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January 25, 1961



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

On January 19th, when the President met with Mr. Kennedy, he called me in to join them after they had been together about fifteen minutes. As I came in he had just phoned for the helicopters to make a trial run, and asked me to time them. Captain Aurand went in with me and took over the task of timing. (They arrived in exactly five minutes.)

The President then asked me to develop in somewhat greater detail for Mr. Kennedy some of the operational arrangements and preparations in existence so the President could give direction to the government and the nation in the event of emergency.

I showed Mr. Kennedy the "satchel" and the book of emergency documents therein, describing what had been done to bring them to the point of inclusion and the President's initialed approval for inclusion in the satchel, and showed him a sample document -- the first in the book--ready for signature. I described to him a number of the other documents, such as calling the Congress into session, and described the use that would be made of FBI offices at that time. I showed him "Plan D-Minus" which sets forth the actions of the government in the event of emergency, and explained how these documents key into this plan. I also told him of the extra document -- not a part of the Emergency Action Paper series -- included in the satchel which would authorize the use of atomic weapons in an emergency.

I then showed Mr. Kennedy the book containing the policy statement, instructions, and controls on the matter of existing advance authorizations for the use of atomic weapons, and explained the great value of this in assuring that the U.S. could not be caught by surprise.

I then described briefly the White House emergency plans for movement of the President and his family, the facilities from which he would operate, and the initial operations planned to be performed.

I next mentioned the arrangement that President Eisenhower and Vice President Nixon had agreed upon between themselves whereby the Vice President would accede to the powers of the Chief Executive in the event of temporary incapacity of the President.

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Next, I showed Mr. Kennedy the book of Department of Defense emergency actions and described the process by which the JCS would communicate with him in event of an emergency. We had some discussion as to how these procedures would work in the event of a surprise emergency while he was at the Capitol for the inauguration the following day.

Mr. Kennedy expressed deep appreciation to the President for having these matters laid out and explained for his benefit.



A. J. Goodpaster
Brigadier General, USA



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