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14 May 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting with Chancellor Adenauer

1. During my recent trip to Europe I met Chancellor Adenauer on the 6th of May and talked with him for over an hour. He appeared to be in good health and good spirits. We did not discuss his retirement or internal German politics.

2. I opened by telling the Chancellor that Cuba, concerning which we had briefed him a few months ago, remained a serious problem to the U.S. because of the continued presence of Soviet forces and the capability of the Soviets to use Cuba as a base to infiltrate the rest of Latin America.

3. Adenauer noted that the President had told him that Cuba was most dangerous because of the access it provided into Latin America. The Chancellor said that he had told Secretary Rusk last summer that many Germans had good contacts in Latin American countries and that many Latin American leaders came to visit the Chancellor from time to time. Adenauer said he would be glad to let the U.S. know about these contacts and to use them to frustrate Castro's efforts if the U.S. wishes. He had mentioned this previously but had received no response from the State Department.

4. The Chancellor also stated that there is a Belgian (Vannistendael), who is leader of the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions. He has been working closely with labor unions in Latin America but has received no encouragement from the U.S. Presumably American officials are not anxious to sponsor a Catholic trade union movement even though this is obviously the best anti-communist group in Latin America.

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5. Adenauer said the Germans were very concerned about the Italian elections and he said that he would like to speak frankly about this. He thought that the U.S. had treated Fanfani too well when he was in Washington, thus inflating his ego and his hopes. Adenauer doubted Fanfani would be Prime Minister again, but if he was, he would still not be worried about the communists. Other Italian politicians were, in the Chancellor's opinion, also foolish. They thought the Pope would confuse the communists by receiving Adzhubei, whereas it was the non-communist voters who were misled by the Vatican's position. Adenauer said he thought the Pope was an excellent "doctor of souls" but a very poor politician.

6. Adenauer recalled a talk he had had with Khrushchev in 1955. According to the Chancellor, Khrushchev said at that time that Russia faced two serious challenges--one the U.S., the other Communist China. Adenauer was convinced that Khrushchev was already beginning to worry about the Chinese threat as long ago as 1955 and is now worrying a great deal more.

7. Adenauer also noted the weakness of Soviet agriculture and suggested that in the opinion of some Germans who had visited the Soviet Union recently, the Soviets do not have the ability to continue present military programs and simultaneously develop the economy, especially agriculture.

8. The Chancellor said that Khrushchev has been fluctuating as to whether to try to reach agreements with the West so that he could re-arrange his priorities and be better prepared to face the Chinese Communists. For the USSR to come to terms with the West would be a damaging admission of weakness - especially since Khrushchev has always said that the USSR is the greatest power in the world. Therefore, Khrushchev is likely to develop a great deal of tension with the West when he makes his decision to come to terms so as to reduce our demands to the minimum. This might explain the current hardening of the Soviet line.

9. Adenauer then described the development of close relationships between Germany and France, which he said he considered justified in view of the special American relationship with the British. He said the basic German assumption was that political integration of Europe depended on French-German cooperation. He said the present draft treaty was actually drawn up in September 1962, long before the UK-French flareup in January 1963.

10. When Macmillan visited de Gaulle before going to Nassau, the British Prime Minister complained that he was having trouble with his nuclear weapons systems, presumably referring to the Skybolt. De Gaulle suggested that the British make available for European defense all of the British "achievements" in the nuclear weapons field. According to de Gaulle, Macmillan did not respond but went immediately to Nassau and made the Polaris deal, which de Gaulle (and Adenauer) felt he must have had in mind when he was talking to de Gaulle. It was anger over this behavior of Macmillan that caused de Gaulle to hold his 14 January press conference torpedoing the British.

11. Adenauer said that the angry press conference was clearly a mistake and that he told de Gaulle in Paris that the six nations in the European common market should request a study and report after tempers had cooled to save face for everyone. However, instead of the six nations proceeding with a study, it developed that the six nations, plus Britain, recommended the study. De Gaulle instructed Couve to veto this procedure as contrary to his understanding with Adenauer. The Chancellor concluded by saying that nothing in the world could prevent diplomats from doing "stupid" things.

12. Finally, Adenauer said, despite the misunderstandings, he believed France "was not totally negative" on the concept of some kind of collective nuclear force for Europe.

13. When I suggested that Adenauer might influence de Gaulle by the example of the Chancellor's own sound position, Adenauer said simply that it is a very important subject which might very well be discussed between them.

JOHN A. McCONE  
Director