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The Berlin Nuclear Crisis Critical Oral History**

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Institute of Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies
Working Paper

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**Living in the Question?
The Berlin Nuclear Crisis Critical Oral History**

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Part II
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Complete transcripts and manuscript are located in the Benina Berger Gould Collection,
Box 1, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University, and John F. Kennedy Library,
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PART II

**POLITICALLY POWERFUL DISCOURSES ON THE BERLIN WALL:
MARTIN HILLENBRAND, McGEORGE BUNDY, AND PAUL NITZE**

INTRODUCTION

Discourse lives, as it were, beyond itself, in a living impulse toward the object; if we detach ourselves completely from this impulse all we have left is the naked corpse of the word...

As a living, socio-ideological concrete thing...language for the individual consciousness, lies on the borderline between oneself and other.... It becomes "one's own" only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention.¹

Part II examines the "politically powerful discourses" from within academia that were read and witnessed by the participants of the Berlin Nuclear Crisis Project. Martin Hillenbrand and McGeorge Bundy were interviewed by the Berlin Nuclear Crisis Project members, and selected scholars met with Paul Nitze. The challenge was to get to know the subjects primarily through these interviews, their personal publications and memoirs, and their relationship to others during critical times in our country's nuclear history.

Martin Hillenbrand, McGeorge Bundy, and the biographer of Paul Nitze, David Callahan, were guests of the Nuclear Crisis Project in 1989. The transcripts for these meetings were not available for security reasons. To insure the integrity of their views and to best represent them, I choose to quote passages from notes I had taken during the interviews at the Kennedy School and from their biographies, memoirs, and other written works and to treat this as a postscript to the other oral history transcripts included in Part I of this paper.

What is similar in the three men's lives is how **war, international crisis, politics, and powerful men** shaped their outlook on everything they experienced. It was the lens through which their lives were portrayed for the public. As a Foreign Service officer and government diplomats, Hillenbrand, Bundy, and Nitze were part of the decision-making process that began and ended the Cold War. They all shared an image of Russia as the enemy.²

**MARTIN HILLENBRAND, DIRECTOR OF OFFICE OF GERMAN AFFAIRS,
US DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

BERLIN POLICY: HISTORICAL COMPLEXITY AND UNNECESSARY TENSION

...the terror and the utter viciousness of the Nazi and Japanese aggression, as well as the endless implications for evil of their victory, permitted men of principle to equate participation in the war with good conscience by balancing tremendous evil against even more tremendous evil. Now that the dread possibilities of atomic fission haunt the minds of men, the problem of war has become almost identical with the problem of human survival.³

There is one thing that always puzzled us, and that was how to take Khrushchev's rhetoric—how seriously to take his rhetoric—because his rhetoric was highly threatening...you can say that he was just overly exuberant, but his ultimatums were always accompanied by the possibility, the rhetoric, of a nuclear war; just as he told Kennedy in Vienna, "then there will be a war."⁴

I think that the president, as he lived through the Berlin crisis and became preoccupied with it, necessarily became more and more impressed with its complexity and its difficulties.⁵

Martin Hillenbrand was interviewed by members of the Nuclear Crisis Project on October 10, 1988, and the original transcript is unavailable. Paul Sweet, American Consul General in Stuttgart interviewed Hillenbrand on August 26, 1964.⁶ Sweet's interview was structured around questions concerning President Kennedy's views on the Berlin Crisis and Khrushchev. These questions pertained to the domestic level of organization in the White House and, on a more personal level, to Kennedy as he dealt with Khrushchev during the crisis, and in Vienna. It also addressed the diplomatic negotiations and military threats before and after the Wall was built and Kennedy's response to these. Martin Hillenbrand's main questions in the interview with Sweet regarding the Berlin Wall Crisis of 1961 were:

- How did Kennedy describe and experience the complexity of the crisis?
- How did the Germans view President Kennedy, and what was Kennedy's relationship to Adenauer?

- What was the organizational structure in the White House and the decision-making style of President Kennedy?
- What were the political and military actions immediately before and after the Vienna meeting? How did Kennedy view Khrushchev during this time?
- Was the Wall a surprise, and what were the politics of the president's diplomatic negotiations in response to the building of the Wall?
- What was the role of the nuclear weapons during the president's term in office, and what was Kennedy's "resolution" to the Berlin Crisis?

Martin Hillenbrand started his career as a Foreign Service Officer, and as part of his service, was sent to Germany in 1956.⁷⁷ Foreign Service Officers can be sent anywhere in the world at any time, to serve the diplomatic needs of the U.S. They are frontline personnel of all U.S. embassies, consulates, and other diplomatic missions. Historically, Foreign Service Officers have been generalists who would expect to be assigned to various kinds of jobs, in different parts of the world in the course of their careers.

He was Director of the Office of German Affairs in the Department of State during the entire acute period, which began with the so-called Soviet ultimatum on Berlin on November 27, 1958 and ended according to Hillenbrand in September 1963.⁸ Hillenbrand was part of the Interdepartmental Coordinating Group on Germany and Berlin, developed on June 30, 1961 by McGeorge Bundy, and chaired by Secretary Dean Rusk.⁹ This group had previously been named the Interdepartmental Group on Berlin Contingency Planning. The Interdepartmental Coordinating Group on Germany and Berlin later became the Berlin Task Force, which had its first meeting on August 17, 1961.

Foy Kohler was its effective head, and Hillenbrand was his deputy. The basic membership of the task force, which was physically to function in the Operations Center of the State Department, came from the Office of German Affairs. It quickly became the operational center for the discussion of American contingency planning and other matters relating to Berlin.

Mr. Hillenbrand stated in his interview with Mr. Sweet that when President Kennedy took office in 1961:

The Berlin crisis which began in November of 1958, was still very much with us, although Chairman Khrushchev had, in effect, declared a moratorium shortly after the collapse of the summit meeting in Paris in the spring of 1960 because...of the difficulty negotiating with the Americans while they were having a national election. However, everyone assumed that, once the new administration had taken over, the Soviets would revive the Berlin threat and apply new pressure.¹⁰

During this period I was, in effect, the principal working level officer dealing with the problem of who had to draft papers, and who was responsible at least to seeing that papers got drafted, on the subject. Our contacts were frequent. I attended practically all of the meetings which took place in the White House on this subject over a period of several years, and I was on a number of occasions called over to the White House, to brief the President or to obtain his decision.¹¹

...I know of no other problem in American foreign policy of recent years, or for that matter of the postwar period, that has been both as complex as the Berlin problem and as important in terms of the possible implications if U.S. policy failed. This complexity...was both a 'historical complexity'¹² involving a tremendous mass of documentation...and also [concerned] the possibility of a crises' occurring in a hundred different segments of the Berlin problem, communications, transportation, access to East Berlin, etc...¹³

A second issue Minister Hillenbrand discussed was the German's view of President Kennedy and, in turn, how President Kennedy treated the German problem.

For Mr. Hillenbrand: "The Germans...had a somewhat questioning approach towards the new administration...It was a new party, which had taken over the government in the United States, and it was a party, which had been associated in their minds with the wartime and immediate postwar policy of the U.S. towards Germany...I think President Kennedy had certain views about the nature of the German problems and Berlin problems."¹⁴

Kennedy formulated his policy under heavy pressure, rather than relying on preconceived plans. Before he assumed the presidency, JFK's foreign policy interests did not include any extensive analysis of postwar Germany. In 1951, the Massachusetts congressman visited the Federal Republic of Germany but concluded that the Social Democratic Party (SDP) leader Kurt

Schumacher, not Chancellor Adenauer, was the strongest political figure of Germany, and Kennedy greatly admired the logic of Schumacher's arguments.¹⁵ Kennedy's remarks in an article appearing in *Foreign Affairs* in 1957, offered a critique of American postwar German policy, stating that "the age of Adenauer is over..." Adenauer was referred to "as a shadow of the past."¹⁶

Martin Hillenbrand in a letter to Frank Meyer wrote that Kennedy had a superficial opinion of Adenauer "one in a negative sort of way." Kennedy viewed Adenauer "as a relic of the Cold War whose links to the Eisenhower administration's anti-Communist foreign policy were not in keeping with the idea of diplomatic flexibility, which he projected as his foreign policy priority."¹⁷ In addition to this, "One of the realities that emerged quickly enough was that a number of new people in the White House, and some in the State Department, did not have a high regard for the handling of the Berlin problem by the Eisenhower administration."¹⁸

Kennedy especially articulated a desire to take risks to bring about a thaw in the Cold War and to find a new approach to the Russians that would end the brink-of-war phase of the long Cold War. The Eisenhower-Adenauer connection hindered efforts to create dialogue with the Soviets. Kennedy resented what he perceived as the German chancellor's veto over attempts to improve American-Soviet relations.

Theodore Sorenson, in an August 1988 interview, stated that JFK did not give much attention to the German chancellor. Kennedy's remarks certainly seem to verify this lack of understanding of Adenauer's contribution to postwar developments in Germany and Europe.¹⁹

Hillenbrand was acutely aware that President Kennedy had certain views about the nature of the German and Berlin problems.²⁰ Mr. Hillenbrand stated in the Sweet interview that:

Some of the people around him seemed to think that there was some easy solution or, if not an easy solution, at least an ingenious solution which could be devised by intelligent men, to get the Berlin problem off the President's back and I suppose the President must have been advised by these people that such a solution was possible. The new administration was not committed to any solution of the Berlin and German problems before a searching investigation had been made.... I think the President as he lived through the Berlin crisis and became preoccupied with it, necessarily became more and more impressed with its complexities and its difficulties.²¹

As a realist, the president was very conscious of the physical limitations of our position in Berlin, as geographically weak. He was not among those who suffered from the illusion that we were really negotiating from a position of basic strength. The president was very much against empty gestures. You do those things that are absolutely essential to protect your vital interests, and you restrain the more hotheaded of your subordinates from doing things that merely exacerbate the situation but do not strengthen your own position. The president did not, of course, hesitate to take chances, calculated risks, in order to defend our interest. He did not like being pushed around by the Soviets any more than his advisers did. Nevertheless, he did not allow the heat of the moment to override his sound judgment on the major elements that were involved in the Berlin situation.

Another theme of Hillenbrand was the organizational characteristics of the new administration and Kennedy's decision-making style. Hillenbrand when interviewed by Sweet stated that:

It was quite clear to any well informed person that the subject of Berlin was one with which the President would have to come to grips at a fairly early stage, and his advisers both in the White House and in the State Department, were very aware of this...some of the President's new team felt that there must be some new solution to the Berlin problem which could be pulled out of the hat and which a new administration, obviously possessed of a great deal of collective intelligence, would be able to devise. Our feeling in the State, of course, was that there were no easy solutions to the Berlin problem...during the first few months Kennedy's major preoccupations were with other problems,²² apart from the general recognition that the Berlin problem was one he was going to have to come to grips with fairly early in the game.²³

Those of us in the State Department who had been dealing with the Berlin problem up to that point were encouraged to write memoranda and papers which would focus attention on the primary issues...and try to anticipate what might be expected from the Soviets...I remember one such paper particularly, which was prepared at the request of the White House and on which I worked for some time called "The Problem of Berlin."²⁴

Kennedy's advisory procedures as president, in keeping with his informal leadership style, varied from issue to issue, with few officials having fixed responsibilities. Kennedy liked to describe himself as the hub of a wheel, with his many associates as the spokes. Upon entering office, Kennedy dismantled much of Eisenhower's staff

machinery, including the NSC Planning Board, the Operations Coordinating Board, the Cabinet secretariat, and the positions of staff secretary to the president and chief of staff. ²⁵

“One of (President Kennedy’s) characteristics was that he brought to any problem an open, searching mind which was not satisfied merely to accept the conventional answers of the experts...He always encouraged intellectual activity, and the circulation of ideas.”²⁶ As opposed to Khrushchev, Kennedy was comfortable with the intellectual arena and brought with him a number of academics and businessmen who had been associated with the Democratic Party’s electoral victory. “He wasn’t only up with the news, he was ahead of it.”²⁷

The New Frontier foreign policy ²⁸ apparatus was staffed by individuals whose brain power and energy were enviable, but whose diplomatic experience was limited. Conducting much of the foreign policy decision making process like a Harvard seminar, the new administration believed that day to day involvement in events brought more results than top level statements of purpose and direction, which had characterized decision making under Eisenhower... Eisenhower had created a formal structure of review within the National Security Council.²⁹

President Kennedy was much more informal and more accessible than President Eisenhower. Kennedy developed a distinctive style of his own in dealing with the Berlin and German questions. As opposed to Khrushchev, Kennedy was comfortable with the intellectual and brought with him a number of academics and businessmen who had been associated with the Democratic Party’s electoral victory.” The New Frontier foreign policy apparatus was staffed by individuals whose brain power and energy were enviable, but whose diplomatic experience was limited. According to Mr. Hillenbrand;

...in the years of the Kennedy administration there were complicated discussions of Germany and Berlin going on with the Soviet Union...I think Kennedy mastered what was necessary for him to make decisions. Obviously, in dealing with subjects of this kind of complexity, he had to rely...on advice given him by the Secretary of State and other responsible advisors, but the President had a very quick mind, which went directly to essentials. He could read very rapidly...and meetings at which he was present usually did involve his knowing what the essence of the problem was...in discussions with foreign statesmen including the Soviets, he knew what he wanted to say and said it well. ³⁰

Kennedy searched widely for advice, insisted on going over and over alternative courses of action, and pressed for imagination to expand the menu. For a July 1961 meeting that Bundy characterized as perhaps the most important yet held, Kennedy called in no fewer than 25 people.³¹

He always gave the impression of being in full command of the situation and of not being overwhelmed by the complexities or by the gravity of the decisions that he was being asked to make. His working style was a fairly easy and generally affable one. As I said earlier, meetings in the White House were not formal, in the sense that they resulted in a lot of documentation on, elaborate minutes, and so on. This was not an institutionalized form of decision-making. The President, in effect, picked the brains of those who were there, asked for their advice, and then arrived at his decisions.³²

Kennedy did not normally resort to snap judgments about either the nature of a situation or about the remedies that were required. He held a certain amount of psychological insight, both into the minds of his own advisers and into the minds of his opponents. I believe that on occasion he rejected certain actions, that were proposed by his advisors because those actions would have had an irritating and exacerbating effect on the Soviets without really contributing to the basic amelioration of the situation, in which alone a resolution of the Berlin problem could be found.

On June 3–4, 1961 in Vienna a major confrontation took place between Kennedy and Khrushchev. The events leading up to Vienna and those political and military actions in the aftermath were a turning point in the administration's attitude to the Berlin Crisis. Hillenbrand recalled, "In the briefing materials which I prepared for the Vienna meeting, we certainly didn't try to hold the hope of any easy solution to the Berlin problem. The general approach accepted was that a vital interest of the United States was involved in the maintenance of our position there."³³

Just two weeks before the meetings, the president charged Robert Kennedy with convincing the Soviets of US resolve by meeting face to face with Georgi Bolshakov, a ranking officer in the Soviet intelligence apparatus. The attorney general met with Bolshakov and told him, "I know you're on intimate terms with Adzhubei and others. I think they wouldn't mind getting truthful first hand information from you, and I presume they'll find a way of passing it on to Khrushchev."³⁴

Robert Kennedy tried to convince Bolshakov that Khrushchev would be mistaken to believe John Kennedy was weak and would tolerate being pushed around. Robert knew his brother's thinking: I suppose if we get involved in a war in Europe, [he remembered the president said], we will have no choice but to use nuclear weapons. The Kennedys feared a war might start as a result of miscalculation or misjudgment, and so Robert warned Bolshakov "not to push too hard." Still, Khrushchev persisted in proclaiming his intention of driving the Western powers out of Berlin.³⁵

Worried that a callous mistake might trigger war, the Kennedys saw the back-channel contacts with Georgi Bolshakov as a chance to personalize negotiations and reduce the possibilities of war through miscalculation.

In response to these meaner times the Kennedy administration took a more realistic view of thermonuclear war. Some called it thinking the unthinkable. "If we do not meet our commitments in Berlin", John Kennedy asked, "where will we later stand?" The military activated reservists, doubles draft calls, and expanded by two hundred thousand part of a request for a \$3.4 billion increase in military spending. First, however, they had to convince Khrushchev that they were tough, but not "mean and tough" as Robert often described the Soviets.... Told that Khrushchev thought President Kennedy did not have the guts for war over Berlin, Robert Kennedy told Bolshakov: "He does, I know. Tell Khrushchev."³⁶

The blunt way in which Khrushchev presented the president with the Soviet position on Berlin which led the President to make his remark about the likelihood of a cold winter, had created the prospect of a major crisis"....he emerged from the Vienna meeting knowing Khrushchev's feeling that a major confrontation with the Soviet Union was about to take place and that the energies of the new administration had to be devoted, on an emergency basis, to meet this challenge to his position.³⁷

Kennedy's image of Khrushchev was shaped by the outcome of the Vienna meetings more than by anything he later saw on paper or heard from his Soviet experts. The president described it to British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan in a London stopover on the way home: "The President," noted Macmillan, "was completely overwhelmed by the ruthlessness and barbarity of the Russian chairman."³⁸ J. W. Hilty wrote that, "Khrushchev had run roughshod over John Kennedy at the Vienna meetings. 'Worst thing in my life. He savaged me,' said the president."³⁹

According to Mr. Hillenbrand, one result of the Vienna meetings was that the

Secretary of State was charged with coordinating the work in the U.S. government of formulating recommendations to the president as to the courses of action, which should now be followed.... named the Interdepartmental Coordinating group, [the group] was established under the general direction of the Secretary of State. This was the forerunner of the Berlin Task Force and it worked in close collaboration with the White House, and particularly with Mr. George Bundy... We were charged initially with the coordination of a report to be made to the President within a very tight deadline...about ten days. ⁴⁰

This meeting, which took place on or about July 19th, was devoted to a discussion of the next steps to be taken. Mr. Acheson attended the meeting. Though he was not a formal member of the new administration, Acheson had been an adviser on a number of ad hoc assignments that the president had asked him to undertake. ⁴¹ He was asked back to add his advice to that obtained from the State Department and other departments of the government. A big problem for the group was deciding what specific military action the United States should undertake in response to the Vienna threats in terms of specific action in the military area. Hillenbrand suggested that some military response by the United States would be appropriate, though he did not mean forceful military action. Some kind of a military buildup should be undertaken, which would coincide with the year-end deadline stipulated by Chairman Khrushchev. “

National Security Action Memorandum No. 58 of June 30, 1961, gave the secretary of state general responsibility for coordination the various studies called for by the NSC...

a working group of the Interdepartmental Coordinating Group operated around the clock ...to complete a report for the meeting of the National Security Council on July 13. The final document and attachments proved a formidable one: a “Summary of Development of the Course of Action”, a section entitled “Imminent Decisions”, followed by ten annexes containing recommendations and specific studies by the relevant government agencies....

A lengthy discussion of the report in the National Security Council led to further instructions from the president to “prepare evaluations of alternative courses of actions and specific recommendations for the implementation of such actions”, to be discussed at a NSC meeting on July 19th. National Security Council Action Memorandum No. 59, dated July 14, 1961, passed out specific assignments.” ⁴²

The decisions of this July 19 meeting were reflected in the president's famous speech of the 25th of July, 1961, laying out basic US policy on Germany and Berlin in light of the Vienna findings.⁴³ Approximately three weeks passed between the July 25th speech and the building of the Berlin Wall on August 13th. During that period the Kennedy administration held meetings in Paris and there was direct communication from Paris to Washington. When Mr. Sweet asked Martin Hillenbrand during a 1964 interview if the wall had come as an entire surprise, Mr. Hillenbrand answered:

“Entire surprise” is perhaps the wrong expression.⁴⁴ It certainly came as a surprise in specific terms. It became clear to many of us dealing with the Berlin problem that the East German regime and the Soviet Union would have to do something, somehow about the ever-increasing flow of refugee, which was reaching almost run-away proportions by mid summer of 1961. The constant refugee drain had been a major factor in hampering the growth of the GDR. It had continued at impressive rates over a period of ten years or more, and had resulted in an actual diminution of the population of the GDR.

Then, during the summer of 1961, what became known as “*Torschlusspanik*”⁴⁵ [panic caused by fear of the gate slamming shut], took over in the GDR which made many people decide to leave right away rather than wait a little longer. This led to an explosive outpouring of refugees from the GDR, which over one weekend reached nearly 50,000.

Under these conditions it was clear that the East Germans would have to do something, if their entire state was not to melt away demographically.... I remember seeing no intelligence reports or any other materials which predicted the building of the Wall. It may be that there were some of this kind, but I doubt it. They would most probably have come to my attention, so I think it is accurate to say that the Wall came as a surprise. It did not come as a surprise that measures were taken drastically to reduce the flow of refugee.⁴⁶

Mr. Hillenbrand returned to Washington about the 17th or 18th of August from a vacation and encountered much controversy in Washington regarding

...the failure of the Allies to take decisive action to knock down the Wall, [Hillenbrand thought that] most people who were aware of the realities of life in Berlin did not feel that such an action would probably have been effective. [He recalled to Sweet] that General Clay, who certainly was not known for his reticence in pursuing activist policies, himself admitted as much in a television broadcast...He, in effect, defended the response of the Allies to the Wall.⁴⁷

When asked by Sweet if the German Government was active in pressing or presenting its views on the Wall to the President, Hillenbrand recalled that to the best of his knowledge,

...the German Government never proposed that physical action be taken to remove the wall. By September 14 when the Soviets announced that Gromyko was prepared to have direct exchanges of views with Secretary of State Rusk, there seemed to be some easing of the crisis and the President subsequently met with Gromyko on October 6 and this initiated a long, long period of talks at various levels with the Russians on Berlin.

...The theory... was that, while we must take military measures, and must by concomitant political action impress the Soviets with the seriousness with which we regarded their threats to our position in Berlin, at the same time we must engage in political discussions aimed at seeing whether there was not some diplomatic way out of the impasse. It was quite clear... that we were on a collision course with the Soviets... and if they carried out their year-end threat to go ahead and sign a peace treaty with the East Germans... to turn over all responsibilities for Allied access to the East Germans, we were going to be in a first class crisis with all the possible implications of such a crisis in a military sense. It was for this reason that the President actively favored pursuing the problem with the Soviets diplomatically. An occasion for doing this was provided, of course, by Gromyko's coming to New York in connection with the session of the General Assembly which opened in September, 1961.

...in speaking of the easing of the crisis I meant simply that there had been an agreement to talk, and I wonder whether... the President had fairly defined ideas about what should be sought in talks with the Russians?"

...these talks were designated not as negotiations, but as exploratory talks to ascertain whether a basis for negotiations existed... The French refused to participate in any Four-power meetings with the Soviets, but they did say that they would not object to the conduct by the Secretary of these exploratory talks. So the Secretary, going into these talks, was in no position to make commitments for the occupation powers in Berlin.

...After the departure of Foreign Minister Gromyko from the United States, a further round of discussions with the Soviets would have to take place still in the category of exploratory talks. [These talks] would be best to conduct in Moscow between Gromyko and our ambassador in Moscow, Lewellyn Thompson... The original drafting of these instructions was done in the Berlin Task Force... then approved by the Secretary of State and cleared with the President at meetings at the White House meetings... then sent telegraphically to Ambassador Thompson. After each meeting in Moscow, Thompson sent long reports back to Washington which had to be analyzed and used in preparation of the instructions for the following round.⁴⁸

According to Hillenbrand, during the Thompson-Gromyko phase in Moscow and then the Gromyko talks in Geneva a number of major air corridor harassments were averted by diplomatic channels. Hillenbrand goes on in his interview with Sweet regarding this period of intense discussions to say that:

Chancellor Adenauer, who had...not been following the discussions with the same care as the President, suddenly became aware of this proposal for an International Access Authority as well as certain other things, and did not like them.... This created the kind of synthetic crisis, which we have seen in Bonn from time to time. The interest of the politicians was stimulated and tended to feed on itself, so that you did have within the spring period what became known as the "leaks crisis", or the International Access Authority crisis...

I think the President felt that calculated leaks and stimulated criticism of the U.S. Government of a rather frenetic nature, such as characterized Bonn during this period, was not really a very helpful contribution....

On the other hand, the four power meetings continued in Washington, and the souring of the atmosphere which inevitably took place because of the leaks crisis did not have any basic effect upon our willingness to share information and to ask advice within the Ambassadorial Group.⁴⁹

At the same time that diplomatic relations and negotiations preoccupied the Kennedy Administration during the Berlin Crisis the question of deterrence and military buildup was being debated by the White House staff. The role of nuclear weapons and the nuclear stalemate with Russia during his term in office significantly affected the approach of the president to the Berlin problem.

Mr. Hillenbrand states that:

From the beginning of his administration President Kennedy was very much conscious of the responsibility which he, President of the United States, had for the use of our nuclear deterrent in any given crisis situation. I believe he brought to this awesome responsibility a strong sense of conscience and a strong sense of the implications for the American people of the possible use of nuclear weapons. Yet I think he was also very conscious of the fact that, our possession of those nuclear weapons and our ability to make the Soviet Union believe that, under certain circumstances, we might be forced to use them, constituted our basic security and our ability to withstand Soviet threats and pressures in a situation, particularly like Berlin, where we were at an admitted geographical disadvantage and where the Soviets could bring to bear their undoubted superior local forces in any showdown

[depended on our nuclear stance]. As it would have to any man of conscience in such a situation, I think the President inevitably tended to look at problems not only in terms of their immediate resolution, but also in terms of the long-range implications they might have in tending to bring about a nuclear confrontation...

...[Kennedy] was certainly not a rash man who would plunge into a situation waving our nuclear bombs and implying that we were prepared to inject the nuclear equation immediately. It was one of the unique things about the Berlin situation that it did, both in popular belief, in press treatment, and I think in the estimates of the leaders of the Soviet Union and in the United States, raise the nuclear factor much earlier than many other situations which actually involved more physical violence on the spot. This was...partly due to the fact that, in and about Berlin, there was direct confrontation between the military forces of the United States and the Soviet Union. Moreover, both countries had, in effect, declared that their vital interests were involved in the situation. This created a tense atmosphere about every discussion of the Berlin problem, which was reflected in the rather spectacular treatments which it always got in the press, in the fact that even minor incidents in Berlin were blown up immediately into front page stories.

I think that the President recognized after Vienna...that there were two aspects of military might of the United States...first of all, the basic willingness, which was a question of determination and will, to employ the nuclear weapon under extreme contingencies—contingencies that we would never seek ourselves and secondly, that we would certainly wish, purely in terms of our own national self interest, to avoid confrontation if at all possible.⁵⁰ The second aspect was the fact...that in an out and out arms race, a competition for general increase of military capacity, the United States, out of its vast economic abundance, with an economy that was not operating with the same kind of strained, distorted imbalance as that of the Soviet Union, could easily divert a portion of its resources from civilian use into a larger arms program. This could be done without any real disruption of our economy, whereas for the Soviet Union any further diversion of resources to military use would cause a further unbalancing of an already delicate economic structure. This was part of the underlying reasoning that went into the US military buildup in 1961, which was supposed to have both a direct and an indirect deterrent effect. The direct deterrent effect was that the military buildup, and particularly the augmentation of our forces in Germany, was intended to impress the Soviet Union with the seriousness of our intentions. The Soviets could see we were building up our forces...The second indirect effect was to foreshadow the possibility of even more comprehensive military buildup, a military buildup which, I have indicated was something the Soviet Union could not hope to emulate...⁵¹

Hillenbrand goes on to say that :

We obviously cannot know with any certainty, Khrushchev's unwillingness, to engage us in an arms race, to create a kind of continuing crisis which could only

result in the multiplication of American armament efforts, was influenced by his own recognition of the limitations of the Soviet economy.⁵²

[These issues must have played a role in tempering of the Berlin crisis that came about in the latter part of 1961].

...I think it is fair to say that the President's employment of our nuclear capacity as a diplomatic weapon in the Berlin situation was a very measured and tempered one, one which reflected his full comprehension of the awesome implications of nuclear weapons and of his responsibilities as President. It also involved a courageous recognition of the fact that we had to make it credible to the Soviets that, if we were pushed beyond a certain point affecting our national security and vital interests, the danger of the use of those weapons might arise.... I think that, by achieving this credibility, he was able to add to the general Western deterrence of the Soviets in Berlin which,...we can say certainly was a successful effort.⁵³

Martin Hillenbrand concluded in his interview with Sweet, members of the Kennedy School Berlin Critical Oral History Project, and in his memoirs, that the principal result of the whole course of this Berlin policy was long standing and in the end, unnecessary tension. According to Mr. Hillenbrand:

Defining German policy in its broadest sense to include the Berlin problem, one can say that if we defined German policy in its broadest sense to include the Berlin problem, one thing accomplished during the Kennedy administration was the resolution of the Berlin crisis, which had begun in November 1958, not in the sense of finding a solution which was agreed to by the Western powers and the Soviet Union and formalized in a document signed by them, but a "resolution of a kind" which many had thought was the most we could hope to get anyway, a resolution which consisted of putting the Berlin problem on ice... reducing the explosive potential which it had had for a period of some four years or more.

Now with respect to German policy as a whole, all one can say is that the Kennedy administration did as much as any previous administration and accomplished no more and no less. ...

At least one can say that nothing was done during the Kennedy administration that made the prospects of unification any worse, and the beginnings of an approach were developed which provided a theoretical road by which reunification could be attained over the long run...

I think the conclusion of history will be that there were "no major opportunities missed", that is opportunities to achieve a radical solution of either the German problem or the Berlin problem.⁵⁴

McGEORGE BUNDY

EXISTENTIAL DETERRENCE: THE DANGER OF UNCERTAINTY⁵⁵

“War is evil...occasionally the lesser of two evils.”⁵⁶

I...believe that not all the consequences of the nuclear arsenals are bad.... There is an intrinsic inhibition on adventure which is none the less real for being essentially independent of doctrines-and even of nuclear deployments-on either side. I have called this phenomenon “existential deterrence”, and I think it has more to do with the persisting peace-and division of Europe than all the particular nuclear doctrines and deployments that have often bedeviled the European scene...”⁵⁷

“Nuclear energy is a somber subject...what is dominant and even decisive about nuclear energy is that it can end modern society overnight. The business of preventing that catastrophe is everyone’s business, and the indispensable instrument of that business is government.”⁵⁸

McGeorge Bundy was a guest of the Berlin Nuclear Crisis Project in January 1989. I was present at the meeting and have included passages from my personal notes, sections from the memoir he wrote (*Danger and Survival*), articles he edited and wrote and memos he dictated while on the National Security Council.⁵⁹ Also included is text written by his biographer Kai Bird.⁶⁰ These excerpts are representative of McGeorge Bundy’s views on the Berlin Wall Crisis, the Cold War, and on nuclear weapons and deterrence. McGeorge Bundy died in September 1996. Throughout his interviews, Bundy’s questions centered on three issues, very complex and yet similar to questions asked in the other transcripts:

- How were the nuclear strategies of the leaders developed and implemented?
- Was Berlin Khrushchev’s personal crisis?
- What were the differences and similarities in approach of Khrushchev and of the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations to the issue of nuclear weapons?

McGeorge Bundy was influenced by his family⁶¹ and by mentors of his who had shaped policy about war and international crisis.⁶² Bundy is distinguished not only by his outstanding

ability to conduct national security affairs and an ability to convert psychological thinking into acceptable political rhetoric, but he also had a genius for understanding the interface of politics and people. He seemed an enigmatic man sometimes fiercely hawkish in his association with men like Stimson and Acheson and at other times more liberal and philosophical.⁶³ Older, powerful men...found themselves charmed and dazzled by Mac Bundy.

A Yale graduate, McGeorge Bundy was an intelligence officer in World War II and helped plan the invasion of Europe. He was present at every point in history when the question of the use of nuclear weapons was debated, beginning with the decision to drop the bomb on Hiroshima. Bundy had an outstanding understanding of nuclear deterrence. The depth of his thinking and breath of his writing on the subject is remarkable.⁶⁴

In 1963 he concluded, after a lifetime of involvement with decisions and policies about nuclear war that: “nuclear danger exists, there is no escape from the requirement to coexist with it, and this requirement in turn implies some notion of deterrence. We do not know how to transcend the danger.”⁶⁵

The Berlin Wall Crisis is a good lens for viewing Bundy and his ideas of governmental policy regarding nuclear weapons.⁶⁶ It provides data for exploring how he thought and what he experienced as special assistant for national security (1961–1966) and supervisor of the National Security Council to presidents J. F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson during a critical time in our history.

Bundy’s views were shaped early on by the role of secrecy in war. He learned the importance of silence from many people in his family. His mother, who believed that “silence is victory”, became the first cryptologist in the Bundy family in 1941, and his brother Bill was an Ultra officer. Harvey Bundy, his father, became assistant secretary of state under Herbert Hoover and special assistant to Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson. From early on his sons William and McGeorge followed their father into public service.

Harvey Bundy had spent the war harboring numerous secrets of his own. He was Stimson’s chief filter for intercept intelligence. All the ‘Magic’ intercepts came

across [his] desk. And when Pearl Harbor happened, he knew for a fact that there had been an enormous intelligence failure.⁶⁷

McGeorge Bundy's own "personal" stance on nuclear weapons was also influenced by his particular war experience as a signal intelligence officer.⁶⁸ As an intelligence officer in World War II:

McGeorge Bundy primarily saw war through the eyes of Rear Admiral Kirk and the CIA operation of Ultra.⁶⁹ As Kirk's Ultra man, Bundy was not supposed to put himself in a position where he might be captured. By the end of the European war...Mac had not seen any combat; as an officer privy to the secret of Ultra, he was barred from getting anywhere near the enemy.

Ultra was an extraordinary weapon. That the Allies were reading the most secret communications of the Nazi war machine...made the war winnable, and at a cost cheaper in blood and treasure than could have been the case otherwise. Ultra created in senior staff and at the political summit a state of mind, which transformed the making of decisions. To feel that you know your enemy is a vastly comforting feeling. It grows imperceptibly over time if you regularly and intimately observe their thoughts and ways and habits and actions...⁷⁰

This ability "to know thy enemy" may have given Bundy the confidence he had to "inherently believe" that Khrushchev, Kennedy, and Eisenhower would never use nuclear weapons. No one knew better than Bundy that the dual use of nuclear weapons, both for political leverage and military power, demanded a high level of secretiveness. His communications regarding the dual use of nuclear weapons during the Berlin Crisis always took "secrecy" into account. For Bundy it was a policy as well as a form of covert communication. During the Cold War Bundy defined the nuclear threat as more a political force than a possibility that any President or Soviet leader would actually use them militarily.⁷¹ He was most invested in secrecy so that maximum use could be made of the "nuclear danger" as a political weapon. He credits his education about the nuclear danger to his three mentors, Harold Stimson, Robert Oppenheimer, and John F. Kennedy.⁷² At the age of 22, Bundy went to work as a special assistant for Harold Stimson, Secretary of War. As Stimson's confidant and scribe he was privileged to many conversations regarding the decision to drop the atomic bomb on Hiroshima.

Stimson had chaired the Interim Committee that met with scientists from May to July 1945, and later with the industrialists central to the Manhattan Project. On June 11, 1945, the Franck Report (Report of the Committee on Political and Social Problems, Manhattan Project, “Metallurgical Laboratory,” University of Chicago) was issued recommending that:

Nuclear bombs cannot possibly remain a “secret weapon” at the exclusive disposal of this country...the scientific facts on which their construction is based are well known to scientists of other countries. Unless an effective international control of nuclear explosives is instituted, a race of nuclear armaments is certain to ensue following the first revelation of our possession of nuclear weapons to the world....

We believe that these considerations make the use of nuclear bombs for an early, unannounced attack against Japan inadvisable.⁷³

This was written after estimating the casualties and damage that would result from the use of an atomic bomb, but the document had not been circulated among the Los Alamos Scientists.⁷⁴

In another report on June 16, 1945, scientists including Oppenheimer recommended the immediate use of the atomic bomb to help save American lives in the Japanese war should be such as to promote a satisfactory adjustment of our international relations. At the same time, we recognize our obligation to our nation to use the weapons to help save American lives in the Japanese war.⁷⁵

In his review of a book on Henry Stimson’s life, Stu Rosenblatt wrote: “In Stimson’s mind there would be no warning to the Japanese; there could not be allowed any pretext that might forestall the use of the atomic bomb.”⁷⁶

After the war, when American dissent of the bombing was at its peak, Colonel Stimson with [McGeorge Bundy] as his scribe, felt compelled to write an article for *Harper’s* magazine.⁷⁷ Published in February 1947, “The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb” stood for at least two decades as the definitive explanation of the why the atomic bomb was detonated. The article “intended to demonstrate that the bomb was not used without a searching consideration of alternatives.”⁷⁸ Bundy’s “personal” conclusions were mixed. He argued that “my own present belief was that there were things that might have been done to increase the chance of early surrender, but I have also had to recognize how hard it was to decide to do those things as matters actually stood in May, June, and July [1945].”⁷⁹ There continues to be much criticism and

dissent about Stimson's arguments in the *Harper's* article and in his memoirs. Dissent to the article focuses on Stimson's position regarding the use of the bomb without enough attention to alternatives.

In 1947, Bundy edited Henry Stimson's memoirs of his days as secretary of war, *On Active Service in Peace and War*, which was completed with Stimson after his retirement and published in 1948.⁸⁰ Like the essay, the book further helped to establish the official reasons for the decision to use the atomic bomb against Japan. These explanations included the sense of "outrage over the attack on Pearl Harbor," "the conclusion that invasion was the only way to certain victory,"⁸¹ and the hope of shortening the war,

The possibility of a long and bloody contest of ground forces was a matter of particular concern to George Marshall and Henry Stimson in the War Department.

By the spring of 1945 the imminent prospect of a great new secret weapon gave hope of ending the whole business quickly...for the American president and his top War Department advisers, in June of 1945, this was an extraordinarily elemental matter: The bomb might help decisively; it should be used.⁸²

In his memoirs, Stimson discusses a theme that he had previously ignored or tried to suppress: the critical relationship of the atomic bomb and the Soviet Union for policymakers before Hiroshima. Stimson denied the link between the atomic bomb and Russia. Bundy supported Stimson's thinking in his own memoirs when he writes:

In the Decades since Hiroshima a number of writers⁸³ have asserted a quite different connection between the American thinking on the bomb and the Soviet Union—namely that a desire to impress the Russians with the power of the bomb was a major factor in the decision to use it. The assertion is false...There is literally no evidence whatever that the timetable for the attack was ever affected by anything except technical and military considerations; there is no evidence that anyone in the direct chain of command from Truman to Stimson to Marshall to Groves ever heard or made any suggestion that either the decision itself or the timing of its execution should be governed by any consideration of its effect on the Soviet Union.

What is true—and important—is that these same decision makers were full of hope that the bomb would put new strength into the American power position.⁸⁴

After working for Harold Stimson, Bundy was a lecturer from 1949 to 1951, and associate professor of government from 1951 to 1954 at Harvard. Bundy edited a book in 1952 for Dean

Acheson entitled *The Pattern of Responsibility: From the Records of Dean Acheson*.⁸⁵ Bundy laced the book with his own commentary and views on the Soviet Union. He stated that: “Because so much of American policy is governed by the great threat from Soviet Russia, Acheson’s talked more on this topic than on any other.”⁸⁶ Bundy was willing to take on the book project “in defense of Dean Acheson’s foreign policy... Bundy was a liberal Republican shocked by conservative attacks on Acheson.”⁸⁷

He agreed with Acheson’s view on the Cold War, that there were other ways than the nuclear threat to stop Communism.⁸⁸ Bundy, was particularly invested in political pressure in the form of psychological warfare and covert operations as a way of undermining Russian totalitarianism, but he wanted to prevent nuclear war at any cost.

Like Eisenhower and Acheson he was very concerned with ridding the world of Communism, he just didn’t want to do it at the cost of bombing whole civilizations. Bundy did not agree with Dean Acheson’s position on arming West Germany.⁸⁹ “A sophisticated response to the Soviet challenge, Bundy suggested, would include a vigorous menu of covert operations and psychological warfare.”⁹⁰

In 1952, Acheson asked Bundy to serve as the recording secretary to a State Department “panel of consultants on disarmament” known as the Oppenheimer Panel. Originally called the Interim Committee, this panel was established by Henry Stimson, the secretary of war, in 1945.⁹¹

Oppenheimer himself was one of the first men to voice doubts about what had been, in isolation such a magnificent achievement. He admitted (after the August 14, celebrations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki)...that he was ‘a little scared of what I have made.’ However, he went on to say, ‘A scientist cannot hold back progress because of fears of what the world will do with his discoveries...If atomic bombs are to be added to the arsenals of a warring world, or to the arsenals of nations preparing for war, then the time will come when mankind will curse the name of Los Alamos and Hiroshima.’⁹²

By 1952, Oppenheimer was engaged in a losing battle to thwart the building of a thermonuclear bomb, the H-bomb. The next year Bundy wrote a document that came out of the Oppenheimer Panel, entitled *Early Thoughts on Controlling the Nuclear Arms Race*. Bundy essentially painted “a bleak portrait of a world in which nuclear weapons would soon threaten all

civilization.”⁹³ His opening words to the UN when presenting the final report of the Oppenheimer Panel were: “we are here to make a choice between the quick and the dead.”⁹⁴ Since Hiroshima, Bundy and the panel members realized there was now a double threat. “Simply stated, the difficulty we face is that we must deal with both the Soviet Union and the arms race.”⁹⁵

The Oppenheimer Panel made five recommendations. The most striking was a new policy of candor for the American people. Logically, Bundy argued that “a policy of candor would alert the American people to the nuclear peril and simultaneously signal the soviets that we did not intend to use this weapon in a pre-emptive strike.”⁹⁶ The panel members urged that in addition to providing the facts and figures, the United States government should direct public attention specifically and repeatedly to the fact that the atomic bomb works both ways and “that the United States should tell the story of the atomic danger and...it should explain the rate and impact of atomic production.”⁹⁷ As Bundy described it,

No one on the panel not even Robert Oppenheimer emerged from the Panel’s nine month exposure to nuclear realities and prospects without a greatly deepened sense of enormous and rapidly approaching peril...The Panel felt compelled to take full account of both the nuclear danger and the Soviet threat to peace.⁹⁸

Oppenheimer further stated in *Foreign Affairs*,

A more effective defense could even be of great relevance should the time come for serious discussion of the regulation of armaments...This will call for a very broad and robust regulation of armaments...Defense and regulation may thus be necessary complements.⁹⁹

From 1953 to 1961, McGeorge Bundy was the youngest dean of the Arts and Sciences faculty at Harvard. He left Harvard in 1961 to become special assistant for national security affairs to President Kennedy and was one of the key men informing Kennedy on policy from 1961 to 1963. Bundy possessed “unlimited confidence.”¹⁰⁰ According to Hillenbrand’s memoirs, “If it had not been for the extraordinary ability of McGeorge Bundy to synthesize cabinet room discussion, and to get the president to sign off on skillfully drafted action memorandums, confusion might well have reigned.”¹⁰¹

...Bundy and his deputy, Walt Whitman Rostow, eliminated Eisenhower's cumbersome committee system and made the NSC a compact body of eleven people. The White House established its own situation room and installed equipment that gave it direct access to State Department, Defense Department, and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) cables...Bundy managed the flow of information, intelligence,¹⁰² and decision papers to the president, and monitored the operations of other agencies."¹⁰³

With Kennedy, Bundy engineered the distinct use of nuclear weapons as "political pressure." This was called the New Frontiers policy. Vienna, in June 1961, was a good example of Kennedy's use of the threat of nuclear weapons as political leverage. Kennedy had hoped to negotiate with Khrushchev, but when he could not do this, he threatened a build up of nuclear weapons, conventional troops, and a significant increase in the civil defense program in a July 25th speech to the nation.¹⁰⁴ Bundy had written a document entitled "Berlin Decisions" on July 17, 1961¹⁰⁵ that reviewed the issues about Berlin planning, and this paper was influential in J. F. Kennedy's July 25th address.

All these political maneuvers made it look like nuclear weapons would actually be used by the United States. The real threat of the "nuclear danger" was in place. Again when the Wall was built and in the confrontation at the Wall, Kennedy and Khrushchev chose not to use nuclear weaponry beyond a political threat. This was their joint agreement and it worked.¹⁰⁶

McGeorge Bundy in particular saw the Berlin crisis as Khrushchev's crisis. Such a crisis can be defined as Khrushchev coming to terms with his own views about nuclear war and how far he would go to start World War III. Bundy wrote:

We can learn a lot about nuclear reality by observing what happened in Berlin before and after Khrushchev's crisis. Yet his was the crisis in which there were real threats of war. Khrushchev's Berlin crisis gives us what is otherwise missing in the nuclear age, genuine nuclear confrontation in Europe. Governments were forced to ask themselves repeatedly what might make it necessary to fight, and in what measure and on what terms they must be prepared to use nuclear weapons.¹⁰⁷

The Berlin crisis of 1958–1963 was a Soviet exercise in atomic diplomacy, an effort to use a new appearance of Soviet nuclear strength to force changes in the center of Europe. Both the atomic threat and its destructive aim were made explicit in the first formal Soviet note of

November 27, 1958:

Methods of blackmail and reckless threats of force will be least of all appropriate in solving such a problem as the Berlin question. Such methods will not help solve a single question, but can only bring the situation to the danger point. But only madmen can go to the length of unleashing another world war over the preservation of privileges of occupiers in West Berlin. If such madmen should really appear, there is no doubt that strait jackets could be found for them.¹⁰⁸

Bundy clearly states that:

[Khrushchev] started a crisis, but as the final result made clear, it was built on a bluff...Except for the wall, Khrushchev never took the actions he so often threatened...Khrushchev himself had no intention, of running a nuclear risk even though he threatened so often. He hoped that an asserted danger of nuclear disaster would make other governments responsive, but at the same time he was determined that no act of his should result in any risk of nuclear warfare that he could not himself control...There was salami slicing, but it was always far more slender than that, and it always stopped short of combat.¹⁰⁹

His style of threats and reassurances worked as he so often bluffed the United States and sometimes even himself. The Wall, from its first day to the present has been protected by nuclear danger. Even though Khrushchev was humiliated by the admission of American nuclear superiority, the fear of nuclear war and the actual risk of it created enough of a sense of danger in world leaders to prevent a military challenge to the Soviet power in place in Europe.

Bundy also addressed the differences between the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations and the way they dealt with nuclear danger. Both Eisenhower and Kennedy believed that:

...there is nothing in the world that the Communists wanted badly enough to risk losing the Kremlin. However, they took different postures to make the danger of nuclear clear. Eisenhower believed that it was enough “to stand right ready”, and Kennedy believed that there must be military choices more credible and less suicidal than a rapid resort to general nuclear war.¹¹⁰

Both presidents believed they must persuade Khrushchev of their determination to stand firm. Each in his own way did what he thought best to ensure a credible posture of readiness to face nuclear danger. Both men knew what nuclear weapons could do.¹¹¹

In the end, Bundy’s own argument that Berlin was Khrushchev’s crisis was extended to Eisenhower and Kennedy as Berlin was the first major confrontation that any of these three

leaders faced where nuclear war was at stake. They each had to make up their own minds about what they would do and how far they would go with the other side's threats and provocation and at what point if any would they risk nuclear damage to their own countries.

We do not know what either one would have done at a moment of final choice. We do not know what, or how much, either Eisenhower or Kennedy had finally decided, or what Khrushchev believed about them or vice versa. We do know that the Soviet leader took no step that might have made it necessary for him to learn an American president's choice.¹¹²

We have seen that Eisenhower and Kennedy...all believed that their basic objective must be to persuade Khrushchev not to run nuclear risks, and I am convinced that in these years, as now, the decisive nuclear reality for both sides was a risk of such enormous shared catastrophe that by comparison no numerical advantage or disadvantage in the nuclear balance could in the end count for much.¹¹³

Bundy developed his own distinct belief system though he was strongly influenced by Stimson's decision to use the atomic bomb for military purposes; Oppenheimer's rejection of the use of nuclear weapons; Acheson's belief in diplomacy; and Khrushchev's, Eisenhower's, and Kennedy's nuclear strategies; McGeorge Bundy concluded that:

A policy of openness in nuclear capability and deployment is better for world peace than veiled secrecy...Political leaders need to remember Nagasaki and Hiroshima to keep support for non-use strong.¹¹⁴

The power of nuclear weapons lies in the fear of the uncertainties of it, in its "existential danger." Whether this fear of danger is an adequate deterrence remains to be seen and hopefully this will never be tested. For Bundy it was another alternative, a choice to deliberate and ponder.¹¹⁵

In 1985, Bundy expressed "regrets" over the *Harper's* article that he had written for Stimson in 1947. When interviewed on the MacNeil/Lehrer News Hour on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, Bundy said,

I am not disposed to criticize the use of the existence of the bomb to help to end the war, but it does seem to me...that there were opportunities for communication and warning available to the United States government which were not completely thought through by our government at that time.¹¹⁶

In his memoirs, *Danger and Survival*, published three years later in 1988, Bundy concluded that:

All these possible means of ending the war without using the bomb are open to question; they remain possibilities, not certainties...I have argued my own present belief that there were things that might have been done to increase the chance of early surrender, but I have also had to recognize how hard it was to decide to do those things as matters actually stood in May, June, and July.¹¹⁷

**PAUL NITZE; ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR
INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS (ISA)**

THE RISK WORTH TAKING

War is not synonymous with Armageddon.
—Paul Nitze¹¹⁸

The memory of Pearl Harbor no longer seemed to do justice to the fear that lay behind the cool rationalism of thinkers like Nitze...¹¹⁹

Paul Nitze is the individual who, more than anyone else, has influenced both the policies guiding the development of U.S. nuclear weapons and the halting progress toward their control. Never a principal cabinet officer, Nitze nevertheless managed to place himself at the center of the action...even when out of office, he found a place at the heart of the debate.¹²⁰

The interviews, memoirs, and narratives about Paul Nitze presented not only the dilemmas of planning of foreign policy, but the prescribed role of a person central to the debate of nuclear strategy and military policy during the Berlin Wall Crisis of 1961. Nitze himself would later recall,

In government, I found it hard to be wholly loyal to the principles of either the Democratic Party or of the Republican Party. I never achieved appointment to the highest political offices. I was...fired from the government four times, three times I resigned because I found my position to be personally intolerable. Nevertheless, I believe few others have been as fortunate to participate as actively as I have, either as a member of the government team or as an outside critic, in the major decisions on U.S. policy during the critical fifty years from 1940–1990.¹²¹

James Blight, co-chair of the Berlin Nuclear Crisis Project, had previously interviewed Paul Nitze on May 6, 1987 about the Cuban Missile Crisis.¹²² David Callahan, author of *Dangerous Capabilities: Paul Nitze and the Cold War*,¹²³ was a guest at a 1989 meeting of the Kennedy School's Center for Science and International Affairs Nuclear Crisis Group. He was specifically invited to discuss the role of Paul Nitze in the Berlin Wall Crisis of 1961 because of the research he was conducting at the time.

Nitze's own memoir, *From Hiroshima to Glasnost*, was also available at this time.¹²⁴ The themes of specific interest to Callahan and the Nuclear Crisis Group were :

- The personal and political experiences that influenced Nitze's nuclear strategy.
- The organizational role Paul Nitze played in the Kennedy administration during the Berlin Wall Crisis of 1961.
- Contingency planning for military confrontation before and after August 13, 1961.

The personal experiences in his youth and his early political career played a great part in shaping Paul Nitze's political career. Nitze gained an interest in Russia from his uncle, a distinguished geologist who worked for Czar Nicholas II, and his grandfather, Charles Nitze, who was appointed Honorary Consul for Russia in Baltimore. "From their influence, [Nitze] developed an interest in Russia at an early age and later a love for Russian literature including Chekhov, Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Turgenev, and Herzen."¹²⁵

His experience living in Europe during both world wars no doubt shaped his feelings about war. Nitze admired his father, who was a scholar and university professor, but Nitze was influenced by the seemingly powerlessness of his father and friends to change the course of political history.

In 1919...my father's academic colleagues discussed the terms of the Treaty of Versailles in length...and none of them, as far as I could tell, believed in its wisdom. They were in my estimation as distinguished a group of scholars as had ever been brought together, but it was evident that they were powerless to influence events.... It was then at the age of twelve, that I decided when I grew up, I wanted to be in a position where I could participate in world events and be close to the levers of influence. Distinguished scholarship did not appear to offer that opportunity.¹²⁶

In the fall of 1924 Nitze attended Harvard, where he studied economics and sociology. Here he recalls how those subjects shaped his thinking:

The study of economics revived my interest in finding a path to understanding and influencing the real world...and in sociology I hoped to find the discipline that would relate practical life to basic values. Due to "the vagaries of fate", my draft number never came up and I was never inducted into the armed forces, even though I was eligible to be selected throughout the war.¹²⁷

From 1928 until 1939, except for one year as a graduate student, Nitze lived in the world of business.¹²⁸ In June, 1940, Nitze went to Washington as assistant to James V. Forrestal, the president of a Wall Street firm, and joined a group that worked on the Selective Service Act. Forrestal later worked for a short time as one of President Roosevelt's assistant secretaries and then became Under Secretary of the Navy. Nitze shared with Forrestal the conviction that "even at the outset of the struggle against Nazism, the world faced at least as great a danger from Bolshevism."¹²⁹

In 1941, Nitze was not surprised to learn of the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, since he experienced relations between the United States and Japan as "deteriorating for some time", but only questioned when and where the Japanese would "make their first move." He would recall: "I thought Japan was a marvelous country populated by the most hateful people on earth. Like other Americans at the time, I could not forgive the Japanese for Pearl Harbor."¹³⁰ For Paul Nitze, Pearl Harbor defined the military vulnerability of the United States. American territories were no longer safe and out of reach of transatlantic military invasion. As Strobe Talbott described,

Pearl Harbor seemed to implant in Nitze's mind what became one of the grand obsessions of his life: strategic vulnerability. The Japanese sneak attack had deprived the United States in a few hours of a large part of the arsenal on which it depended for defense—and, indeed, for deterrence. The nightmare scenario of a Soviet nuclear first strike that drove the strategic debate of the post war period was largely an updating of the script enacted on that infamous Sunday morning. The American battleships in Pearl Harbor had many of the characteristics later ascribed to strategic nuclear weapons.¹³¹

Nitze began his policymaking career at the end of World War II when he was assigned by Roosevelt to the United States Strategic Bombing Survey (USSBS). "The US Strategic Bombing Survey was begun by the Secretary of War on November 3, 1944 by a directive from President Roosevelt. It was "established for the purpose of conducting an impartial and expert study of the effects of our aerial attack on Germany, to be used in connection with air attacks on Japan, and to establish a basis for evaluating air power as an instrument of military strategy, for planning the future development of the US armed forces, and for determining future economic policies with

respect to the National defense.”¹³² “It was not until the spring of 1945, after the allies resumed their offensive, that the field teams got their first glimpse inside Germany.”¹³³

In Germany he found the big cities in almost complete ruins, but the countryside was virtually untouched. There was very little left of the Berlin I remembered from the 1920s and 1930s. “What the American and British air forces had not destroyed had been finished off by the Red Army. ... The most significant finding, Nitze thought, [of the USSBS] concerned the effects of strategic bombing on the oil refining and chemical plants and on the German transportation system.”¹³⁴

“Toward the end of the summer, ... the war in the Pacific was ... over and President Truman had decided that the effectiveness of the air war against Japan should be the survey’s next subject of inquiry.”¹³⁵ Nitze remained with the USSBS during the Truman administration.¹³⁶ The USSBS conducted a careful survey to measure as precisely as possible the effects of the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Nitze was the main author of the report on their findings. He concluded that atomic weapons caused only partial destruction.¹³⁷

In Nagasaki, the railroads were back in operation forty-eight hours after the attack. Most of the rolling stock in the city had been destroyed, but the tracks suffered relatively minor damage. In Hiroshima, ... we also found that even in the immediate blast area, people who had taken to simple air raid tunnels emerged unscathed, indicating that the bomb’s effects were largely confined, like most conventional weapons, to above ground targets...¹³⁸

Even in 1945, it became clear to Mr. Nitze that

a monopoly of atomic technology by any one country or group of countries could not be preserved forever. Once the feasibility of atomic fission had been demonstrated, mastery of the technique of production by other countries would be a matter of more or less time. It was also apparent that atomic technology would progress as all other technology had progressed and that, in time, larger and more terrible weapons would be available...

A way in which international ownership and control of atomic weapons could be achieved was outlined in the Acheson-Lilienthal report issued in March 1946. The recommendations of this report were embodied in the Baruch plan of June 1946 submitted... to the United Nations. The Soviet Union summarily rejected the essential elements of the Baruch plan—

...Prolonged negotiations followed...The end of atomic monopoly had serious implications for American security...it was now apparent that effective international control depended as much on Soviet intentions as our own...we could expect the USSR to modify its negative intentions only if we were successful in building a Western security system of general strength...international control of atomic energy by itself would not eliminate the source of tension.... Atomic security was seen to be not separate from, but an integral part of, the general problem of security.

...more serious students of military and political affairs warned of the dangers in permitting a military imbalance to continue.¹³⁹

In 1946, when the final Summary Report on the Pacific War was finished, Nitze's mission with the bombing survey came to an end.¹⁴⁰ He then joined the State Department as deputy director of the Office of International Trade Policy.

His nuclear and political strategy beliefs were built on a number of important life events as well as political experiences. His beliefs about the Soviet Union and the threat it posed to international world order informed his strategic thinking and policy making throughout the Cold War.¹⁴¹ He was adamantly against Communism and his fear of Soviet expansionism and aggression and resulting strategic vulnerability influenced his policy planning more than any other factor.¹⁴² In 1944, Nitze had received an early warning about the emerging Soviet threat from George Kennan who "believed that the alliance between the United States and the Soviet Union would not survive the war and that Moscow's relentless search for security would soon lead to confrontation."¹⁴³ Nitze postulated that:

...the goal throughout the Cold War was for the United States to take the lead in building an "international world order" based on liberal economic and political institutions and to defend that world against communist attack.¹⁴⁴

He was further influenced about Russian tendencies by a speech Stalin delivered on February 9, 1946. In it Stalin stated that

peace was not yet assured, since capitalism continued to exist in certain nations, primarily the United States, and that preparations for war were...again necessary.¹⁴⁵

On February 22, 1946, George Kennan, who was in Moscow as Charge D'Affaires in the Soviet Union sent a "Long Telegram" to the Secretary of State in the United States warning of an

impending Russian threat to the United States and giving the sources of Soviet conduct.¹⁴⁶

Written in response to a query from the Treasury Department to analyze Stalin's recent 1946 speech, Kennan's long telegram "attributes to the Soviet Union alone the status of threatening force, with Britain part of the 'Western World.'"¹⁴⁷ Churchill, on March 5, 1946, described an encroaching "iron curtain" which amplified Kennan's warnings and any doubts Nitze may have had about the Soviets threatening posture were erased. Churchill stated:

A shadow has fallen upon the scenes so lately lightened by the Allied victory. Nobody knows what Soviet Russia and its Communist international organization intends to do in the immediate future, or what are the limits...to their expansive and proselytizing tendencies.... From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the Continent.... I have felt bound to portray the shadow which, alike in the west and the east falls upon the world...¹⁴⁸

Nitze did not at this time "see much of a threat of military action by the USSR against Western Europe." His worry was with the economic situation of the world and a deteriorating Europe.¹⁴⁹ This fear was shared with President Truman, who on March 12, 1947, issued the Truman Doctrine.¹⁵⁰ Soon after, George Kennan set up a small group of analysts, known as the Policy Planning Staff, who were charged with developing policy for a "deteriorating Europe." But when Nitze was asked to join as deputy, Acheson did not want him in this position, Nitze remained in the Office of International Trade Policy.¹⁵¹

In July, 1947, George Kennan published the Long Telegram in *Foreign Affairs* under the pseudonym of "X" and titled it "The Sources of Soviet Conduct".¹⁵² As Nitze would recall:

It was this article that provided the overall rationale for the policy that would guide U.S. foreign policy for the next generation. Here he introduced the concept of containing Soviet and Communist expansionism, but he was vague on what might be required to achieve successful containment....

George's underlying argument [was] persuasive—that a long term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies" would...produce fundamental changes in the Soviet system, making it less menacing toward the West....¹⁵³

"I concurred with George's assessment of the situation.... In dealing with the more immediate problem of Europe's growing instability, I thought we should attack it at its source and restore

confidence where it was needed most—in the economic sector.¹⁵⁴ This concept was incorporated into Secretary Marshall’s proposal in his “Harvard Commencement speech offering American aid to those European countries willing to coordinate their efforts for economic recovery.”¹⁵⁵ The key belief was that if the people were fed, they could think about politics, and then it would be less likely that they would resort to Communist expansion.¹⁵⁶

During the next year as deputy assistant secretary of state for economic affairs, Nitze was involved with both the Communist coup in Czechoslovakia and the Berlin¹⁵⁷ and US Airlift. After the Berlin blockade in the summer of 1949, Nitze was assigned to work with George Kennan, who was then director of the State Department’s Policy Planning Staff (S/P).¹⁵⁸ It soon became clear that Kennan wanted to step down, and Nitze succeeded Kennan as director of policy planning on January 1, 1950. Nitze officially started his career as a “policy planner” with this new position and adopted an approach very different from the one Kennan had originally intended when he began the direction of the planning staff in 1947.¹⁵⁹

On September 19, 1949, during the change of leadership, the Soviets detonated a nuclear device, and research on the production of an American hydrogen bomb -the “super bomb-”, was plainly a real possibility.¹⁶⁰ Nitze would later recall:

Acheson called Kennan and me into his office and asked that over the weekend we each draft a paper proposing what the U.S. reaction should be to this event. We came to very different conclusions.

...George’s paper [written in response to Acheson’s request] expressed horror at the consequences of a competition between the United States and the Soviet Union to build such weapons.[...] In essence he held that *moral leadership* was of far greater importance than superiority in the destructiveness of weapons. He recommended that the U.S. adopt a policy of unilateral nuclear disarmament.

My paper argued that we could now expect that the Soviets would focus their efforts fully to offset and counter our nuclear capabilities. They had the resources and skills to do so. As they approached...nuclear equality with us, their evident nonnuclear military superiority on the Eurasian landmass would become decisive unless we took steps to counter it. To do so, we needed to increase our conventional military capabilities and to assist a network of allies also to increase theirs. It would take us many years to achieve a rough equality in nonnuclear forces. To extend the time available to do so, we should continue to work on developing our nuclear capability...¹⁶¹

Added to this the People's Republic of China was established under Communist rule.

...we were on the verge of a fundamental change in the balance of power....The question was: How should we react to these developments? [...] Our military believed that something had to be done to preserve our margin of nuclear superiority over the Soviets...¹⁶²

The critical issue was “whether to move ahead with the development and testing of a thermonuclear weapon, or H-bomb, or to continue to hold our scientists under wraps.¹⁶³ There was much internal debate about this next step in our military strategy and technological build up. On one side “Robert Oppenheimer, who was also chairman of the AEC’s General Advisory Committee, composed of the country’s leading nuclear physicists...opposed further research and development aimed at testing a fusion reaction.”¹⁶⁴ Nitze’s memoirs report that

LeBaron was anxious that I should side with him in supporting the development of the H-Bomb. So he asked me to talk with Ernest Lawrence, director of the University of California’s Radiation Laboratory in Berkeley.... [Lawrence], strongly supported Teller and questioned Oppie’s argument about the effect of secrecy...to solve scientific problems. He said the Soviet nuclear weapons program was no more and no less secret than the one in the United States. In both countries work on nuclear weapons matters was highly classified and scientists...were seldom, if ever, allowed to publish their findings. Most of the real advances that occurred here, Lawrence added, were made by physicists under the age of thirty. What motivated them was their sense of pushing forward the frontiers of knowledge and the prestige resulting from the appreciation of their work by their peers. This was enough to stimulate creative work in the United States and it was probably the same in the Soviet Union.¹⁶⁵

According to Nitze’s biographer David Callahan:

On a gray and wet Saturday morning, the General Advisory Committee of the Atomic Energy Commission met in Washington to begin deliberations on the H-bomb. The GAC included...Robert Oppenheimer, Enrico Fermi, and Isador Rabi...It was also a group that included many tortured souls, men who in Oppenheimer’s words “had known sin” for their participation in the Manhattan Project...the group engaged in two days of emotionally charged debate.

...In language almost unknown to the bureaucratic world, the GAC pleaded against building a bomb “that might become a weapon of genocide.”¹⁶⁶

Members of the GAC concluded that: “We all hope that by one means or another, the development of these weapons can be avoided. We are all reluctant to see the United States take the

initiative in precipitating this development. We are all agreed that it would be wrong at the present moment to commit ourselves to all out efforts towards its development.”¹⁶⁷ Nitze recalled that

To settle the question of whether to build the H-bomb, Mr. Truman on November 19, 1949, appointed a Special Committee of the National Security Council, composed of the secretaries of state and defense and the AEC chairman David Lilienthal. They, in turn, appointed a working group of deputies to develop specific recommendations. LeBaron, as...chief adviser on atomic energy, represented the Defense Department; Henry D. Smyth and Gordon Dean...represented the commission whenever Lilienthal was absent, and R. Gordon Arneson, the secretary of state’s atomic energy adviser, and I were delegated by Acheson to represent the State Department.¹⁶⁸

He drafted a paper that incorporated the views of David Lilienthal, who opposed the bomb. This paper recommended among other decisions: “That the president authorize the A.E.C. to proceed with an accelerated program to test the possibility of a thermonuclear reaction;...and that the N.S.C. reexamine our aims and objectives in the light of the USSR’s possible thermonuclear capability;...and that no public discussion of these issues...be authorized.”¹⁶⁹

The internal debate about the H-bomb came to an end with a brief meeting, between the president and the Special Committee on January 31, 1950, and Truman made the decision to go ahead with the H-Bomb.

Lilienthal had led off with a short recapitulation of arguments against the H-bomb, including his own moral qualms. But, it quickly became apparent that Truman had...made up his mind. “Can the Russians do it?” he had asked. Assured by the committee that they did indeed possess the necessary capabilities, he had cut short further discussion and signed off on the committee’s recommendations and a press release announcing his decision. The meeting had lasted ten minutes....

Nitze believed that: The Soviets were fully committed to developing an H-bomb before Mr. Truman made the decision that we should do the same. There can now be little doubt that had Mr. Truman not acted when he did, the Soviets would have achieved unchallengeable nuclear superiority by the late 1950s.¹⁷⁰

While the AEC began work on building an H-bomb, Truman issued a directive to the State and the Defense Departments to examine the national security implications of the president’s decision, and to reexamine our objectives in peace and war. Paul Nitze, and others recommended a

strong response.¹⁷¹ The final report NSC-68 was submitted to the National Security Council for the president's consideration in April 1950 and finally approved in September 1950.¹⁷²

Nitze states in his memoirs that NSC-68 was the first of what later became a series of basic national security policy papers produced each year through the Truman and Eisenhower administrations. "From 1947 to 1950 almost all our policy initiatives had been economic and political; little attention had been given to our or anyone else's military capabilities."¹⁷³ NSC-68 changed all that.

It was during my years as director of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff in the Truman and Eisenhower administration from January 1950 to June 1953, that I first felt the impact of full participation in the decision making of the United States.... During that period, we in the Policy Planning Staff were responsible for the central policy staff work and recommendations concerning the Korean War, the Korean armistice negotiations, and the decision to proceed with the development of thermonuclear weapons. As director of the Policy Planning Staff, I headed the drafting and annual revisions of the basic national security document NSC-68, approved by President Truman in 1950....these documents embodied the core of our political and defense policy for the succeeding forty years.

We felt that the full weight of responsibility for the actions to be taken rested upon us in the Staff, and upon me in particular as director of the group....We were prime movers in the affairs of immense scope.¹⁷⁴

In 1957, Eisenhower became concerned about the Soviet missile program with the Russians' launch of Sputnik and appointed the Gaither Panel, headed by Rowan Gaither, Chairman of the Board of Rand. The Gaither Committee was an ad hoc committee of private citizens appointed by President Eisenhower to determine the requirement for and the feasibility of civil defense in the nuclear age. Nitze because of his work on NSC-68, Nitze was now well respected and was asked to draft the final version of the committee's report. This report, "Deterrence and Survival in the Nuclear Age," responded once again to Nitze's and the committee's fears, "that the political leadership of the country had underestimated the gravity and extent of our "strategic vulnerability."¹⁷⁵

Although Wohlstetter was not on the Gaither Committee, its report drew heavily from a classified study on strategic vulnerability that he had supervised for RAND...Looking ahead to the day when Soviet bombers would be replaced by

intercontinental missiles, he warned that a bolt-from-the-blue attack would be able to knock out virtually all American air bases.¹⁷⁶

An even more hawkish tone to military planning and spending than Nitze's NSC-68 document, the final report went well beyond the original charter of the civil defense issue. Nitze himself stated: "It concluded that American deterrence and survival were both in jeopardy."¹⁷⁷ These findings were based on material from the CIA, the military, and top government officials. According to Nitze: "President Eisenhower did not embrace the recommendations of our report. He was anxious to maintain his image as a man of peace and he was not about to approve a major expansion of our defense budget."¹⁷⁸

In 1959, Acheson and Nitze, as chairman and vice chairman of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee of the Democratic Advisory Council, wrote a paper entitled "The Military Forces We Need and How to Get Them." Nitze claimed that this paper constituted the foundation for John F. Kennedy's position on defense issues when he succeeded in winning the Democratic nomination.¹⁷⁹ Soon after this report was written and prior to his election, Kennedy "named Nitze to chair a special task force to conduct a non-partisan investigation into U.S. national security needs, with emphasis on defense and foreign policy issues."¹⁸⁰ The report was then delivered on November 9, 1960. "I had long been an advocate of flexible military response and our task force report to the president elect strongly supported this position."¹⁸¹

After Kennedy was inaugurated on January 20, 1961, Robert McNamara, Secretary of Defense under Kennedy, recruited Paul Nitze as a senior staff member for his department. Nitze was asked by McNamara to become the assistant secretary of defense for International Security Affairs (ISA). As head of ISA, Nitze played the role of diplomat more "actively than expected."¹⁸² Under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, ISA became the source for major foreign policy initiatives...[known as the little state department] .

Kennedy rejected Eisenhower's NSC-centered system of foreign and national security policymaking. In the belief that it was inefficient and cumbersome Kennedy introduced a less centralized system. Kennedy's assistant secretary for ISA, Paul Nitze, was chosen to contravene the squabbling in the previous administration among the armed forces and resultant weakening of the president's power as well as

the failure to bring foreign policy and military strength into harmony. As Kennedy's handpicked representative, Nitze saw that the president's decisions on foreign policy "got translated into coordinated actions by the Departments of State and Defense."¹⁸³

As part of ISA [Nitze] joined Kennedy's "academic advisory group", an assemblage of intellectuals brought together (prior to the election) largely to help the young senator compete for the nomination against better-known, more experienced liberals, notably Adlai Stevenson.

When Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev used a January 1961 speech to pledge support for the "sacred" struggles of colonial peoples and promised to defend "wars of national liberation", the new administration's worst fears seemed confirmed.... Now, as [Kennedy] moved into the Oval Office, he urged his advisers to study Khrushchev's address and mark his words. "You've got to understand it", he told them; "this is our clue to the Soviet Union."¹⁸⁴

Following Nitze's appointment as assistant secretary of ISA, President Kennedy told him that he wanted Nitze's ...office to be the focal point in our administration for arms control. He asked me for a thorough review of our policy before the nuclear test ban negotiations resumed on March 21st. I became deeply involved in this review and preparations for the negotiations with the Soviet Union in Geneva. I turned over many duties to William P. Bundy, and I became primarily responsible for NSC type policy issues and crisis management.

Kennedy ordered a reappraisal of U.S. and allied defense requirements, with special emphasis, as Nitze had long advocated, on reducing NATO's reliance on nuclear weapons by increasing conventional strength. What emerged was the strategy of "flexible response" to replace the Eisenhower administration's outmoded policy of massive retaliation.¹⁸⁵

In June 1961, President Kennedy invited Nitze to the Vienna summit with Khrushchev. In response to the summit, there was fear that a confrontation over Berlin could escalate into war.

Kennedy, Nitze and the rest of the U.S. delegation returned to Washington sobered by the summit....Kennedy moved quickly to deal with the impending crisis. On June 13 Nitze accompanied McNamara to an NSC meeting on...Berlin. The secretary of defense explained that the U.S. position was fatally weak....The President was deeply disturbed by these findings and ordered an interdepartmental group to develop a viable strategy to deal with the Berlin crisis. Foy Kohler would chair the group and Nitze was to direct the Pentagon's work on the project.

From the beginning, Nitze was a hard-liner on Berlin. Some in the administration believed that the Soviets were...unhappy about Berlin and saw Khrushchev as trying to consolidate his hold on Eastern Europe for security reasons.... They felt the confrontation could be diffused through negotiations.

Nitze thought this was nonsense. In his opinion negotiations or concessions of any sort were dangerous....To Nitze, the Soviets were behaving in a manner consistent with the analysis of NSC 68. Their primary goal in putting pressure on Berlin was to humiliate the west and score a major cold war victory...

[Nitze stated,] I am convinced that there is...a much broader Communist objective involved, of which Berlin is merely a proving ground....

At stake in Berlin, then was not the status of a single city, but the fate of the entire world. Berlin was only a symbol...which by itself was of no overwhelming value to the United States. Yet as Nitze had stated in NSC 68...perception was the key to victory in the Cold War.¹⁸⁶

Nitze would recall that prior to this June meeting, “In March 1961, President Kennedy had commissioned a study on Berlin from Dean Acheson. I worked with Dean on drafting the report. The final version was submitted to the president three weeks after Mr. Kennedy returned from Vienna.”¹⁸⁷ By early July, Acheson had come to dominate the group. He predicted that the Kremlin would provoke a crisis over Berlin in 1961 and that;

The only solution was to convince the Soviet leadership that the United States would risk war to protect its stake in Berlin....if the Soviets signed a treaty with East Germany and attempted to cut off access to Berlin, The United States must respond with military force. While it was possible that such a strategy might spark nuclear war, Acheson deemed the risk worth taking.

Nitze also judged the risk worth taking....Nitze believed that every effort should be made to avoid a [nuclear exchange], but he was not ready to rule out the possibility....A full scale nuclear exchange would...devastate the West...Hence use of nuclear weapons by us only become rational if the alternative would be even worse than nuclear war—such as the capitulation to the Communist program of aggression.

And in 1961 it appeared to Nitze that relinquishing Berlin would mean just such a capitulation.¹⁸⁸

To Nitze, this 1961 paper, known as the Acheson Report,¹⁸⁹ viewed the Soviets the same way that they were described in NSC-68, and it was a self-fulfilling prophecy:

I am convinced that there is...a much broader Communist objective of which Berlin is merely a proving ground. This is to impose on the West and on the U.S. by the application of threats of force and terror tactics, a psychological defeat by purporting to demonstrate our impotence in the face of the much advertised Soviet power...¹⁹⁰

Callahan described the developments as follows: “In late June and early July, as the interdepartmental group on Berlin (later called the Berlin Task Force) came together, management of the crisis was divided between State and Defense. While Kohler and his aides concentrated on a set of diplomatic responses to Khrushchev’s challenge, Nitze’s staff began developing contingency plans for a military confrontation.”¹⁹¹

How did Nitze and Acheson manage the “burden of this responsibility”¹⁹² of even suggesting the use of nuclear weapons as a risk worth taking, putting their own families at risk, as well as the rest of the United States and the world? The “risk worth taking” was initially opposed by the president. But, after Vienna and influenced by Acheson and Nitze, President Kennedy became more combative. Callahan recalls how Kennedy went on national television on July 25th and told the American people:

We cannot and will not permit the Communists to drive us out of Berlin... The city... was the great testing place of Western courage and will... To deal with the crisis, Kennedy announced an additional \$3.2 million in military appropriations, and call up some 200,000 reserve troops....

Nuclear war was a real possibility... the president asked Congress to allocate new funds to civil defense programs so that in the event of an attack, the lives of those families which are not hit in a nuclear blast and fire can still be saved, if they can be warned to take shelter and if that shelter is available.¹⁹³

Although Acheson, Nitze, and others had pressed Kennedy to declare a state of national emergency, Kennedy

said he was not going to declare a national emergency, seeing that as his last public step not the first. But, he would triple draft calls and ask for congressional resolution giving him stand-by authority to call up Reserves—providing six new combat-ready divisions and supporting air groups ready for European deployment... He would emphasize a steady non-nuclear build-up... Escalation.

McNamara and his men were not happy. The Chiefs wanted the Secretary of Defense to argue for... “Plan A”, the toughest of the military scenarios, which gave authoriza-

tion to tactical nuclear weapons. The President skipped to “Plan C”, the most moderate alternative.

...Kennedy had been impressed by a long memo written...by Thomas C. Schelling, who argued that the real purpose of nuclear weapons was to be used as chips in a calculated game of threat and risk. Played well in that game, the purpose of nuclear weapons was to prevent their use....It is a war of nuclear bargaining....

On the day before the speech, the President cabled Macmillan, laying out the situation as he saw it:...”This is a time of clear and imminent danger, I do not believe we can convince the Soviets of our willingness to face the greater risks, which may be ahead unless we are ready to bear the burdens of a period of growing peril.”¹⁹⁴

As the West met to plot strategy, the situation in Berlin continued to deteriorate. On August 4th, Warsaw representatives met in a secret session (in Moscow) and voted to allow Ulbricht to seal the East Berlin border. On August 13th as Nitze vacationed in Maine, East German troops began erecting a brick and barbed wire barrier separating East and West Berlin. Nitze immediately swung the International Security Affairs Committee into action, but he was too late. Callahan reported that

The White House would not change its decision not to take action. Nitze was furious. He saw this simply as a first step in the eventual Soviet control over all of Berlin...He couldn't believe that the U.S. would let the Soviets get away with such a move.¹⁹⁵

According to Nitze's in his Memoirs:

The Wall, at this point, could easily be knocked down by a jeep or truck, but it was not clear to anyone in the West whether the barrier was being constructed to keep the East Berliners in or to keep us out....

Washington had received no recommendation from our own people in Berlin or from the FRG...to knock down the barrier. I together with other Pentagon officials carefully considered whether we should recommend this action to the secretary of defense....we received intelligence information indicating that two East German divisions and three Soviet divisions had been moved surreptitiously to encircle Berlin....

This covert deployment suggested that they were planning a more serious trap, in which we would knock down the wall and they would respond by occupying all of Berlin. The situation could have escalated quickly into a general nuclear war for

which neither our allies nor we were militarily or psychologically prepared. We decided against a recommendation to move against the wall.¹⁹⁶

Some thought the wall helped ease the crisis. Many suspected that the building of the wall represented the furthest extent of Moscow's bullying. Never had the US and Soviet Union seemed so close to war. Nitze would recount that

six days after the wall went up...[the administration] reacted to the political problems caused by the crisis.... President Kennedy sent Vice President Johnson to Berlin, as his personal emissary. Accompanied by retired General Lucius Clay, a hero to West Berlin since 1948 when he oversaw the airlift to the besieged city...[Johnson was to respond to the] "decline in morale" of West Berlin and the feared exodus from the city. Simultaneously, the President sent fifteen hundred American troops in armored trucks down the Autobahn through the East German check points to Berlin.¹⁹⁷

In late August 1961, Nitze turned to the outcome of a game type analysis of the Berlin situation that Rand was preparing in order to deal with the escalation of the crisis. Fortunately, "...Thomas Schelling, the analyst in charge of the game, could not get a war started between the two teams representing the United States and the Soviet Union."¹⁹⁸

There was nothing the West could do except continue the policy of bluff and brinkmanship. And the best chance of making that policy work, of convincing the Soviets that the US would employ all means at its disposal to keep Berlin free, was to have a credible hard-liner tell the Soviets bluntly that the United States was ready to resort to nuclear weapons.

Such a person would have to be known to the Soviets as a hard-liner, and he would have to occupy a government post where detailed work on nuclear weapons strategy was done....

Paul Nitze was given the job....

The United States would not allow itself to be bullied by an aggressor, Nitze said. It would not allow itself to be humiliated. The Soviets might be militarily stronger in East Germany, but they were not superior everywhere in the world....Nitze's September 7th speech was nuclear saber rattling of the first order.

...But if Nitze could bluff persuasively in public, he was in private acutely aware that the nuclear threat was exactly that: a bluff. Not only did he reject proposals that warning shots be considered, but he also opposed a much more ambitious plan put together by Harry Rowan....¹⁹⁹

In Nitze's own words: "Throughout the remainder of the year, Washington continued to prepare for what appeared to be an inevitable confrontation with the Communists when and if Khrushchev actually signed a separate peace treaty with East Germany and access to the city of Berlin would be denied to allied powers.²⁰⁰ He would also report that originally "our NATO contingency plans called for sending a small military force down the Autobahn to Berlin, and if resisted moving to the nuclear response envisioned in MC 14/2."²⁰¹

When Nitze showed concerns as early as April 1961, that contingency planning was needed, Robert McNamara, Secretary of Defense, asked Nitze to spearhead a review of military contingency plans in the event the Communists attempted to cut off our access to Berlin. At the end of July, Nitze recalled,

McNamara and [Nitze] flew...to Europe to confer with General Lauris Norstad who...had...set up a special Berlin planning unit known as "Live Oak"... Norstad was from the old school of massive retaliation and his preparations for the defense of NATO Europe, devised under the Eisenhower administration, strongly emphasized the early use of nuclear weapons in any major confrontation with the Soviets. This accorded with NATO strategic doctrine at the time, but was totally at odds with the flexible response approach that McNamara and Nitze thought preferable.

McNamara and I questioned General Norstad sharply about his plans to use nuclear weapons. In response he said he would not use them in the first instance.

...Our NATO allies thought only in terms of the psychology of deterrence,...that NATO would respond to a Soviet attack with the prompt, full use of our strategic arsenal. An initial nuclear exchange limited to targets in Europe was not what they had in mind....

...To my mind this tension between our declaratory policy and the flexible response, which McNamara and I thought should be our action policy, posed a most serious problem.²⁰²

This declaratory policy and the action policy had been defined by Nitze as early as 1956 in a *Foreign Affairs* article, entitled "Atoms, Strategy, and Policy." In it, Nitze stated that "the more we can bring our action policy and our declaratory policy into line with each other the more effective both became."²⁰³ As Nitze's memoirs report,

The Washington Ambassadorial Group, made up of representatives from the US, Great Britain, France, and Germany, had been meeting since 1958. In 1961 it was chaired by Foy Kohler. After the Berlin Wall was erected on August 13, [Nitze] was asked to organize and chair a subgroup on military planning that would spell out what “flexible military response” might entail. These two groups, the quadripartite subgroup and the interdepartmental Berlin task force, were not in conflict but represented different organizational facets of our approach to the same problem.²⁰⁴

Nitze would report that the Berlin task force had few options:

Our...NATO allies argued that the principal purpose of military forces was deterrence, rather than their use if deterrence failed,...They claimed that since our only deterrent in Europe was based on an expressed determination to meet any Soviet attack with nuclear weapons, a buildup of conventional forces would only weaken that deterrent by undermining its credibility....

There were also advocates of another airlift, like the one in 1948–49,...but...it “became apparent that an airlift could easily be interdicted and therefore would not be reliable.”²⁰⁵

In late July and early August the West’s military and diplomatic policy on Berlin was taken up at a four-power foreign ministers conference in Washington and Paris. Nitze lobbied hard for the program of mounting pressures. At his side was Lieutenant Colonel Dewitt Armstrong, feeding him the arguments and data to strengthen his case. The crisis continued to build and led to “stepped up” planning in Washington, and in the fall of 1961, Nitze’s contingency planners began the final form of their work. This was directed by Squidge Lee, director of policy planning in the (ISA) department, and Lieutenant Colonel Armstrong of his office. The starting point was Armstrong’s original paper on potential Soviet actions and possible western response. It was called the Horse Blanket because the number of actions the United States and NATO might take, and what response from the USSR might be stimulated by each Western action was so great that it was thought “it would take a piece of paper the size of a horse blanket to write them all down.”²⁰⁶

The Horse Blanket was never finished because the number of scenarios, the details necessary to explain them, and all the “probabilities” were too cumbersome. A revised edition called the Pony Blanket was more manageable and was used by Nitze as a starting point when he

chaired the “quadripartite military planning subgroup of the Washington Ambassador’s Group.”

²⁰⁷The Pony Blanket paper developed the program of mounting pressures into an organized and coherent framework. This gave our allies more confidence. Nitze recalled: “It helped the four governments to work toward a meeting of the minds on what we should do in a variety of contingencies, It went a long way toward persuading our NATO allies to accept the doctrine of flexible response that became in 1967, MC 14/3, NATO’s new strategic concept.”²⁰⁸

Even though the contingency planning was largely finished and almost every scenario for Soviet aggression had a set of Western responses, Nitze wanted an even more concise version than the Pony Blanket that could be summarized on one page. They worked day and night, and the next morning, Nitze read the paper and found it excellent. This paper, called the Poodle Blanket, was the final outcome of the Berlin task force. It was issued as National Security Action Memorandum (NSAM)109 and was approved by President Kennedy on October 23, 1961.

The essence of NSAM 109 was its ‘preferred sequence’ involving four phases of graduated response, ranging from diplomatic protest notes to all out nuclear war...The first three phases involved pressure through diplomatic channels, economic embargoes, maritime harassment, and UN action, followed by or in combination with NATO mobilization and then conventional military measures such as sending armed convoy probes down the Autobahn.... Phase four called for the escalating use of nuclear weapons.²⁰⁹

According to Callahan:

Paul Nitze “dismissed most talk of nuclear weapons use during the Berlin crisis.” Rowen’s memory is that with the exception of his first strike plan, which...never became a part of ISA’s Berlin contingency plans—the issue of nuclear war was seldom discussed in detail among Nitze’s Berlin staff...It wasn’t taken that seriously as a possibility. Squidge Lee agreed, “Nobody sat down and blocked out what we would do if this thing goes nuclear because that was clearly the ultimate step down the line...nuclear war was possible”, said Lee. I think subliminally it loomed over the entire picture.²¹⁰

In his memoirs Nitze mentions a time when he did discuss the use of nuclear weapons with Pentagon officials:

McNamara and I fully discussed the various possibilities of the fourth phase, but little was put on paper and his recollections of these discussions are different from mine...

It is my recollection that McNamara and I discussed with General Page a possible plan for a strike against the three airfields on which Soviet heavy bombers were based and on their three forward staging bases in the Far North...General LeMay thought we should strike with a much larger force. McNamara...told me he had no recollection of this discussion.²¹¹

Although a hard-liner, Nitze's contingency planning during the Cold War and the Berlin Crisis never matched his declaratory policies. "I would say the nuclear options were very unattractive when you looked at them in detail", Nitze recalled. "Not impossible, but very unattractive."²¹²

Nitze's story addresses the complex relationship between hard-liners and soft-liners, the military and policy makers, and declaratory and action policy. It speaks to the differing solutions to nuclear weapons that sometimes sound the same. Strobe Talbott clarified his belief about nuclear war:

I believed in arms control but not disarmament Nitze recalled, ...Arms control means the regulation of the military dimension of the Soviet-American competition. The goal is much the same as the goal of deterrence itself; stability, that strange safety in which weapons of vast destructiveness help keep the peace. Arms control is a refinement of, and supplement to deterrence....Arms control has the connotation of accepting nuclear weapons as a fact of life....

The goal of disarmament is...the reduction of the weapons themselves....If arms control seeks to promote a state of strategic nuclear stability, disarmament seeks a state of grace or innocence.²¹³

Nitze's antidote to nuclear war, on the other hand, was deterrence:

The objective of reducing the risk of war is intrinsically linked to deterrence. Whether or not we have arms control agreements, it is necessary that the United States and her allies have sufficient military forces, both conventional and nuclear, to deter an armed attack by the Soviet Union ...

Our policy should be one of maintaining a deterrent posture adequate to assure that no war would occur...²¹⁴

Talbott would recall that "Unlike McGeorge Bundy, Nitze believed that "the naked count of missiles in and of itself" was an extremely important measure of national security. Paul felt strongly that national will was very much a function of military capacity...if I have one more H-

bomb than you do, I can put pressure on you. That disagreement was basic to the great strategic debate of the nuclear era.”²¹⁵

In 1985, Nitze concluded, in opposition to Bundy’s position of “existential deterrence”, “that one important issue remained [which was that] some thought the terror of nuclear weapons was such that their existence would in itself prevent war. This view was held by those who considered the destructiveness of nuclear weapons to be absolute...”²¹⁶

Nitze was acutely aware of the danger of nuclear war and took no measures to deny this possibility. In the 1980’s, Nitze wrote, : “ There is no purpose to be gained through the use of our nuclear arsenal.... I can think of no circumstances under which it would be wise for the United States to use nuclear weapons, even in retaliation for their prior use against us.” In his astounding turn-around he concludes, “I see no compelling reason why we should not unilaterally get rid of our nuclear weapons.”²¹⁷

In the book he wrote in 1993, *Tension Between Opposites*, Nitze questions Western values and asks the following extremely important questions:

- Had those of us been right who had taken such an uncompromising view of the superiority of the liberal Western value system to the opposed claims of those following the Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist doctrine?
- Had we been right to urge that the U.S. proceed to determine the feasibility of a controlled thermonuclear reaction?²¹⁸

Then in an article he wrote in 1994, “Is It Time to Junk Our Nukes?” Nitze makes the case for replacing nuclear weapons and

...choosing strategic, high-precision conventional weapons over strategic nuclear weapons. they are safer, cause less collateral damage, and pose less threat of escalation than do nuclear weapons....In the aftermath of the Gulf war...one message rings loudest: The United States, when provoked can and will use strategic conventional weapons against targets it considers appropriate....It may well be that conventional strategic weapons will one day perform their primary mission of deterrence immeasurably better than nuclear weapons if only because we can—and will—use them.²¹⁹

Is this Paul Nitze joining the long list of militarists who have renounced fifty years of support for the nuclear weapons system and succumbed to the “Nuclear Retirement Syndrome?”²²⁰ How else

could one explain his complete turn around after spending his career promoting the building of thousands of nuclear warheads? Or with age, like Robert McNamara in his film “The Fog of War”, does he want to repent for taking part in the most frightening and dangerous history any country has ever experienced the threat of nuclear war.

From the beginning Paul Nitze had a reflective side, interested in ideas and philosophy. He questioned firstly whether our Western value system is superior to other political ideologies and secondly whether there is any use for nuclear weapons today. Living in the question of these two critical issues remains the greatest challenge we face today.

NOTES

¹ M. M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), pp.292–293, in J.Senehim, "Language, Culture, and Conflict: Storytelling as a Matter of Life and Death" *Mind and Human Interaction*, 7:3 (August, 1996): 152.

² According to Janice Gross Stein: "Embedded enemy images are a serious obstacle to conflict management, routinization, reduction, or resolution. Once formed, enemy images tend to become deeply rooted and resistant to change, even when one's adversary attempts to signal a change in intent. The images themselves then contribute autonomously to the perpetuation and the intensification of conflict." Janice Gross Stein, "Communications, Signaling and Intelligence", in Edward A. Kolodziej and Roger E. Kanet, (eds.) *Coping with Conflict after the Cold War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), p.247.

For Hillenbrand, "Living in Berlin made it easy to develop a 'cold warrior' syndrome....The very propinquity of an ideologically hostile regime dominated by another ideologically hostile regime made both the threat and the capacity to execute that threat seem larger....Just as most of us thought the Soviets were all true believers in a cause dedicated to achievement of ultimate world hegemony, so our cold warriors were true believers in the righteousness of our cause....boorish and frequently threatening Soviet behavior reinforced the conditioning. Despite all this, I could not help but feel that, in the nuclear age, we must find a better way than continuing confrontation between the superpowers, whether in Berlin or in a broader setting." Martin Hillenbrand, *The Future of Berlin* (Montclair: Osmun Publishers, 1980), pp. 116–117.

³ Martin J. Hillenbrand, *Power and Morals* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1949), p. 30. This book was based on his dissertation, finished in 1948 at Columbia University from the Department of Public Law. Hillenbrand majored in philosophy and history as an undergraduate.

⁴ Hillenbrand to McKiernan, Transcript #2. In *Nuclear History Program Oral History Transcript, NHP Berlin Crisis Oral History Sessions #1–8*, conducted at the German Historical Society and the National Security Archive, October 1990–1992 (University of Maryland: Center for International Security Studies at Maryland School of Public Affairs, 1994).

⁵ Paul P. Sweet, *Interview with Martin J. Hillenbrand*, Oral History Project, John F. Kennedy Library, Martin J. Hillenbrand, Minister, American Embassy, Bonn interviewed by Paul R. Sweet, American Consul General, Stuttgart, August 26, 1964, p. 8.

⁶ Sweet, *Interview with Martin J. Hillenbrand*.

⁷ Foreign Service Officers can be sent anywhere in the world at any time, to serve the diplomatic needs of the U.S. They are frontline personnel of all U.S. embassies, consulates, and other diplomatic missions. Historically, Foreign Service Officers have been generalists who would expect to be assigned to various kinds of jobs, in different parts of the world in the course of their careers.

Hillenbrand started his career as a Foreign Service Officer in 1939. He was sent to Switzerland during World War II to work in the visa section of the consulate. At the time he stated that "apart from the interventions of people like Mrs. Roosevelt in individual visa cases, there was little apparent realization in Washington of the moral factors and human stakes involved in the plight of Jewish refugees..." Martin Hillenbrand, *Fragments of Our Time: Memoirs of a Diplomat* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1998), pp. 13–16.

In February 1940, he was "back in Washington to attend Foreign Service Officers Training School." Hillenbrand said "our training class watched in horror as the German armies swept through France in the

spring of 1940 — the world we knew might be collapsing. He received assignment at the end of the session to Baghdad and then began his work in Germany in 1946 where as counsel he was to assist with the opening phases of the tasks and duties of the American consulate general in Bremen which was a city largely in ruins...The district of the Bremen consulate included most of the British zone of occupation.” Ibid., pp. 49–50.

⁸ “Soviet Note of November 27, 1958” in *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. XL, No. 1021, (January 19, 1959):81–89

⁹ The purpose of this group was to develop an integrated timetable intended to achieve (1) maximum deterrent effect with respect to the Soviets, and (2) the agreement and maximum cooperation of our Allies. FRUS, pp. 162–164.

¹⁰ Sweet, *Interview with Martin J. Hillenbrand*, p. 1.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 4.

¹² Hillenbrand describes his thinking about the “historical complexity” of the situation in Berlin and the German problem in an excellent chapter he wrote entitled, “Berlin: Politics, Symbolism and Security”, in Martin Hillenbrand, *The Future of Berlin* (Montclair: Allanheld, Osmun Publishers: 1980), pp. 3–79.

¹³ Sweet, *Interview with Martin J. Hillenbrand*, pp.10–11.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 7.

¹⁵ Schumacher’s arguments are best articulated in: Andrei S. Markovits and Philip S. Gorski, *The German Left: Red , Green and Beyond* (New York: Polity Press, 1993), pp. 39–40.

¹⁶ John F. Kennedy, “A Democrat looks at Foreign Policy”, *Foreign Affairs*, 36:1 (1957) :49. In Frank A. Mayer, *Adenauer and Kennedy: A Study in German-American Relations, 1961–1963*. (New York: St. Martin’s, 1996), p. 7.

¹⁷ Mayer, *Adenauer and Kennedy*, p. 8.

¹⁸ Hillenbrand, *Fragments of Our Time*, p. 169.

¹⁹ Kennedy was not happy with the Dulles-Adenauer line which “basically believed that the real Soviet aim in this situation was to destroy the Western Alliance; that any willingness to negotiate on anything other than obviously unattainable proposals was a sign of weakness....” Sorensen, *Kennedy*, p. 596.

“For Adenauer, a German military contribution was the only readily available bargaining chip which he could use in his quest to reestablish German political sovereignty. In his view, a smaller republic anchored in the West was not only more politically possible but actually more morally desirable than a united Germany “floating” between East and West...Adenauer began establishing the machinery of the defense ministry long in advance. In May, 1952, the Federal Republic signed a treaty for the building of a European Defense Community (EDC to include forces from Germany, Italy, France and the Benelux countries)...in exchange, the Federal Republic was promised its return to full sovereignty by the Allied powers in the so-called General or German Treaty.

“In February of 1954, the Bundestag passed a military amendment to the Basic Law, (which before this included provisions prohibiting the rearmament of Germany, including the reinstatement of compulsory military service) which gave military services a constitutional and legal basis. When the EDC pact failed to pass in the French National Assembly in 1954, a new package of agreements, which addressed French objections, the so-called Paris Treaties, were drafted. Like the EDC agreement, they also included a General Treaty providing for Germany’s national sovereignty. The Bundestag ratified the package in

early 1955...the first American atomic weapons were stationed in the Federal Republic just three...years later.

“Adenauer...gave priority to securing the existence of the Federal Republic, a path which would fast extinguish hopes for a united Germany. Adenauer was convinced that only via a sound and unalterable anchoring in the West would Germany’s destructive vicissitudes finally come to an end.”

“Adenauer favored the establishment of a stable, parliamentary democracy on German soil, for which he was ready to sacrifice the country’s national unity. Nowhere was Adenauer’s greatness as a political leader more pronounced than in his readiness to abandon the sanctity of national union for economic stability and political democracy.”

“The chain of developments culminating in West German rearmament met the categorical opposition of the organized left-KPD, SPD, and DGB and unleashed a storm of extra parliamentary protest with varying connections to the unions and parties.” Markovits and Gorski, *German Left: Red, Green and Beyond*, pp. 38–39.

²⁰ *Documents on Germany, 1944–1985* (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of State, Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs, 1985), pp. 732–733.

²¹ Sweet, *Interview with Martin J. Hillenbrand*, p. 8.

²² “Kennedy would take office under warning that difficulties over Berlin, possibly a crisis, loomed ahead. However, he was pre-occupied at first with the so-called Third World, which had by 1960 become a major theater of East-West competition. The term ‘Third World’ came into use to describe those nations that had not aligned themselves with either the Soviet Union or the West.” Ernest R. May, and Philip D. Zelikow, (eds.), *The Kennedy Tapes Inside the White House During the Cuban Missile Crisis*, (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1997), p. 19.

²³ Sweet, *Interview with Martin J. Hillenbrand*, pp. 2–3.

Hillenbrand agrees with others in this study that the organization of the two administrations differed, as did their styles, but that the crisis remained the same. “Some writers tend to distinguish the Eisenhower period from the Kennedy period as two distinct crises...I prefer to think of the crisis as a continuum, with the Soviet ultimate threat merely postponed, not lifted.” Hillenbrand, *Fragments of Time*, p. 121.

²⁴ Sweet, *Interview with Martin J. Hillenbrand*, p. 2. The “Problem of Berlin” which ran over 30 pages is summarized in *Foreign Relation of the United States, 1961–1963*, Vol. XIV (Washington: US Government Printing Office, Department of State, 1993), pp. 33–34.

²⁵ Meena Bose, *Shaping and Signaling, Presidential Policy* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1998), p. 13.

²⁶ Sweet, *Interview with Martin J. Hillenbrand*, p. 7.

²⁷ Meena Bose, *Shaping and Signaling, Presidential Policy*, p. 13.

²⁸ “If the New Frontier meant anything, it meant that America had stopped sitting back and giving up when problems got difficult.” Anthony Hartley, “JFK’s Foreign Policy”, *Foreign Policy*, 4 (Fall 1971):79, in William Attwood, *The Reds and the Black: A Personal Adventure* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), p. 23.

Sorensen states that “As the future President himself put it in his campaign:...I want people in Latin America and Africa and Asia to start to look to America and what the President of the United States is doing, not to Khrushchev or the Chinese Communists...then freedom can be maintained under the

severest attacks it has ever known. [...] I think it's time American started moving again." Hartley, "JFK's Foreign Policy", 79–80. Quoted in Theodore C. Sorensen, *Kennedy* (Harper & Row, 1965), p. 23.

Also see Bose, *Shaping and Signaling*, p. 52, for a discussion of Kennedy's New Frontier Policy and White, *Kennedy: The New Frontier Revisited*, pp. 1–17.

²⁹ Mayer, *Adenauer and Kennedy: A Study in German-American Relations, 1961–1963*, p. 9.

³⁰ Sweet, *Interview with Martin J. Hillenbrand*, p. 11.

³¹ May, *The Kennedy Tapes*, p. 30.

³² Sweet, *Interview with Martin J. Hillenbrand*, p. 28.

³³ I am assuming he is referring to "The Problem of Berlin" drafted by Hillenbrand on March 30, 1961. *Foreign Relation of the United States, 1961–1963*, Vol. XIV (Washington: US Government Printing Office, Department of State, 1993), pp. 33–34.

Other briefing reports prepared for Vienna can be found in Transcript 1, including : "President's Meeting with Khrushchev Vienna, June 3–4, 1961. Background Paper. Khrushchev: The Man, His Manner, His Outlook, and His View of the United States." State Dept. PMK D/11 May 25, 1961. Declassified 2/15/74.

Also perhaps 20 experts, internists, psychiatrists, and psychologist systematically reviewed the range of material together (collected by the Central Intelligence Agency most all of it from the public record). See Bryant Wedge", "The Study of Man: Khrushchev at a Distance, A Study of Public Personality" *Trans-Action*, 5: 10 (October, 1968): 25.

³⁴ J. W., Hilty, *Robert Kennedy: Brother Protector* (Philadelphia, Pa.: Temple University Press, 1997), p. 434.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 434.

³⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 435–436.

³⁷ Sweet, *Interview with Martin J. Hillenbrand*, p.13.

³⁸ May, *Kennedy Tapes*, p.30.

³⁹ Hilty, *Robert Kennedy*, p.433.

⁴⁰ Sweet, *Interview with Martin J. Hillenbrand*, pp.13-14.

⁴¹ Douglas Brinkley, *Dean Acheson The Cold War Years, 1953–71* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 145.

⁴² Hillenbrand, *Fragments of Our Time*, pp. 180–182. For text of NSAM No. 58, see *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961–1962*, Vol. 14 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, Department of State,), pp. 162-165. For NSAM No. 58 see *Ibid.*, pp. 197-198.

Another important document that Secretary Rusk, Foy Koher, and I put together during those hectic day we called "Outline on Germany and Berlin."... The paper began by specifying the relevant vital interests of the United States as we saw them:

1. The presence and security of the Western forces in West Berlin
2. The security and viability of West Berlin
3. Physical access to West Berlin

4. The security of the Federal Republic against attacks from the East

The paper went on to note that, apart from these vital interests, the United States also had important, but still unrealized political goals in Germany, such as the application to all Germany of the principle of self-determination and the intimate association of a unified Germany with the West....Among these, which provided no occasion for a resort to force by the West were de facto division of Germany and the de facto absorption of East Berlin into East Germany.” Hillenbrand, *Fragments of Our Time*, pp. 182–183.

⁴³ Much of the decisions made in the “Outline on Germany and Berlin” (FRUS, Vol. XIV, pp.207–209) became the basis of Kennedy’s July 25th Report to the nation on the Berlin Crisis. Also see “Digest of Selected Documents on Berlin through 30 June 1961 (From Owen Files).” Available from the Digital National Security Archive, <http://nsrchive.chadwyck.com/nsaindexhome.htm>.

⁴⁴ See David E. Murphy, Sergei A. Kondrashev, and George Bailey, *Battleground Berlin: CIA vs. KGB in the Cold War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), pp. 343–378 for a discussion of the “secrecy” controversy about the building of the Wall: and Seymour M. Hersh, *The Dark Side of Camelot* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1997), pp. 258–259.

However Sorensen maintains that the Adenauer government described as “deeply neurotic” by one of its American admirers, and suspicious that the new contingency planning (which left more room for negotiation) had not brought the German people face to face with the realistic choices. “It was a hotbed of rumors, none of them true, that the West knew of the Wall in advance...or had concluded a secret pact at German expense.” Sorensen, Kennedy, pp. 596–597.

⁴⁵ In his memoirs, Hillenbrand describes his experiences of the phenomenon of *Torschlusspanik*. “Torschlusspanik (panic caused by fear of the gate slamming shut)—was a phenomenon we witnessed again in 1961, before the Berlin Wall was built, when refugees were streaming out of East Germany...in anticipation of restrictive action by the government of the German Democratic Republic.” Hillenbrand, *Fragments of Our Time*, p. 13.

⁴⁶ Sweet, *Interview with Martin J. Hillenbrand*, pp. 17–18.

⁴⁷ “Kennedy...on August 30 announced the appointment of General Lucius Clay, the retired army hero of the 1948 Berlin blockade, as his special envoy. Clay was a hard-line anticommunist (Republican) who was openly skeptical of Kennedy’s decision to accept the wall. But the wall remained.” Hersh, *The Dark Side of Camelot*, p. 258.

Although Clay defended the Allies, he was personally in favor of a plan to knock down the wall. After the tank confrontation at Checkpoint Charlie, White House and State Department concerns about Clay began to grow. “Clay was a man with an almost overriding sense of mission, a disregard for orderly procedures, and no real sense of the caution that the nuclear age...imposed on responsible leaders. ... What seemed particularly intolerable to Generals Clark and Norstad was Clay’s intrusion into their command channels in a matter involving alerting of troops and deployment of tanks and their crews.” Hillenbrand, *Fragments of Our Time*, pp. 193–196.

⁴⁸ Sweet, *Interview with Martin J. Hillenbrand*, pp.20–23.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 24–26. Within the Ambassadorial Group, talks took place between Thompson and Gromyko in Moscow as stated and between Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin and Rusk and between President Kennedy and Dobrynin. Anatoly F. Dobrynin, *In Confidence: Moscow’s Ambassador to America’s Six Cold War Presidents, 1962–1986* (New York: Times Books, Random House, 1995), pp. 66–67.

⁵⁰ “Kennedy and the White House contingent, supported by Abe Chayes, Roger Hilsman, and George McGhee in the State Department wanted “creative negotiations” to be the essence of our response to

Khrushchev... They reacted strongly to any course of action that might lead to a nuclear confrontation over Berlin... I believe that Dean Rusk, Foy Kohler, and I could all agree that *nuclear war over Berlin would be the ultimate irrationality*. Moreover, we knew that the British and the French would never agree in advance to a course of action that might involve a two-division probe into the GDR without consideration at the highest level when the time actually came.” Hillenbrand, *Fragments of Our Time*, 179.

“A theme that began to emerge... was that the threat of an arms race pitting the industrially superior United States against the Soviet Union, might in itself constitute an effective deterrent against continuing Soviet pressure on Berlin. ...it seemed to some of us a logical by-product of the sort of military preparations [Acheson] had advocated...it might obviate the need to execute the major steps of such a military build.” Hillenbrand, *Fragments of Our Time*, pp. 181–182.

⁵¹ Sweet, *Interview with Martin J. Hillenbrand*, pp. 35–37.

⁵² In Sergei Khrushchev’s opinion, Nikita Khrushchev was acutely aware in his country of the agricultural shortage and the housing problems, which had grown worse for decades. “The most important decision was how to combine strengthening the country’s security with reducing military spending. Military professionals demanded that the Soviet army, air force, and navy be given equipment precisely symmetrical to that of the U.S. military. But that would take all the nation’s financial resources, leaving nothing in the budget to build housing and provide people with normal lives. Father choose a different path...[Negotiation, he believed, would not be effective]...To restrain the West from a possible attack on the Soviet Union, Father decided to resort to bluff and intimidation.” Sergei Khrushchev, “For Americans, of course the Soviet Union was the Evil Empire,” *American Heritage* (October 1999): 34–52.

⁵³ Sweet, *Interview with Martin J. Hillenbrand*, pp. 35–38.

⁵⁴ Sweet, *Interview with Martin J. Hillenbrand*, pp. 41–44.

⁵⁵ Bundy states: “The terrible and unavoidable uncertainties in any recourse to nuclear war create what could be called ‘existential’ deterrence, where the function of the adjective is to distinguish this phenomenon from anything based on strategic theories or declared policies or even international commitments. As long as each side has large numbers of thermonuclear weapons that *could* be used against the opponent, even after the strongest possible preemptive attack, existential deterrence is strong and it rests on uncertainty about what could happen.” He calls this “existential deterrence” and defines the uncertainties in this article. McGeorge Bundy, “The Bishops and the Bomb”, *New York Review of Books*, XXX:10 (June 16, 1983): 4.

“In Bundy’s usage...there is less denial of nuclear weapons effects, and the illusion of control is replaced by recognition of the truth of uncertaintyThe focus...is on the weapons’ actual threat and on the dangerous uncertainties and annihilative potential consequences of those uncertainties. Existential deterrence moves sufficiently away from the extremities of dissociation to suggest the possibility of moving still further in that direction. beyond the psychological and moral distortions of deterrence policy, and taking mutual steps toward nuclear, and eventually conventional—weapons, disarmament.” Robert Jay Lifton and Eric Markusen, *The Genocidal Mentality: Nazi Holocaust and Nuclear Threat* (New York: Basic Books, 1990), p. 211.

Michael Howard affirms that Bernard Brodie formulated the term “existential deterrence”, but McGeorge Bundy -also lays claim to it. However, both have used the term in different contexts. See Michael Howard, “Brodie, Wohlstetter and American Nuclear Strategy”, *Survival* (Summer 1992): 110–111. See also McGeorge Bundy, “Nuclear Weapons and the Gulf”, *Foreign Affairs* (Autumn 1991): 84. Robert Zadra, “European Integration and Nuclear Deterrence after the Cold War, Chaillot Paper [November, 1992] Available at <<http://www.iss-eu.org/chaillot/chai05e.html>>.

⁵⁶ McGeorge Bundy, ed., *Zero Hour: A Summons to be Free* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1940), p. 84.

⁵⁷ McGeorge Bundy, "The Unimpressive Record of Atomic Diplomacy" in Gwyn Prins, ed., *The Nuclear Crisis Reader* (New York: Vintage Books 1984), p. 43.

⁵⁸ McGeorge Bundy, *The Strength of Government* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968), p.20.

⁵⁹ "The National Security Act of 1947 created the Department of Defense and the National Security Council, . . . which called for "the establishment of integrated policies and procedures . . . relating to national security." Although the NSC was re-organized under Kennedy, Bundy claims in his letter to Senator Henry M. Jackson, September 4, 1961, "that there has been no recent change in the NSC act of 1947", nor has there "been any change in the basic and decisive fact that the Council is advisory only." McGeorge Bundy, "The National Security Council in the 1960s" in Senator Henry M. Jackson, ed. *The National Security Council Jackson Subcommittee Papers at the Presidential Level* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1965), p. 275–281.

⁶⁰ Kai Bird, *The Color of Truth* (New York: Simon and Shuster, 1998).

⁶¹ The family was involved with "intercept intelligence, also know as signal intelligence and this became the Bundy family vocation. While his father sat in the War Department reading the highly classified final product, his wife and sons became involved in . . . cryptology toiling away at deciphering the radio codes of various foreign powers. . . . Kay [his mother] became the first Bundy to become a cryptologist. In 1941 . . . she was taught how to discern whether there was a hidden message in plain-text letters or telegrams sent abroad. 'Kay recalled, 'I got caught absolutely absorbed in code-breaking.'" Bird, *The Color of Truth*, p. 72.

His brother William Bundy "became one of America's leading cryptographers, privy to the war's most closely guarded secret, the German military cipher, code-named Ultra. McGeorge Bundy served as Admiral Alan Kirk's one time pad man, decoding similar intelligence intercepts during the 1944 Normandy invasion. The experience left the Bundys with an appreciation for how important a weapon intercept intelligence could be to those who had to make decisions about war and peace in a dangerous age. Ibid., pp. 15–16.

⁶² Like his father, Mc George Bundy had many mentors. One mentor was the family saint Harold L. Stimpson, former Secretary of State under Hervert Hoover and former Secretary of War under Franklin Roosevelt. Stimpson one of thirty six Americans cleared for unrestricted access to decoded and translated Japanese diplomatic and military intercepts obtained by American cryptographic personnel in 1941" Richard Stinnett, *Day of Deceit* (New York: Free Press, 2000), p.307. His father Harvey Bundy had worked for Stimson as assistant secretary of state in 1931. In 1945 McGeorge Bundy worked for Stimson as scribe. With Stimpson, Mc Bundy edited his memoirs, *On Active Service in Peace and War* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948). Stimson is credited with being "the man who would come to define the American foreign policy establishment." Kai Bird, *Color of Truth*, p. 38. Stimson was also credited with the decision to drop the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima. Bundy was later influenced by Acheson, Oppenheimer, and Kennedy.

⁶³ "...Mac was dubbed Mahatma Bundy . . . because he was constantly speaking out on the issues of the day." Kai Bird, *Color of Truth*, p. 59.

"The liberalism of . . . Bundy . . . became even more pronounced with the passage of time. Caricatured in the 1960s by the New Left as a war criminal, (because of his policies on Vietnam), in the decade to come Bundy remained liberal in every sense of the word . . . Though ambitious . . . he was neither an ideologue nor crass opportunist. In the increasingly partisan atmosphere of the foreign policy establishment of the post

Vietnam era, Bundy [was a]... liberal mind in a conservative age..." (Ibid., p. 21). As such, his story is intimately bound up with the tragedy of American liberalism in the Cold War era.

Later on in his life he was influenced by Reverend Reinhold Niebuhr..."our favorite moral philosopher... *The world was evil, but being part of this world, man must learn to live with the evil within him and in his neighbors*. From this theological insight came the underpinnings of a foreign policy based on coexistence with an essentially evil neighbor...the Russians." Ibid., p. 111.

He again credited Niebuhr with teaching Kennedy during the Cuban Missile Crisis that "in the end one must accept *the obligation to choose the lesser evil*, but it takes a special kind of courage to make that choice with grace when there is a smell of burning in the air." Bundy, *Danger and Survival*, p. 457.

⁶⁴ Important chapters and articles McGeorge Bundy has written on the subject of nuclear deterrence include, Bundy, "The Unimpressive Record of Atomic Diplomacy" in Gwyn Prins, ed., *The Nuclear Crisis Reader*, McGeorge Bundy, "Risk and Opportunity: Can We Tell Them Apart?" in Catherine McArdle Kelleher, Frank J. Kerr, and George H. Quester, eds., *Nuclear Deterrence: New Risks, New Opportunities* (New York: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1984), p. 27–36, McGeorge Bundy, "The Bishops and the Bombs," pp. 3–8, and McGeorge Bundy, "Fifty Years in the Shadow of the Bomb," *Nature* 376:6539 (August 3, 1995): 382–384.

⁶⁵ Bundy, "Bishops and the Bomb," p. 3.

⁶⁶ For a limited discussion of Bundy's personal view of nuclear weapons see McGeorge Bundy, *The Strength of Government*, p. 20–24, and Bundy, "Unimpressive Record of Atomic Diplomacy", p. 42–44.

⁶⁷ Bird, *The Color of Truth*, pp. 82–83. In Stinnett, *Day of Deceit*, p. 22 and pp. 37–8, Bundy's father Harvey makes the case that "President Roosevelt regularly received copies of Japanese messages decoded and translated from both Purple Code and the Kaigun Ango" in the pre-Pearl Harbor period that gave him ample warning of the impending attack on Pearl Harbor.

⁶⁸ The Signal Intelligence Service of the US Army was "established on Apr. 24, 1930 to consolidate all Army activities engaged in Cryptology under the Signal Corps. The SIS was responsible for producing the Army's own Codes and Cipher devices for efforts to Decrypt the communications of potential enemies." Norman Polmar and Thomas B. Allen, eds., *The Spy Book: The Encyclopedia of Espionage* (New York: Random House, 1997), pp. 511–514. For a definition of cryptography, see Ibid., 144.

⁶⁹ "Initially Mac's draft board had rejected him because of poor eyesight...but later he got himself into the army by memorizing the eye chart. Like his brother he trained at Fort Monmouth in signal intelligence. For an excellent description of Ultra see Kai Bird, *Color of Truth*, pp. 81–83, and Polmar and Allen, *Spy Book*, pp. 563–564.

⁷⁰ Kai Bird, *Color of Truth*, pp. 81–83.

⁷¹ During the Cold War Bundy defined the nuclear threat as more a political force than a "possibility that any President or Soviet leader would actually use them militarily. He believed that we should use political pressure in the form of psychological warfare and convert operations to fight Communism in the Soviet Union at the time. According to a recent declassified document account, on June 30, 1961, "National Security Adviser McGeorge Bundy issued National Security Action Memorandum No. 58, paragraph 7, which asked the secretary of state and the director of central intelligence for advice on 'preparations to be taken to create a capability for inciting progressively increasing instability in East Germany and Eastern Europe, at such time after 15 October as it may be ordered'." Bundy also asked for suggestions from the CIA about "bringing this capability to the attention of the Soviets before they make their critical decisions about Berlin." David Murphy, et al., *Battleground Berlin*, p. 366.

Further discussion of intelligence and the Berlin Crisis both in 1953 and in 1961 can be found in Polmar and Allen, *The Spy Book*, pp. 60–62.

⁷² “I worked for all three...Different as they were from one another, they shared an approach to nuclear danger that seems right to me: They did their best to understand it; they recognized it as centrally a political problem; and they were not afraid to accept, and even to seek, the responsibility for choice.” Bundy, *Danger and Survival*, p. xiii.

⁷³ The Report of the Committee on Political and Social Problems, Manhattan Project, “Metallurgical Laboratory”, University of Chicago, June 11, 1945 (The Franck Report). Members of the committee included: James Franck (Chairman), Donald J. Hughes, J. J. Nickson, Eugene Rabinowitch, Glenn T. Seaborg, J. C. Stearns, and Leo Szilard. Source: US National Archives, Washington, D.C.: Record Group 77, Manhattan Engineer District Records, Harrison-Bundy File, folder #76. Available from <<http://www.dannen.com/decision/franck.html>>.

⁷⁴ Silvan .S. Schweber, *In the Shadow of the Bomb: Bethe, Oppenheimer, and the Moral Responsibility of the Scientist* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. 3.

⁷⁵ Recommendations on the Immediate Use of Nuclear Weapons, by the Scientific Panel of the Interim Committee on Nuclear Power, June 16, 1945, p. 1. Source: U. S. National Archives, Record Group 77, Records of the Office of the Chief of Engineers, Manhattan Engineer District, Harrison-Bundy File, Folder #76. Available from <<http://www.dannen.com/decision/scipanel.html>>.

⁷⁶ Stu Rosenblatt, “How Henry Stimson Bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki too,” *Executive Intelligence Review* (March 12, 1999), p.4. Available from http://www.larouchpub.com/Rosenblatt_Stimson. This was a book review of Godfry Hodgson, *The Colonel: The Life and Wars of Henry Stimson, 1867–1950* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1992).

⁷⁷ Bundy as the ghost writer of the essay made use of his father Harvey Bundy’s arguments, as well as drafts by General Groves and Gordon Arneson, an army officer regarding the use by the United States government to detonate the atomic bomb.

⁷⁸ Bundy, *Danger and Survival*, p. 92–93. “The article by Henry L. Stimson, “The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb”, *Harper’s Magazine* (New York: Harper’s & Brothers, February, 1947), p. 1–11, also outlined the conclusions of the Interim Committee after discussions with the Scientific Panel. The recommendations were that: “the bomb should be used against Japan as soon as possible, it should be used on a dual target...a military installation or war plant surrounded by...houses and other buildings, and it should be used without prior warning.”

⁷⁹ This is perhaps the first “moral dilemma” Bundy came up against, sacrificing his own personal belief system for the sake of his public persona and “job”.

⁸⁰ Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, *On Active Service in Peace and War* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948)

Although, many historians have “discredited the main line of argument presented by Bundy and Stimson in 1947...Bundy basically to this day defends the use of the bomb as “understandable”, but takes into account the archival evidence produced by later historians.” Bird, *Color of Truth*, p. 97.

⁸¹ Bundy, *Danger and Survival*, pp. 61–62.

⁸² Bundy, *Danger and Survival*, pp. 62–63.

⁸³ Norman Cousins and Thomas K. Finletter, “A Beginning for Sanity”, *Saturday Review of Literature* XXIX (June 15, 1946): 5–9, 38–40. This article first raised the issue that the United States may have used

the bomb for an ulterior purpose: to deal with the Soviet Union. Other resources include Gar Alperovitz, *Atomic Diplomacy: Hiroshima and Potsdam* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1965) and Barton J. Bernstein, *The Atomic Bomb The Critical Issues* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1976), pp. xvii-2. Also, Rosenblatt, "How Henry Stimson bombed Hiroshima, and Nagasaki too." *Executive Intelligence Review* (March 12, 1999), p. 4. Available from http://www.larouche.com/other/1999/rosenblatt_stimson_2611.html.

⁸⁴ Bundy, *Danger and Survival*, p. 88.

⁸⁵ According to Bundy, the method he used for writing this book was mainly that of direct quotation; the principal witness being Mr. Acheson himself. Bundy stated that "Acheson is a good witness and that history is far more than the public statements of public officials... Obviously the public statements of Secretary Acheson cannot tell us all of what he is and does;... Mr. Acheson's public statements do not tell us all of what he is, but they make fairly plain a number of things he is not and they do the same major job for American foreign policy... I think that Mr. Acheson's actions have been very clearly and strongly anti-Communist, and that they have been governed at each stage, by his own honest convictions and by the facts." McGeorge Bundy, *The Pattern of Responsibility: From the Records of Dean Acheson* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1952), pp. v-vi.

⁸⁶ Bundy quotes Acheson: "Communism as a doctrine is fatal to a free society and to human rights and fundamental freedoms. Communism as an aggressive actor in world conquest is fatal to independent governments and to free peoples... the times call for a total diplomacy equal to the task of defense against Soviet expansion and to the task of building the kind of world in which our way of life can flourish." Bundy, *The Pattern of Responsibility: From the Records of Dean Acheson*, pp. 20-23.

"Acheson picked up most strongly on what had been Stimson's central concern: the political need to address the Russians soon and directly." Bundy, *Danger and Survival*, p. 141.

⁸⁷ "Faculty of Arts and Sciences-Memorial Minute: Mc George Bundy", *Harvard University Gazette* (September 19, 1996). Available from <<http://www.news.harvard.edu/gazette/2001/02.01/13-bundy.html>>.

Bundy stated in his introduction to *The Pattern of Responsibility*, "that "there was room for a book whose evidence might set the more irresponsible attacks in a perspective of fact while providing Mr. Acheson's own answers on arguable matter.... There is one particular clarification... this record may help to provide. It is a peculiarity of the criticism leveled at Mr. Acheson that... is contradictory. A particular example of this phenomenon comes in the conflict between the opinions of those who think him too soft and those who think him too hard. From one side we are told that he is an appeaser and a friend of the Reds, while from the other we hear that he has become a prisoner of his critics and is thus a tool of blind reaction.... I think that Mr. Acheson's actions have been clearly and strongly anti-Communist, and that they have been governed... by his own honest convictions, and by the facts... the 'get Acheson' drive; is to cast discredit upon the Secretary of State of the United States. This man is not trying to get rid of known Communists in the State Department; he is hoping against hope that he will find some." Bundy, *The Pattern of Responsibility*, p. vi.

In the end, Bundy concluded that "it seems possible that the striking single phenomenon about [my] tenure as Secretary of State may be the... disparity between what [I have] accomplished and the opinion in which [I have] been held by a large number of his countrymen." *Ibid.*, p. 291.

⁸⁸ "...Acheson repudiates isolationism, appeasement, and preventive war, clearly and repeatedly. Instead he argued a fourth line of policy... Resist communism, and build 'situations of strength,' work for an eventual settlement without war, accepting the fact that the course ahead is long, hard, and dangerous;

and stick to our own ideals.” Ibid., pp. 25–26. Bundy also agreed with Acheson that “The times call for a total diplomacy equal to the task of defense against Soviet expansion and to the task of building the kind of world in which our way of life can flourish.” Address at the University of California, Berkeley, California, March 16, 1950 (Bulletin, XXII, p. 478) in Bundy, *The Pattern of Responsibility*, p. 23.

⁸⁹ “I do not think the State Department acted wisely in its demarche toward German rearmament in the fall of 1950,” Bundy, *The Pattern of Responsibility*, p. viii.

⁹⁰ He advocated employing “certain methods of political and psychological pressure to weaken Soviet totalitarianism.” Kai Bird, *Color of Truth*, p. 112.

⁹¹ The interim committee was established “to study and report on the matter of temporary war time controls and publicity and to make recommendations on post war research development...the Committee agreed that a Scientific Panel should be established to advise the Committee not only on technical matters, but also on any other phase of the subject on which the Panel might care to express its views. Membership of the scientific panel was: Drs. Compton, Lawrence. Oppenheimer, and Fermi. Available from *Hiroshima and Nagasaki Documents*, NF Archive Main Page, <<http://www.trumanlibrary.org/>>.

⁹² Peter Goodchild, *J. Robert Oppenheimer: Shatterer of Worlds* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1981), pp. 170–172.

⁹³ McGeorge Bundy, “Early thoughts on Controlling the Nuclear Arms Race”, was later published in, *International Security* 7:2 (Fall 1982): 3–27.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 6.

⁹⁵ “...In recent years, American policy has been heavily preoccupied with the Soviet danger and most of our actions have been responses to Soviet actions and threats.” “In one sense, of course, the whole contest in weapons is primarily a result of Soviet behavior, but it is important to conduct this contest on terms that preserve our own freedom of action and give proper weight to the transcendent dangers of the weapons themselves...” Ibid., p. 16–17.

⁹⁶ Kai Bird, *Color of Truth*, p. 115.

⁹⁷ Ibid., pp. 19–20.

Oppenheimer also sees candor as an important reform “We do not operate well when the important facts, the essential conditions, which limit and determine our choices are unknown. We do not operate well when they are known, in secrecy and in fear; only to a few men...the political vitality of our country largely derives from two sources. One is the interplay, the conflict of opinion and debate, in many diverse and complex agencies, legislative and executive, which contribute to the making of policy. The other is a public opinion which is based on confidence that it knows the truth.” J. Robert Oppenheimer, “Atomic Weapons and American Policy,” *Foreign Affairs* 31:4 (July 1953): 530–531.

⁹⁸ Bundy, *Early Thoughts*, p. 4.

⁹⁹ Oppenheimer, “Atomic Weapons and American Policy”, pp. 534–535. Bundy is like-minded when he states “one path toward a lawful community and a path with urgent relevance to armaments is of course the notion of *international arms regulation*.” Interestingly, Bundy also credits Henry Stimson with proposing arms control. “What Stimson urged was a major effort, led by the president, to work out directly with the Soviet Union and with Great Britain a three power covenant “to control and limit the use of the atomic bomb as an instrument of war.... Stimson had come slowly to his September conclusions...in the month after Hiroshima the old gentleman came to a very different view. He had time to think...granting all that could be said about the wickedness of Russia, was it not perhaps true that the

atom itself, not the Russians, was the central problem? Could civilization survive with atomic energy uncontrolled?" Bundy, *Danger and Survival*, pp. 136–137.

¹⁰⁰ What I remember most about the Bundy interview at Harvard was his “poker” face that did not show expression. It was not passive, but more as if you could read anything you wanted into his thoughts without ever knowing what he was thinking. He personified the quintessential Harvard male politician: strong, inexpressive, and brilliant. No matter what he was thinking or feeling, “His loyalty was to the president and to our nation’s security.” James C. Thomson Jr., “A Memory of McGeorge Bundy,” *New York Times* (September 22, 1996). Available from <<http://www.english.upenn.edu/~afilreis/50s/bundy-obit.html>>.

¹⁰¹ Hillenbrand, *Fragments of Our Time*, p. 212.

¹⁰² Bundy had a most intricate and involved association with the CIA and the use of psychological warfare and covert action as a way to fight the Russians, rather than nuclear war. Starting with Ultra and then the “interlocking relationship between academia and government intelligence agencies” when Bundy was a Harvard Dean (Kai Bird, *Color of Truth*, p.138), he knew well the influence of the intelligence agency in Public Policy and Decision Making. McGeorge Bundy once said in relation to the CIA “everyone agrees your analysts are the only honest guys in town, and we need to know the truth.” Ronald Kessler, *Inside the CIA* (New York: Pocket Books, 1992), p. 107.

“In reaffirming his support for covert operations, (after the Bay of Pigs fiasco) Kennedy sought to ensure that in the future he would be better advised, and so he established bureaucratic machinery strongly reminiscent of that which Eisenhower had used...he revived the president’s Board of Consultants on Foreign Intelligence Activities...Also under review in the...aftermath of the Bay of Pigs were the bureaucratic provisions for authorization, planning, and circuit breaking in relation to covert operations...The special group continued to operate, consisting in the fall of 1961 of Maxwell Taylor, McGeorge Bundy...and of course the director of the central intelligence...

“Counterinsurgency and...clandestine counterrevolutionary activity...seemed the proper course for Americans, whose horror of nuclear war and distaste for draft-based wars complemented the attitudes of the Russians” (as evidenced in particular by the Khrushchev speech delivered in December 1960.)” Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, *The CIA and American Democracy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), pp. 119–131.

¹⁰³ “Kennedy revamped the machinery of U. S. foreign policy. Contemptuous of the State Department...he reportedly fantasized about establishing a small, secret office under his personal control to run foreign policy. He contented himself with remodeling the NSC to enhance his personal control. As his special assistant for national security affairs, he chose McGeorge Bundy, and his deputy, Walt Rostow... “The *John F. Kennedy National Security Files*, (University Publications of America, 1995), pp. 2–6. Available from <http://www.lexisnexis.com/academic/guides/area_studies/nsf/nsfjfk.asp#genintro>

The National Security Files were the working files of John F. Kennedy’s special assistant for national security affairs McGeorge Bundy. Documents in these files originated in the offices of Bundy and his assistants, Walt V. Rostow and Carl Kaysen, in the various executive departments and agencies, especially those having to do with foreign affairs and national defense; and in diplomatic and military posts around the world.

¹⁰⁴ Bundy was concerned that Kennedy’s political maneuver for increased civil defense could be misunderstood. He stated the “risk of public misunderstanding was grossly neglected by all of us.” Bundy, *Danger and Survival*, p. 356. “I, [Bundy], believe most people naively feared the use of nuclear weapons when in fact what they really misread was the political use of nuclear weapons for the ‘real thing.’ As

Chairman Khrushchev said in a letter to President Kennedy dated September 29, 1961. ‘They say that you sometimes cast politics out through the door but it climbs back through the window, particularly when the windows are open.’ Charles S. Sampson, (ed.), *Kennedy-Khrushchev Exchanges, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961–1963* (Washington: US Government Printing Office, Department of State, 1996), p. 25.

¹⁰⁵ JFK Kennedy Library. NSF, McGeorge Bundy Correspondence, Chronological File 7/17/1961-7/31/1961, Box 398.

The three major decisions were: military, political, and economic and the long range decisions concerned:

1) Military: After we have decided on an initial request of the Congress, how should the further build up proceed? What kind of force should we be prepared to use if our access is blocked?

2) Political: the substance and tactics of possible later negotiations; the eventual handling of Berlin issue in the UN; and preparations and posture we should adopt vis à vis turmoil in East Germany and Eastern Europe in anticipation of a Berlin crisis.

3) Economic: Vigorous military preparations (and/or economic sanctions) to meet a Berlin crisis will impose a severe burden on the US and US balance of payments. New inter-allied measures will be required to permit equitable sharing of this burden.

¹⁰⁶ “The wall, from its first day to the present, has been protected by nuclear danger... West Berlin’s Mayor, Willy Brandt, whose hate for the wall was immediate, deep, and lasting, saw at once that an unpleasant part of his task was to ‘curb rash reaction’ ; he knew that there must be no explosion of activity that might run out of control.... Ever since August, 1961, it has been clear... that the West will not make a military challenge to Soviet power in place. But nuclear danger really and truly and unpleasantly does prevent military challenge to the Soviet power in place in Europe.” Willy Brandt, *People and Politics: The Years 1960–1975*, J. Maxwell Brownjohn, trans. (Boston: Little Brown, 1978), p. 30 in Bundy, *Danger and Survival* pp. 370-371.

Back Channel communication between Kennedy and Khrushchev before and after the Wall was built indicate an agreement not to use nuclear weapons. See USSR Transcript, “Politics of Transformation: Ideology Does Count for Further Explanation”, B. Gould, *Living in the Question? The Berlin Nuclear Crisis Critical Oral History Project*; (2003). Available from <http://repositories.cdlib.org/iseees/2003_i01-goul>.

“Prior to the Wall being built and soon after the July 25th speech by Kennedy, Bundy, Rostow, and Schlesinger conjecture that Kennedy may have given ‘advance encouragement to Khrushchev.’ What he did, deliberately and after prolonged consideration, was to base his Berlin policy on what mattered most—on what was worth a risk of war to the American government and people and to their principal allies,... [Kennedy] defined the interest to be defended as the continued freedom of West Berlin, and while he was aware that Khrushchev was one of his most important readers, he paid much more attention to the need for Khrushchev to know what he would defend than for Khrushchev not to know what he would not.” Bundy, *Danger and Survival*, p. 368.

¹⁰⁷ Bundy, *Danger and Survival*, p. 359.

¹⁰⁸ Soviet note of November 27, 1958 in *Department of State Bulletin* (January 19, 1959):81–89, in McGeorge Bundy, *Danger and Survival*, p. 360.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 364.

¹¹⁰ Bundy asked. “What chance is there that the result could have been different? The first requirement is that the president should understand the danger, as Truman did not at the time.... My own view is that the

chances would have been much different with Roosevelt or Eisenhower, or Kennedy, each of whom one can imagine reading the fierce short phrases—‘extreme danger to mankind,’ ‘an evil thing considered in any light’—and concluding that he simply would not choose to cross this ghastly Rubicon if he could help it.

“Any of these presidents might have asked himself how to do better and he might then have done at least three things that Truman did not do. First, and most important, he could have insisted upon, and taken part in, a process of inquiry much more searching and serious than the one we have examined...he could have insisted on a search for further alternatives.... A president wanting to hold back would require a position strong enough to satisfy, or at least to contain such forces, and that position would have to be public...” Bundy, *Danger and Survival*, pp. 222–223.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 377–378.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 378.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 379

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 96–97.

¹¹⁵ Bundy, “Fifty Years in the Shadow of the Bomb,” *Nature* 376:6539 (August 3, 1995): 382–384. Also see Bundy, “The Unimpressive Record of Atomic Diplomacy,” pp. 42–54.

¹¹⁶ Bird, *Color of Truth*, p. 97. “By this time he had known for some years of Stimson’s own very early misgiving about atomic weapons.” *Ibid.*, p. 114.

¹¹⁷ McGeorge Bundy, *Danger and Survival*, pp. 92–93.

¹¹⁸ Paul H. Nitze, “Atoms, Strategy and Policy”, *Foreign Affairs* 35:2, (January 1956): 198. “One point he stressed often was that a nuclear war could be kept limited, and even won.” David Callahan, *Dangerous Capabilities: Paul Nitze and the Cold War* (New York: Harper & Roe, 1990), p. 165.

¹¹⁹ Strobe Talbott, *The Master of the Game* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1988), p. 70.

¹²⁰ Janne E. Nolan, *Guardians of the Arsenal The Politics of Nuclear Strategy* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1989), p. 44.

¹²¹ Paul H. Nitze, *Tension Between Opposites: Reflections on the Practice and Theory of Politics* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1993), p. 4.

¹²² James G. Blight and David A. Welch, *On The Brink* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1989), pp. 139–150.

¹²³ This book was published as. David Callahan, *Dangerous Capabilities: Paul Nitze and the Cold War* (New York: Harper & Row, 1990).

¹²⁴ Paul H. Nitze, with Ann M. Smith and Steven I. Rearden, *From Hiroshima to Glasnost: At the Center of Decisions, A Memoir* (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1989).

¹²⁵ Nitze, *Tension Between Opposites*, p. 59.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. xiii.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. xv.

¹²⁸ In 1931 he returned to Harvard as a graduate student in the field of sociology, in search of answers to questions that had emerged over the last ten years for him. He also took courses in philosophy, and constitutional and international law. Nitze was very influenced by the books *The Decline of the West* by Spengler and *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* by John Maynard Keynes.

¹²⁹ There is and much sometimes controversy about Nitze's affinity with Germany. For an excellent discussion of this issue see Zachary Citron, "The Conversion of Paul" in *New Republic* 200:5 (January 30, 1989), and Stanley Hoffman, "Hawk in the Woods," pp. 31–33.

Paul Nitze's wrote in a forward to a recent book by W. R. Smyser, "My family is of German origins on both sides. I learned to speak German before English... We were in Munich when England declared war on Germany.... Germany was also to provide... my entree into the worlds of finance and government. In 1929... I was commissioned by... a Chicago brokerage firm, to go to Germany to report on whether German securities might be a better investment than American securities.

"It was... later, in 1937, that I got my first sight of Adolf Hitler at a... close range, too... he ranted and raved with true passion and hatred. [...] When, in the summer of 1940, the invitation to serve in Washington came from Jim Forrestal,... I did not hesitate to go... and as the war in Europe ended I found myself in Germany again. I managed to locate some of our German relatives... One of the more memorable episodes was interrogating Albert Speer, mastermind of Germany's war production effort... He attributed Germany's defeat to the incompetence, softness and stupidity of the group around Hitler.

"From that point on my association with Germany was to remain principally in the fields of policy, the facts of which are mostly in the public domain from the Marshall Plan, the Berlin Airlift and the creation of NATO all the way to our strategic arms negotiations with the Soviet Union. I still consider the Berlin crisis of 1948 to be the most parlous moment for America, far closer,... to drawing us into conflict with the Soviet Union than the later Cuban missile crisis. Not the least reason for this was that I knew the U.S. was ill prepared militarily for war... I always placed greater emphasis on the importance of German-American relations than I did on intra-European cooperation... as long as the Cold War lasted it was logical for America to cultivate the closest of ties with Germany and for Germany to contribute to the Western alliance. And so it did, thanks initially to Adenauer's leadership and our own persuasive arguments, much to the frustration of Moscow." R. Smyser, *From Yalta to Berlin: The Cold War Struggle Over Germany* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), pp. xiiv–xv.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

¹³¹ Talbott, *Master of the Game*, p. 31.

¹³² *United States Strategic Bombing Survey Summary Report (Pacific War)*, (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1946), p. 3.

¹³³ This assignment brought Nitze his closest encounter with the devastation of war. "In order that we might become more familiar with the problems of strategic bombing, General Anderson suggested that I spend some time at a divisional base where actual operations were planned and executed..." Nitze, *Hiroshima to Glasnost*, p. 30.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 34–35.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

¹³⁶ "On August 15, 1945, President Truman appointed a distinguished group to conduct a study of the effects of all types of air attacks in the war against Japan. The United States Strategic Bombing Survey was modeled after the commission that Roosevelt had established in 1944 to examine the bombing of Germany..." "Japan's Struggle to End the War United States Strategic Bombing Survey" in Barton J. Bernstein, *The Atomic Bomb: The Critical Issues* (Brown and Company: 1976), p. 52.

¹³⁷ Nitze's view differed from that of the general public whose reaction after Hiroshima and Nagasaki had been that the destructiveness of atomic weapons was absolute and immeasurable. "...newspapers in the United States were filled with speculation, some of it proclaiming the atomic bomb to be of limitless

power—the ultimate weapon....” Nitze, *Hiroshima to Glasnost*, p. 42.

“...Nitze looked closely at the damage done by the first A-bomb. After what he had seen in Europe, it was nothing spectacular...atomic bombing did not appear decisive.” Callahan, *Dangerous Capabilities*, p. 50.

In an article by Gregg Herken, he reports that “Nitze found in the destruction a subtle and little-appreciated tribute to the indomitability of the human spirit. He dissented “from the common, popular view” of the bomb: “that it was an absolute weapon and this changed everything”...Nitze answer to his own question portrayed the bomb neither as world-ending or even as necessarily precluding victory in such a war...How far out of step was his own thinking with the public mood early in 1946, when he tried to convince New York’s Robert Moses that new buildings going up in the city should be equipped with civil defense shelters.” Gregg Herken, “The Great Foreign Policy Fight,” *American Heritage* 37:3 (April/ May, 1986): 68–69.

¹³⁸ Nitze, *From Hiroshima to Glasnost*, pp. 42–43.

Nitze also “...thought that we had to take into account “the possibility that our enemies would have weapons as powerful and as destructive as our own. I became convinced...that any postwar reorganization of the armed forces should include provisions for...a vigorous research and development program...an...improved system of intelligence...to avoid a repetition of the Pearl Harbor disaster; and closer coordination of the armed forces under an integrated department of defense oriented toward weapons systems based upon modern technology...Under it there would be three services, each with precisely defined missions.” *Ibid.*, p. 43.

Nitze recommended the reorganization of the Departments of Navy, Army, and Strategic Forces.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 24–30.

¹⁴⁰ Its report, issued in July 1946, stressed that Japan was near surrender before the atomic attacks and that Japan would have surrendered soon even without the nuclear bombings. The key conclusion was that air superiority alone could have produced unconditional surrender and did obviate the “need for invasion.” Bernstein, *The Atomic Bomb The Critical Issues*, p. 52.

In Nitze’s own words, “even without the attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it seemed highly unlikely, given what we found to have been the mood of the Japanese government, that a U.S. invasion of the islands would have been necessary...” Nitze, *Hiroshima to Glasnost*, pp. 44–45.

¹⁴¹ At Harvard, he encountered his first study of Communism. “One of his chief tutors was a White Russian émigré Aleksandr Kerenski.” He agreed with...Spengler’s argument that authoritarianism posed a mortal threat to the western democracies...and prophesied that the day of the west might already be coming to an end...and preached an alarming message of impending doom. Two other professors...Robert Merton and George Sawyer Pettee...influenced Nitze. Merton with his ideas about Marxism-Leninism and Pettee, a political thinker who believed that “revolutionary states were predicated on repression and were inherently aggressive. He saw close parallel’s between Hitler’s Germany and Stalin’s Russia.” Callahan, *Dangerous Capabilities*, p. 30.

¹⁴² See Paul Nitze, “Political Aspects of a National Strategy” (1960) in Kenneth W. Thompson and Steven L. Rearden, eds., *Paul H. Nitze on National Security and Arms Control* (New York: University Press of America, 1990), pp. 65–68 for his views on Soviet Aims and ambitions.

As a Soviet expert Talbott found “Nitze’s relationship to the Soviet Union and his fear of Soviet aggression and Communist expansionism very perplexing, although it follows the line of many in Washington and the Pentagon in the early 1940s. He was certainly not an expert in Soviet affairs and did not visit

Moscow until 1955.” Talbot, *Master of the Game*, p. 31. In his memoirs Nitze claims to have first visited the Soviet Union by mistake in 1929. Nitze, *Hiroshima to Glasnost*, p. xvi.

¹⁴³ Nitze, *Dangerous Capabilities*, p. 51. This was perhaps the only time they agreed on Soviet “thinking.” “By the end of the Second World War and for some forty years thereafter Kennan and Nitze would be combatants in a remarkable cold war of their own.” Herken, “The Great Foreign Policy Fight”, p.66.

¹⁴⁴ Paul H. Nitze, “America: An Honest Broker” *Foreign Affairs* Fall, 1990: 1.

¹⁴⁵ There are many interpretations of Stalin’s election eve speech delivered on February 9 1946.

“Stalin contended that the division of the capitalist world into two hostile blocs and ensuing imperialist wars...was still inevitable...he implied that a new war, like the two World Wars would begin as a war between two major hostile imperialist camps...And it would spare the USSR for fifteen to twenty years, because he envisaged the USSR tripling its prewar output of iron and steel and doubling its output of oil and coal within three or more five year plans as finally making the USSR safe against ‘any contingency.’ Robert H. McNeal, ed., *Resolutions and decision of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), pp. 234–235.

“Stalin’s Delphic message of February 9, 1946, clearly indicated that a third world war was ultimately inevitable—a war between the US and Great Britain. But in 1946 hardly anyone outside the Soviet Union read it that way...Indeed, many foreign commentators, including certain Communist leaders, believed that Stalin had...declared the inevitability of a US-Soviet war, the precise opposite” of what was stated. “Stalin, the Politburo, and the Onset of the Cold War, 1945–1946,” *Carl Beck Papers* (Pittsburgh: Center for Russian and East European Studies, 1988), p. 17.

Another interpretation is noted by James Forrestal in his diaries that in his conversations with Justice William Douglas, “I asked him if he had read Stalin’s speech and if he had what was his impression. He said, the speech is a ‘...Declaration of World War III.’” Walter Mills, ed., *The Forrestal Diaries* (New York: Viking Press, 1951), p. 134.

¹⁴⁶ “The puzzlement and uncertainty over the real meaning of the speech delivered by Stalin and his lieutenants prompted the U.S. Department of State to request that George F. Kennan...send Washington an ‘interpretive analysis’... Kennan’s response was the Long Telegram written a few weeks after Stalin’s speech in 1946...Since no country intended armed intervention against the USSR, Kennan...wrote, Moscow’s groundless fears of ‘capitalist encirclement’ demonstrated that the Stalin line was not based on an objective evaluation of the outside world. The Kremlin’s outlook was at bottom a ‘neurotic view of world affairs,’ a view of reality distorted by an instinctive sense of insecurity, inferiority, and downright ignorance compounded by the fact that the Soviet Government was ‘actually a conspiracy within a conspiracy.’ Albert Resis, “Stalin, the Politburo, and the Onset of the Cold War, 1945–1946,” *Carl Beck Papers* (Pittsburgh: Center for Russian and East European Studies, 1988), pp. 17–18.

¹⁴⁷ Katherine A. S. Sibley, *The Cold War* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1998), p. 133.

¹⁴⁸ “Iron Curtain Speech, Winston Churchill, March 5, 1946” in Sibley, *Cold War*, pp. 136–137.

¹⁴⁹ According to Nitze, in 1947 “there was a consensus in Washington that the Soviet threat came primarily from political intrigues and subversion. A major opportunity for such tactics to succeed would spring from spreading economic disarray in Western Europe...I did not...see much of a threat of military action by the USSR against Western Europe...My worry was with the general worldwide” economy.” Nitze, *Hiroshima to Glasnost*, p. 48.

¹⁵⁰ The immediate objective of the Truman Doctrine was to send US aid to anti-Communist forces in Greece and Turkey, but it was later expanded to justify support for any nation that the US government

believed “was threatened by Communism during the Cold War” period.

¹⁵¹ “In March 1947, Marshall, then Secretary of State returned from an...unproductive meeting of foreign ministers in Moscow. [...] He asked Acheson to have a Policy Planning Staff created that would concentrate on analyzing and making recommendations on upcoming strategic issues,...concerning the USSR. [...] Acheson selected George....and George asked that I serve as his deputy, but Acheson turned his proposal down on the grounds that my background was that of a Wall Street entrepreneur...”Nitze, *Tensions between opposites*, p. 121.

¹⁵² “It was a penetrating analysis of the nature of the Marxist/Leninist doctrine, its transformation into Stalinism, the actions to be expected from such a regime, and the gains it was making in expanding its power and influence, particularly in Central Europe.... George concluded...that if expansionism, could be contained for a sufficiently long period of time, the Soviet conspiracy would eventually look inward into what was happening within the Soviet Union and address itself to its internal problems rather than pursue further expansion. [...] I was impressed by Kennan’s sensitivity and insight. It seemed evident that he had a deep understanding and love of Russian culture and correctly grasped that Leninist/ Stalinism doctrine and action were as alien and hostile to Russian culture as they were to Western culture as a whole....George Kennan tended to look upon diplomacy as the queen of the policy disciplines.” Nitze, *Tensions between opposites*, pp. 122–123.

¹⁵³ Nitze, *Hiroshima to Glasnost*, p. 51.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

¹⁵⁶ In 1947, Nitze became head of the group in charge of getting the data needed to estimate Europe’s needs. Out of this grew the Marshall Plan, and the significant move to include Germany in this plan meant that the German economy had to be integrated into the rest of Western Europe. The motivation was to avoid political problems in Germany that could arise from the near starvation the people faced.

¹⁵⁷ Nitze considered the Berlin blockade “one of the most serious crises of the postwar period.” Nitze, *Hiroshima to Glasnost*, p. 58.

¹⁵⁸ “State’s early Policy Planning Staff...was put together on a crash basis. On April 29, 1947, Secretary of State Marshall called George Kennan into his office, and asked him to assemble the staff without delay and to develop a set of recommendations for dealing with the crisis in Europe...the Staff could claim credit for...making a central contribution to the Marshall Plan, ‘NSC-68’, a general planning document which served as the basis for our arms build up...” I. M. Destler, *Presidents Bureaucrats and Foreign Policy The Politics of Organization Reform* (New Jersey: Princeton University, 1972), pp. 224–225.

¹⁵⁹ For Kennan the warnings about the Soviets in the Long Telegram and the theory of containment in the X article were written only as a means to political and economic ends, not for military purposes.

When Kennan wrote his Long Telegram and later his X article, “Sources of Soviet Conduct,” he “felt like others that went by the name of ‘Russian experts,’ that our view of the Russian problem, was a view that accepted Russian-Communist attitudes and policies as a danger at the political level, but did not see either a likelihood or a necessity of war and did not regard the military plane as the one on which our response ought to be concentrated...”

Kennan however “could not forget...that our military and to some extent our political planners had adopted for military planning, against my anguished objections, the year 1952 as the probable peak of danger which our preparations should be designed to meet...They did not themselves intend to start a war at that time, but they assumed there would be a real danger of the Russians doing so as soon as their

current program of military preparations was completed...”

They viewed the Soviet leaders as absorbed with the pursuit of something called a “grand design,” a design for the early destruction of American power and for world conquest and this worried Kennan. “The thought of war with Russia was sickening enough just from the standpoint of the slaughter and destruction it would involve even if nuclear weapons, should not be used.” George F. Kennan, *Memoirs, 1925–1950* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1976), pp. 90–94.

“Kennan later insisted that he had meant neither that the means of Soviet expansion would necessarily be military nor that the means of Western containment should be military; rather, in both cases, the arena of competition should be primarily political, and one of the principal means of containing the Soviet Union should be the industrial and economic rebuilding of Europe... For just that reason, Kennan wanted Nitze to be his deputy. in 1947... but Under Secretary of State Acheson, who had so disparaged Nitze’s alarm about the Stalin speech... now blocked his appointment as deputy director of policy planning.” Talbott, *Master of the Game*, pp. 45-46.

“May and June, 1949, Nitze was at Acheson’s side in a... negotiation with Stalin’s foreign minister... Acheson revised his opinion of Nitze and... appointed him to the job of... deputy directory of policy planning. Ibid., p. 50.

¹⁶⁰ Kennan, *Memoirs, 1925–1950*, p. 471.

¹⁶¹ Nitze, *Tension Between Opposites*, p. 125.

¹⁶² Nitze, *Hiroshima to Glasnost*, p. 87.

In summary; “Relations between the United States and the Soviet Union deteriorated... after the war. The failure to reach an agreement to place atomic energy under international control, the takeover of Czechoslovakia, the Berlin blockade, the victory of Mao Tse-tung over Chiang Kai-shek on the Chinese mainland, the detection of detonation of... the first Soviet atomic bomb, in late August, 1949, and the arrest of Klaus Fuchs in early January 1950 created an atmosphere that led Truman to order the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) to go full speed ahead with the development of a hydrogen bomb, against the recommendation of the General Advisory Committee (GAC). Schweber.” *In the Shadow of the Bomb*, p. 156.

¹⁶³ Nitze, *Hiroshima to Glasnost*, p. 88.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 88.

¹⁶⁵ Nitze, *Hiroshima to Glasnost*, p. 89. Also see, Martin Zuberi, “The Missed Opportunity to Stop the H-Bomb,” *Strategic Analysis* XXIII:2 (May 1999), available from <<http://www.ciaonet.org/olj/sa/sa99zum02.html>>.

¹⁶⁶ Callahan, *Dangerous Capabilities*, p. 73.

¹⁶⁷ Silvan .S. Schweber, *In the Shadow of the Bomb*, p. 158.

¹⁶⁸ Nitze, *Hiroshima to Glasnost*, p. 90.

¹⁶⁹ Nitze, *Hiroshima to Glasnost*, p. 91.

Nitze’s rationale: “The Russians had tested their first atomic weapon in the late summer of 1949 and since then have held a number of tests which included nuclear weapons of large size. The British, too, have tested atomic weapons, and many other countries have undertaken substantial atomic programs... The end of atomic monopoly had serious implications for American security.” Nitze, *U.S. Foreign Policy, 1945–1955*, p. 27.

¹⁷⁰ Nitze, *Hiroshima to Glasnost*, pp. 91-92.

“Nitze agreed with Truman’s decision chiefly because [he knew Truman] had no way of knowing what the Soviets might do. In fact, what many of us suspected at the time was true—it did not take a demonstration by the United States to convince the Soviets that the H-bomb might be feasible. What we did not know was that Stalin actually had given the go-ahead for the Soviet H-bomb around November 1, 1949, a full three months before Truman made his decision.” Ibid., p. 91.

For another version of the decision making process see McGeorge Bundy, “The Missed Chance to Stop the H-Bomb.” Available from <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/article-preview?article_id=6599>, Bundy states that the President “made his decision before there was a debate.”

¹⁷¹ “...in late 1949...Nitze established himself, in the eyes of the secretary of state and the President, as a hard-headed realist. He “replaced Kennan not just as director of Policy Planning but as a man of the hour.” Talbott, *Master of the Game*, p. 53.

Nitze and Kennan since the Long Telegram in 1947, had disagreed about the interpretation projected onto Soviet intentions and capabilities. “Kennan did not believe that the Soviet leadership had any real intention of risking war with the United States. Even their probing actions...were likely to remain at a sub-military level. Nitze and the others placed greater weight on Russia’s potential military capabilities... [they operated under the belief system that] Even if the Soviet Union had no intention of risking all-out war, it still confronted the United States with the challenge of limited and indirect aggression.

[As a diplomat], “Kennan feared that too much emphasis on the military side would damage the possibilities of a diplomatic endings of the Cold War... Acheson did not agree that the requirements of modern diplomacy could ignore the military and strategic dimension...

“In the end Kennan’s positions were brushed aside and the final recommendations reflected Acheson and Nitze’s view that if the United States was to achieve a balance between commitments and capabilities a much larger military appropriation would be needed... These recommendations were accepted by the President as the basis for discussion and went on the agenda of the NSC as NSC Paper No. 68, [the basis for American foreign policy in the Cold War years of 1953–1971 and] there was practically no expectation that the spending levels envisioned would ever be approved.” David S. McLellan, *Dean Acheson: The State Department Years* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1976), pp. 270–272.

An excellent discussion of Nitze views on the Soviet stance towards nuclear capability within their own country can be found in McLellan’s book p. 271 and for Kennan’s beliefs see Zuberi. “The Missed Opportunity to Stop the H-Bomb,” Available from <<http://www.ciaonet.org/olj/sa/sa99zum02.html>>.

¹⁷² See Paul Y. Hammond, “NSC 68: Prologue to Rearmament” in Warner R. Schilling, Paul Y. Hammond, and Glenn Snyder, *Strategy, Politics, and Defense Budgets* (Columbia University Press, 1962), pp. 267–378, available from <<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/hammond.htm>>; and Paul Nitze, “Grand Strategy Then and Now: NSC-68 and Its Lessons for the Future,” *Strategic Review* (Winter 1994).

¹⁷³ Thompson and Reardon, *Paul H. Nitze on National Security and Arms Control*, pp. 33–34

¹⁷⁴ Nitze, *Tensions Between Opposites*, p. 5.

¹⁷⁵ Nitze, *Hiroshima to Glasnost*, p. 166.

“By late 1957 our intelligence estimates predicted a Soviet production potential of one hundred ICBMs by 1960. We who were working on the Gaither Committee studies,... were not informed of this new intelligence and updates estimate. Nitze was brought in as an adviser to the committee in the summer of

1957...” Ibid., p. 167.

¹⁷⁶ Talbott, *Master of the Game*, p. 67.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 67. “The report stressed that the United States either had to respond immediately to the expanding Soviet military capabilities or face potentially grave consequences. The Gaither committee recommended that the United States reduce the vulnerability of its strategic forces, strengthen and enlarge its nuclear ballistic missile capabilities, improve the ability of the armed forces to wage limited military operations, reorganize the Department of Defense, and construct fallout shelters to protect the civilian population...costing \$44.2 billion, spread between 1959 and 1963.” David L. Snead, *The Gaither Committee, Eisenhower, and the Cold War* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1999), p. 2.

In addition to Civil Defense we “urged that the United States improve its early warning network, train its SAC bomber crews....accelerate our missile production program, and phase in hardened bases for our ICBM’s...Eisenhower...believed that nuclear war was ‘unthinkable’ and...the effort to achieve a reliable deterrent capability was not urgent...” Ibid., p. 168.

¹⁷⁸ Nitze, *Hiroshima to Glasnost*, p. 168.

¹⁷⁹ Nitze, *Tensions Between Opposites*, pp. 145–146.

¹⁸⁰ Thompson and Reardon, *Paul H. Nitze on National Security*, p. 63.

¹⁸¹ Nitze, *Hiroshima to Glasnost*, p. 195.

In the spring of 1960 Nitze had delivered a lecture “Political Aspects of a National Strategy” to the Air War College, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. This lecture was representative of Nitze’s thinking at the time and reflects “the influence his ideas exercised not only on Kennedy’s campaign positions but also on his policies later as president.” Thompson and Reardon, *Paul H. Nitze on National Security*, pp. 63–76. The report identified the “principal national security issues”:

- 1) The most urgent national security issue was the defense policy decision as to whether we should attempt to achieve a politically meaningful “win” capability in general nuclear war, or to settle for the more modest goal of being able to deny the Soviets such a capability through assuring ourselves secure retaliatory capability;
- 2) The creation of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency later mandated by the Congress in 1961; and the issue of the development of a common position on Berlin with the British, the French, and the West Germans, including a plan to cover the contingency of a renewal of a blockade.

¹⁸² Callahan, *Dangerous Capabilities*, p. 214.

“Straddled between the overlapping jurisdictions of the State Department, NSC, and the Defense Department, the Office of International Security Affairs under seven presidents reflected the institutional confusion surrounding the administration of foreign and national security policy.” Gregory Piller, “DOD’s Office of International Security Affairs: The Brief Ascendance of an Advisory System,” *Political Science Quarterly* 98:1 (Spring 1983): 60.

“By the end of 1952, ISA was officially administrating the Mutual Defense Assistance Program and NATO affairs, coordinating defense contracts with State and the NSC, and advising the secretary on politico-military issues.” Thomas J. Bigley, “The Office of International Security Affairs”, *United States Naval Institute Proceedings* 92 (1966): 61–72 in Piller, *DOD’s Office of International Security Affairs*, p. 60.

“When ISA was upgraded [The post of Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, was established in 1953] one concern was whether the Joint Chiefs could provide the secretary of defense with advice on military aspects of political issues, thereby obviating the need for a civilian intermediary like ISA. . . .ISA’s capacity to coordinate inter-service opinion was undermined by Eisenhower’s defense secretaries. The president’s background made him an obvious authority on military issues. . . . Eisenhower’s background made him his own secretary of defense. . . .Under Eisenhower ISA was caught in an NSC policy process that was unproductive, inflexible, distant from the real sources of policy. . . .the Eisenhower ISA neither provided analysis independent of the Joint Chiefs, as it would under Kennedy and Johnson, nor coordinated the positions of the professional military services.” Ibid.,p. 61–62.

¹⁸³ “How Kennedy Plans to Run Defense and Foreign Policy”, *U.S. News and World Report* (9 January 1961): 38–39.

¹⁸⁴ Michael E. Latham, *Modernization as Ideology American Social Science and Nation Building in the Kennedy Era* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

“By the time Kennedy had assumed the presidency, U.S.-Soviet relations had already deteriorated drastically. The main events leading to this deterioration were Khrushchev’s 1958 ultimatum on Berlin and the breakdown of the 1960 Paris summit over the violation of Soviet air space by an American U-2 spy plane. The cold war was a central issue in the U.S. presidential campaign of 1960, with each candidate promising to wage it more effectively than the other. During the first seven months of the Kennedy administration, tensions increased markedly. Khrushchev’s January 1961 speech avowing Soviet support for wars of national liberation alarmed the new and insecure administration in Washington.” “The John F. Kennedy National Security Files: U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe 1961-1963” (University Publications of America, 1996. Available from <http://www.lexisnexus.com/academic/guides/area_studies/nsf/jfkussr.asp>.

According to Callahan, “In this same speech on January 6, 1961, where [Khrushchev declared his war of liberations] Khrushchev declared his intention to remove the western presence from Berlin.” Callahan, *Dangerous Capabilities*, p. 215.

¹⁸⁵ Kenneth W. Thompson and Steven L. Rearden eds., *Paul H. Nitze on Foreign Policy*, Vol. XIII (Washington DC: University Press of America, 1989), p. 189.

¹⁸⁶ Callahan, *Dangerous Capabilities*, pp. 216–217.

¹⁸⁷ Nitze, *Hiroshima to Glasnost*, p. 197.

¹⁸⁸ Callahan, *Dangerous Capabilities*, p. 218.

¹⁸⁹ “Report by Dean Acheson, Washington, June 28, 1961,” in *Foreign Relations of the United States, Berlin Crisis, 1961–1962*, Vol. XIV (1961–1963), pp. 138–159.

¹⁹⁰ Callahan, *Dangerous Capabilities*, pp. 217–218.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., p. 219.

¹⁹² Benina B. Gould, “From the Outside In: The Human Side of Crisis Management”, in B. Gould and Donna H. DeMuth, *The Global Family Therapist* (New York: Allyn and Bacon, 1994), pp. 210–228.

¹⁹³ Callahan, *Dangerous Capabilities*, p. 221. Also see Bundy in this Part II, for a more “political interpretation of the nuclear threat in this situation.”

¹⁹⁴ Richard Reeves, *President Kennedy Profile of Power* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993), pp. 196–199. Nitze also did not agree with the president and believed that the call to increased reserve troops

would weaken our deterrence policy.

¹⁹⁵ Callahan, *Dangerous Capabilities*, p. 223.

¹⁹⁶ Nitze, *From Hiroshima to Glasnost*, pp. 199–200.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 200.

¹⁹⁸ Callahan, *Dangerous Capabilities*, p. 224. Also, see the Rand Transcript in Part I of this Working Paper, for further discussion of the impossibility of starting a nuclear war no matter what the hardliners and softliners did or said.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 224–225. “...Rowen and a few others put together a detailed memorandum explaining how a first strike would be executed and arguing that it was doable. Nitze was appalled.” *Ibid.*, p. 226.

²⁰⁰ Nitze, *From Hiroshima to Glasnost*, p. 200.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 197.

“During the Eisenhower administration...United States nuclear strategy was dominated by the concept of massive retaliation to a Soviet attack here or abroad by attacking a combination of military, urban-industrial, and government control targets in one great spasm. This strategy was incorporated in NATO’s strategic concept (MC14/2 adopted by the North Atlantic Council in May, 1957) which called for a massive nuclear response to any sustained Soviet attack, whether or not the Soviets used similar weapons.” *Ibid.*, p.195.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 201–202.

²⁰³ Nitze, “Atoms, Strategy and Policy”, *Foreign Affairs* 35:2 (January 1956): 187–198.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 202.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 202.

²⁰⁶ Nitze, *Hiroshima to Glasnost*, p. 203.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 203.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 203.

²⁰⁹ Nitze, *Hiroshima to Glasnost*, pp. 203–204.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 226 One of the most interesting points to be made here is that although Nitze talked about nuclear weapons in public, “Berlin contingency plans,” the issue of nuclear action was seldom discussed in detail among Nitze’s Berlin staff.

²¹¹ Nitze, *From Hiroshima to Glasnost*, pp. 204–205.

²¹² Callahan, *Dangerous Capabilities*, p. 230.

²¹³ Talbot, *Master of the Game*, pp. 70–71.

²¹⁴ Paul Nitze, “Objectives of Arms Control,” *Survival* XXVII:3 (May/June 1985): 98–100.

²¹⁵ Talbot, *Master of the Game*, p. 81.

²¹⁶ Nitze, “Objectives of Arms Control,” p. 100.

²¹⁷ “Paul Nitze Succumbs to ‘Nuclear Retirement Syndrome.’” Jerry W. Sanders, *Peddlers of Crisis: the Committee on the Present Danger and the Politics of Containment*, (Boston: South End Press, 1983), p.

10. Available from <<http://www.no-nukes.org/nukewatch/winter00/w00nitze.html>>.

²¹⁸ Nitze, *Tensions Between Opposites*, p. 6.

²¹⁹ Paul H. Nitze, "Is it Time to Junk Our Nukes?" *Washington Quarterly* 20:3 (Summer 1997): 97–101.

²²⁰ This phrase was developed by Robert J. Lifton, "Imagining the Real Beyond the Nuclear End" in *The Long Darkness* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), p. 97. "It is a bewildering dilemma that nuclearism draws both the proponents and the opponents. Very often one discerns what Lifton calls the "retirement syndrome": "One has to assume psychologically that the man-weapons constellation is so pervasive while a person is in office, the pattern of nuclearism so dominant, that the world is seen through a prism of nuclear weapons, and therefore nuclear weapons-centered policies are promulgated. At the movement of retirement, however, a person can take a step back and, prodded by conscience, voice doubts that were previously suppressed..." General Mirza Aslam Beg, "Nuclearization of South Asia: Rational Diffusion of Holocaust," available at <<http://www.friends.org.pk/Beg/nuclearization%20of%20south%20asia.htm>>.