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May 15, 1959

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MEMORANDUM OF CONFERENCE WITH THE PRESIDENT
May 15, 1959



Others present: Secretary Dillon, Mr. Murphy
Secretary McElroy, General Taylor,
Mr. Allen Dulles, Gordon Gray
General Goodpaster

Mr. Gray told the President the group was meeting with him to discuss a proposal growing out of the Murphy Committee for certain covert measures connected with with Berlin/Germany situation. The President said that it had seemed to him that a lot of skill would be required to put across the idea that we are making preparations to support unconventional activity in Eastern Europe should negotiations break down.

Mr. Murphy said the idea of the group had been that some "seepage" to this effect, if begun soon, might in fact help in the negotiations under way in Geneva. The Soviets would feel a little pressure on themselves. The President said he recognized this but still thought it would be hard to put the point across that these actions were related only to a possible breakdown of negotiations. He mentioned that it would be a mistake in his judgment to move great forces forward at this time. In the first place, such action would be provocation, and in the second, it would be something of a bluff since the Soviets know that we could not conduct a major ground type operation against them in East Germany.

Mr. Allen Dulles said that he had talked with his brother in January about this matter, and specifically what could be done covertly to help the negotiations. They felt that Eastern Europe is one of the Soviet weaknesses, and they should not be allowed to feel assured that the status quo is in no danger there. They had therefore decided to conduct a program of denigrating personnel of the East German regime, and this has gone forward, and also to show that we take the situation of the East Europeans quite seriously and are not abandoning them. The idea would be to show that if we come to

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the brink of war, there are things we could do to stir up trouble for the Soviets in Eastern Europe.

The President confirmed that he understood that the plan called for seepage that we are building up dissention and the capability of creating unrest, to be carried out in case the negotiations break down. He reiterated that this is a very difficult point to make. Mr. Murphy said our purpose would be to get the point across simply to the Soviets. Mr. Gray said he understood that no action is planned now. Instead we are just planning to leak the idea. Mr. Allen Dulles said that certain unconventional type supplies might be moved forward, although possibly not in the first phase.

The President asked what assurance we could feel that this operation would be kept in the heads of a very few people. Mr. Dulles said that we are experienced in this type of activity, and that we have routes by which we can leak such information to selected points at high level [redacted]

[redacted] The President said he understood that Allen Dulles will be in charge of this operation. He asked him to keep a careful watch for Soviet reaction.

Mr. Gray next recalled to the President that he had had some question regarding plans to establish covert cooperation [redacted] in the intelligence field. The President said his question arose in the following way -- while it is all right to be dealing secretly [redacted] he wanted to know whether [redacted] is continuing to work against us [redacted]. He thought we must be thinking of the whole [redacted] area. Mr. Murphy commented that the situation seems to have quieted down a great deal in these countries, thus indicating that [redacted] is not working against us at so high a pitch. The President said he has often wondered if we cannot find a few venturesome people who would like to go [redacted] and take teaching positions, thus tending to offset the very strong hold [redacted] on this profession. Mr. Allen Dulles said [redacted] language is the chief problem. We have very few people who have mastered that language. He added that if we can bring [redacted] policy to parallel our own, [redacted] teachers would then be useful to us. Mr. Dulles said that we are giving, and are planning to give, only very modest support. Already it seems to be having some good effect, however. The President indicated he was satisfied by this explanation.

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Mr. Dillon next referred to a message from Prime Minister Macmillan to the President in which Mr. Macmillan raised the question of joint military planning in the Mid East, specifically planning for the contingency of an attack from Iraq against Kuwait. The President recalled that we had agreed upon the principle of cooperation in planning at Bermuda. Mr. McElroy commented that the British have been pushing hard for joint planning in the Mid East but were nowhere to be found when we wanted joint contingency planning affecting Berlin. Mr. Murphy said they had been willing to conduct joint planning here in Washington, but Mr. McElroy said it was planning with our commands in Europe that was really required. The President said he would assure Mr. Macmillan that we were ready to go forward with such planning for the Mid East.

The President also commented to Mr. Dillon that, in another letter to him from Mr. Macmillan, the latter brought out that the British idea, relating to trade with Russia, and medium term credits for the purpose, was far less in scope than we had originally thought.



A. J. Goodpaster
Brigadier General, USA

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FORM OF DOCUMENT	CORRESPONDENTS OR TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
1.	Memo of meeting with President by Gray re East/West student exchanges; JCS splits; Berlin (TS 3 pages)	5/26/59 9/10/81, cc	A (WH--NSC, JCS)
2.	Memo of meeting with President by Gray re (TS--1 page and envelope) <i>exempted MR 80-67 # 3 upon pvt/MR 97-468 # 1 exempted MR 86-776 # 2 POR. EX 8/29/10 CC</i>	5/26/59	A (WH--NSC, CIA)
3.	List of topics discussed with the President (1 page)	5/18/59	A
4.	Memo of meeting with President by Gray re Egypt; import restrictions; NSC 5810/1; limited war; OCB (TS--1 pp.) <i>portions exempted MR 80-67 # 4 12/3/98-B/BM</i>	5/19/59	A (WH--NSC)
5.	Memo of meeting with the President by Gray re a political action program (TS--1 page and envelope) <i>exempted MR 80-67 # 5 / POR. EX - MR 97-468 # 2 some portions exempted, 2011-57 # 2 4/10/12</i>	5/21/59	A (WH--NSC, CIA)
6.	MemCon, President, Dillon, Murphy, McElroy, Taylor, Allen Dulles, Gray and Goodpaster re unconventional activities in <i>(TS--3 pages)</i> <i>exempted MR 80-67 # 6 portions exempted MR 90-247 # 1 POR. EXEMPTED 1-23-08 CC exempted MR 84-478 # 1 POR. EX - MR 97-469 # 1 portions exem. 2011-57 4/10/12</i>	5/15/59	A (WH--NSC, CIA, State)
7.	Memo of meeting with President by Gray re --Director of CIA present (TS--2 pages and envelope) <i>exempted MR 80-67 # 7 EXEMPTED 2007-48 # 1/22/08 cc, MR 82-427 # 1, 9/10/84 exempted MR 90-252 # 5 (6/91) exempted MR 97-468 # 3 / exempted MR 2003-98 # 1 (10/03)</i>	5/12/59	A (WH--NSC, CIA, State)
8.	Memo of meeting with President by Gray re Record of Action of May 7, 1959 NSC meeting re 1960 Defense Department Budget (TS 1 page)	5/12/59 9/10/81, cc	A (WH--NSC)
9.	Memo of meeting with President by Gray re effects of nuclear war; NSC procedures (2 pages) <i>12/31/80 bc</i>	5/7/59	A

FILE LOCATION
WHITE HOUSE OFFICE, Office of the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs: Records, 1952-61

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