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John S. D. Eisenhower 300 CARLISLE STREET, GETTYSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

July 15, 1961

MEMORANDUM OF CONFERENCE WITH FORMER PRESIDENT

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

DATE: Saturday, July 15, 1961, 8:30 A. M.

OTHERS PRESENT: Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara  
Director of Central Intelligence Allen W. Dulles  
General Lyman L. Lemnitzer, Chairman of the Joint  
Chiefs of Staff  
Lt. Colonel John S. D. Eisenhower

Former President (General) Eisenhower opened by asking Secretary McNamara whether this meeting was specifically called to discuss the Berlin situation. Secretary McNamara said he wanted to discuss the total world situation, particularly regarding the pressures which Congress and the public are exerting on the Defense Department. As a result of the recent Moscow Air Show, pressures have increased on the Department to expand the program of manned aircraft and accelerate the B-70 program. There is pressure on to cancel action taken earlier on the part of the Administration which would deactivate certain military bases no longer needed and which deactivation would save 1/4 to 1/2 billion dollars. In addition there is pressure to call out the reserves at this time.

Mr. McNamara said that the current thinking of the Administration is that no additional manned aircraft should be programmed and that the B-70 program should not be accelerated. He thinks it would be foolish to react too strenuously to such a development as the Soviet Air Show. Thus we should continue our programs of deactivating unnecessary military bases and should not immediately increase the manpower of the Armed Services.

Mr. McNamara said, however, that he presently plans to request of Congress a supplement to the current budget on the order of \$4 billion. \$1.5 billion of this would be spent to round out shortages of ammunition such as anti-submarine warfare devices and Sidewinders. It would be planned to retain Department of Defense units such as six B-47 squadrons; 2 Attack Carriers; four Transport squadrons; one ASW carrier; and others currently planned for deactivation. Furthermore, if such becomes necessary, the money above \$1.5 billion would permit the call-up of certain other units: amphibious units, National Guard, etc. It is not planned to do this immediately. Mr. McNamara mentioned a savings of 500 to 600 million dollars which could be effected by the impounding of certain other funds already appropriated for expansion of manned aircraft programs.

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Mr. McNamara said that Mr. Dulles agreed that the Moscow Air Show had shown us little new. The Soviets had displayed more "Bounder" aircraft than had previously been estimated by us. Other than that, there is little radical that we learned from the show. Mr. McNamara mentioned that the Administration planned to effect a tax increase to cover additional expenditures.

General Eisenhower said he has not been living with this problem and therefore does not feel too well qualified to express an opinion. Some information on the Soviet Air Show, for example, has seeped through to him through the newspapers, but that is his chief source of information. He recalled that some years back the Soviets put on an Air Show which resulted in a radically increased demand on the part of the Air Staff for manned bombers. The Staff had given the Soviets credit for greater air power than anticipated and had thus provided ammunition for Senator Symington to attack the Defense program. Finally we concluded that these estimates were a mistake, This is an old trick of the Soviets.

*These are*

*These are the things that we should be looking for in our intelligence reports*

General Eisenhower said that he has witnessed this type of thing for eight years. He is convinced that we will lose the game unless we base our military plans on what we really believe we should do and should then follow through on these plans. If we react violently to every new development such as Sputnik (General Eisenhower referred to Sputnik as his toughest public relations problem) then we are "licked." We cannot afford to respond to every Russian action or every Russian peace offer. This will result in an alternate weakening and strengthening of our defense posture, which by its very nature would be too expensive. Our plans must be based on the results of meticulous study by responsible persons of stature.

Regarding the reserves, General Eisenhower said he cannot see "a nickle's worth" of interest in calling up the reserves except, (1) The possibility of placing a good unit outside of each population center so as to provide a disciplined body in case of disaster and, (2) A means of showing visible evidence of our concern regarding the world situation.

General Eisenhower said that with the kind of war we fear, a general war growing out of a brushfire war, we can have the reserves mobilized by the time we have the brushfire forces deployed. If it becomes necessary to mobilize other than the immediate reserves, then we are in a big war, He agreed that we should not respond to public fear and particularly to Congressional fears. Despite the words of the Constitution, the Congress is not capable of exercising sound judgment regarding military programs. This judgment must be left in the hands of professionals. These men must study the problem and must realize that they are not merely professionals as such; they represent the hinge between the strictly military and the national economy. General Eisenhower said he is currently engaged in doing some writing to expound his views.

*It is a matter of how we would turn into a nuclear war*

*brooding type*

*The letter*

*probably a handwritten note*

*read the responsibility of having or receiving*

*benefit in*

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General Eisenhower continued that if the Administration desires to show concern they could take a measure which he feels is necessary, but which he admits probably would not be popular with the politicians. This measure is to choose between "guns or butter" without trying to have both. Whatever money is spent out of necessity for defense should be saved by cutting back on the money currently programmed for improvement of living conditions, money which he believes has been programmed too rapidly. (He mentioned the School and Housing bills as examples.) He would impound every nickel which has been provided in the current ~~budget~~ *supplement for* programs other than defense. (He added paranthetically he noticed that price support of wheat was raised one cent a bushel, which "burns him up," and pointed out that the ~~Administration must be able to withstand~~ *Government* all the pressure groups.)

*add detail*

*warfare programs*

*a major*

If the U. S. is manifestly willing to sacrifice butter for guns, everyone will be happy. Foreign bankers watch our budgetary processes closer than do Americans, with the exception of those Americans charged with the direct responsibility therefor. Currently Germany is now carrying 40% of its reserves in dollars. The Bank of England is now carrying only 10%. But if the great nations decide to cash dollars for gold, we will have a run on our gold supply. General Eisenhower said that Mr. Khrushchev will not miss the point if America takes Spartan measures ~~such as this~~.

*to preserve the substance of*

*has a maximum of*

Mr. Dulles then interjected the matter of foreign aid and hoped that General Eisenhower did not mean to cut this vital program. General Eisenhower agreed and said he is writing a letter to a friend to this effect. General Eisenhower went on to say that we are not just defending ~~ourselves~~, we are defending ~~it~~ *the* American way ~~and~~ to preserve our standards of values. He said we cannot respond to Russian movements like a bunch of "scared kids with a bully." He said he would not go further than his own budget in such matters as B-70. He recalled, and General Lemnitzer confirmed this, that the current budget calls for creation of two prototypes only. He pointed out there are technical problems regarding the B-70 which have not been solved. Mr. Dulles reminded General Eisenhower of the development of a new aircraft with an altitude capability higher than the U-2. Much of what has been learned from ~~its development~~ *such development* can be put into the B-70.

*the*

*one*

General Eisenhower said ~~that~~ *one* the new high altitude aircraft program is quite reasonable. It defeats ~~the~~ AF argument that a major reason for development of the B-70 is its commercial application. Secretary McNamara agreed that there is little relationship between B-70's and commercial aviation. General Eisenhower continued that he recommended cutting everything in the budget ~~but~~ *one* excepting national defense and interest on the national debt. He said any weak-kneed way of responding to every pressure group in the Country is bad. He said he would prefer the tax increase mentioned by Secretary McNamara over any plan for further deficit spending; however above all he would prefer to reduce unnecessary expenditures. Mr. McNamara said again that he hoped to spend only 1.5 billion of the 4 billion requested.

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General Eisenhower then expressed general approval of expansion of ASW capabilities plus stock pile of Sidewinder weapons. Said he thought expansion of the Marine Corps by 15,000 marines, which he had seen recently in law was ~~silly~~. Any war which cannot be handled by our Navy, our Air Force and our mobile ground reserves in being, would be in his opinion a major war. He reemphasized that we have facing us a 40-year prospect. If we cannot program our forces to be sustained for forty years then we are going to be forced into an armed camp.

General Lemnitzer said that the money which will be spent by the military will be phased in gradually. An expansion of military capabilities requires ~~some~~ personnel and a little money. An example of the use of the money would be to make real divisions of the three training divisions which are now included in the Strategic Army Forces (STRAF), part of our fourteen division force.

*the*

General Eisenhower said that he feels that we should cut down the number of our national guard ~~divisions~~ <sup>and reserve units</sup>. Congress insists on 700,000 reserves on pay-drill status. But in times of crisis such as this, the Administration should have the capability of defying the National Guard Bureau, The Adjutant Generals' Association, and similar organizations. Mr. McNamara said we are trying to work down from the currently required level of 37 National Guard Divisions. General Eisenhower reiterated that now is the chance to do so. He would recommend eliminating ~~five~~ <sup>four</sup> divisions and organizing half a dozen to be good ~~one~~ <sup>over</sup> reserve divisions. He pointed out that during his Administration he and others in ~~secret~~ <sup>confidential</sup> session stalked more radically than this.

General Eisenhower went on to discuss the National Debt. During his eight years in office, despite all he could do, the debt ceiling rose from \$275 billion to \$290 billion, this happening in ~~good~~ <sup>fairly</sup> times. ~~That~~ <sup>It</sup> is necessary for any Administration to try to keep expenditures down as much as possible, ~~Unless~~ we are willing to go to stultifying taxes which will make it impossible for any expansion of industry to go on. He recognizes that the decisions on priorities will be tough decisions, but they must be made. Many of the decisions will be outside the military, but he emphasized that ~~the military itself cannot be regarded as outside national policy~~. Defense is no longer just a tool of the government; it is too much a part and parcel of our country. He reiterated that morale of the Nation is as much a part of the defense as is weapons procurement. He said again he is in the process of trying to write down for publication what he believes.

*Amended  
date*

*date*

*These details except to say that the budget he submitted last January was a tragedy, in his opinion, to meet the revised intentions as he then saw it. Moreover he doubled the value of increasing the strength of ground troops.*

*monumental*

*delivered*

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Mr. Dulles gave General Eisenhower a rundown of what is expected in the months ahead. He feels that Khrushchev will test us before the end of the year. There are several ~~monumental~~ dates. First is September 17th -- which is the German election time. Mr. Dulles does not feel that the pressure will be put on before this period. On 17 October is the meeting of the Party Congress. Some time between 17 October and 1 January, he believes Khrushchev will put us to the test. He ~~pointed out~~ that the Soviets are relatively stronger today than they were when they issued their first ultimatum on 27 November 1958.

~~Mr. Dulles then continued by briefing General Eisenhower on the progress of the "Talent Keyhole" operation. The quality of photography has not yet reached that of the U-2. But some shots have been good enough to compare somewhat favorably with that other quality. As a result of the "Talent Keyhole" operation we have discovered two long range missile sites between Leningrad and the Ural Mountains. These missile sites contain 4 launching pads, each of which would identify a capability of eight ICBM's. In addition we have discovered 100 MRBM pads, all of which are oriented toward Western Europe.~~

*contains things which he mentioned but which are too secret to put in this way*

General Eisenhower expressed interest in this and pointed out that we also are relatively stronger than we were in 1958. He recognized that in the game of bluff the man who operates in secret has a great advantage. But in all warfare, whether we are talking about an infantry company or U. N. action, the morale and spiritual strength is the first thing we must have. Without it nothing else counts. There are people who accuse the American public of weakening as a result of our affluent society. General Eisenhower does not believe this is so, so long as we get the truth out to the people.

Mr. Dulles said that American leadership now is facing another problem, which it to bring Britain along with us. Mr. McNamara said he is concerned over the possible timing of a declaration of National Emergency. He does not think such is necessary now. General Eisenhower agreed and said that declaration of such a national emergency would be the worst mistake possible, for then all that Khrushchev has to do is needle us here and there to force us into such radical actions as declaring a national emergency any time he so chooses. (Mr. McNamara said we have a national emergency in existence already which gives the President adequate powers. This emergency remains with us as a result of the Korean conflict. )

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General Eisenhower repeated his point that we should cut all federal expenditures other than payment of interest on the national debt. He reiterated that the Administration must make choices and the situation existing at this moment affords the best excuse that he ever heard of. He asked casually of Mr. Dulles whether the tunnel to East Berlin was still functioning. Mr. Dulles said the tunnel had been discovered and the alternate tunnel mentioned by General Eisenhower has not proved feasible. He expressed puzzlement over the fact that this British gentleman named Blake who was captured by the Soviets and had given the secrets of the tunnel had not elicited responsive action on their part. They did nothing for a long time. Certainly the Soviets could not have desired the tunnel to remain, since we were getting a great deal of information from the Soviet chit chat through this source.

General Eisenhower asked whether Secretary McNamara had seen the photographs taken formerly by the U-2. Mr. Dulles said he had seen some of them and Mr. McNamara said he had been briefed extensively on the matter and that the intelligence acquired from the U-2 had been the basis for weapons procurement controversies such as General Eisenhower mentioned once before. ~~As a result of this intelligence, the Chiefs at one time had recommended a supplement of \$7 billion in defense spending rather than \$4 billion.~~ General Lemnitzer pointed out in haste that this \$7 billion was intended as a ceiling only and for tentative use.

Secretary McNamara then expressed his agreement that Khrushchev can turn an emergency on and off at will and if we over respond he can leave us exhausted. Mr. Dulles said that, for example, the Soviets can conclude a treaty with East Germany and then instruct Ulbricht not to take immediate measures which would provoke us to action. Mr. McNamara said that to meet a situation like this we must have a completely flexible response.

Mr. McNamara then brought up the question of the basis for action in Berlin. Regarding the color of the paper on which access passes are printed or the identity of the people that the passes are given to, or exact procedures regarding the passes, the current Administration does not feel that these matters are sufficient to provoke us to war. General Eisenhower expressed general agreement with this idea but said that in his Administration he had been extremely careful to avoid any actions which might make it look that we were forced to deal with the GDR on an equal basis. If we can force Khrushchev to say that the GDR are acting as agents of the Soviets then we could probably allow such procedures to go by. If our protests must go to Ulbricht himself then we are in trouble.

General Eisenhower said that these small things in themselves would not be the basis for war. However, a probe which might be necessitated by these things, in which a battalion would be resisted by the Soviets ~~would certainly be a basis for war in itself.~~ ~~We must not be placed in a position where the Soviets would shoot first.~~ ~~The advantage accruing the attackers is too great.~~ ~~He himself had said in a secret meeting, once, that he was "willing to go" under~~

*declassified*

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~~certain circumstances.~~

In summary, General Eisenhower would want the State Department to go into the matter of procedures on access routes very carefully and estimate what happens when you are forced to deal with the GDR. He recalled on the other hand, that we have at times dealt with the Communist countries which we do not recognize on an informal basis. He recalled the conversations in Warsaw between Ambassador Beam and representatives of the Chinese Communists.

General Eisenhower continued by recognizing that we sometimes have trouble in bringing Britain along. Prime Minister Macmillan had said with some feeling that Britain would never go to war to protect 2,000,000 Germans who had twice in one generation attempted to subjugate themselves. *Finally* ~~the~~ *not when* the issue was pressed, Macmillan ~~had admitted~~ that if faced with the prospect of being kicked out of Berlin the British would go along to war with us. General Eisenhower said of course we must face up to the question of what we are going to hit in the event of war, the head of the snake or its tail. He reiterated that we cannot go on forever responding to Soviet actions. He recalls that the \$12 billion deficit for FY '59 was largely a result of the hysteria as a result of the Sputniks. We must operate in confidence.

Mr. Dulles then read a State Department message from Bonn which had been the result of a message received from the Soviets. This was tough language -- it pointed out that some notes not yet received by the Soviets were unsatisfactory to them, that Soviets troops would be stationed along the border in the event of conflict, and if the West desires a war it can have same.

General Eisenhower said he thinks that Khrushchev feels there is propaganda value available now, so he is leveling a broadside. He hopes primarily for division of the Free World and a weakening on our own part by our own unwise action. He does not belittle the problems the Administration must solve. But he thinks that any examination of the Budget must be looked at ~~on the whole~~ and not in a Department of Defense context only. He reiterated his statement that ~~the foreign countries watch our Budget more closely than most Americans do.~~ He mentioned also that the price structure within this country should also be watched carefully; *and further inflation.*

General Eisenhower then asked General Lemnitzer how the MINUTEMAN was doing. General Lemnitzer said it has had unusual success. Secretary McNamara said the first firing had been successful, but they had had some unsuccessful firings later; on the whole the program is going well. It is hoped that the warhead will soon approach a megaton rather than the 3/4 magaton programmed under the Eisenhower Administration. He also said that the POLARIS is going well.

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General Lemnitzer said that the Soviets are watching carefully to see what we will do regarding measures to enhance civil defense preparedness. General Eisenhower repeated that they will recognize our intentions if we make a courageous choice between guns and butter. He mentioned his own fallout shelter, which he had planned to build a couple of years ago but had foregone for fear of the public hysteria that such might cause. He recognizes that the building of fallout shelters can create a defensive or pessimistic attitude. ~~He mentioned that he had once~~ ✓  
~~one time who he had fired when he had found him sitting in his cellar~~  
in Normandy. He admits it is difficult to know what is useful to do regarding Civil Defense matters. ~~He said sometimes he himself is tempted~~ ✓  
~~to dig a shelter. Now that he is a private citizen, it might not get the at-~~  
~~tention it did when he was in office.~~

Secretary McNamara said that there are plans afoot to transfer responsibility for fallout shelter programs from OCDM to the Department of Defense. They are trying to get all new government buildings now provided with fallout shelters. General Eisenhower said that he had tried this in his Administration. Mr. McNamara said that the best time for so doing would be right now.

~~Mr. Dulles then showed General Eisenhower a map regarding the "Talent~~ ✓  
~~Keyhole" program and location of the launching pads which they had dis-~~  
~~covered. To this General Eisenhower asked why we have not placed missiles~~  
in Alaska capable of hitting Eastern Siberia. General Lemnitzer said that  
General Armstrong, Commander, Alaskan Command, had proposed so doing.  
(General Eisenhower was first made conscious of this matter by a briefing  
from General Armstrong in Alaska in June of 1960.) There are, however,  
differing opinions within the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the merits of so doing.  
Secretary McNamara said that General Armstrong had mentioned it to him also.

General Eisenhower inquired as to whether the REDSTONE would have sufficient range for this purpose. Secretary McNamara said it did not; but the extended range PERSHING, which is coming along well, could be used for that purpose. General Eisenhower recalled that the people in the Department of Defense had tried to throw out the extended range PERSHING on the basis that it would give the Army too much range. He was quite satisfied himself, with his decision to go ahead with this program. General Lemnitzer said that the PERSHING could easily replace all other MRBM's.



*forwarded and TOP SECRET*  
*about joint*  
*resolutions*

General Eisenhower concluded by urging Secretary McNamara to depend on the judgment and integrity of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who ~~obtain professional decisions~~ on defense matters, ~~backed up of course by~~ the CIA. He reiterated that the Chiefs should not pay too much attention to their own services but should rather delegate the function of supervisions of their own services to the Vice Chiefs of Staff. General Lemnitzer remarked humorously that this has been accomplished by necessity.

Secretary McNamara thanked Former President Eisenhower for his time and said the counsel would be of great benefit.

*John S D Eisenhower*  
John S. D. Eisenhower

*forwarded upon [unclear]*