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SMITH MILLER
FM KAUFMANN

CONFIDENTIAL

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THE FOLLOWING IS FOR BACKGROUND INFORMATION ONLY.

THESE ARE NOTES BY A SPECIAL SOURCE WHO ATTENDED A FOREIGN POLICY BRIEFING CONFERENCE FOR THE PRESS, AUGUST 15, 1961, AT THE STATE DEPARTMENT.

SECRETARY OF STATE RUSK AND PRESIDENT KENNEDY BOTH SPOKE OFF THE RECORD, THOUGH THEIR REMARKS ARE QUITE ACCURATELY REFLECTED IN THE AUGUST 16 NEW YORK TIMES STORY BY FRANKEL AND THE MURRAY HARDER STORY IN THE WASHINGTON POST OF AUGUST 16.

SECRETARY OF STATE RUSK:

1. BERLIN. IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT THERE WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY HAVE BEEN LEAKS, WHEN THE FOREIGN MINISTERS MET IN EUROPE RECENTLY THEY DID NOT ARRIVE AT ANY NEGOTIATING POSITION RELATIVE TO BERLIN BUT THEY DID ATTEMPT TO SORT OUT THOSE THINGS OF VITAL INTEREST.

KHRUSHCHEV SAYS THAT HE WILL END THE STATE OF WAR WITH GERMANY AND SIGN AN INDEPENDENT TREATY WITH EAST GERMANY. SO FAR AS KHRUSHCHEV IS CONCERNED THIS WOULD CONCLUDE THE WAR AND WEST BERLIN WOULD BELONG TO EAST GERMANY. IF THE U.S. WERE TO AGREE TO THIS, WE WOULD HAVE TAKEN AWAY FROM THE GERMAN PEOPLE THEIR RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION, AND IT WOULD BE NECESSARY FOR US TO NEGOTIATE WITH EAST GERMANY ABOUT FUTURE ACCESS ROUTES INTO BERLIN. THE SITUATION IN GERMANY IS ABNORMAL AND HAS BEEN SINCE 1946. WE HAVE MADE A NUMBER OF PROPOSALS TO SETTLE THIS SITUATION AND THE NOTION OF A UNIFIED GERMANY WAS IMPLICIT IN THE PEACE TREATY.

ONE OF THE VITAL ISSUES AT STAKE IS THE ABILITY OF BERLIN TO LIVE. IF THIS IS DISRUPTED, WE ARE BOUND TO BE IN FOR TROUBLE. THE STATE DEPARTMENT HOPES THAT THERE CAN BE A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF THE ISSUE, AND PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S STATEMENT HAS SET THE TONE. THERE ARE RISKS INVOLVED, BUT THESE ARE REDUCED IF WE INCREASE OUR STRENGTH. ONE OF THE GREAT PROBLEMS IS TO GET ACROSS TO KHRUSHCHEV THAT WE HAVE VITAL INTERESTS IN THIS MATTER AND THAT HE MUST NOT FOOL AROUND WITH THEM.

KHRUSHCHEV'S INTERESTS ARE THE CONSOLIDATION OF HIS INTERESTS IN CENTRAL EUROPE, WORRY ABOUT FAILURE IN EAST GERMANY, AND UNCERTAINTY ABOUT BOUNDARIES AND ATTITUDES OF HIS SATELLITE.

THE BLOCKADE OF EAST GERMANS TRYING TO COME INTO WEST BERLIN GIVES US A READY-MADE PICTURE OF WHAT IS GOING ON IN EAST GERMANY, AND AN EXCELLENT STORY TO TELL THE REST OF THE WORLD OF WHAT LIFE IS ACTUALLY LIKE BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN. IT WOULD BE HARD TO IMAGINE A GREATER ADMISSION OF FAILURE THAN THIS ACTION IN BERLIN. IN PARTICULAR, THE PICTURE OF AN OLD COUPLE BEING TURNED BACK AT THE BARBED WIRE STRETCHED ACROSS THE BORDER IS

ABSOLUTELY WONDERFUL PROPAGANDA. THIS POINTS OUT THE INTOLERABLE SITUATION EXISTING IN EAST GERMANY AND WHO IS ACTUALLY CONDUCTING THE SLAVE TRADE. THIS IS A STORY WHICH NEEDS TO BE TOLD EVERYWHERE IN THE WORLD.

KHRUSHCHEV IS PRESENTLY CONDUCTING A SYSTEMATIC CAMPAIGN TO TELL EACH STATESMAN IN EUROPE THAT IN THE EVENT OF WAR THE USSR AND THE USA WILL SURVIVE, BUT THAT OF COURSE EACH STATESMAN'S COUNTRY WOULD BE COMPLETELY WIPED OUT.

PRESIDENT KENNEDY:

1. GENERAL REMARKS. WE ARE LIVING THROUGH AN EXTRAORDINARY REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD. THIS HAS BEEN BROUGHT ON BY THE ENDING OF EUROPEAN EMPIRES AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MANY NEW GOVERNMENTS WHICH ARE SO FAR MOSTLY UNSTABLE. AT THE SAME TIME, THERE HAS BEEN A TREMENDOUS CHANGE IN THE NATURE OF WEAPONS OF WAR WHICH WILL GET FAR WORSE THAN THEY ARE NOW AS MORE NATIONS ACQUIRE THE ABILITY TO DESTROY THE WORLD. IF THESE TWO FACTS ARE COMBINED WITH KHRUSHCHEV'S STATEMENTS THAT HE INTENDS TO WIN THE WORLD, WE CAN REALIZE HOW DANGEROUS THE SITUATION IS AND HOW CLOSE WE HAVE COME TO WAR. TO REPEAT: UNSTABLE GOVERNMENTS, NEW WEAPONS, AND THE DESIRE OF THE COMMUNISTS TO ULTIMATELY DESTROY US AND TO CONQUER THE WORLD HAVE MADE THE 20TH CENTURY A DEADLY SERIOUS ONE.

KHRUSHCHEV TOLD THE PRESIDENT TIME AND TIME AGAIN AT VIENNA THAT IT WAS THE COMMUNISTS INTENTION TO WIN THE WORLD. THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT WHEN KHRUSHCHEV MET RECENTLY WITH MCCLOY "THE WORDS WERE DIFFERENT, BUT THE TUNE WAS THE SAME."

2. BERLIN. WE MUST MAINTAIN OUR LINES OF COMMUNICATION INTO BERLIN BY WHATEVER MEANS ARE NECESSARY, AND WE SHALL DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE WITHOUT MILITARY ACTION BEING NECESSARY. A DIVIDED GERMANY IS NOT SATISFACTORY EITHER TO US OR TO KHRUSHCHEV, BUT PEACE DOES EXIST REGARDLESS OF HOW UNSTABLE IT MAY BE. THE U.S. POSITION IS THAT WE CANNOT AFFORD TO BE DRIVEN OUT OF BERLIN AND THIS ISSUE IS NOT NEGOTIABLE.

THERE ARE NO PLANS FOR A 4-POWER SUMMIT CONFERENCE. SINCE PRESIDENT KENNEDY REPEATEDLY STATED THAT THERE IS NO USE HAVING ONE UNLESS THERE CAN BE HOPE FOR SOME ADVANCEMENT. THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT HE DOES NOT SEE ANY SUCH HOPE AT THE PRESENT AND THINKS THAT SUCH A MEETING WOULD BE UNWISE AT THIS TIME. BERLIN IS NOT YET A PROBLEM FOR THE UN BUT IT MAY BE SOME DAY. AT PRESENT THE BERLIN PROBLEM STILL BELONGS TO THE OCCUPYING POWERS: THE UNITED STATES, FRANCE, BRITAIN AND THE USSR.

3. CUBA. PRESIDENT KENNEDY SAID THAT HE SAW NO HOPE OF IMPROVING OUR RELATIONS WITH CUBA AS LONG AS THAT NATION REMAINS A PART OF THE COMMUNIST CONSPIRACY.

4. TESTING. IF WE CANNOT MAKE PROGRESS IN ARRIVING AT AN AGREEMENT WITH THE USSR ON NUCLEAR TESTING, THE PRESIDENT SAID IT CERTAINLY SEEMS DOUBTFUL THAT WE CAN REACH ONE ON DISARMAMENT.

5. WORLD SURVEY. THE PRESIDENT FELT THAT WE SHOULD NOT ALWAYS DEPRECIATE OURSELVES AND UNDERRATE OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS. IN LATIN AMERICA WE HAVE GREAT POTENTIALITIES. IN AFRICA WE ARE BETTER OFF THAN WE HAD ANY HOPES OF BEING A YEAR AGO. IN THE MIDDLE EAST KHRUSHCHEV IS HAVING HIS OWN TROUBLES. SURELY, THE UAR IS NOT LOOKING KINDLY AT HIM, FOR INSTANCE. IN SOUTHEAST ASIA WE STILL HAVE OUR OWN SHARE OF TROUBLES, BUT A LITTLE HEADWAY IS BEING MADE NEVERTHELESS IN LAOS. THE SITUATION IN INDIA LOOKS VERY GOOD. GREAT BRITAIN HAS STRENGTHENED EUROPE BY BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE COMMON MARKET. FINALLY, THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT AS FAR AS BERLIN IS CONCERNED, HE SURELY WOULD NOT HAVE LIKED TO HAVE HANDLED KHRUSHCHEV'S PROPAGANDA DURING THE PAST FEW DAYS.

THERE FOLLOWED REMARKS STRENGTHENING SECRETARY RUSK'S POINTS THAT THE BLOCKADE OF EAST BERLIN GIVES US AN EXCELLENT PROPAGANDA OPPORTUNITY IN THE UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRIES.

END MSC.