of maintaining nuclear weapons research under conditions of a total test ban.

206. In his formal paper, William Foster laid out seven recommendations:

- a. *Atmospheric test ban.* The United States should table an atmospheric–outer space–underwater test ban treaty.
- b. *Comprehensive test ban.* At the time of tabling an atmospheric–outer space–underwater test ban treaty, the United States should declare its willingness to accept a comprehensive test

President Kennedy: Have we ever tabled the one before [*unclear*].

Foster: Well, our ambassador [*unclear*] said the other day . . .

Bundy: We have never tabled a treaty, we have made proposals . . .²⁰⁷

Foster: Right. [*Unclear interjection by Wiesner.*] [*Unclear*] was turned down and see which way this one is turned down. It would at least put us in a good position. And an atmospheric treaty does not have the domestic political difficulties which you would expect with the comprehensive [*unclear*]. At the time—

Rusk: And, as well, it has very large international appeal.

Foster: Oh, it has a great deal of appeal, really emotionally, and whether it is proper or not, it has a great emotional appeal, in terms of fallout. We would at the same time, express our willingness to discuss a comprehensive test ban treaty, without numbers, but involving a possible reduction in the number of on-site inspections, and involving a slightly different type of control post than had been in the Geneva treaty. We would not discuss numbers, of either control posts or the on-site inspections, unless the Soviets expressed a willingness to get away from their zero on-site inspections.

President Kennedy: Have they ever indicated a willingness to go

ban treaty involving internationally monitored national control posts on Soviet soil and involving a possible reduction in the number of on-site inspections. We should be prepared to provide the conference with as much recent data as we can relating to detection, location, and identification capabilities of internationally monitored and coordinated national systems while making the point that this data did not eliminate the need for on-site inspections. We should avoid proposing specific numbers either of stations or of on-site inspections on the ground that we saw no point in suggesting or debating details or numbers until the Soviet Union accepted the principle of on-site inspections.

- c. *Soviet testing.* In the event the Soviets commence an atmospheric series, we should continue to indicate willingness to negotiate in both areas a and b but should indicate that we might wish to conduct further tests ourselves if the Soviet series produced extraordinary results.
- d. *Domestic political preparation.* The decision to table a revised comprehensive treaty should await the developments both at Geneva and in this country. A major campaign of domestic information and political preparation should be begun as to the new data and its significance.
- e. *No-transfer agreement.* The United States should press for a worldwide agreement banning the transfer or acquisition of nuclear weapons or nuclear technology. This course of action would be related practically but not organically to the other courses of action.
- f. *Underground testing.* We should continue our underground testing program until a comprehensive treaty had been achieved.
- g. *Readiness to test in the atmosphere.* We should, to the extent feasible, maintain readiness to test in the atmosphere. This would involve discussions with the United Kingdom as to the continuing readiness of Christmas Island as a test site.

207. The United States proposed a partial test ban in September 1961. The Soviets rejected this proposal.

ahead with control posts? And now, of course, it's got to be a question of what "internationally coordinated nationally controlled" control posts, what those words mean. [Unclear.] How do we interpret that phrase, in other words?

Foster: Well, I thought, again, that we should go in, with the internationally monitored and coordinated control posts, so that the data from control posts on the Soviet soil would feed into the international system and that there would be the opportunity of having some representatives, other than all Soviet citizens, who will take a look at this situation.

Now, the scientists, I believe it is fair to state, think that the value of that data is, from a scientific viewpoint, not particularly great. From a political viewpoint at home, however, it has a political significance, which without some such request for an outside look at the Soviet data, I think their political friends have made it quite clear to us that they would feel that this is a tremendous concession for the Soviet Union [unclear]. It would take a lot of education before we can accept such a—

President Kennedy: But our whole scientific opinion is that we can do without that information from the Soviet Union as far as these control posts are concerned?

Rusk: As far as detection is concerned.

President Kennedy: [Someone coughs.] Gesundheit. This is really in a sense a political decision that there are increasingly [unclear] treaty.

Unidentified: I think we ought to accept it myself. [Unclear.]

President Kennedy: That could be the start. [Unclear] could be [unclear].

Arthur Dean: Well, I think that we could approach the Soviets and, under general [unclear] and comprehensive treaty, not mentioning the number of control posts and number of on-site inspections. Of course, they're pretty smart. They would immediately start playing a numbers game with us, and say, "Well, you had 180 [control posts] before, and you're talking about 19. . . ." ²⁰⁸

President Kennedy: We were talking 180 around the world, were we? ²⁰⁹

Dean: We were talking 180 around the world, and 19 on Soviet territory.

208. Arthur Dean was the chairman of the U.S. Delegation to the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee at Geneva until 27 December 1962.

209. The President is referring to the verification system proposed at the Geneva conference in 1958.

President Kennedy: And now we're talking about [unclear]?

Dean: We're talking about 20 on an international [basis] outside the Soviet Union and 5 on Soviet territory.²¹⁰

Long: That is not a fair comparison, though, because although it's 180 that one had before, where you covered all testing and all media, and with the 20 that you mentioned, you're only [verifying] with respect to seismic [areas], so that, if you would . . . the numbers wouldn't be quite that different.

Foster: It might be 170, wouldn't it?

Wiesner: But we did want 17 seismic control posts in the Soviet Union and we're now talking about 5. I think that's a relatively—

Bundy: We're not talking about 5, I think that's really the point. [Bundy chuckles.]

President Kennedy: We're now talking about 5 in the international system. [Unclear] understand [unclear]. Before this, we were talking about 180, is that correct?

Long: Yes, that's right. And those 180 had . . . All of them, or essentially all of them, had seismic equipment on site, but they also, all of them had various types of equipment to monitor tests at high altitude in outer space.

President Kennedy: But will we still need that, won't we?

Long: There's quite a good case to be made for letting the monitoring of high altitude and outer space be done by unilateral systems, so that simply [unclear].

President Kennedy: Why is that? What is that case?

Long: Well, the case is threefold. One of them is that outer space is ideally the sort of situation where we can do fully as well by ourselves as we can with the [unclear]. [Unclear] as to the numbers of pieces of equipment, things that we go into that if we have to do—

President Kennedy: In other words the United States alone can monitor that around the world?

Wiesner: If we want to.

President Kennedy: If we want to. So there's 180, now we reduce that to 20? We could reduce it to 20, these . . .

The conversation becomes confused. Evidently Dr. Long of ACDA envisions deploying new types of monitoring stations that were not prescribed in the old Geneva system of 180 stations. Meanwhile Jerome Wiesner has

210. The Arms Control and Disarmament Agency had suggested that the new technical information permitted a scaling back of the verification system to 25 national control posts that would be internationally monitored.

just assured the President that some of the monitoring can be done by systems controlled by the United States within its own territory.

Long: If one did the very tentative kind of technical proposal which we have been working on, one would include seismic and atmospheric in this international [system], and then the number of separate stations might be nearer to 50, of which [unclear].

President Kennedy: We're at 50. . . . What about 20?

Wiesner: Twenty at seismic only, you see. And these things are not supposed to be co-located [unclear].

President Kennedy: All right. [Unclear.] So 20 is the seismic . . . ?

Long: Twenty of these would be seismic, some of which would have other facilities like electromagnetic pulse. And as I say, the total number would cover atmospheric and . . .

President Kennedy: Some of these, 30, and the 20 seismics, and 30 makes 50. Would they all be located in the United States? [*Several people simultaneously answer "No," and someone adds "All around the world."*] So where do we get the 80–20? [Unclear] seismic. Where did we get . . . ?

Long: Twenty is the number of seismic stations which by themselves, if no stations inside Russia, do quite a good job of monitoring seismic events.

President Kennedy: [Unclear] do quite a good job. [*General laughter, perhaps in reaction to this confusion over the number of control posts.*]

Wiesner: At the last meeting, Mr. President, last Friday—

Unidentified: Mr. President, this is why we decided not to have precise numbers!

Unidentified: Let's not.

Wiesner: Last Friday, you were given a chart which compared the performance of the system that Dr. Long is talking about with basic [unclear] with the performance of the system that we attributed to a [unclear] . . .

President Kennedy: I know that they're comparing in some way [unclear] with 180 [unclear] I know . . . testing the equipment in outer space, the atmosphere, seismic, and electromagnetic. Now we're only talking about 20 that would be just seismic? Or 50 that would be just seismic?

Long: No, they . . . If the . . . The 20 figure comes up over and over again, because if one focuses only on the underground problem, 20 stations outside Russia, 20 seismic stations, is a system that has been assessed in detail and whose characteristics are known rather well, and we are reasonably confident—

President Kennedy: Is this 20 based on the new information, last month's data, or is this based on the [unclear]?

Long: Well, it's based on a consideration of last month's data. Particularly the capability of those [unclear].

President Kennedy: All right. So now we've got 20 that are seismic. Now we're talking about 50. So where did we get the other 30?

Long: One would have—this is going to be cumbersome but I think [unclear] a lot, one would have about 15, around the world. Fifteen pieces of equipment which were acoustic, [unclear] then we'd have about 25 pieces of equipment around the world for electromagnetic pulse, but some of these various things would be co-located, so that the total number would be 45 or 50.

President Kennedy: Now, tell me your judgment on the 20. As I understand it, the other 30 would be for above ground, is that correct? Then either [unclear]. With 20 seismic, if the Russians were cheating, so far as testing, we're in [unclear] of this great data from the control posts within the Soviet Union. We didn't have any [unclear]. What kind of . . . What are the chances of picking up [unclear] . . . ?

Long: The detection threshold for, on a sort of comparable test basis would be . . . The detection threshold for the Geneva system for this particular standard [unclear] tuff would have been about 1 kiloton.²¹¹ The threshold for these 20 will be just about twice that, about 2 kilotons. The identification capability is reasonably close to the same.

President Kennedy: Now that's for tuff; and for the other material? [*Several people answer simultaneously:* "Alluvium."]

Long: The same factor of two would hold.

President Kennedy: Was that five before? Now it's up to ten?

Unidentified: It's actually up to 22.

Unidentified: Twenty-two. Six and 12. [*Unclear exchange.*]

President Kennedy: In other words, you couldn't really do without any inspection in this time period, could you?

Unidentified: You could not.

President Kennedy: You could do without controls [unclear].

Unidentified: That's correct.

President Kennedy: What is your judgment, let's say you have two conditions of . . . You don't have reliance upon their national control stations, how many inspections, scientifically . . . How many incidences could you pick up on one of these [unclear] machines, whether it would

211. Tuff is hard rock in which a nuclear explosion can be tested. It is a mixture of volcanic ashes and igneous rock. A low-yield test (1 kiloton) would be easier to detect in this hard material than in the softer alluvium.

be seismic, that you think it would require inspection in the Soviet Union [unclear] based on that latent data?

Long: One would end up seeing something like very roughly 50 to 75 small earthquakes, small events, small seismic events, which were on land, which were sort of not obviously in the shallow coastal waters—so that there's some reasonable chance to think they were on land [unclear] reasonable chance. But it should be said that that's a number that does fluctuate from year to year, so that one year it might be 50 or another year it might be a hundred.

President Kennedy: And in a previous year, this new information . . . how many do we think it would add? If [unclear] tell about . . . ?

Long: Oh, the number would have been . . . well, with what previously, [before the] very new, it would have been very high, something like a thousand.

President Kennedy: So now you figure that you can tell, by pointing these machines, you could pick up, distinguish, between an earthquake and an atomic explosion except in 50 to 75 cases, is that about it?

Long: Yes. That's in some ways an unfair, but actually a correct, statement. It doesn't quite put the thing in the picture in the sense that a better station would detect more of those smaller events and of course leave somewhat more undetected, so that in a sense we would have a better station and it would see more events, at least maybe a hundred [unclear].

Wiesner: If we improved the system, so that the threshold goes down, we'll see more and more events, so that [unclear] a very poor system wouldn't see anything, needing inspection. But this is the dilemma [unclear].

President Kennedy: For example, if you move the threshold up . . . [unclear] talk about cheating

Wiesner: Yup. You could. [Unclear.]

Bundy: We'd be consistent then.

Wiesner: But we'd be very happy if under all conditions we could see a clear implosion; but if we could, then these number of events might be four times as many.

President Kennedy: Now, let's say the 50 to 75, if you test . . . Does that include the 5 or 6 or 7 or 8 kilotons in alluvial?

Unidentified: Yes. Yes.

President Kennedy: Would that include, say, 2 kilotons in alluvial?

Long: No, it would go to 5 to 10 kilotons.

President Kennedy: Five to 10. And anything below 5 to 10 kilotons in alluvial would not show in that, would not go into the 50 to 75?

Unclear exchange between Long and the President.

Long: Two kilotons associated with 10 to 20 in alluvial. I said 5 to 10. [Unclear exchange.] In tuff.

President Kennedy: Two kilotons in tuff is equivalent to [unclear]? Several say, "10 to 20."

President Kennedy: Now, if you drop the . . . that's the threshold is it?

Long: Yes.

President Kennedy: [Unclear.] On the alluvial, then, say, you had 5 to 10 in alluvium, could you pick that up at all?

Wiesner: No.

Long: Well, on this system, a single 5- to 10-kiloton test, a single 5-kiloton test in alluvium probably would not be seen.

Bundy: What's not clear to me is whether that's true of all tests, or whether this depends on circumstances and conditions—

Long: It does depend on circumstances. There's a very significant amount of fluctuation in the behavior of these stations depending on precisely where the station is and where the test is, so that . . .

Bundy: There's a risk factor involved . . .

Long: It shouldn't be taken quite that. . . . There *is* a risk factor involved.

Wiesner: As a matter of fact, if we all calculated that the threshold is 5 kilotons, I doubt whether anyone would have the courage to test [unclear] kilotons just because of the uncertainty in someone being able to [unclear].

President Kennedy: It occurred to me, there are certainties in regard to testing as well as . . .

Bundy: Detection. Detection.

Long: The fluctuation [unclear] in signals that are generated from various sites . . .

Bundy: The same earthquake doesn't give the same signal to different places.

Rusk: Well, you couldn't be comfortable testing up to these . . .

President Kennedy: It . . . wouldn't it help you very much to have additional detection? [Unclear] reduce the number from 180 to just 20 of the seismic—I don't know all these figures. Wouldn't it help you to improve, to increase the number, not reduce the seismic so much? Another 20 machines around the Soviet perimeter?

Wiesner: If it's right within the Soviet Union, you probably can't help yourself a great deal . . .²¹²

212. Referring to an explosion.

Unidentified: [Unclear]

Wiesner: That's right. Those few might help some, but I doubt we can find a marked improvement.

Foster: It would help. It would help on this fluctuations—especially since we defined it as having to have four stations.

Long: We had to have made provision, for example, [unclear] wanting to improve a quite substantial number of rather ordinary [stations], one would almost say, relative to these inferior, university-type seismic stations around the world: Japan, Russia, Iran, Iraq. . . . Those stations . . . each one is not very good, relative to these rather good ones proposed here, but every now and then one of them does pick up an event, and the fact that they are occasionally false in their [unclear].

President Kennedy: Well, it doesn't seem to me that there's so much objection to the number of control posts as there is objection [unclear] . . .

Rusk: Unless they have . . . Unless they man them internationally. I think the Russians have objected to international—

Tape cuts out for 13 seconds.

Wiesner: Incidentally, I think that we're talking about the core of the two proposed systems when we talk about the level of 22 kilotons in alluvium. It's either accepting the set of figures that say 6 to 12, and this just involves being willing to spend more money and have better equipment, and have a more complicated system. So, an alternative to your proposal that would have more stations which also could be looked at in detail is that, including the best possible stations [unclear] limitations.

President Kennedy: Yes. And as I say, I don't . . . now, even if they . . . I gather from what you said, Doctor, that there isn't very much that we would anticipate the Soviet Union, given its sophistication, that they would be able to develop with these tests.

Haworth: There's certainly a lot they would be able to develop, [unclear]; in my personal opinion, it would be unlikely to be decisive.

President Kennedy: They could—

Tape cuts out again for 45 seconds. During this period the conversation shifted to the status of negotiations in Geneva. The U.S. special envoy to the General Disarmament and Nuclear Test Ban talks, Arthur Dean, is speaking as the recording resumes.

Dean: [fades in] . . . then today are being turned down on the grounds that we now spend some 43-odd underground and know how to do it. I think they have also learned how to do underground better, and I think they've assumed that we were, in effect, offering them something which didn't need any inspection, or any control system, [unclear] we

would be perfectly free to continue to do it underground.²¹³ Now my general judgment is that they wouldn't accept it. I also feel that, all of the Eight feel,²¹⁴ that when we put out our Department of Defense memorandum of the 7th of July, that that was sort of a diplomatic signal that we planned to make some fairly important concessions on the comprehensive treaty.²¹⁵ That's the way they all interpreted it.

The Swedes, Madame [Alva] Myrdal, their ambassador, has told me that if we don't table a comprehensive treaty in about two to three weeks, she is under instructions from Bernd Lundgren, their foreign minister, to come in with a fairly important proposal for a comprehensive treaty. And the Swedish scientists are very suspicious of our data. They can't understand how we picked up the Soviet tests, underground signals and, second, in the French test by distant instrumentation. And yet we say that we can't always detect and identify by distant instrumentation. They are very . . . She tells me that she hopes we will come in with a comprehensive treaty, but that if we don't within that period, she is under instructions to do something fairly comprehensive—

President Kennedy: Now what is our answer to those two points about picking that up?

Haworth: Well, the French test, for example, was above 40 or 50 kilotons and it was in rock, hard rock, which is ten times as good a signal as alluvium.²¹⁶

Dean: But you see, that's top secret, I can't mention it.

President Kennedy: Why can't you mention it now?

Long: The yield in magnitude, the magnitude is top secret.²¹⁷ . . . [*fade in*] magnitude, which, by the standard thing, is . . . would be equivalent to 90 to 100 kilotons in tuff, or 15 kilotons in granite. [*Unclear interjection.*] That could [*unclear*].—

President Kennedy: What was it in granite? [*Unclear exchange.*]

Bundy: Well, that we don't have to say.

213. The Soviets began to test underground in October 1961. The United States had started in September 1957.

214. The eight neutral members of the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee.

215. The memorandum of 7 July alerted the world to the Department of Defense's upward revision of current detection capabilities.

216. In other words, an explosion in hard rock is ten times easier to detect than one in alluvium soil, which is much softer and can muffle sound waves.

217. At this point in the conversation the White House recording machine switched from Tape 2 to Tape 3.

President Kennedy: In other words, we're now relying on the figure received in our machines and not on the special intelligence, so that's a rather easy line. So, I think let's go ahead. And we have some . . .

Wiesner: But this is interesting because the rest of them probably will say it's 20 or 30, but there's still a disagreement between them by a factor of two, so—

Unidentified: Anyway, they're saying—

Bundy: Well, that's a whole lot more than nothing.

Wiesner: Yup.

President Kennedy: Anyway, could we detect it on our machine close by or would they go all the way around?

Long: All the way around. A very long distance.

President Kennedy: OK. Well, that's one point. Now, the other one would be . . . What's the other thing we talked about? The . . .

Bundy: Semipalatinsk underground shot, which we also detected a little while ago.

Long: Also big, very much the same size, detected by many many stations, both ordinary university types and—

President Kennedy: How much did we figure that was in stone?

Unidentified: Size 10?

Long: A little bit smaller.

President Kennedy: Is that in stone?

Long: Yes sir. The rock in that area is, again, hard rock.

Wiesner: These are both aseismic areas to which . . . [*Unclear*] happened in the seismic areas you might not have paid notice.

Bundy: Well, not only aseismic areas, but testing areas.

Wiesner: Testing area and very large explosions.

Unidentified: Well, I think that that seems to me [*unclear*] answers.

Dean: So far, that's been regarded as top secret.

Foster: Mr. Dean—

Bundy: Every newspaper's—

Foster: The point for consideration here is we have declassified the use of several Nevada shots and told in what medium they are, what the yields were, and people around the world, of course, had their seismic counters at our facility.

Bundy: [*aside, under his breath*] This is just nuts.

Foster: So if that information has . . . should be dispensed if it hadn't been—it's been given out—

Unidentified: Ahead of time.

Foster: Well, it should because that would straighten a lot of this out. [*Unclear interjection.*]

Long: Wait a minute. Which hasn't been . . . You were referring to the French shot?

Foster: Yup. French and Russian. [Unclear] our information—

Unidentified: From which then people can infer these things and straighten all this out.

Wiesner: Yeah, but they're always carrying the extrapolation too far, because these are under ideal conditions for detection with no attempt made to disguise or hide the thing. We're worrying about poor conditions with people trying to hide, and we've got to keep saying this to them.

Dean: I know—

President Kennedy: I think Arthur Dean ought to maybe go ahead and say what he, these two points anyway. It doesn't seem to me that this is very secret.

Dean: Yeah. That's fine; can I just finish my [unclear]?

President Kennedy: Yes.

Dean: I believe, and I'm in no position to judge the law; maybe our secretary and Mr. Foster would know, but the political situation is precarious—but I think the Indians have now come to the conclusion that, since we will not accept the 100 percent destruction of nuclear weapons and delivery vehicles and the abolition of all foreign bases in the first stages, that there's no possibility of bringing the Russians and ourselves together and disarming. I think they're very discouraged and very disillusioned.

I think, therefore, they're determined in the fact that they must get something before the UNGA [U.N. General Assembly] on nuclear testing. I think they are determined that they are going to introduce something, and most of them are much more interested in the arms race, at least at Geneva, than they are in the fallout.

I think if, because of the political situation, we cannot table sometime before the committee adjourns on the first of September, if we can't table something even with blanks in it—even if we put blanks in it, I think we would get a very good position in the UNGA—but if we can't table something along the comprehensive line after we tried the atmospheric . . . I may be wrong, they might expect the atmospheric, but I think the Soviets will not, and I think most of the Eight there will be somewhat disappointed if we don't come along with an atmospheric.²¹⁸

I'm very much afraid that we might go into the UNGA, and that the Swedes, joined, I believe, by the Arabs, can themselves propose [unclear]

218. Dean was referring to a draft comprehensive treaty that would leave unspecified the number of monitoring stations and annual on-site inspections.

something which might be far more difficult for us to combat in the UNGA if we ourselves don't come forward with our own treaty before the first of September, and [unclear] largely without.

Now as I said, I quite agree with the theory here that we ought not to just go in and table a comprehensive treaty with, let's say for the sake of argument, five control posts inside the Soviet Union and say, 12 on-site inspections per annum, because I think immediately the Soviets would start driving on numbers, and I think India would start driving on numbers. And I think you'd end up with a number that you wouldn't be able to sell domestically. And maybe the thing that they'll do is to still continue to build these [unclear]. The Soviets, of course, are pretty shrewd and—

President Kennedy: I'm not going to . . . I don't see . . . That's what I don't understand, how we can do it in blanks.

Dean: Well, I think they're pretty shrewd. What [unclear] to say, whether you're talking about a greater number of control posts or a lesser number. You're talking, between 10 to 15 or 5 and 10. I think that they're playing the game.

President Kennedy: And you keep saying, "Well, will you accept any?" and they'll say what?

Dean: Well that's . . . I'll have to try. I think I'll have to try it at least for two days with [Valerian] Zorin to see whether, as a matter of principle, that they would accept *any* control posts on the Soviet Union, on a . . .²¹⁹

President Kennedy: What is our argument for not having a definite number proposed?

Rusk: So long as the Soviets stand with zero, whatever number we put in, whether it's 12, 8, or 2, would be subject to erosion. We both do our best to put in a reasonable number adequate to our needs. In the process of mutual opinion and discussion, this number will come down under pressure for no purpose. So what we can say is that, whatever number it is, you can be very sure that it's more than zero.

Bundy: To put it another way, Mr. President, sure we're parlous with two groups of people, whatever number. If we put in a number n , the Congress will say it should be $2n$ and the neutrals will say it should be $\frac{1}{2}n$, and we will have a hell of a war over something that doesn't do us any good at all if the Soviets stick with zero.

Rusk: The main prerequisite is to get some agreement with the

219. Valerian A. Zorin was the Soviet representative to the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee, 1962.

Russians. And if we put in numbers without getting a breakthrough on the principle from the Russian side, then we're negotiating with the neutrals about something that doesn't have any relevance to them at all.

President Kennedy: If we're talking, though, about 50 to 75 events, it seems to me that actually you don't need 12 inspections.

The President's comment sparks an unclear exchange. His eagerness to bring down the number of required annual on-site inspections is controversial around the table. McGeorge Bundy is one of the President's challengers.

President Kennedy: You can prove this though, Mac. We were talking about 12 to 20 based on the number of events, and now we've cut the number of events into . . . what? A fifth or a tenth?

Bundy: You're saying exactly what the Swedes will say, Mr. President.

President Kennedy: Well, that's it. That's, you see, the logic of it takes us there. By what do we cut our events?

Unidentified: Well, then we'd have to add [unclear]. [Unclear interjection by the President.]

Bundy: Probably about 10 [unclear]. [Wiesner is speaking in the background.] Depending, but you're using different detection systems. But what you have to bear in mind as you improve the detection system, the number of events goes up again.²²⁰ [Unclear exchange.]

Unidentified: The problem with that, I think it would probably go up by four Mac not by ten.

Bundy: It depends where you look at it, to inspect it.

Rusk: [Unclear.] When we first went in, we had one inspection for every five events, so we had a threshold. But when we revised the threshold, the ratio of inspections to suspicious events jumped from 1 to 40, so we thought that from 12 to 20 inspections, there was an overhang of the possibility of inspections which would give us some security. Now, you get below a certain number, and that overhang of inspections is not viewed as a threat. When you got down to three, for example, it doesn't provide enough of a threat of inspection to apply real brakes on a place as large as the Soviet Union.

Unidentified: What's that, a lot of control posts? [Unclear.]

Rusk: A lot of international control posts on Soviet territory.

220. Bundy is deflecting the President's argument by making the point that as verification technology improves, more rather than fewer suspicious underground events will be detected. These, in turn, will necessitate more on-site inspections.

The President appears impatient with this opposition to reducing the number of on-site inspections. He turns to other areas where the U.S. position can change in Geneva: on the number of required control posts, how they are manned, and the number of on-site inspections.

President Kennedy: I think according to Arthur Dean, we'll just have to go through with the changes we've made. This first place is international, we're now talking about it as specifically manned [control posts]. We're talking . . . well now, we're not talking about internationally manned, we're talking about internationally controlled. We haven't defined what the difference is, have we, between internationally manned and internationally controlled?

Dean: As I understand it, [as opposed] to having this [as] one-third are Western, one-third Soviet, one-third neutral on the control posts, we now are prepared to have these control posts manned 100 percent by Soviet nationals, except that we would like to have some right of supervision of the equipment and the calibration and the training of the personnel by [unclear] on the committee. It's not [unclear] right of on-site inspection.

President Kennedy: Well, it seems to me . . . Can't we drop . . . What did we originally say was our number for control posts along the Soviet [unclear]? [*Some unclear responses.*]

Dean: Ninety-two.

President Kennedy: Now we're talking about . . . It seems to me in this area, we could drop it. I mean, they were counting on this very much. There's got to be some change in our position, otherwise we're going to look [unclear] last month and that would look pretty bad.

Wiesner: Well, the President's proposal is that in addition to the [unclear] outside the Soviet Union—

President Kennedy: [Unclear] 5 to 19 in.

Wiesner: Will be 5 here—

Rusk: That drops from 19 to 5 . . .

Wiesner: Manned by the Soviets, which is a critical Soviet [unclear].

President Kennedy: That's if we count the category before that.

Foster: No sir. We've never mentioned it.

President Kennedy: How long will that last when we don't have any confidence in it anyway? The fact that we don't regard it as essential. Why? Why can't we say we're dropping it from 19 to 5 because of our new information [unclear]?

Bundy: Well one reason, Mr. President, one reason for the question is that the 5 is associated with a total net worldwide system of 25, of which 5 of these would be [unclear], 20 would be outside.

As you said yourself 20 minutes ago, there's a real question of whether that's the thing to do or whether we want 50 stations which would detect a lot more closely.²²¹ I don't think what we . . . This happens to be one system which we've looked through, but it's not the only possible system, and I don't think we're in a position now to say that it's *the one* to which we would sign on. We could put it forward as a sample, but I don't think you ought to get pinned to it.

President Kennedy: Say [unclear]. When did it . . . Did we ever put forward the drop of 180 to 20?

Dean: No, sir. [unclear]—

President Kennedy: With no bombing data? That's an American proposal?

Bundy: It's not a proposal; it's only a study program.

President Kennedy: I understand, but that's an American—

Unidentified: It could be co-opted.

Haworth: This is a suggestion within the executive branch.

President Kennedy: Well, why is it we can't drop this 180 down to . . . drop it to 50? It really depends on what kind of controls, inspection, I mean, quotas we're talking about. Whether they're major or [unclear] circumstances, less sophisticated.

Unidentified: Yes.

President Kennedy: And that's if we dropped the 20 to the 5. I mean, if we . . . What was the figure again?

Unidentified: Nineteen.

President Kennedy: Nineteen down to 5, then say on the question of inspections, we've got to first find out whether we're going to get any action. If that's the weakest part we're going to be in. The fact of the matter is, if we said from 12 to 20, if we said 9 now, at least it would look like we could change, and 9, I would think, would be . . . the Soviets probably could take it [unclear] anyway.²²²

The question we have to decide is, if we said from 12 to 20 [unclear], are we better off to have a slightly different figure—as a result of new material—9, than we are with Arthur Dean over there saying, "Well, I can't give you what our figure would be," because [unclear] to be safe. I

221. The President did not say this. He never quite understood how the number of control posts rose from 20 to 50 in the course of Dr. Franklin Long's speech.

222. The President is referring to on-site inspections in the Soviet Union. The U.S. position was that it required between 12 and 20 annual inspections of suspicious underground events to verify a comprehensive test ban.

would think they would say, "Well, let's get your figure and then we'll make the Soviets come up." I would think that one way [the onus] is going to be on him all the time for the next three months, and in the United States; the other way is going to be for the Soviet Union to break the [unclear].

Bundy: You could have the best of both worlds, maybe, by saying we could go at least to 12, and we hope lower, but the data aren't yet completely examined. Then you'd know you'd get pulled further, but—

Wiesner: I think it better if you don't specify numbers, because if you have 12, people start saying well, you know, 12.

Bundy: That's true, but we know—

Wiesner: We'll say we're willing to talk about a new number once we understand that there's going to be some inspection. [Then] we're in much better shape.

Bundy: And that the number will be lower.

Wiesner: The number will be—[Unclear exchange.]

Foster: [Unclear] lead us to believe that it will be a lower number than we previously thought.

President Kennedy: What will be Arthur Dean's answer to why we can't come forward with a new number?

Bundy: It's actually damned complicated, as we found out this afternoon.

Dean: [Unclear] I think I could explore with Zorin for a couple of days alone, but he and I alone, whether or not they in principle would accept a comprehensive treaty, if they would be willing to accept a lower number of control posts and a lower number of on-site inspections than we've been talking about before. And I think I can explore that with him. . . . If he's too vague, I don't believe I can spar with him much beyond two days, but supposing he said to me at the end of the two days, "No, we absolutely, flatly refuse to accept any control posts, and we flatly refuse to accept the on-site inspections [unclear]."

Bundy is heard whispering in the background.

President Kennedy: [to Bundy] I don't agree with [unclear].

I think, well, I think we ought to, well why don't we . . .

Foster: I ought to mention one other technical factor that has not been mentioned, that relates to the inspections, and that is the defined area over which you can look, and that originally the Geneva system was supposed to be so that you had a 50 percent chance that it was actually inside the area where you were allowed to look.

This is one thing that has been clearly done on a professional basis, whether by having fewer stations farther away, and so forth. And our position would be better if we could get that area enlarged, and that

would give us more breathing room on inspections, so that should, I think, be factored into the plan as well as the other two.

Dean: Somewhere, around 200 to 500?

Foster: Well, maybe [unclear]. [*Foster continues to whisper in the background.*]

Wiesner: Actually, as it's set up now, I think you will get the pattern that we have a 200 and a 500, and the 500 occurs if you don't have a signal surround. And I think this would be the case in almost all the signals we're talking about, so we're talking automatically with the 500, wouldn't you agree?

Unidentified: I would think so, and [unclear].

Foster: I just can't see why this . . . increasing that would be nearly so objectionable to the Russians as more inspections.

President Kennedy: [Unclear.] Maybe we ought to change that restriction.

Dean: I don't [unclear].

Wiesner: On a related point . . . in the list of things that's been proposed here, as you know, issuing from the State Department is also a pretty [unclear], and after the Secretary of State proposed this the other day, it appeared to me that this might be the mechanism that would give Premier Khrushchev some flexibility if he needs it. After all, he's in a very funny spot vis-à-vis inspections. He's made the statement so many times that he isn't going to have any inspection in the Soviet Union, that he has to have some way to get out of it. If they're seriously interested in these kinds of thing, then they would [unclear] to, but he was in a position to say, "Well, I am really not interested."

President Kennedy: Well now, you know, Arthur, what about now, given the mood of the place? Are we suggesting that Arthur Dean can go back to them and say, "We'll drop the number of control posts on the Soviet Union's [unclear]"? Do we have agreement that that's our position?

Foster: Not right away, Mr. President. I think you can take a sampling tomorrow morning with the congressional leaders, and I can assure you all our mail and our discussions with the two committees that [unclear].

President Kennedy: Well, I agree the stories this weekend are unfortunate—they keep using the word *soft* and so on, which is very absurd. But the only thing is we do have, as I understand it, new information, and we don't want to just dissipate . . . for political reasons, we don't want to miss a chance, particularly if we are, which seems to be the general consensus, with a general agreement that we're better off . . . and we

don't want to let the uninformed, in a sense, to use that term, hold us back and bring us into a worse situation.

Haworth: Well, I'm appalled that they don't believe it, sir.²²³

Bundy: Well, this isn't partly because the job isn't finished. It's just—

President Kennedy: That's right.

Haworth: Make up our own mind.

Bundy: They've always been told that this data is very tentative. The data is really rather less tentative than [unclear].

Rusk: But Mr. Dean will only say that we dropped 180 posts to the range of 50. Well, that automatically, proportionally drops the 19 to the range of 5. That's 5 being the total number of posts you're talking about. I think we could go ahead on that, on a discussion basis. We're not [going to] put it in the form of a formal treaty text. But I wouldn't say [unclear] about that.

President Kennedy: What is the . . . now I know that the . . . Has this been sort of explored in detail with the joint committee yet?

Foster: Yes, sir. There was a technical presentation by Defense [unclear] for three or four hours, and then I was up for three or four hours, and was not . . .

President Kennedy: Because they don't . . . that joint committee doesn't want a test ban, I mean, isn't that their—

Foster: Well, they want . . . They were expecting an atmospheric test ban. At this point in time, they're against concessions, as they call them. The Foreign Relations Committee, before which I went after those two appearances, is almost . . . Well, [Senator] Clint[on] Anderson moved strongly for an atmospheric test ban. [Unclear], [Senator Stuart] Symington, [Senator Wayne] Morse . . . it looks like [Senator] George Aiken will be [unclear], as I say—but I talked to him a little bit—are all against this at this point in time.²²⁴ They say it's too tentative . . .

President Kennedy: Atmospheric?

Foster: No, atmospheric is all right, that's if it's by itself.

President Kennedy: I see.

Nitze: [Unclear] Has it occurred to them that we were not talking about a situation in which there was no inspection, because Stuart Symington

223. Some congressional leaders had questioned the implications of the technical reassessment announced by the Defense Department on 7 July.

224. Clinton P. Anderson, a Democratic senator from New Mexico, and George D. Aiken of Vermont were on the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy. Stuart Symington of Missouri and Wayne Morse of Oregon were on the Foreign Relations Committee with Aiken. Symington was also on the Armed Services Committee.

called me very upset and said, "I hope to hell that you're not going to go through with this." [*Unclear interjection.*] He seemed vaguely lost [*unclear*].

Foster: [*Unclear*] insisted on on-site inspections, both committees.

President Kennedy: He did not [*unclear*].

Bundy: Is it not clear to them? I think the ones I talked to—

The tape cuts off for 1 minute and 24 seconds. Evidently some of the missing conversation involves discussion of how to persuade the members of the Joint Committee about the significance of the new data.

Long: [*fades in*] But you would take one large underground test as a calibration to explosions.

President Kennedy: What about our own test? Has that told us much? Our own underground test? Doesn't that tell us?

Long: Yes, our own underground tests confirm all this, but you see, this is so [*unclear*] to see Russia, you have a neutral fellow seeing some of ours, for example, it did respectively but not nearly so well seeing these French Sahara tests. But all these confirm for us that it's just that the very best numbers, the ones that are particularly interesting . . . I think this is just—[*Unclear exchange between Long and Bundy.*]

Adrian Fisher: Mr. President, with [*Senator*] Hubert Humphrey as probably the strongest supporter that we've got.²²⁵ He takes—who wants this treaty really badly—he takes the position that he wishes that you do a two-stage operation. He said if you put any major, "the things we'll call concessions," now or table a comprehensive treaty based on "national systems," the animals will go loose and people will take positions on this, so it will make it very hard to get a treaty ratified if we ever get one in debate. We originally, as you know, felt rather the other way. If you sound all excited about it [*unclear*] and he said, "If you really want a treaty, don't do anything too fast, because if you do, you'll have people like Jackson . . ."

Tape cuts off again for 51 seconds. According to Seaborg's account of the meeting, several others reiterated Fisher's view. They reported that "the proponents of a test ban in the Senate such as Humphrey feel that it should be taken in two steps: first, exploration without actual numbers and then a treaty."

President Kennedy: The Senate and the [*unclear*] consider the job [*unclear*]. On the other hand, maybe by the fall, the Soviets finish their tests, we make the determination that their tests are not a danger to us, that we might be able to really do something on a treaty. We will have two or three months, and they won't be [*unclear*] to feel that they're

225. Hubert H. Humphrey, senator from Minnesota, was on the Foreign Relations Committee.

being rushed.²²⁶ Now, how can we . . . on the other hand, those people over in the [unclear] Senate.

Rusk: Mr. President, the effect of what we're saying here to Arthur Dean would be to go over there and talk about a comprehensive treaty. There would be two blank spots in it, and that's the numbers, so long as the Soviets are sitting on zero. But in any event, we would like to go ahead with that in spirit, since we can go ahead on that now—

Bundy: [whispering an aside to a separate conversation] I agree with that. This is so stupid as to—

Rusk: —without reference to all this inspection issue.

President Kennedy: Well, now can't we—?

Rusk: [Unclear] is enough activity for Arthur Dean for some time to come.

President Kennedy is not persuaded that the administration should be so cautious.

President Kennedy: [Unclear] trying to go from 180? So that there's no point—

Bundy: Well, he can certainly indicate that he's ready to move, Mr. President—

Rusk: Yes.

Bundy: —and maybe we can give numbers in the control posts area if we avoid the numbers, but if you're going to feel Zorin out as to whether there's any give, if you get give, then we've got a clear course.

Unidentified: That's right.

Bundy: If you don't get any give, then we have to look again. Isn't this going to be true all summer long?

Rusk: Sure.

Bundy: If you go back and talk two days—

Dean: Yeah [unclear]. [Dean tries to interject.]

Bundy: —then you have to ask again. Meanwhile, we're at war on the Hill, and maybe we've got resources we haven't mobilized for talking to these fellows.

Rusk: See, we don't really have a case to argue on Capitol Hill or for the public so long as the Soviets are saying zero inspections.

President Kennedy: Yeah, but the only problem is how Arthur Dean . . . this thing could build into sort of a struggle and all the rest, and he's got no data. And then he goes back there and, says . . . Well, he's got to look like he's got something more.

226. *They* refers to the senators.

Bundy: He can tell a lot, Mr. President. Now, there's this very simple thing. If people don't even know the difference between a 50-kiloton shot in granite and a 5-kiloton shot in alluvium, there's quite a lot to be said at Geneva [*laughs*], it seems to me.

Unidentified: Yeah. And we've got [*unclear*]—

Bundy: We've got to look around and do a lot of declassifying.

Dean: I don't want to overexaggerate what might happen if the Swedes come into this thing, but I think the Swedes feel that we've had this information a lot longer than three weeks ago.

Bundy: Well, that's another thing we could say—with straight honesty.

Dean: And . . . I think the Swedes may come in, and I think the Russians would also come back on this thing. Our data now in effect goes back to the occurrence of their [*unclear*] back in 1959.

Foster: By good luck not by good knowledge of their [*unclear*].

President Kennedy makes an unclear response to Foster.

Dean: I'm really sorry, but I think, and I don't want to exaggerate this thing, but I think that if we don't use, if we don't do . . . I don't want to get you in trouble on the political situation here, but you may find that if we don't come up with something *very* good within two to three weeks, that the Swedes and the Indians and the Arabs may come in and table their treaty and bring their scientists in to prove that we can do a lot more than we're prepared to say that we can do as of the present time. Then you've ruined—according to the UNGA—[*unclear*], and you've got their plan plus their data which I think puts us in a very difficult position for the UNGA this fall. I don't want to overexaggerate that speculation, but Madame Myrdal has told me that she's under instruction [*unclear*] to move within two weeks in a major way if we don't do something within two weeks.

Wiesner: That could be. That could be.

Bundy: From what I heard, Art, with all the dope that we've got in front of us that we're pretty sure they don't know, you could make three 6-hour speeches. And if she doesn't have to go back and tell them [*unclear*]—[*Unclear exchange.*]

Dean: No, she doesn't. But I think the Swedes are onto something, because this fellow [*unclear*] keeps coming around everyday, asking, probing, probing, probing, asking for more information. And I think that they think that we've had this data that we are now saying [*since*] the seventh of July, for over a year.

President Kennedy: For over a year?

Dean: Yes.

President Kennedy: What do they base that on?

Dean: Well, I think we have.

President Kennedy: We have had this data?

Long: Couldn't have got it from the Russian test or the French test until the last year . . .

Dean: Well, I think this data's been available to AFTAC for well over a year.²²⁷

Dean's comment provokes a loud outburst from a few participants who speak over each other.

Bundy: It's nuts to even say that! [*Laughter.*]

Unidentified: Oh, I agree.

President Kennedy: I'll tell you . . . I sent a memorandum to the Secretaries of State and Defense about this, because, as I say, I don't know anything that we've done that is more confused and spread havoc that this thing . . . as far as the government's going [*unclear*]. So we've looked into this question—I sent a memorandum with exactly that question, how long have we had this, and why, if we had it for any length of time, wasn't it made available to the disarmament agency? So I sent that over to the Secretary, so perhaps you could tell us . . .

Bundy: He's answered.

McNamara: Well, I would be happy to. The information is based on analysis, further analysis of the Russian and French tests. The French tests occurred on approximately May 5, if I remember the date correctly. It normally takes 60 days to transmit the information from the collection stations to the analytical groups in Washington, which would mean that they received it on July 5.

In this particular instance, however, they became so interested in the possibilities that this information allowed them to, in effect, recalibrate their scales, they expedited the transmission and received it, I believe, on June 15. Now I'm quoting these dates from memory, but I can check my memo here.

They began to analyze it on June 15, and on the weekend of June 29, which I believe was a Saturday, Dr. [*Doyle*] Northrup, [*who was*] at home, had a new idea of the way in which this could be interpreted, and either went to the office or took the material home with him on Sunday, reanalyzed it, and concluded that the estimate should be changed. Now that would have made the date approximately June 30 or July 1. The Disarmament Commission had called a meeting for July 3.

The question was, then, since he had this new information that had

227. The acronym AFTAC stands for Air Force Technical Application Center.

developed between June 29 and July 3, should he present it to this meeting. He discussed the matter with his superiors in the Air Force. They said, "Expose them." He went to the meeting. [*Someone begins to tap on the table.*] There were 25 people in the room; he exposed the information to them. Now I am told—although I wasn't present at the time—that later, it was considered that since 25 people knew it, particularly because of the character of the people, this was likely to leak to the press, and it was subsequently proposed that it be distributed to the press. I think that's a fair approximation of the timetable.

Bundy: That's right.

McNamara: Since Mac was involved in the process—

Bundy: I was deeply involved in this last part and would still . . . if they're suspicious of us for having put it out, what they would think of us if it had leaked out beggars description.

McNamara: But I think, Mac, it's fair to say that this was a weekend analysis.

Bundy: Look, now, this is what happened and now it's also fair to say, in a wider sense, that if we'd all looked harder at the data and had a different system for spying it out, we might have known a lot a lot sooner. But it is not true that anybody sat on the knowledge of this stuff, and anyone who says that ought to have . . . really [ought] to be hit over the head. [*Unclear exchange.*]

Rusk: There's a major reinterpretation here, because somebody had some ideas they discovered [*unclear*] under credence, and not under national interest.

Kaysen: But I think the important point is when the questions were asked, I think, because the fact that certain numbers existed doesn't in itself make you change your ideas. [*There is a whispered side conversation.*] You have to ask the question, "Do these numbers mean something different than what we thought they meant?"

Bundy: That's right. Maybe we were dumb, but we weren't corrupt.

President Kennedy: Now we're going to get Arthur . . .

Unidentified: [*Unclear.*]

President Kennedy: Given the problem at home, given the fact that we're really rather indecisive about the significance of these matters because it's all new, where do we go and deal with Zorin . . . ? Zorin will say to you that he won't allow anybody to be on the national control sites except Soviets. He will also say that there's no inspections, and we will, after you and Zorin meet, go before the neutrals and you say, "Zorin says this," and they'll say, "Well, all right with Zorin, but what about you?" That's where it seems to me his problem is going to come [*unclear*].

Dean: Well, I bet I . . .

President Kennedy: For instance, if we could say a change that will not be particularly controversial, but I say, well I say, we could change the number, though we daren't put it into distribution, the number of . . . [Bundy whispers] control sites. That's where all the difficulty is. It all depends what kind you have and where you locate it. At least he can say he's gone from 180 down to 50, can't they? That certainly isn't . . . What?

Unidentified: Does Arthur have to respond to the neutral nation proposal which is on the table?

Wiesner: Because there is already a specific proposal.

President Kennedy: What about?

Wiesner: Which says that essentially the national type of detection system and inspection which is rather ambiguous as we read it here, you can't tell whether it's invitational inspection or permissive, unless—

Rusk: Mr. President, the Eight only, with the possible exception of India, appear to walk the fence that some control, some international inspection, is necessary. It seems to me that so long as the Russians are saying zero, we can get the neutral nations over there to put their heat on the Russians, rather than on ourselves. But we don't have to come out, we can intimate that these figures are lower than we thought they had to be at the beginning. But just so long as the Russian figure is zero, the neutral problem is with the Russians, not with us. . . .

The tape cuts off again, this time for 51 seconds.

President Kennedy: . . . if we went to the previous data, this kind of inspection system, with the progress that they can make underground, is still a terrific gamble for the Russians.²²⁸ [The President continues to speak softly.]

Haworth: Well, I agree. And I . . . well, I think, Mr. President—

President Kennedy: In the first place, we tried to put in a separate category what they could get by cheating underground. And that . . . they know that they could get some things, but when we talk together what we could ask them . . . what they've got.

As I understand it, the scientists tell us they don't think they could make *decisive* breakthroughs. So they have to have a reason for cheating, and if you've got the chance to inspect them, even ten times, you've got a pretty good—even with the previous data—you've got a chance that I wouldn't think they'd, that anybody'd want to take.

228. The President was returning to his earlier argument that even scaled down, the proposed verification system would deter Soviet cheating.

They're not gonna let us do it anyway. They're not going to let us go tracking around the Soviet Union ten times in a year anyway, are they?

Dean: Now, as I understand it [*unclear*].

Unidentified: [*Unclear*].

President Kennedy: You don't think they'll let us go any time?

Dean: As I understand this data—I'd like to have the scientists correct me—I've been troubled for 18 months about the fact that this system we've set up is really a Frankenstein. The one that we originally had set up, with 180 control posts and that type of thing, I . . . the cost and the whole thing, I'd always thought that it would never work, and that *if* we could do these things on a national basis, and where we could build our own equipment and have our own personnel in to supervise it, plus this tied in to some kind of an international commission with an obligatory right in the commission to determine when you make the on-site and to make it obligatory and not invitational [*that then it might work*]. And all the Eight have told me that when I say it must be obligatory, "We agree with you." Now, I'd always thought that instead of making a concession to the Soviets, or making this a softer system, I think you really have got a harder system, a better system.

Wiesner: You'd get it quicker.

Dean: Now if we could . . . and you don't have to wait this three years while you install these 180 control posts when you really have an uninspected, uncontrolled moratorium. If we really could satisfy the congressional committees that the scientists are correct on this data, and that we've even got a better system, perhaps we could get in on the public and all of the newspaper accounts who used the word *soft* on Monday [*morning*], or *concession*, or it looks as though you're giving something away to the Soviets. I actually [*unclear*].

President Kennedy: I'd prefer that word *soft*. . . .

Dean: —you're improving it; you're improving the situation.

Foster: Mr. President, it seems to me that this is a good system, it can be put in sooner, it is salable to the Congress. It just needs a little more time, and a little more . . . than just me selling it to them over the [*unclear*]. It seems to me also, however, perfectly negotiable to go to the neutrals and the nonaligned and say, "We have come back, and our data allows us to accept a good many of the philosophies within your proposal—national control posts, augmented by an international commission and international monitoring and coordinating." It also allows us to claim in advance that we will be able to substantially reduce the number of control posts—

Bundy: And on-site inspections.

Foster: —on Soviet territory and of inspections, over our previous plans. Now, if you don't have to give numbers at that point. I think you'd say, "But before any of this can take place, we have got to get acceptance of the principle of on-site inspections in the Soviet Union."

The President realized that no one in the room supported his view that it was in the interests of the United States at that time to authorize Arthur Dean to present precise changes in the U.S. position.

President Kennedy: I generally agree [unclear], so that's all right with me.

Now the question is, what about the scientific briefing? Get all of this clear, the real essence of all this, [unclear] limitations as well as the possibilities, can be presented to all of them, so that some Swede isn't up there . . .

Wiesner: You mean in Geneva?

President Kennedy: Yeah. How exactly . . . Who's going to do that?

Foster: Oh, we're gonna send Dr. Long, hopefully Dr. Wiesner, a distinguished seismologist, either Dr. [Frank] Press or Dr. Oliver or Dr. [unclear], from AFTAC.

Wiesner: Up to [unclear].

Foster: —from AEC. And invite the other nations to do this, giving them a time, a week's notice. The Soviets, I understand, are . . . have said that they would be willing to discuss this thing—

Dean: [Unclear.] That's right.

Foster: —with competent people. Now this gives us, again, a week or so in which we can do some verbal arrangement on the Hill . . .

The tape cuts out for eight minutes and four seconds. According to Seaborg's diary account, "Foster reiterated that he would like to table the atmospheric test ban treaty, and Bundy reiterated that Congress would be troubled if a comprehensive treaty were tabled at this stage depending solely on national detection posts. . . . Vice President Johnson said that many senators have talked to him about their concern about opposition to such a treaty."

According to an unsigned memorandum on this discussion, the participants made the following recommendations and suggestions:

Mr. Foster summarized his view. We should table a treaty banning only atmospheric tests now. We should tell the neutrals that our new data means we can accept a national detection system, fewer detection stations, and fewer on-site inspections, but we must first get acceptance from the Russians of the principle of on-site inspection.

Ambassador Dean repeated his view that we should table a comprehensive test ban treaty even though all its details could only be spelled out later.

Mr. Bundy pointed out that tabling a comprehensive treaty would upset the senators.

The Vice President acknowledged that many senators were upset. They are concerned about what we are now doing and they need additional information. Possibly the President will have to talk to certain key senators.

Ambassador Dean restated his view that we should introduce a revised comprehensive treaty now.

Mr. McCone said that the congressmen are worrying [about ?] the test sites in the Soviet Union.²²⁹

Foster: What we propose in the comprehensive treaty. The commission should take appropriate measures, including arrangements for permanent observers at, or periodic visits to, elements of the system, in order to ensure that established procedures for the rapid, coordinated, and reliable collection of data are being followed.

President Kennedy: Well, now isn't it a fact that we don't . . . that our new scientific data, if we believe it, will tell us that national control of these systems on the Soviet Union are not necessary [unidentified speaker agrees with President Kennedy] [unclear] make some progress?

Haworth: They would jump on this localization.

President Kennedy: Tell exactly where it is?

Haworth: Yes.

Wiesner: Well, as a matter of fact, if the Soviet Union did [unclear interjection], it would help on detection, too. But—

Bundy: All right. Well, now we can't count on it.

The President had a new strategy. He would adjourn this meeting and try again later to achieve consensus on a new negotiating posture in Geneva.

President Kennedy: That's our proposal, there. Well, now, we're still back . . . We'd better . . . We've been at this problem for over an hour, and I don't think that . . . it seems what we've got to do is come back tomorrow.

When are you going, Arthur?

Dean: I have no plans [unintelligible because Dean and the President are speaking at the same time].

229. Memorandum of Meeting with President Kennedy, 30 July 1962, *FRUS*, 7: 520–24.

President Kennedy: You probably ought to go up and talk on the Hill a little before you go, just to . . . I mean, Wednesday morning, we could arrange to have you go up on the Hill, and then we've got to have a meeting again tomorrow in which we go at this matter of exactly how he should word the three matters: How we should describe the control posts, and how we should, how many of these control posts he could save. Because it's got to look like there's some difference, otherwise we're sending him back there to lose the case. Then we can't have put out all this publicity and then make it look like we just didn't do anything in effect.

I think what we've got is political, Arthur, because I don't think the Soviet Union is going to probably accept, certainly before their tests are over, and we've looked at them, and they've looked at them, and neither one of us is going to accept any inspection, a [unclear] observer, accept an inspection. The problem is to have it on their back and not on our back for the next five or six months. And . . .

Dean: On this question of—

President Kennedy: I'd just like the Secretary to go over there and have something to protect himself with, and us with, and not have it look like he's just kind of shooting off. But Arthur Dean has all his information based on the Soviet interpretations, given to you [unclear] arrival. They'll say, "Arthur Dean knows it's better than this, but he's been forced by the Pentagon and the warmongers to just come up with nothing." Now they tend to . . .

I know that the Congress is [unclear], also the broader constituencies of the Congress in this matter, particularly when none of us think they're going to get a test [ban] anyway at this time. But now the question is, what is our posture, arguing this matter, our position over the next five or six months? We don't want to have the Soviets and the main neutrals all together, and two-thirds of the General Assembly all beating our brains out.²³⁰

I don't think anybody's going to be very . . . particularly if we know an awful lot of people up there, on political grounds would be charging us with selling out no matter what we do anyway. So I think we've got to think of what his case is going to be when he gets over there.

Dean: I might—

President Kennedy: Why don't you think about that overnight.

230. The President was anticipating a difficult time over Berlin at the U.N. General Assembly in the fall. Nikita Khrushchev was expected to come over in November, and Kennedy did not want to hand him another issue in the form of apparent U.S. intransigence on a nuclear test ban.

Dean: Yes.

President Kennedy: Let's get back tomorrow and talk about it.

Dean: I mean, just [this] last discussion I had with Zorin, he was very relaxed the other afternoon and we were together for three or four hours, but he said to me, "Are you going to try to stop us from doing this next series of tests?" And I said "Well, what do you mean?" And he said, "Well, are you going to make some kind of a proposition that's going to make us look badly because we go through with the next series of tests." And [unclear], "Well, we could do it of course." And I said, "What do you have in mind?" [Laughter]

He said, "Well, what do you think of this Padilla Nervo's thing?"²³¹ And I said, "Well . . ."

President Kennedy: This what?

Rusk: . . . Padilla Nervo's proposal, [unclear].

Dean: Padilla Nervo's proposal.

Rusk: [Unclear] stops January 1st . . . , sir.

Dean: That you stop your testing in some stated period of time.

Kennedy asks about the details of Padilla Nervo's proposal and Rusk responds indistinctly.

Dean: And I said, "Well, of course you're also [going to] have to [Rusk continues to mumble in the background] . . . you're always going to have to be sure that the period of time is long enough, and you're always going to have to be sure that you or ourselves don't test last, and maybe we could work it out so we have some stated period of time. I don't know what it should be. I think June 30th, '63, is probably too early; but I said, "Even if we signed the treaty, and we both agreed to it, there'd be some period of time before it'd be ratified by our Senate, in which it wouldn't be a binding agreement, but probably we could, if we did get together, we probably could agree on some period of time in which each of us could test."

And he completely tried to raise this three or four times as to whether we were going to try to stop them from testing, and I said, "Well, we certainly are open minded on that; we certainly would be prepared to work out some kind of a formula with it." But he is very much interested in this Padilla Nervo formula.

President Kennedy: That's all just . . . it's just in the atmosphere, is it?

231. Luis Padilla Nervo, the Mexican representative to the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee, suggested on 14 June that the nuclear powers agree to stop atmospheric testing by 1 January 1963.

Dean: They're going to start—no sir—they're . . .

President Kennedy: Well, I meant [unclear]—

Dean: Padilla Nervo is against all testing. [Unclear exchange.]

President Kennedy: But he's got inspection in there, ideally.

Unidentified: January 1st was his date, wasn't it?

Dean: It is, but Padilla Nervo is—

President Kennedy: It's the date . . . It's just the date the agreements begin, I think.

Well, I think we've got to come back tomorrow. Let me just say again that in view of the publicity we've had [unclear] to date, in view of Mr. Dean's own position over there, then I think there is the impression on our part that this new data should bring new hopes within the limits of our own concern for safety here, and also the Congress, and we've just got to figure out what we can give him to go back and sustain him for two or three months.²³² And we're going to be debating this, and we're clearly not going to get any place with the Russians on this matter until they get through their tests and we've analyzed them.

We've got to get something for Arthur. We've got to think about the little things. Now what are we going to do about the French? [Unclear.]

Bundy: After this meeting, I think that we're going to have further discussions. We've already said that this was your initial meeting with Mr. Dean. We simply say that again. If we could all do as well as we did over the weekend, we'd get a medal for good behavior. . . . It seems to me, if we could just—[Laughs.]

President Kennedy: Anyways I might say coercion was [unclear] idea.

Bundy: I tried to bat that down. Softness and concession has nothing to do with it. It's what the facts indicate that we need to have that we're talking about. We might all go after that one understandably.

Wiesner: The trouble is the data is soft.

Foster: Perhaps due to the frustration of the leadership [unclear] on this, with the Vice President might be helpful.

Rusk: I think this [unclear] today.

The meeting begins to break up. Wiesner mentions the timing of raising this matter with the congressional leadership. While the men stand and move their chairs, there are some unintelligible exchanges. After a door closes an argument begins between Arthur Dean and Robert McNamara

232. On 14 July, Arthur Dean had said to reporters that the new data might make it possible for the United States to withdraw its insistence on having any monitoring posts in the Soviet Union. He was quickly corrected by Dean Rusk.

over when the new data on detection capabilities was available. The President is overheard saying, "Why don't we do this tomorrow?"

Bundy: But really, nobody's hiding anything. They may not. . . .

Dean: A year ago, I had the chance, and I cross-examined this fellow [unclear]. But the [unclear] was disciplined for giving me information about [unclear] at all. I know perfectly well this son of a bitch is furious.

President Kennedy: But some of this suggests [unclear].

Bundy: . . . dislike this information?

McNamara: Mr. President, I'll absolutely guarantee you that Romney . . . I said [Dr. Doyle] Northrup but it was [Dr. Carl] Romney that was the [unclear], that did this over the weekend of the 29th. . . .²³³

Dean: Well, I can show you charts dated a year ago where—

Bundy: Oh, well three years ago [unclear].

Unidentified: Is that going to go outside of this room?

President Kennedy: Well, you've got to do that, but I've got to say, I . . . You know, Romney's . . . of course . . . couldn't . . . Do you feel that this [is] information they had?

Dean: I don't think they *realized* it. But I, when I kept cross-examining them about it, cross-examining them about it, cross-examining them about it, they finally disciplined Doyle for giving me too much information!²³⁴

McNamara: Well, that may be. I don't dispute that at all, although that isn't going to happen. It isn't happening now. And, of course, definitely . . . But Romney didn't have these ideas, he didn't have the data [unclear].

Dean: Well, I got suspicious myself over this thing, not that anyone was hiding anything, but I just kind of put all of the little stuff together, and I kept cross-examining all of these fellows, and finally they . . . I got silence. And I went after them all again and that's . . .

Bundy: That's what's been changed. [Unclear exchange.]

President Kennedy: What I'm talking about is talking about bringing down tomorrow John McCloy and Bob Lovett as a . . . sort of independent outside people who might be able to help out with the joint committee . . . that wanted [unclear].²³⁵

233. Northrup and Romney worked at the Air Force Technical Applications Center (AFTAC).

234. Dean is referring to the Air Force.

235. Robert A. Lovett and John J. McCloy were two of the most experienced national security specialists in the United States in 1962. Secretary of defense during the Korean War, Lovett had been offered his pick of senior positions in a Kennedy administration, only to turn them all down on account of his health. McCloy, assistant secretary of war during World War II and later the U.S. high commissioner in Germany, served under Kennedy as the President's adviser on disarmament until October 1961.

Unclear exchange involving Dean.

President Kennedy: Particularly, Scoop [Senator Henry Jackson] is very responsive to Bob Lovett, and [unclear].

Dean: I think Lovett will be fine.

Bundy: Are you going to be OK on this, on the data, at the meeting?

Dean: Yeah.

President Kennedy: Well, now first—

Dean: You sure about it? Was he fine with this?

President Kennedy: Well, yes, he hasn't [unclear] very close to—

Unidentified: No, he is not.

Dean: Let me tell you what happened. He got very sore, because he said that we didn't bring this thing up in either [unclear], but we did bring it up before [unclear], and he got up and walked out to another meeting, and the whole thing was [unclear]. [Bundy makes an amusing aside.]

President Kennedy: [Unclear] has this information?

Foster: Oh, Mr. McCloy has it, the chairman of it has it, and he's talked a lot of [unclear] over the telephone [unclear].

President Kennedy: All right. Now what about this? What I'd like to see, is it possible to get Mr. McCloy and Mr. Lovett down in the morning to get it together . . . get all the data. . .

Bundy: Get a briefing—

President Kennedy: . . . all the data, and have a meeting in the afternoon like we had today and discuss these three points?

Unidentified: Sure.

President Kennedy: Then Arthur Dean ought to think overnight [someone mumbling in the background] [about] what he thinks he needs to go back there, given the limitations in our position. And I just . . . Really, because you know, the Hill, we don't want to find ourselves historically . . . and then we miss the chance [unclear]. Obviously, what will happen, as well, [unclear] series. But I think we've got to give him something to do. Otherwise it's going to look like we got him back and didn't really pursue [unclear]. . . .

Bundy: I think you [unclear] if we do a hard job with the Committee and we get the thing calibrated so that we can—

President Kennedy: If we can get McCloy and Lovett going, it is much easier for him to do this.

Dean: I'm sure.

President Kennedy: We'll try to get them. Mac, you want to talk with—?

Dean: I'll call. [Unclear exchange.]

President Kennedy: Mac, [unclear] if you can get them to come

down in the morning for the data and in the afternoon for our meeting. Have you got all the . . . ? [*Unclear exchange.*]

Bundy: The only way to get [*unclear*].

President Kennedy: I think if we can get . . . I'll tell you what, Mac . . . Could we make sure that . . . ?

Bundy: Yes, sir.

President Kennedy: I'd like to have Mr. McCone get all this, because they're going to be talking to him, a lot of these people.

Bundy: All of the technical data?

President Kennedy: Well, have him listen to it, because a lot of the Joint Committee know him and then he would be in a position to do us a [*unclear*]. So let's get that tomorrow morning, too. If we can get Lovett, McCloy, and Mr. McCone there at the same time; otherwise it just [*unclear*].

Bundy: Well, if we could get as many as we can get. That's the easiest [*unclear*].

McNamara: Mac, who do you want to have do this?

Bundy: Well, I would think that there are several people that ought to do it, and the question is who really can pull it together and harden it up. And my . . . in some ways I wish you would do it. You've heard all the data; you've got an analytical mind. You can present it to a layman better [*unclear*].

McNamara: I haven't heard this. This is just what I was going to do tomorrow morning assuming that there'd been no [*unclear*].?

Bundy: That's just what has to be done.

McNamara: You have to pour this through a layman's mind, and [*unclear*] some [*unclear*] fashion, but I can—

Bundy: Well, I myself haven't listened to it enough.

McNamara: Well I have; but I would [*never*] do it. . . . If they can't come down, I will definitely [*unclear*].

Bundy: Bob, we can probably hold the whole thing 24 hours. [*Unclear*] to have a meeting without getting this done, so let me find out what their availability is and . . .

President Kennedy: Will you let me know, too?

Bundy: Yeah, sure. When I know—

McNamara: [*Unclear*] which requires you to process it through somebody. Might talk the same language as the uninitiated, which [*unclear*].

Bundy: This is plain. But also, you see . . . what did happen, and this is why people worry about, had worried about the earlier organization, is that when these fellows go up, they're under instructions from General

LeMay to make it very plain that all this data is tentative and implies no breakthrough.²³⁶ So these two create [unclear] . . .

McNamara: Well, it's a little more than that, Mac. Harold Brown feels that this is tentative.²³⁷

President Kennedy: Does he?

McNamara: I wouldn't say tentative. He feels there are many uncertainties, and of course there are. There is a tremendous amount of interpretation that's—

When the President is out of earshot, Bundy outlines his concerns about the President's eagerness for new numbers.

Bundy: The basic reason for not putting in figures is that there are . . . it isn't just [unclear] events. I mean that the President keeps going back to that, but the moment you get a sophisticated understanding of the interlock between detection and inspection and threshold, and risk, you know that the number is a political number; it's never a technical number.

Unidentified: Yeah.

Kaysen: This, I think, is an important point. I think the big thing about the new data that hasn't been clearly said, Bob, is that all the uncertainties we have [unclear] a different direction. People are uncertain, and they are mostly uncertain about how much better this is.

Dean: No, no, no. I don't know about that, [unclear]. [Unclear exchange.]

McNamara: I definitely don't agree.

Kaysen: I can't believe we spent two and a half days on this—

McNamara: Some people may be that, but Harold is not just as uncertain that they aren't much better. . . . Harold is uncertain as to the range, and the point within that range which might turn out to be the most probable point, and the range is wide.

Bundy: Yes, but it's all in one direction.

McNamara: No, no. I think the, except the—

Bundy: Except that problem with alluvial testing; I thought it was a [unclear].

McNamara: That was a [unclear] problem.

Kaysen: . . . But the alluvial testing [unclear interjection] is at least half a red herring. [Unclear exchange.]

Unidentified: [Unclear] made a pressing case the other way.

236. General Curtis LeMay was Air Force Chief of Staff.

237. Brown, later secretary of defense in the Carter administration (1977–1981), was director, Defense Research and Engineering of the Department of Defense in 1962.

Dean: What do you fear? That's what I want to know. [Unclear exchange.]

Kaysen: Mac, Taz wanted you to know that he's collecting [unclear] for you or for somebody's customer. [Unclear.]²³⁸

Bundy: Yeah, I have a customer. [Unclear exchange.]

Door closes. The President forgot to turn off the machine and the tape spooled out. There is some indistinct corridor discussion and then someone, probably Evelyn Lincoln, turned off the machine.

As Bundy had suggested, the matter could wait 24 hours. Lovett and McCloy could not come down together on July 31, so the next meeting on the test ban would be held over to August 1. In the meantime, the White House Press Office announced that the President would be giving a press conference Wednesday afternoon. The President already intended to discuss Peru at that time; but he would also be expected to have something to say on Arthur Dean's instructions by then.

The President had one more meeting before going for his second swim of the day. An old friend from Kennedy's time on the Senate Labor Rackets Committee, Clark Mollenhoff, was in for an unrecorded 20-minute chat. Finally, at 7:25 P.M., the President could call this well-taped day over.

Wednesday, August 1, 1962

After taping nearly four hours of conversation on Monday, the President left no tapes from the next day.¹ Tuesday, July 31 was largely taken up with ceremonial duties. In the morning, President Kennedy met with the Brazilian student leaders as suggested by Lincoln Gordon. Later he attended the swearing in of the new secretary of health, education and welfare, Anthony Celebrezze. However that evening, Kennedy held a very interesting meeting with Georgi Bolshakov that would have provided

238. Tazewell Shepherd was the President's naval aide.

1. The Secret Service numbering system suggests that no meeting tapes were made on 31 July 1962.