

August 1961

Italian Prime Minister Fanfani's Visit to Moscow, August 1961

Citation:

"Italian Prime Minister Fanfani's Visit to Moscow, August 1961", August 1961, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Translated for CWIHP by Niccolo Petrelli.
<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/113361>

Summary:

A series of talks between Fanfani and Khrushchev in Moscow in early August 1961. The focus of the talks is on the ongoing Berlin Crisis and "the German question." Other topics include relations between Italy and the Soviet Union, East/West tensions, and nuclear disarmament.

Original Language:

Italian

Contents:

Translation - English

Fanfani and Segni's Visit to Moscow (August 1961)

KHRUSHCHEV: Mr. President, Minister of Foreign Affairs, members of the delegation, please let me welcome you once again. We are very pleased that you accepted our invitation and you came to Moscow. Of course we do not want to make you supporters of communism. During your stay in our country you will have the opportunity to know us better, to see how we live and therefore you will learn to understand us better, which in turn will allow you to strengthen your friendship with us or by contrast to better fight against us. In both cases this visit will prove helpful to you. We usually allow our guests to speak first, Mr. President of the Council please.

FANFANI: I would like to thank you once again for your invitation and for your welcome. In my speech at the airport I was sincerely willing to demonstrate the spirit with which we welcomed your kind invitation. We started from the principle that men can understand each other and we see in every man someone with whom it is possible to reach an understanding. The recent achievements of science and technology have made the world that we inhabit such a small place that only fools could think of staying isolated from other people.

KHRUSHCHEV: That is right, only fools can think this way, and yet there are still some who think so.

FANFANI: I believe that the increasing high level contacts between statesmen ultimately lead to a lower risk of war. All those who, like me, are in their fifties remember that in every decade of our lives we talked about this or that war. The best thing we can think of is to leave our children a better world than the one our fathers left us. In light of this purpose - let me point it out once again - we accepted your kind invitation to Moscow for an exchange of views on the international situation and on the relations between our countries. Let me stress that we do not have any illusion about being decisive for the maintenance of peace. However, we are a fairly large and populous country with an important geographical position, a country closely tied to its allies, so that we too can give our contribution to the maintenance of peace. You said that you usually allow your guests to speak first. We highly appreciate your courtesy, but it appears clear that as leaders of two states with a different weight in world affairs, we also have different responsibilities. Therefore perhaps it would be more appropriate to hear first what Mr. Khrushchev thinks about the international situation. I assure you that behind our proposal to let you talk first, there is no ploy or second end. We came here because we feel responsible towards all men and all countries, and although we are not members of the same political community, this does not prevent us to observe the actual situation and to take into account the reality of facts. I must also emphasize that here we represent nothing else than our own interest: no one has sent us to Moscow, we came spontaneously, on the basis of our country's interest.

KHRUSHCHEV: If I understood well you are asking me to speak.

FANFANI: If you agree.

KHRUSHCHEV: With which topic would you like to begin?

FANFANI: Like all men, we are particularly interested in the problems that threaten peace and what should be done to avert a war.

KHRUSHCHEV: One of the most important issues today is the liquidation of the colonial system, that is, if you agree, "the question of questions". A stormy awakening of colonial peoples is taking place and Western statesmen should understand the spirit of our times. Rulers of the past have to show wisdom: they must give up their

colonial possessions, withdraw their troops and grant independence to those people. Until that happens, there will be "fuel" to cause an explosion. You see, right next to you, in Algeria, a conflict is going on from seven years. And then there is Bizerte, Angola, Congo, Cuba and even Latin America where so much fuel is accumulating. Western countries, or as you call it, "countries of the free world" blame communists for the birth of the national liberation movements but for us this is a great honor. When slaves rebel against their masters, it is an honor for us to be considered the "Spartacus" of the situation. Lumumba was accused of being a communist and murdered by Tshombe, now the same Tshombe is in route with the US, Belgium and with all the other colonial rulers, then Tshombe himself is a communist? If Tshombe is a communist then I am an anti-communist.

I am telling you this to show you the contradictions of the West. The West is blinded by fear, and does not want to evaluate objectively our times. It threw its curse at us and it calls communists the men who rebelled against its domains. These people may not even know what communism is but - they say - if the communists are the ones who fight the colonial system, then they are just men and this is an honor for us.

The West has lost the ability to ratiocinate. You see, at the time we had the slaves' revolts communists did not even exist. Even today, when the oppressed rebel against their oppressors, albeit in different social conditions, communists have nothing to do with this. If you really want to fight communism, then free colonial peoples, give them their independence, the right to choose who to follow, you or us. We are not asking for those peoples' freedom in order to send them agitators, we want to give them the chance to autonomously adopt the social model they prefer.

Some people in the West express themselves roughly this way: "Could we reach an agreement with the USSR and the other socialist states in order to maintain the status quo worldwide and to prevent any alteration in the balance of power between socialism and capitalism?" This is unthinkable. If a nation wants to change the situation of its own country it is impossible to interfere with this choice as it is an internal affair of that people.

As an example I will refer to two of our neighbors, Iran and Afghanistan, which are both monarchies. With Afghanistan we have excellent relations, there are no border skirmishes and I am personally on good terms with the King and the First Minister. Our relation with the Shah is different. We gladly welcomed him here and we talked to him. Suddenly a revolution broke out and the Shah, out of fear, looked for shelter in the jaws of the United States, signing an agreement which entails a US intervention in case of external attack or internal subversion. Now, this is understandable in the event of an external attack, but the case of an internal struggle is rather different. For instance, do you think that Mossadeq is a communist? No, he is landowner, but the Americans did not like his policy, so they overthrew him.

Today the Shah barely retains control in his own country not because of the communists, as the Iranian Communist Party is weak. Even the Shah's closest collaborators do not know how to get rid of him; we will not get involved in such matters, but they will definitely chase him away. Is this "the hand of Moscow?" No, it is not the hand of Moscow, it is the hand of time. Iran is dominated by feudal lords and is a poor country, where people have no choice between life and death: they are dying of hunger. The people will fight and you cannot do anything about that. They accuse us of inciting riots but there is no reason to do that because it is their own life that is pushing them to fight. We did the same thing 40 years ago, we made the revolution and we did not do it badly.

Another example: Cuba, Batista was a dictator and a swindler...Cuba has rebelled under the leadership of Fidel Castro. Castro is not a communist, he is the son of a landowner and I told Kennedy: "Your policy will make him a communist". At the time,

we had noble revolutionaries too, as for instance the well-known anarchist Fuerst Kropotkin. For instance, think about the revolt of the Decembrists; they were not communists, they had grown up in aristocratic families, but they thought that we could not continue to live that way and then they fought and thus they knew the prison and the gallows. In those days there were no communists and now we are in another era even though some do not want to understand it. Drunk with power, they do not see the world's changes and they refuse to restore the ill-gotten gains and this is perverse behavior. Human society lives and grows like an organism whose cells change from minute to minute, otherwise death occurs. One has to understand the logic of development and it is important not to be afraid of the new. But if the ruling classes do not want to step aside, then men fight and we sympathize with this struggle, although we do not interfere.

A century ago, when Italy was fighting for unity, one of the best surgeons of all times, Piragow, came to your country to treat Garibaldi. Piragow was not a communist, he was simply a progressist liberal, who supported the legitimate struggle of the Italian people: there were hundreds and thousands all over the world who shared Piragow's view.

Some time ago I told the Americans: "You rebelled against the British colonial rule, providing an example to other nations and winning the sympathy of the entire world; that was the past, now you bring chains". The Americans do not see the present, it looks like they are still living in the past. They say their constitution is still intact, but it has been preserved intact as the Latin language: it is dead. They say that there is no freedom here because we have only one party, while they have two. Actually they have only one party, the monopolistic capitalism's party and within it two factions, the Republican one and Democratic one, the donkey and the elephant. It is upon them to decide which one among these beasts is better. I do not want to open a discussion on these issues, neither I do want to offend the NATO allies, but I have already discussed this with Eisenhower, Kennedy and Macmillan, so I am revealing no secret. In Angola, the blood flows and a part of the world ignominiously looks elsewhere in order not to see, why? Because Portugal, a NATO member, is responsible for that. When the United States, mainly for decency reasons, criticized it Portugal reacted with a scene of jealousy. Another NATO's member, France, behaves like a pirate in Bizerte and Macmillan actually approved De Gaulle's actions.

We were accused of interfering in the internal affairs of other states, but everybody knows that we are against colonialism and this is the reason why they ask for our support.

In the last few days I have been very busy; even though I had just come back from my holidays, when the ambassadors of African countries asked to meet me to discuss the question of Bizerte I received them and they asked for our help.

We already proposed to "liquidate" the colonial system, had this proposal been accepted, colonial peoples would not have any reason to contact us. For as long as the colonial system continues, the struggle will continue and the colonial slavery will push people to fight and to get closer to us, this is the logic of the conflict. We sympathize with people who fight and we can help them with materials and weapons. This is no secret: we believe that colonial peoples have a legitimate right to freedom and independence.

I want to tell you a story. In 1955 I was visiting the UK with Bulganin. We were in the car, I, Bulganin and Lloyd and Lloyd told me: "A little bird told me you sell weapons to Yemen". I replied: "Two birds told me you sell arms to Iran", and Lloyd: "Why you do that?" "And you?" I said. We officially made a proposal for an agreement that prohibits arms' sales but you rejected it, here is the conflict.

You blame us, we blame you, how can this be resolved? Only ending the colonial system, implementing a policy of non-interference and respect for the other's sovereignty. We support this policy, but the United States stated, in Dulles' words, that it is immoral to pursue the politics of neutrality. Dulles would give moral lessons even to Nehru!

And now we come to the crucial question of how war could be banished from human society and disarmament be realized. Since ten years, actually fifteen, we meet to discuss the issue of disarmament and we are unable to reach an agreement. The West accuses us of being against the control system, but it has not proposed any verification system.

We support control, we love our country exactly as much as the Western statesmen love their own, we would not accept disarmament without a control system but we oppose a veto power. Accepting the principle of a veto power we could no longer believe anyone. We want to control everything and everywhere and, generally speaking, we want to hold the possibility to check the implementation of disarmament measures: everybody should be able to do the same. Make your proposal for a control system and show the world if we are in favor or against it, but you will not do it because you know that we would accept it. By contrast you accuse us of opposing any control system, trying this way to direct against us the anger of those who oppose the arms' race: the truth will soon emerge.

We proposed to form a 15 members' committee for disarmament. It is upon the non-aligned countries to judge who really opposes nuclear disarmament; I am ready to recognize any control system, provided that it guarantees disarmament: I am not interested in the system per se, I am interested in disarmament. However, since we sit in the Commission of the Ten from ten years and we brooded just rotten eggs, we do not intend to participate any longer.

Regarding the issue of nuclear tests, we were about to reach a ban-test agreement with Washington, then the Americans raised the issue of the underground tests, which apparently requires a large number of checkpoints and this way they hoped to create an extended spy network in our country. We were ready to get involved, mistakenly believing that the Americans were serious about resolving the issue. However, we noticed that the disarmament negotiations did not make any progress and then came the events of Congo, where Hammarskjöld has abused his powers. So we thought that this Hammarskjöld could come to our country as a Pentagon spy; this way the President shall no longer guide the Council of Ministers in the USSR, because he will be replaced by no matter which Hammarskjöld.

Please try just once to think about how do we feel and judge by yourself what leads us to this conclusion. If the Americans do not want to disarm and they rely on their weapons, then we, who do not have less weapons, will do the same and we will live like two fools in a powder keg. We recognize the absurdity of this situation, but we cannot do anything by ourselves, so we said, "The issue of nuclear tests must be solved together with the problem of disarmament." You see the situation? We produce nuclear weapons, exactly as the United States and England, France conducts nuclear tests and says it will continue to do so. France is one of your allies, the French are the ones who want to continue nuclear tests, not us. Moreover recently we conducted only half of the tests carried out by the United States. Does it make any sense for us to undertake negotiations in order to achieve a test ban? It may come a time when also a fifth country might be able to produce nuclear bombs and conduct nuclear tests, exactly as France now, but in such a case you could not blame that country. One could rightly argue, "Why you do not want us to possess nuclear weapons, if they are produced in the USSR, the United States, England and France? Perhaps you are in favor of some kind of nuclear weapons' monopoly?" Today De Gaulle speaks this way, tomorrow there will be someone else.

You must also understand my responsibility as President of the Council of Ministers of the USSR. A few minutes ago our scientists were here to tell me that they have just developed a bomb with a 10 million tons of TNT capacity and they were asking permission to test it. It is the cheapest bomb, since it costs only two and a half times the cost of one million tons bomb. Experts claim to have missiles capable of launching it, what should I do? Do I have to authorize the experiments? Especially given that we are threatened with war if we conclude a peace treaty with Germany. I am in pain, McCloy told me that recently Kennedy has been under pressure from the militaries; I am subject to such pressures too and you will see who is able to resist to this pressure and who is not.

For what concerns me I will tell you that it will depend on the international situation. If we will witness continuing threats against us, we will resume the experiments. The bomb must be developed and it must be tested, please do not say it is immoral; if attacked, we will employ nuclear weapons. What should I say? That nuclear weapons were not tested because of me? Do you realize my responsibility? I think we will carry out these tests, but we will wait, we want to see in which direction the barometer of international atmosphere will turn.

Concerning the question of disarm, we are thus ready to sign any agreement, provided that it leads to a genuine disarm. In any case we are against arms control, we can control our weapons by ourselves. After the West rejected our proposals for a general and comprehensive disarmament, we made a series of partial proposals such as a non-aggression pact between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Westerners have rejected that too invoking the UN charter: "Everything is already contemplated in that text" they claimed, but the UN Charter sanctions also countries that cause war, therefore it was not necessary to create military blocs; they reply that blocs are essentials to prevent war. If the blocs are not in conflict with the UN Charter, why should it be so a non-aggression pact? The result is that military blocs were set up, while you want to prohibit non-aggression pacts.

The Americans pretend to be masters of the world's destiny. They believe, now as before, they have the power to decide all over the world but they do not keep up with the times. Human knowledge usually lags behind the facts and processes in human relations usually take place before and only afterwards you start to understand them. Let's take the example of a great general: when he leaves the service, he retains his aides, because during his career the general has become accustomed to them. Consider for instance the case of a spendthrift. Although he squandered all his properties, he speaks with his servants, who stayed with him, as if he were still rich. The United States is currently in the same situation of a rich man in ruin: they were accustomed to detain the atomic monopoly, they believed to be the largest economic power and they looked down on other people, but times have changed.

One billion people all over the world already lives under the banner of marxism-leninism; the Americans have the right to despise this flag, that is their own business, but they must take into account the fact that we live and we develop.

The US say: if you sign a peace treaty with Germany we will tear away your ears, but no one can speak to us this way anymore as we are not the same as before. We are able to kick ass too, so why they speak to us this way? Maybe we should make clear the real balance of power.

Another example: a girl has given herself to her beloved, but then he left her. The girl says, "Do whatever you want but you cannot get rid of the baby." The same is true for the old world. It did not want us but we came to this world and it welcomed us badly: there was an intervention, there was a bourgeois war but the world did not succeed in strangling us and now we are the second most powerful country in the world. We train three times the number of engineers of the US, we were the first to send a man

into the outer space; the Americans still jump like frogs but they cannot fly and yet they continue to threaten us!

De Gaulle withdrew a division from Algeria to bring it to Europe, and now he is threatening us with it. We know that he could not leave that division in Algeria, because it was hostile to him, everyone knows it, so why he gives such demonstrations? The Americans decided to increase their military contingent to 250,000 men, but what is the meaning of such a measure in our time? The next war will not be fought with bayonets, and even if it were so, we dispose of a greater number of bayonets as we can mobilize from two to five million men in a couple of days. I do not understand why they resort to these actions. I am going to give a speech and I will follow the advice of the ancient Romans, who, they say, used to have a cold shower before taking an important decision. We do not want to precipitate things...

In a word, the international situation is currently tense. I am referring to the core issue which has bothered everyone, the German question. You know which kind of war we faced and, to our regret, we fought also against you. During the war I was a member of the war council at the front and I fought against your troops. I questioned some of your officers and of your "black shirts" in Donbass. In Rostow I interrogated two of your air force officers, they were fine young men and they favorably impressed me. They told me they did not know why they were fighting, they were not career officers: one was an agronomist, and the other was a civilian employee.

I recently knew that you were asked to raise the issue of war prisoners. First of all, there are no prisoners of war here, neither Italians, nor Germans. Second, put yourself in our shoes: if you came to our country as guests and you were not allowed to return home it would be intolerable. Italians came to us with weapons in their hands and that is the reason why we killed them, now someone says: "Our soldiers did not return from Russia." Yes actually they remained in Russia, in their graves.

According to this logic, who should we submit the bill for our 20 millions dead? I also had a son, he was a pilot and he did not come back. I know he is dead, but his body has not been found and therefore he has not been buried. Should I ask for my son to Adenauer?

The war is over, and a peace treaty has not been signed yet, although 16 years have gone by. The remains of the last war must be liquidated. We propose to conclude a treaty, and is it or not a contribution to peace? When someone proposes a peace treaty, it means that he wants peace; those who oppose it want to keep the remains of the war in order to choose the right moment to trigger a new conflict. Americans clearly show they do not want peace, quite the opposite. As for Adenauer, he is an old man and while some old men live well and maintain clarity of view, others lose their mind. I do not want to enter into these problems, I'm not a psychiatrist: Adenauer is the head of the German Government and I address him as such.

What is the logic behind the Western objections to the peace treaty? Apparently the problem is that Germany is divided, but it was Hitler not us who wanted war for Germany. For what regards me, how many Germanies have arisen following the war, whether two or five, this is a problem of the Germans and I hope that they could solve it. I hope that Adenauer and Ulbricht would sit around a table and agree on Germany's reunification, however, I am told that I should find an agreement with Ulbricht. I am a communist and I sympathize with Ulbricht, exactly as Kennedy sympathizes with Adenauer. And what does this mean? It means that we, Russia and America, the Warsaw Pact and NATO fight because Adenauer does not want to meet with Ulbricht. This is absurd! If they do not want to meet, they will live separate from each other.

Concerning this point I support De Gaulle's position. During the conversations I had with him, he told me he opposed the German reunification, considering it dangerous for France; in the course of a private meeting Macmillan told me that he favoured the existence of two Germanies, however both of them refused to say these things publicly. Is this a fair attitude? I always say what I think. We were forced not to sign the peace treaty, but we will sign it and the access to Berlin will be blocked. We would be happy to conclude the treaty and to give West Berlin the status of free city. We thought at length about how to solve this issue, and we would really like to do it without offending anyone's prestige and self-esteem. Morally and legally West Berlin belongs to the DDR; however, we do not intend to annex it, since this would be an act of brute force and it would have serious consequences on our relations with our former allies. Such action would lead to a worsening of the situation and therefore we oppose it. Moreover West Berlin is now a capitalist city and we are not going to change it through violence, it would go against all our principles, according to which all people must be able to freely choose the socio-economic conditions they prefer. This is not a position dictated by a particular situation of our politics, it is by contrast sanctioned in our program, our Gospel, therefore we believe that the internal situation of West Berlin should remain unchanged. However it is necessary to give Berlin the free city status so that freedom of access could be granted to all countries wishing to maintain relations with it. During the meeting in Vienna we proposed Kennedy to allow the four powers to maintain troops in the city in order to guarantee access to West Berlin. Today about 11,000 soldiers of the United States, France and England are in Berlin, allow us to maintain a symbolic contingent in West Berlin, to represent the unity of the four Allied powers. If you do not want to do this, then we could employ neutral countries' troops or a UN contingent, for us is the same. In any case their presence cannot be based on the occupation's law, since the peace treaty means the end of the occupation even as a result of a legal instrument deposited at the United Nations.

To sum up: no blockade of West Berlin and full freedom of external relationships, but only basing on an understanding with the Democratic Republic. We were told that this is not possible, that we fought against Germany and now we should ask Ulbricht. Is Adenauer better than Ulbricht? Both are German and the only difference lies in the fact that you like Adenauer and by contrast I like Ulbricht. Why the Soviet Union asks for permission to Adenauer and the West cannot do the same with Ulbricht? We have a railway line Moscow-Paris via Bonn and we can make our trains travel only with Adenauer's consent. This is no humiliation for us, as these are the most elementary rules of the life of a community. When I come to your house, I have to knock first and if you do not let me in, I have to go. However, when someone breaks into my house, I defend myself and this is a basic right.

Another example: we have an air link with England and our aircrafts fly through Denmark, hence we ask Denmark's authorization. This is absolutely normal, so why do you want to go to West Berlin without asking permission to the DDR? The answer is that there are issues of reputation at stake. Does anyone think about our prestige? Only through capitulation we will be forced to accept this and we have no intention to surrender, neither to war threats, nor to other threats. We will ask all the states who fought the war to sign with us the peace treaty with Germany. If they will refuse, then only the socialist countries will sign the treaty. On the base of the peace treaty the remnants of the occupation regime, including West Berlin will be settled on the entire territory of the DDR. We plan to transform West Berlin into a demilitarized and free city. There will be no West Berlin blockade and access to the outside world will be granted to all those who want it. In order to do this we need an agreement with West Berlin's government, as well as the consent of the DDR government for the use of land, river and air communication lines.

In case of a violation of the DDR borders, our armed forces will consider this action as an attack and they will oppose it. Some would argue that this could lead to a war: perhaps yes, but I think there will not be any war. I say this because I am confident in the common sense, I cannot guarantee for the fools but I can say that we will not stop

in front of some fools. I think there will not be any war, because Adenauer himself does not want it, he talks a lot during the election period and he says he is ready to face a conflict but he knows that an hour after the beginning of the war Germany would be destroyed and this is not a threat. I am not threatening anyone, I am not asking for Bonn, I am just asking for a peace treaty, for peace: it would only mean to fix what actually already exists, to normalize the situation.

If we sign a peace treaty and resolve the German and the Berlin questions then there will be no more important issues left unsettled and the overall atmosphere will considerably improve. However, if you want to maintain a state of war, that means that you are only waiting for the right time to attack us and if so, today is fine for us, we are ready for everything even today. The Western press recently reported that during a conversation with the UK ambassador, I would have addressed some threats against the West. I will tell you what was the subject of that conversation; I explained our views on the German question, and he said: "We maintain our position." What does "maintain our position" means? We will maintain our position too: we will sign the peace treaty, cognizant of all its consequences regarding the issue of the access to West Berlin. He said that the West has taken specific commitments to West Berlin, but in Vienna I had already told Kennedy: "then you will have the chance to say that the Krim belongs to you and if you want, you can promise to defend it." Why the West pledged to defend the freedom of West Berlin? Who threatens this freedom? We support freedom too, why Kennedy claims the right to sell other peoples letters of indulgence, just like the Pope?

FANFANI: The Pope does not sell letters of indulgence anymore.

KHRUSHCHEV: You see, the Pope himself has realized that these things lead nowhere, but not Kennedy. Now, to be sure, Kennedy did not make any promise, others did it and now he pays old bills. I understand and respect Kennedy but he is in a difficult situation, there are too many clever guys in the US Congress and a naive guy cannot make it through there... Anyway this is their business. And you want to threaten our country with its 220 million inhabitants and its missiles! If you threaten us, you can expect no other treatment.

I would like to go back to the meeting I had with the UK ambassador. I told him I heard a joke circulating in Britain, according to which the British would be divided between optimists and pessimists. I asked him how many hydrogen bombs would be needed to destroy the UK and he said: "I think I heard six ", I said, "Then you are a pessimist as this is a pessimistic opinion. Optimists do not agree, they think nine bombs are needed and this is the difference." Then I added: "I will reveal you a General Staff secret: we prepared a dozen H-bombs for the UK." This is not a threat, this is reality, why do we produce hydrogen bombs, why do we have a General Staff, why are there armed forces?

For instance the Americans have installed military bases in Italy and in the event of a war, they will strike against us from those bases. Italians are smart, they understand that if there are bases, there will also be missiles aimed against them. And this is not a threat, but a realistic assessment of the situation. If the threat comes from the US military bases, then I will have to ask our Minister of Defense: "What measures did we take to neutralize those bases?" He will show me a map and he will say, "Look, these are the bases, in the UK, Italy, North Africa and in the other countries, and these are our missiles aimed at these bases, a certain number against the UK, a certain number against Italy and the others against the remaining bases. There are missiles for everybody."

Is it possible to behave like the Americans do? They make noise, they threaten us and they expect us to surrender: this is a sign of naivety and political blindness.

Sometimes it has been said that Khrushchev is so involved in the struggle for peace that he could never order a nuclear attack. It is true, we are struggling for peace, I know what the word "war" means, I saw death in the eyes, in Stalingrad I saw squares filled with corpses of Germans starved to death. I participated to the battle of Kursker Bogen, which began on July 5, 1943 and was the most horrific battle of World War II. We oppose war and therefore we do not intend to attack anyone, we propose to make peace and in response we are told that in this case there will be war. Nobody will intimidate us, if a war will start, I shall be Commander in Chief of our armed forces. I know that it will be nuclear war, in which hundreds of millions of people will die, I am not threatening, I am objectively evaluating the situation. The Americans have never known war, and some fool in the US could even think of war almost like a walk where you can rob and pillage, but they will receive a hard lesson and even this one is not a threat, I do not want attack others, I only want to defend myself and I clearly say that if a war will break I will use every means. What else can I say? I will use every means. We will see who will stay alive and in any case it will not be the USSR to start a war, it will be NATO.

I think we will appropriately warn all the governments. Someone might think once again that I want to exert pressure on them, that I want to force them to leave NATO. This is of course naive thinking, it is not that simple. It is not that I speak with them and they immediately retreat from NATO, and ultimately this is not even our goal. We know that Italy has been hit hard by the war, but given that Kennedy threatened us on behalf of NATO, we have to give you a warn: think before it's too late.

Why should we fight each other? What divides us? I know you do not want anything from me, as I do not want anything from you, nor from Great Britain, France, Belgium, Turkey or the other countries, including West Germany. We just want to keep everything as it is and we want it to be confirmed by a peace treaty. I consider it absurd to declare a war just because the access to West Berlin has to be agreed with the DDR, and no another excuse exists.

The West says it fights for the freedom of West Berlin but we recognize that freedom too. Please try to understand us: I have already said at the time to Eisenhower that we do not intend to take West Berlin, what could the 2,2 million inhabitants of West Berlin mean if compared to our 220 million people? The controversy does not concern which one of us will have West Berlin, as Berlin does not alter the balance of power. We would prefer to lead the fight in another area: our struggle, and this is clearly stated in our program recently made public, assumes a battlefield without gunfire, where each system can measure up with the others and the one who will be able to offer more comfort to men will prevail. You are capitalists, we are communists, we will not wage a war for this reason: may history lead us.

If you believe in your social system, then do not start a war, but if you want to translate political and ideological differences into the language of nuclear war, we are ready to accept the challenge. We are against war but we told that imperialism can force us to war, therefore we are ready for it. Perhaps the future will prove the justness of this thesis, but in such an event the responsibility for the war will fall upon you, not upon us.

Think for a moment, what are 2.2 million men? Why should we fight a war for this?

We favor negotiations but if they have to be formal negotiations which, as we were told, could last up to ten years, then we will abandon them. We do not want a conflict but we are not afraid of it and we will face it with dignity. I reply to anyone who will threaten us with war with Alexander Newski's words: "Whoever enters the land of Russia with a sword, will die by the sword." We recognize the right of every people to defend themselves if they are threatened with weapons. For our part, we solemnly declared in our party's program that we will not be the first to attack and this is our

position.

You see how much time I have been stealing you? And now it is time for lunch, this is what the protocol requires, what did you say? Your Minister of Foreign Affairs would like to declare war to us? He can do it, as it pertains to his functions.

SEGNU: What you have just said is not a good starter before lunch.

KHRUSHCHEV: It depends on the interpretation, I have already said that I do not want a war but peace, a peace treaty, what kind of starter do you want then?

SEGNU: The starter has a bitter taste.

KHRUSHCHEV: In the event of a war we will have to eat this starter together, we will have to eat what the cook prepares for us and if a war breaks out, we will all have to deal with the consequences. A single fool is enough to provoke a war. Hitler and Mussolini's war had a cost of 20 million dead, without counting those of the other countries. We did not want the war, the Germans and the Italians came at gunpoint in our country.

FANFANI: I think we should learn something constructive from your considerations, hence I will start from a very serious thing you mentioned, that is that you want to avoid another war.

KHRUSHCHEV: Which is the key point.

FANFANI: If we carefully examine your position, I think that neither I nor my colleague Segni have any particular objection. Moreover we could reply to your assertion, according to which the persistence of the colonial system represents a threat to peace, stating that we gave our contribution, in other circumstances and with different methods, to the liquidation of colonialism.

With regard to your observation that some Western powers, due to mistakes in the colonial question, have indirectly favored communism, I will tell you: when I talked about this with representatives of Western powers, I have been suspected of being a procommunist. I repeatedly mentioned to the stakeholders that, through their colonial policies, they created conditions favorable to the advent of communism. I have said these same things to the Belgian Foreign Minister Vigny, during his visit in Rome in October 1958. I also told him that pursuing such a policy, Belgium would have lost Congo within two years. Probably thinking that I was a communist or a fool, he just told me that I had been misinformed. During a meeting in August 1960 Vigny asked me: "Who informed you that we would have lost Congo?" I replied that I had come to this conclusion in light of the mistakes made by the Belgian Government.

I can also say that over the last three years I always recommended De Gaulle to give freedom to Algeria because it is ultimately unavoidable and that delaying it would have only raised the price to pay. Minister Segni is telling me that the Italian delegation to the UN voted against the action of Portugal in Angola.

With regard to Tunisia, I am convinced that if the Western powers wanted to damage themselves they could not think of anything better than to organize the facts of Bizerte. Actually, we had a friend, Bourguiba, now we lost him. In case of similar actions in the future we could no longer look into the eyes of newly independent nations. I believe that the colonial world is inevitably crumbling down despite the efforts of some ruler who, as you well understand, does not give up easily his possessions. As for Cuba, I openly told before the Italian parliament that the events

which have taken place there are a direct consequence of errors of the capitalist enterprise.

KHRUSHCHEV: Even Kennedy admitted that Cuba's invasion was an error.

FANFANI: I will add that even if Castro had not shown his communist sympathies, remaining within the realm of national emancipation, he would have set on fire the whole Latin America anyway. I always tried to draw our allies' attention on the consequences of their disastrous mistakes vis-à-vis the colonial peoples. In my opinion, they are wrong in thinking that the development of a national consciousness could take place the same way as the transition from illiteracy to the ability to read and to write. They do not understand that the development of the radio, the television and all the other media has virtually canceled illiteracy, given that every man has now eyes and ears to understand what is happening in the world, even if he cannot read.

Many people blamed you for Nasser and for the events in Egypt. I do not think it was your responsibility, because in my opinion, which was confirmed by ambassador Fornari the Italian representative in Cairo at the time, Nasser's main force was the radio. Technological and cultural developments significantly accelerated the overall development of the world and, in my opinion, this is a factor often underestimated by the West.

From these words you can understand which kind of advice we give our allies, and I have to admit that some of them objectively evaluate the situation, thus opting for realistic choices. Of course it is easier for us and for you, as countries that have no colonies, to ask for the liquidation of colonialism, by contrast it is much more complicated for countries that still have them. As for De Gaulle, I am convinced that he will grant independence to Algeria. However, it is very difficult for him, I think we can imagine how hard it would be for you to act if you were not to operate in the socio-political conditions of Soviet Russia but in conditions such as those of France.

To sum up I would say that those who have understood the inevitable course of history concerning the colonial question must operate in a particular direction, with perseverance and without impatience. I must also stress that it is useful to emphasize the risks of a new war but even better it would be to work in order to move from the awareness of such a risk to its very elimination. I think that acting this way we would benefit our allies as well as the newly independent peoples who are now entering the world stage.

As for the dangers to peace posed by newly independent peoples, I think I have a more optimistic view than you, because I believe that the national liberation movement is something inevitable that is already reaching an end, therefore I do not see any risk of explosions. At the same time, I think that a solution to the colonial problem could be compromised by other issues such as disarmament and European security. In my opinion you gave a very honest and objective picture of the international situation, although some of its aspects definitely cannot be considered a good starter before lunch. For my part I want to say frankly that we will fulfill our alliance's obligations too. Please do not consider this as a threat, exactly as you advised us not to consider your realistic assessments as threats. Furthermore, Italy's weight cannot be compared in any way to the Soviet Union. While I was listening to you, Mr. President, I was thinking: are we in a situation in which mutual distrust could lead to war despite the fact that neither side really wants a conflict? The West may come to think that Khrushchev behaves with the aim of destroying everything, and the East could come to think that if the question of Berlin is not solved, there will always be an excellent pretext to attack Russia in the future. We understand your position when you say that you are under pressure from the militaries and the scientists, but you must understand that Kennedy suffers from this pressure too.

KHRUSHCHEV: Eisenhower told me that he was under pressure.

FANFANI: I would like to go back to the comments you made during the meeting you had with Minister of Foreign Affairs Pella in the course of President Gronchi's visit to Moscow, which in my opinion were quite appropriate. When Pella said that it was better to leave the issue of disarmament in the hands of the militaries, you rightly replied that waiting for the militaries to face such an issue would mean to unnecessarily waste a lot of time. In fact, those militaries who advocate disarmament should be immediately dismissed, because their duty is to take care of armaments and strengthen their country's defenses; by contrast responsibility for disarm lies upon us, the politicians. We thank you for your frank representation of the international situation, however I must stress that - and I think my colleague Segni agrees on this point - not all the available means have been employed to solve the problem.

I agree with you when you say that the absence of a peace treaty fifteen years after the end of the war is something abnormal and I also think that when our grandchildren will study contemporary history they will consider us as fools for not having been able, over such a long period, to conclude a peace treaty. Anyway I also think that we should not try to put an end to this situation with a treaty which, aiming to liquidate the remnants of the war, would sanction a bad peace.

You are afraid, in my view rightly, that an agreement on this matter might be deferred indefinitely; yet I think that it is better to continue to search for a peaceful solution to the question in order to avoid the risk of a conflict.

KHRUSHCHEV: We are not threatening war, you are. You will fire the first shot, not us.

FANFANI: It will be a beautiful scene, two armies will face each other in Berlin and each of them will say: "shoot you first" and the other will answer "no you shoot first, so that you will be held responsible for the beginning of the hostilities."

KHRUSHCHEV: I have to point out that we could shoot first in response to a violation of our borders. If Western aircrafts will fly without permission in the so-called corridors to West Berlin, we will shoot them, because they violated the borders.

FANFANI: This statement reinforces my conviction that at the moment we should think about how to avoid a situation where the first shot will be fired. To the nuclear war survivors it will not make any difference who actually fired the first shot, but following such a war, your twenty-year plan as well as our development efforts, albeit more modest, will go up in smoke. I want to tell you a childhood's story. Every time I argued with my friends, my grandfather, regardless of whether I was right or not, slapped me and told me: "the wiser is the one who has the duty to behave more reasonably." By this I mean that if you are convinced of the rightness of your cause...

KHRUSHCHEV: Absolutely convinced.

FANFANI: ...which means that the responsibility falls even upon you. During my visit to the US I told it to Kennedy and now I am telling the same to you. Sometimes I cannot sleep thinking about the enormous responsibility that burdens on you, because you have the power to decide whether in the next months there will be war or peace. I think that your personal experience in the last war will help you to treat this problem with the utmost attention. Statesmen of all countries should pay attention to you, as the ones on which the ultimate responsibility falls upon, and not only through words but also through a specific support for the actions aimed at the maintenance of peace.

KHRUSHCHEV: What should I do then, I am asking for your advice. I tell you now that if you are going to say that I should postpone the conclusion of a peace treaty, I think that this does not address the problem.

FANFANI: I will not give you such an advice. My suggestion, with your permit, is different: it would be better to avoid a unilateral solution to the issue and try by contrast to reach a collective agreement, we have to try to reach such an agreement.

KHRUSHCHEV: We would like it, but it is very difficult. We know that a separate treaty will exacerbate the tension, therefore it would certainly be better to reach an agreement. At the same time we believe that it is possible to achieve a certain result even without this agreement, maybe there will be a temporary rise of tension but then the situation will return normal.

The Ukrainians used to tell a story: a soldier walks in the woods and he meets a woman with a child. The woman says, "I am scared of you, soldier" and the soldier, "Why are you afraid?" "I am afraid that you rape me", says the woman. "As you are afraid of me, silly goose, you keep the child by the hand", replies the man. And the woman: "We can lay the baby on the grass."

FANFANI: I know this story and I told it to President Kennedy during my visit to the United States.

KHRUSHCHEV: And what did Kennedy say?

FANFANI: Kennedy understood that the woman could be raped.

KHRUSHCHEV: Why De Gaulle tells me that there will be two Germanies and then declares to Adenauer that it is necessary to work for a united Germany? I respect De Gaulle and I had entertained with him as I am doing now with you. He asked me: "What do you think to gain by concluding a peace treaty with Germany?". I clearly explained our point of view and do you know what did he tell me? He said: "Who is preventing you from doing so?". I do not want to affirm that De Gaulle agrees with me on this issue. He is a very cautious politician and he expresses his opinions in a diplomatic way, but he is right, nobody prevents me from doing so.

FANFANI: What will happen after the signing of the treaty?

KHRUSHCHEV: We will lay the baby on the grass.

SEJNI: It is not that easy.

KHRUSHCHEV: Will you declare war? Remember, however, that we will give the appropriate response and this does not mean that we are threatening you.

SEJNI: We are not threatening too.

KHRUSHCHEV: Are you not threatening? And what do Kennedy's war maneuvers mean then? You announced an increase in the production of aircrafts, which is clearly intended as a demonstration to scare us. You think you can fight with aircrafts? As the Ukrainians would say, with these aircraft you can go straight to the bathroom. Actually you need them to satisfy your arms industry's orders. Do you see the logic? We said that at the end of the year we want to sign the peace treaty and the planes you ordered will be ready in two years, what else is this but a demonstration, a threat? And why do you try to scare us? I am 67 years old, and I saw many things in

my life, you cannot scare me this way. These are threats, this is hysteria, this is loss in self-confidence, fear of communism... NATO and the US threats show that you are afraid of us and blinded by fear you will fall into the abyss. We propose something different, a peaceful competition, but if you want a war, then you will get it. Choose yourself, we have a duty not to be cowards, and we will fulfill it.

FANFANI: I know no Western statesman who wants war and it would really be a folly to wage war without really wanting to.

KHRUSHCHEV: You want it.

FANFANI: Perhaps this situation stems from the fact that everybody, whatever the action, is convinced not to commit any act of war. But others may think otherwise, albeit mistakenly. So those who adopt these actions must prove very patient and avoid giving up the effort to convince the opponent.

KHRUSHCHEV: For 16 years we have been trying to do so, that is enough, now it is time for you to get convinced by yourself.

FANFANI: I think anyone has the right to convince himself. The consequences of a war, even if brief, would be so disastrous that it seems to me that we cannot, even for a moment, fall victim to the opponent's propaganda.

KHRUSHCHEV: I will repeat it, we will not be the first to shoot, we will shoot back.

FANFANI: When a man knows that if he teases another man, he will cause a violent reaction with all its consequences, then he should think from the beginning to avoid provoking such a reaction. I am convinced that currently there is no higher and no nobler purpose than the consolidation of peace, because there is nothing more important than a life in peace. I am convinced that no one in the West wants war. Therefore I think it is my duty to say that there is a chance to reach the goal of a peace treaty through peaceful means, you must exploit this with the utmost determination (...).

KHRUSHCHEV: I totally agree, we need to discuss, we need to negotiate, we cannot behave like bullies. Why then cannot we agree on the happiness of the world? You see the situation?

We talked about these issues for the first time in 1958, on that occasion I raised the point for the first time saying it was necessary to arrive to a solution within six months. Then Macmillan came to Moscow and we had very reasonable talks. At the beginning Macmillan tried to put pressure on us, then he realized it did not work and thus we continued our conversations in a balanced way. We agreed to organize a meeting between heads of government as soon as possible in order to discuss the issue of a peace treaty with Germany.

With Macmillan we did not explicitly address the question of the peace treaty, afterwards Eisenhower invited me in the US, where we had fruitful conversations. I told him: "It is a pity, Mr. President, that you cannot stay for a third term, because we have already found an agreement." I asked him why the US supplied weapons to Germany. I openly said that, had Germany not been armed, it would have been a strong competitor of the United States and other Western countries on the world markets. "We - said Eisenhower - invest many resources in armaments, but Germany is free and it strengthens its economic potential, thus it is necessary to force it to spend more on weapons." Is this the logic of peace? I cannot agree on profiting from coffins. I told him that a rearmed Germany would represent a threat even for the US,

he admitted that what I was saying was true and that somehow Germany had to be kept less dangerous but, at the same time, he said that it was necessary to arm Germany in order to weaken the German competition.

Do you see the contradiction? Today Germany and Japan are already pushing America and England against the ropes on the world markets.

I always had the impression that, with Eisenhower, we could understand each other. He gave me his parole that he did not want war and I believed him, but Eisenhower is old and sick now and has virtually done nothing to this end. He wanted to be invited to Moscow, but he soiled the house where he had been invited, how can you act this way? A conference had been scheduled for May and in April the Americans sent a spy-plane on our territory. We did not shoot it down and we severely punished the guilty militaries. Given that we did not shoot, they sent another plane in May and this time, we shoot it down. How can someone act this way if he supports detente? I am convinced that behind all this there is the intelligence service of Allen Dulles: Eisenhower clearly authorized the flight plan, he signed it and then forgot about it, Dulles took advantage of this to ditch the Paris conference. Do you remember their lies? They said one of their planes had been shot down over Turkish territory and when we declared that the plane had been shot down in the region of Sverdlovsk and the pilot had been taken prisoner, Eisenhower played the part of the noble knight. He said that he himself had authorized the flight and that the US withheld the right to fly again over the Soviet territory. How can you behave this way? We are not a colony, and then we were also blamed for the Paris Conference's failure. They wanted us on our knees, but we could not bow to this.

In Paris I said, "If you officially apologize the conference may take place. If you do not, there will be no Summit." De Gaulle said, "How can you ask for this, the US is a great power they find it difficult to apologize." We think that even a great power should apologize if it has poisoned the air, but the Westerners were not thinking about any negotiation, they were thinking about an ultimatum, hence we abandoned the conference.

I will tell you another episode. Our Minister of Defense was not expected to attend the conference, because there was no reason for him to participate, but before my departure I was informed that Eisenhower would have brought with him his War Minister. Then I said to Malinowski, "We will go together, if they want to negotiate with the militaries on their back, then we will do it too."

In a word, I tell you this: acknowledge that we exist. From the point of view of the West, we are as an illegitimate son, but we were born and we are developing. Today we have already grown and it is too late to treat us like babies, please negotiate with us in a balanced way. We want negotiations and a peace treaty with Germany, but no one has to threaten us, the militaries should not be mobilized, because in such an event we will do the same. I do not want to mention all the qualities of our soldiers, but they always behaved well in war. Had the Allies still lingered before opening a second front, we could have arrived in Paris. Try therefore to understand that you are demanding the impossible from us. We are supposed to stand still and if we say that we want a peace treaty with Germany, then we are told: "if you do it we will beat you." Do not try it, we know how to beat too. We have talked enough, I invite you for lunch.

SECOND MEETING (August 3, 1961)

(KHRUSHCHEV greets Fanfani and the other officials of the Italian delegation and says

that if he is not mistaken, the day before the interview had been interrupted while Fanfani was explaining his point of view on the international issues, Khrushchev adds that he expects good news from the Italians).

FANFANI (thanks again for hosting him and the Italian delegation and says that a better acquaintance helps to set in motion a mutual co-operation in many areas. Fanfani tells an episode from 1947, when he was Minister of Labour and he received a representative from Sicily who was looking at him quite surprised. When Fanfani asked the man why was he looking at him that way, the man answered that he was told that Fanfani was a leftist. Fanfani replied asking him whether by chance leftists were like all men or they had tail and horns. Fanfani thanks for the clarity of thought expressed the day before by N.S. Khrushchev, in his opinion he gave a realistic representation of the international situation. Going back to the advice Khrushchev asked for the day before, his suggestion is to continue negotiations and not to delay them any longer):

We give such an advice also to ourselves and our allies. As you maybe noticed yesterday, we did not want to open controversies on specific issues because our major concern is the main problem, that is how to guarantee peace. Part of this problem is the different assessment we give concerning the danger represented by Germany. The Italian action, as that of many other countries, is designed to keep Germany in the community of nations, politically within the NATO and economically within the Common Market, and without any doubt has more peaceful aims than those normally attributed to it. De Gasperi, the founder of the Italian European policy, once said that the best way to maintain a peaceful Germany was to harness it in a web of European relationships. Obviously it is possible to give different evaluations regarding this policy, but this is Italy's point of view with regard to its implementation.

KHRUSHCHEV (replies quoting a Siberian story of a boastful hunter who wanted to capture a bear. The hunter came from the woods screaming, "I caught a bear!" They said, "Bring it here!" and the hunter: "It does not come over!" "Then come alone" "It does not leave me!"):

Something similar is happening to you; you think you have captured Germany, but Germany will catch you all, actually it already did so. West Germany is today the greatest economic power in Western Europe, a very active country with a strong industry; its currency, the mark, is so strong that even the dollar must bow to it. In fact, Westerners already carry out Adenauer's policy, and influential politicians from the West openly told us that perhaps after the elections perspectives of a different trend will emerge, which means that everything is done for the sake of Adenauer's interests.

Germany is today the strongest among the Western European states, perhaps even stronger than all the others combined together. Today it is less strong than Eastern Europe's countries only following the changes intervened in the European situation after the Second World War. At the moment, the Federal Republic has no chance to implement an aggressive policy against you, that is against Italy, France and England, mostly because it fears us. Can you guarantee that Adenauer will not die or that he will not get out of his mind? In a word, that West Germany will not turn against the USSR? Can you rule out this possibility?

I cannot, we do not have "crossed lines" with West Germany, conversely, these lines run parallel, our economies are complementary: our economy along with the economy of our ally China - that is an infinite ocean - and that of Germany. Germany is a strong and powerful industrial country that needs our market and our raw materials.

Let's sign the peace treaty with Germany, remove the German issue from the

impasse and then we will have another situation. Maybe we will sit once again together with Adenauer around this table.

Hitler was forced to go to Stalin. This was of course a clever tactic that allowed him to complete preparations for the war against France. Stalin was forced to get involved in his plan, believing that Hitler would limit his action to the West. In other words, Stalin behaved vis-à-vis France and England the same way they did towards us: they tried to push Hitler against us, Stalin pushed him back against them.

Can you guarantee that the story will not recur? I cannot. Anyway one thing is clear, certainly it will not go the same way. A military alliance with Germany is inconceivable for us. We will not support Germany's military plans against the West but we can contemplate an association of our economic potentials, which would be beneficial for both of us. This would not be of any benefit for you, because West Germany would become more competitive. German industrialists know this better than anyone, and they want to develop these economic relations all the way. Now there is tension between our countries but there is no open controversy with Bonn in the economic field.

Some in the West threatened to impose on us an economic blockade, which could actually take place, even though personally I am not convinced, most of all because the West would get no advantage from it. Moreover for a long time the US have been carrying out this policy against us, and we actually have to thank them, because they forced us to work and think more and everybody can appreciate the results: we sent a man in the space well before the Americans.

I think you will find it difficult to convince Macmillan to break with us, he is interested in economic relations with the USSR and moreover he has to manage a difficult economic situation which a break would only worsen. Obviously such eventuality cannot be completely ruled out, but Macmillan will think about it a hundred times before breaking the economic relations. Even Italy, France (De Gaulle is realist on this issue, he wants the USSR friendship and we want it too), Japan and the other countries will hardly accept to make such a step. Therefore it is not you who dominate the bear, by contrast it is the bear which is actually dominating you and therefore it is unassailable. Even now, you are asking for it to give more money, the UK threatened to withdraw its occupation troops if the Federal Republic does not pay for them. Think about what does this threat mean: the UK would become a mercenary paid by Germany. Adenauer is already paying for the British troops, West Germany buys territories for its troops in Italy and the UK, then who captured whom? The bear is already holding you tight, even though you think you are holding it, that is the truth.

From this perspective we are the country that can save you. We will not allow the bear to cling to you and crush you in its embrace: these "friendly embraces" will become increasingly tight. With this I do not want to frighten you, rather to give you a realistic picture. Germany does not care about anyone, set aside the socialist bloc and Germany would immediately turn against you, France, England and all the others. It already has the upper hand over the economic competition.

(Khrushchev jokes about giving Fanfani a bear).

FANFANI (He does not give a direct answer and says that up to this moment he had to deal with bears just once, in 1956, when he was in a US national park where bears go around freely: a whole family of bears was getting closer to his car in an openly hostile attitude. He decided to give them a bottle of coca-cola, which he threw on the ground; the bears drank and calmed down):

I do not want to draw political conclusions from this story, I would like to stress that we are aware of the good and the bad of this bear and we believe that we can keep it at bay. If you have any concern about our ingenuity towards this bear, then you are wrong. Maybe you are too optimistic Mr. Khrushchev, I would really like that the economic framework you outlined could develop the way you have drawn, as this would be a guarantee for peace. Yet, the historical experience shows that statesmen sometimes think irrationally, and this is bad. Even the meeting between Hitler and Stalin you reminded did not lead to those positive results you expected.

KHRUSHCHEV: That was inevitable.

FANFANI: But that is another thing. Regarding a possible economic cooperation between the USSR and Germany, this does not represent anything new to me; if I am not mistaken, you said the same thing to Adenauer in the Kremlin.

KHRUSHCHEV: That would have taken place sooner or later.

FANFANI: If such developments testify of sincere relationships among peoples and if they lead to peace, we definitely welcome them. The German problem is, today as yesterday, a problem of war or peace, exactly as the presence of Russia in Europe is an element of war or peace, therefore we say to our allies that we have to look to Soviet Russia in a realistic way. We are worried that the world may fall into grave misfortunes if we cease to realistically assess things. We believe that Russia may be capable of holding the bear, especially if it tries to attract it with the Chinese drum.

KHRUSHCHEV: I cannot speak on behalf of China, but you understand that China needs industrial products and that West Germany needs markets. The day will come when all the industrialized powers will rush to China like a river in flood and the Americans will be the first. A military solution to China's problem would be senseless and non-recognition of China is a sign of political blindness: the only way out is the recognition of Popular China. I also asked Eisenhower: "Why you do not recognize China? And why did you refuse to recognize the Soviet Union for 16 years?" He answered me that the Tsar denied recognition to the United States for 26 years, then I said: "Our Tsar was certainly a fool, what about you?".

FANFANI: I think the issue of disarmament cannot be resolved without China.

KHRUSHCHEV: Of course not. Take another issue for instance: what is the meaning of the United Nations without China? Luxemburg, for example, is a decisive factor at the UN, while China is excluded.

FANFANI: I think that China will pose the same problems as Germany: there are two parts of Germany and two parts of China.

KHRUSHCHEV: I think that they are two different things: on the one hand we are dealing with the Chinese people's internal affairs, on the other we are dealing with an American occupation.

FANFANI: I believe that there is some analogy in the technical solution of the problem, in the search for a way out.

KHRUSHCHEV: If the Americans withdraw from Taiwan, the Chinese will solve their problems by themselves.

FANFANI: Adenauer could say the same thing: without Eastern Europe's support of the

DDR, the Germans could autonomously solve the problem.

KHRUSHCHEV: We propose to withdraw all foreign troops from Germany and take them back within their boundaries, so that we could see what happens. Why should not we try to do this?

FANFANI: Nothing could be resolved this way, without a general agreement on disarmament, such a measure would only lead to further isolation of the German question. West Germany would then independently solve the issue of East Germany.

KHRUSHCHEV: How would it solve the issue? Through a war?

FANFANI: I think West Germany would solve it in the same way employed by China with Formosa.

KHRUSHCHEV: These are two different things. In Germany we have two distinct states, a socialist one and a capitalist one, the problem cannot be solved through a civil war. By contrast in China the main problem has already been solved by a civil war, the Taiwan question has not been solved because of the US troops' intervention; anyway it is a temporary situation.

The idea of withdrawing from Taiwan is spreading among Americans and although at the moment it is still a weak position, it will strengthen together with the consolidation of Popular China. If they will not go away by themselves, the Chinese will chase them away: the distance is only 70 km, they will install missiles and they will wipe out everything. You could argue that the Americans could do the same, but in such a case we will be next to China and we will launch our missiles against America, because the Chinese cause is a right cause.

What would you do if a foreign power occupied Sicily? It would be a similar situation. The United States took the island by force. At that time, during the civil war, the Chinese were weak and the Americans took advantage of this weakness and now they retain their positions on the pretext that they made a promise to Chiang Kai Shek: this is a bandit's policy and they cannot pursue it any longer.

(Khrushchev tells a story he knew when he was young: some thieves sitting on the side of the road see a man walking on the street. They send him a little boy saying "Ask the uncle to give you his mantle or his clock." The boy asks for the clock and the man chases him away, then the thieves approach the man shouting: "Why are you abusing the kid? Return the mantle and the clock").

Another example: Guatemala chose its legitimate government and the Americans overthrew it. Cuba decided to fight for its independence and even there the Americans intervened: this bandits' policy enhances political sympathies for the communists. Do you know why we cried over Dulles' death? Because that fool pieced together a policy which greatly benefited communism. We even instructed Gromyko to participate to his funeral, because nobody has done for us what Dulles did: he ultimately led to the US isolation, by contrast giving prestige to our policy. With his successors it is much more complicated, with Kennedy is already difficult, so, cheers to Dulles! (says comrade Khrushchev jokingly).

FANFANI: In order to formulate an opinion about Dulles, as about every statesman including ourselves, a certain period of time must pass. Everyone makes his mistakes, in the West we all committed our own mistakes which benefited the Soviet policy, for example with regard to newly independent countries.

KHRUSHCHEV: ...We commit this error too, to the benefit of your wrong opinions.

FANFANI: I do not want to open this discussion.

KHRUSHCHEV: I would like to add something about your advice on how to resume negotiations. We support negotiations for a peace treaty but we will not get involved in negotiations on the German reunification or self-determination. These are issues that pertain only to the Germans and we have nothing to do with them. The issue of the German reunification is not an international problem, it is a purely national problem. We did not sign anything that could commit us to the reunification of Germany and therefore we will do nothing about it. If you expect any action from us about this, then it is a demonstration of the capitalist's world ingenuity, oldness and lack of realism. Such an initiative would aim to attract the colonial countries' attention in order to push them against us. Some countries have already informed us that the United States addressed them with a letter on this issue, whose content was more or less as follows: the Russians support the principle of self-determination but concerning Germany they do not want to behave in accordance with it.

Such a letter certainly does not honor its editor's wisdom. They sent this letter to the newly independent countries and they gave it to us, I read it myself. The USA argumentations are easily questionable and we will discuss them in a letter that we will send. We are therefore in favor of a peace treaty, we recognize the actual existence of two German states and a third in West Berlin. West Berlin has nothing to do with West Germany and we do not accept Adenauer's claims on West Berlin. Such requests may be advanced by us, by you, or by anyone else. Did you hear about the speech McArthur held about two weeks ago in the Philippines?

FANFANI: No, I do not know anything about it.

KHRUSHCHEV: I agree with his statements. McArthur said that the availability of nuclear weapons makes it impossible to resolve controversies through war and that in such a situation military alliances have lost their usefulness. This means that we have to liquidate the military bases and to withdraw the troops stationed abroad: we support exactly this and McArthur stated it explicitly before the Philippines' Parliament.

FANFANI: I expressed the same thoughts during yesterday's toast, saying that the development of military technology entails the need for a new solidarity among peoples.

KHRUSHCHEV: Absolutely right, you know Montgomery, he said the same things and he is not a communist at all, I spoke with him in this same place. There are some issues on which we do not agree, but with regard to military issues he thinks more or less as me. Montgomery proposes the complete withdrawal of foreign troops from Germany as well as the dismantlement of military bases. We proposed this too, as well as the creation of a nuclear-free zone, a limited area for arms control, and most of all a solution to the problem of disarmament.

FANFANI: The issues you mentioned are aspects of disarmament.

KHRUSHCHEV: I discussed this with McCloy and he seemed interested in our proposals, some journalists even wrote that Khrushchev has expressed his hopes to McCloy. I have no particular expectations, as the US are too stubborn and the president cannot do everything: international issues are often solved in the midst of confusion and the president limits himself to listen. By contrast here decisions were taken by the ancient popular Slavic assembly: the boyars pulled each other's beard and the one who lost more hairs was defeated.

FANFANI: I hope, however, that you will not miss some facts which show that something is moving, that ideas are developing and hopes emerging. If so, I think it is possible to conduct successful negotiations with clarity, consistency and determination.

I would like to point out that once you have sat down around a negotiating table you have to consider that the counterpart has its own point of view and its own attitude on specific issues - such as Berlin and the foreign military presence in Germany. I am personally convinced that more objective categories tend to emerge during negotiations, that is the reason why I believe in their usefulness and why I am afraid of mutual distrust. In this regard, I rely on Mr. Khrushchev's sense of responsibility, as my role in these matters is rather reduced, although we are both discussing as heads of government, each one accountable to his own people. Of course we have to be very cautious when it comes to the defense of our peoples, but this does not mean that we should not conduct an open discussion, if we aim to consolidate peace.

KHRUSHCHEV: I agree, however I must emphasize some negative developments. For instance, do you think that the mobilization of some classes of reservists in the United States could strengthen the US negotiating position? It appears clear that they want to rely on force rather than on the common sense. Where does this lead us? It leads us to resort to the same kind of actions and we can prove it.

FANFANI: The Americans claim that you announced your measures ten days before the US.

KHRUSHCHEV: This is not true. The US had already increased authorizations before the Vienna meeting, we just reacted and they responded with other measures and then we did the same in turn and so on.

FANFANI: In the current situation the worst thing would be to fall into a spiral, in which each party responds with countermeasures to the other's initiatives and vice versa.

KHRUSHCHEV: Then you should recommend your allies not to do it, because they are forcing us to behave this way. We would not want to, we want a peace treaty. At the time we unilaterally implemented demobilization measures and we limited armaments' expenditures. The West responded by increasing its budget as well as the number of effectives of the armed forces. What should we do? Either we surrender or we have to adopt countermeasures, which we actually did. They took the first step, we only reacted. We are not behaving wisely, quite the opposite, but we have no choice since we did not begin this.

We proposed a peace treaty with Germany and they said: if you sign a peace treaty there will be war and they decided to mobilize. I do not know if they really want to face a conflict but we simply cannot ignore reality, therefore we decided to increase our military expenditures. If necessary, we will proceed to a partial mobilization, we have no other choice, we cannot expose ourselves to any risk, even though this complicates negotiations and could lead to a situation in which they would become impossible. We cannot sink into this spiral of measures and countermeasures, at a certain point, it will turn into a matter of prestige and the choice will be between war and capitulation: obviously no one will be willing to capitulate and then there will be war.

Personally I do not believe this, I do not think that you really want to wage war for the peace treaty. I hold you in high esteem, privately you are much more reasonable than you show in your public speeches and I think you simply want to scare us. Someone could say that Khrushchev might make some mistake in his calculations and I do not

rule out this possibility, I might be wrong in thinking that you do not want to face a conflict, but I think you make mistakes in your calculations as well. Through military pressure you are trying to force us to abandon the idea of a peace treaty, to give up, and you are wrong.

The situation you are working on might take place too soon: we will sign the peace treaty with Germany, there is no doubt about it, what could you do then? Wage war? Basically you have already stated that there will be war if we sign a peace treaty.

We believe that the United States face this risk more than any other country, as they are in a situation that might push for military action. I think that the US are poorly governed. In that country always exists the possibility that someone takes decisions that do not correspond in any way to the intentions of those who are responsible for them. The President is in a difficult situation, and I think that I would have the chance to find an agreement with the President if he could decide by himself. A very dangerous situation has taken place in the US, our only relief is that you are his allies, Italy, France, the UK etc... All except for Spain. In these countries there are many wise men. Without you the US cannot choose war, because they need your territory. Otherwise, the war will be a ballistic missiles' confrontation but, given that under this point of view we are stronger than the Americans, I do not think that the US would like to face such a conflict. If you put your territory at US disposal it would be different. What should I do then? I shall gather the General Staff and ask: what did you plan in the event of an aggression? The generals will show our plans to attack the military bases; in the event that something would survive after the first strike, a second strike will begin, we do not know if afterward there will be someone still able to conduct peace negotiations.

I know that in case of war we will be hit, but hitting our territory and hitting yours are two different things: here someone will survive, there nothing will remain. Please excuse me, I know that you probably dislike my words, but during these two days of conversations I learned to appreciate you and I noticed that you look at things in a practical way. Please allow me to speak frankly: who threatens us today? America and you are its allies. Well, the United States threaten us relying on you, therefore you are our hostages. The Americans can console themselves thinking that they are a big country far away from you; conversely you are close, so if Washington wages war you will be those who have to die.

Try to understand me: this is not a threat, this is reality, why would we spend billions for missiles, nuclear weapons and hydrogen bombs? If you attack us, we will destroy the entire world and this is not an ultimatum but a realistic consideration.

Is there a reasonable way out of this situation? Yes there is. We are not asking for military bases, nor we are asking you to bow to our policy, I could understand you if you were forced to choose between death and slavery, as in this case it would be better to die indeed. We are not asking for your friendship, we are only asking you to sign a peace treaty with Germany and you say: "all right, then war." I have already talked about this with Kennedy and McCloy. I told McCloy that I consider Kennedy's speech as a military ultimatum. We accept this challenge and we will face the war, we and you are both preparing for the conflict. We will definitely conclude the peace treaty with Germany and with it we will liquidate the occupation regime in West Berlin. In such a case access to Berlin will be possible either passing over our dead body or under the terms of an international agreement. After the signing of the peace treaty, it will be possible to permanently end the state of war on the whole territory of the DDR.

If you are interested in opening negotiations, then why did you provoke such a tense situation? It was you, not us, to adopt mobilization measures, you think that we are physically and spiritually weak: yes we, the communists, support peace but we are

also ready for war, if attacked. Our policy is clearly stated in our program, there we cannot write what we do not think, we cannot lie, because that program is our Gospel, our cult. In this program it is clearly stated that all our forces are committed in the struggle for peace, for peaceful coexistence, for disarmament. To you, anticommunists, we propose: let us trade, let's set in motion the economic cooperation and together we will avoid being dragged into a conflict. May history decide the dispute between our two systems, it will not harm anyone.

You can tell your allies what I said about the hostages, as it is something that needs to be discussed before the beginning of the war.

FANFANI: You also have to think about it.

KHRUSHCHEV: I already thought about it, that is why I speak this way. However, if you advise me to think about it, then reflect on this: should Khrushchev quietly think about whether it is worth signing a peace treaty and risk thus a war? A threat is clearly discernible in this statement. We decided to conclude the treaty, if you are firmly convinced of using weapons in response, then there will be war and this is not an ultimatum rather it is reality.

Fulbright, the chairman of the US Senate Commission on Foreign Affairs, is an intelligent man, and does not want a military confrontation. US Senator Mansfield opposes war too and his statements were criticized when he expressed his views. Basically I think that he only reported 80% of Kennedy's thoughts, the problem is that Kennedy cannot openly say such things. I understand these statements, they are reasonable. We do not want to create a war psychosis, rather we would like to create the conditions for a round table of negotiations, for the conclusion of a peace treaty. Let's force those who want war to behave properly and then we can also talk about trade.

FANFANI: In your words there is an issue over which our opinions totally diverge. You say you want to reach a peace treaty, which raises the question of the deadlines as well as of the participating countries. If you say: I will immediately conclude a peace treaty, then you create an unpleasant situation with all its consequences. By contrast, if you say: it is absolutely necessary to escape this state of war, to reach a peace treaty and therefore to immediately start negotiations, then it would be a different thing. You mentioned statements by influential US personalities, which in your opinion expressed Kennedy's point of view.

KHRUSHCHEV: I think so, even though it has been publicly denied.

FANFANI: I heard that it has been publicly denied. During my last stay in the US I spoke at length with Fulbright, he is a reasonable man.

KHRUSHCHEV: I know Fulbright too, during our trip in the US we have met with the Committee on Foreign Affairs, which he presides and I was favorably impressed by him.

FANFANI: The facts you mentioned show that the situation is serious, however I think that, to a certain extent, it is still possible to be optimistic. Such optimism depends on the willingness of all the world's countries but the key factor is Khrushchev and Russia's will. I do not think that the threats we talked about will be implemented, but we cannot expose ourselves to the risk of disregarding some statements, communications and public speeches. The CPSU's twenty years development program will be impossible to realize, if the most important point, the defense of peace, will not be included.

KHRUSHCHEV: Actually, it is in our program.

FANFANI: That is why I mentioned it, because I know that the need for peace is sanctioned there. This fact should be emphasized in all its aspects, because it is an extremely important question.

KHRUSHCHEV: Anyway if you think that we are willing to surrender to threats, then you are wrong. I wanted to include a paragraph in the program which clearly states: as long as capitalist countries exist, it would be necessary to strengthen the Soviet armed forces, because imperialism might attack us, and it might want to solve controversial political and ideological issues through the use of force. To avert such an eventuality, we need a strong army. If the imperialists want to attack us, we will accept the challenge.

FANFANI: I am convinced that no one wants to attack you.

KHRUSHCHEV: What does it mean, nobody wants to attack us? Kennedy explicitly talked about this, and the US War Minister McNamara even calculated how many divisions would be necessary for such a purpose.

FANFANI: Malinowski too calculated the means necessary for a military attack.

KHRUSHCHEV: Malinowski spoke about this only to me, conversely McNamara made it publicly.

FANFANI: The advantage of your system is that you can discuss certain issues confidentially, while in America they immediately leak.

KHRUSHCHEV: If necessary, I will make them public.

FANFANI: I hope that such a need will occur as late as possible, possibly never.

KHRUSHCHEV: If I will not do it, then you will think you scared us.

FANFANI: Should my presence lead to make public such conversations, albeit indirectly, I would deeply regret coming here.

KHRUSHCHEV: It is not your visit, rather it is Kennedy's behavior. Had these issues been resolved, I would not need to make any speech. Actually, between us there is no controversy, you must, so to speak, suffer on behalf of your friends.

FANFANI: Let me conclude this way: in this difficult moment we must all maintain a strong sense of responsibility, therefore I propose to close the discussion on the international issues, you clearly expressed your position, and we thank you for it.

KHRUSHCHEV: Let me please make one last remark. You said it would be better to avoid setting an irrevocable deadline for the negotiations, that it would be necessary to reach an agreement between all the stakeholders and that it would be fair to take into account the counterpart's views during the negotiations. Westerners, your allies, more or less think this way: the peace treaty will be signed when Germany will be reunited once again and a single government will be able to sign it, which means that there will be no peace treaty, as De Gaulle, for example, opposes Germany's reunification, although he does not openly say it. This reminds me of an anecdote circulating in the early days of our revolution. In those days there were some

excesses in the anti-religious propaganda and in the questionnaires distributed to the employees there were many unnecessary questions, including this: do you believe in God? Some of them answered "At home yes, but not on duty." Today De Gaulle speaks in a very similar way when asked: "Do you support the German reunification?" he says "At home no, on duty, yes". This means that in the event that these conditions - the reunification of Germany, its self-determination, a unitary government - will be raised during the negotiations, we will issue a declaration and subsequently we will abandon the negotiations. These would be the conditions imposed by Adenauer, even if he would not be physically present at the negotiating table. If someone will tell us: confederation, confederative government, then we will negotiate. This confederative government could even be called to sign the peace treaty, even though we would prefer it signed by you and both the German states. This is the subject of the negotiation, reunification is a German internal affair, and we will not discuss it. Hence we say: if Western powers renounce to the peace treaty, then we will conclude it with those states who want to realistically see things, do not favor any border's modification and conversely want to crystallize the situation as it is today.

FANFANI: Obviously we are not entitled to decide in someone else's place, most of all given that we are talking about one of our allies. Nevertheless we think that some of your statements justify some hope.

(Khrushchev tells Fanfani a funny story circulating among sailors of the Baltic fleet concerning the division of Germany, the issue of reunification and Adenauer's inability to reach it)

I would like to address another issue. Among other things, you spoke about the good economic relations between our countries. I share this view and I think we should further expand our commercial relationships. Anyone who thinks this way, definitely does not prepare a war.

On the cultural level, after some initial difficulties, our contacts are positively developing; our ambassador Straneo together with the Minister of Culture Furtseva are currently examining a new set of initiatives and we think that the bilateral relations in this field will improve. In your toast you recalled the hundredth anniversary of the Italian unification and I think that a group of Soviet historians could visit our showroom in Turin, which is dedicated to this event; moreover we welcome any Soviet proposal concerning economic and cultural exchanges.

KHRUSHCHEV: At the moment I do not have any concrete proposal. Generally speaking I favor an intensification of contacts, because it would strengthen peace. As for the visit to Turin of our historians, we believe that it is a useful initiative and we support it and concerning this, perhaps an official invitation from Italy would be helpful.

FANFANI: The invitation will certainly follow, especially given that the Exhibition's president is one of your acquaintances, that is former Minister of Foreign Affairs Pella. He will immediately send you an invitation.

KHRUSHCHEV: As far as we know, I do not think that Pella has fully sympathized with us during his visit to Moscow with President Gronchi.

FANFANI: No, he will immediately invite you. I almost forgot to mention that the president of the historical section of the exhibition is my colleague Segni.

KHRUSHCHEV: Then everything will be easier. I must confess that, had someone else come in his place, our contacts would have been more friendly. On that occasion Pella

acted as a kind of evil genius.

FANFANI: Maybe you should not speak this way before Segni, given that at that time he was President of the Council of Ministers.

KHRUSHCHEV: Then I think that Pella did not follow President Segni's directives. However, we bear him no grudge, we want peace, a treaty with Germany and good relations with you. Moreover, ultimately nothing special happened with Pella.

FANFANI: Me and my colleague Segni are both convinced that Pella will warmly welcome the Soviet delegation in Turin. I would also like to raise the issue of the war prisoners and in doing this I was encouraged by your stories and the warm human understanding you demonstrated when talking about the Italian pilots taken prisoners.

KHRUSHCHEV: Yes, they were good guys, if I had their address, I would write them; maybe they remember me, even though they did not know me by name: prisoners cannot know the name of the interrogators. I remember that one of them had a black eye, because our soldiers beat him when they captured them. I apologized on their behalf with the pilot and he answered me that war is war and that you do not risk only a black eye, but your very head and neck and he was definitely right.

FANFANI: These words help me to get back on the issue, which I will briefly and respectfully explain. It deeply touches our people and by experience we know that its solution would remove an obstacle that still stands in the way to the further development of relations between our countries. During President Gronchi's visit in Moscow an agreement was signed, by virtue of which the search for prisoners of war would be carried out jointly by the Italian and the Soviet Red Cross, provided it was still possible to find someone. Part of the work has already been done, having the Italian Red Cross already sent to the Soviet Red Cross and Red Crescent about 2000 cards of Italian prisoners of war, whose death was not confirmed. However the operations proceeded slowly as we received a response only for 600 of these cards and we were not notified about the place of death, nor about other details which might have been indicated.

On behalf of the Italian Government, I ask the Soviet government to kindly try to speed up the Soviet Red Cross' task and, if possible, to provide more information on death certificates than it has been actually done up to this moment.

KHRUSHCHEV: Which list is it?

FANFANI: It is a list of prisoners of war, which according to some sources were still alive in 1945.

KHRUSHCHEV: How did you know that they were still alive?

FANFANI: We knew it thanks to postcards and letters, as well as information provided by fellow soldiers who returned from captivity. Therefore we ask you to speed up the verifications and to communicate with the Italian embassy in Moscow for any other inquiry.

KHRUSHCHEV: First of all I must say that there are no prisoners in our country, you cannot harbor any illusion about this.

FANFANI: We know it, we know that they are dead, but we ask you to help us discover

exactly where and how our soldiers died, so that we can inform the families about their relatives' fate.

KHRUSHCHEV: I think we can do it.

FANFANI: Thank you very much.

KHRUSHCHEV: I fought in World War Two and I know how important are feelings. The Germans have carefully buried their dead; during our advance we found entire cemeteries with graves of German soldiers. We urged our people and our soldiers to keep these graves. Personally I believed that it could help people understand what does it mean to conduct a military campaign against Russia; anyway the soldiers and the whole population were so angry that all the cemeteries were razed to the ground and today the tombs are impossible to find.

FANFANI: If somewhere in Russia, there are still graves of Italian soldiers who have died not on the battlefield, but inwards - not so many I guess - could you send the remains in Italy? A similar practice has been adopted between Italy and other countries, including socialist states, naturally only if it is still possible. Our experience tells us that this way we could clear the bad feelings that still persist after the war. Could you do the same if possible?

KHRUSHCHEV: I agree with you, but I openly tell you that it will be difficult, almost impossible. I must emphasize that here the cult of dead people is quite weak, even though I have a different idea on this matter. Here sometimes you barely can find the graves of our dead soldiers. I would be happy to fulfill your request, but I am afraid that it is physically impossible. In any case we welcome your complaint and we will do what we can.

FANFANI: We are very grateful for that and I apologize for raising this issue. I know that, given that you have lost your son during war, it is quite unpleasant for you to remember these things and I assure you that I did it in a spirit of great respect and consideration for you.

KHRUSHCHEV: I tell you very frankly that I quietly listened to your request only because during these days we developed a good relationship and because I noticed that you are truly interested in peace and the well-being of your people, but you must understand. Which kind of feelings can such requests cause us? I could tell you: once you came here with weapons in your hands and you wounded us, now you get back to us with these claims. I could have replied: the one who comes here with the sword, will die by the sword. I did not say this because I see that you came with good intentions and therefore we will do what we can. At the time we also accepted President Gronchi's request because he talked to us in a very human way, otherwise we would have said: go ask for your dead to Hitler and Mussolini.

I would like to address another issue. We are ready to expand our trade with you and we can also increase our oil exports. If you buy a larger quantity of oil from us, then we could increase our orders to the Italian industries and we could also buy new products. At the moment I do not have any concrete proposal, but if you agree we could instruct the authorities in charge to address these trade issues.

If we release a joint statement on our meetings, we could say that our exchange of views concerned also the economic relations and the parties have expressed their common desire to expand their trade relations, even in the long term.

FANFANI: In our trade exchange with other countries, including yours, we must

maintain a certain balance. At the moment we buy from the USSR much more than we sell, if we do not conclude an agreement for the sale of ships to the USSR, we will close our balance in deficit. Anyway I think that there are good chances of trade development.

KHRUSHCHEV: Trade is not a problem, you can buy only what you need, our relationship will not worsen for this reason. If you are interested, we will show our interest too.

(KOSYREW, Soviet Ambassador to Italy, makes some statements about the oil-tanker the USSR bought from Italy and on the negotiations for the purchase of other vessels).

I have to say that we intend to increase our commercial fleet and if you are interested, then we will utilize even your building sites. We currently make a good use of our naval building sites and we recently managed to build a large fleet for hunting whales, because we limited our warships' production. We believe that the navy has had its day. Currently we build coasters and atomic-powered U-Boat with ballistic missiles and torpedoes. While in the past U-Boat ships could strike up to 5 km maximum, today torpedoes can strike against targets hundreds of miles away.

FANFANI: Minister Segni will find this much more interesting, given that he lives on an island, by contrast I live in the mountains.

KHRUSHCHEV: If Minister Segni lives on an island, then he should build his house as far away as possible from the coast. We will attack the harbors, because we do not want to give the opponent the chance to employ against us his warships. We are dealing with a sea opponent and therefore we must destroy its harbors and its lines of communication and the submarine fleet will take care of this task.

I revealed a General Staff secret, please do not report this to your allies. Are there still issues to be addressed?

FANFANI: No.

KHRUSHCHEV: I want to thank you once again for coming to Moscow. We appreciated your honesty and your good intentions. I think that the exchange of views of these days was useful for both of us. All our efforts are directed towards peace and friendship among peoples, we are not looking for allies against other countries. We want to maintain good relations with you as well as with all the others. We believe that if we will have the wisdom to resolve the German question, the situation will improve worldwide. McCloy briefly told me that Germany is a bad tooth that needs to be cured, I suggested to remove the tooth and many Americans understand this very well, but I will not get back to this issue. Thanks once again for your visit, we hope that next time you will stay for a longer period. We will be happy to show you our land so that you will see the way those you call "the slaves of communism" live. The choice of the social order is a matter of taste: you love macaroni, we love borscht, but of course we will not go at war for this.

FANFANI: I agree with your positive assessment of our visit. I consider not only a duty but a pleasure to thank you for the invitation and for your welcome. We carefully listened to what you said, although we did not always agree with your views. The one who participates to a meeting should pay attention to its counterpart: the truth rises from discussions, as we think that no one owns the absolute truth. We came to Moscow because we are sincerely interested in peace and we are willing to improve the relations between our countries and we will use what we heard here in the interest of both these aims. As you can see, we did not want to open any unnecessary

controversy, we did not mention our beliefs which, as you know, are not communist; we believe in the development of the individual and we believe in our social and religious order. We think that you can bring welfare to humanity and we try to do everything that is possible to achieve the aims of peace and prosperity. With this spirit we came here and with the same spirit we are preparing to leave. I would like to express the wish that the exchange of views we began may continue here, in Italy or elsewhere. Obviously we have more consideration for our allies than for you, therefore we would like them to take advantage from our meeting. The most important conclusion we drew is that the eventuality of negotiations has not been rejected; we did not draw the conclusion that the issue of negotiations is already settled, but I think we have good hopes.

I wish to reiterate that we came here on our own initiative, no one has sent us, nor it was our intention to test the ground or whatever. We frankly tried to understand each other as guides and representatives of our peoples... We are not leaving Moscow as pessimists, but as optimists. We leave with the specific belief in the necessity of working for the well-being of our people, which is also in the interest of all the other peoples of the earth. Nothing remains to be done, Mr Khrushchev and Soviet personalities, except inviting you for lunch at the Italian embassy.

(The conversation took place in the Kremlin between 10 a.m. and 1.15 p.m.)

REPORT OF THE CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN NIKITA SERGEI KHRUSHCHEV AND AMINTORE FANFANI ON THE WAY TO THE AIRPORT (August 5, 1961)

(KHRUSHCHEV says he takes into great consideration Fanfani's visit to the Soviet Union, and he says he is happy to have personally known the Italian statesman.

FANFANI thanks Khrushchev for the hospitality and the attention given to the Italian delegation and expresses his satisfaction for his meeting with Khrushchev).

FANFANI: Our meeting's results seem very encouraging to me. We are now sincerely convinced that neither you personally nor your government want a war. This is the most important conclusion we have drawn from our conversations. We understood the Soviet point of view on all issues raised during the talks and for our part we can only ask you and the Soviet government, in this complex phase of international relations, to show the utmost patience and prudence in solving problems which involve the whole world. We think that the German question should not be solved unilaterally, but with the participation of all the stakeholders.

KHRUSHCHEV: The Soviet Union tries to make sure that the German problem is solved through the participation of all the parties concerned. However, it should include the conclusion of a peace treaty and the definition of the issue of West Berlin, while the questions of reunification and of the self-determination should be totally dismissed. Concerning the German reunification only the Germans can and must decide, all the other states have nothing to do with it.

FANFANI: The Western countries' ambassadors tried to get information from us about the content of our conversations and the conclusions reached by the Italian delegation. I rejected their requests because I believe that such issues should be treated at the highest level and possibly through personal contacts. You can be sure that in the near future I will find a way to accurately communicate the Soviet Union's point of view to the leaders of the major Western powers, and first of all to Kennedy. Moreover, I assure you that Italy will make every effort to make sure that the Western powers reach an agreement with the Soviet Union on the German problem. Peace is so important that any attempt to preserve and consolidate it should not be neglected.

KHRUSHCHEV: Often it is much better to deal directly with the most senior statesmen. I personally believe that Kennedy will not wage war because of the peace treaty, because this would appear rather foolish and would not be understood by the earth's peoples: going to war only in order to strengthen peace!

However, Kennedy is mistaken if he allows some kind of collective war hysteria to spread in the United States and in the other Western countries. This propaganda machine, set in motion just for the sake of Adenauer's domestic political interests can lead to the brink of disaster. Today is already difficult to imagine what Kennedy could answer tomorrow to the question of why he started a war against the Soviet Union after it signed a peace treaty with Germany.

FANFANI: I agree about the fact that Kennedy has rushed a little bit. The most dangerous aspect of the American situation is that Kennedy is too young for the position he holds. Despite its shortcomings, Eisenhower enjoyed authority in the US as well as in other countries. Conversely Kennedy is encircled by many commissions of experts and, given his inexperience, he relies too heavily on them.

In the Cuba affair the United States made an even bigger mistake. I confidentially tell you that everything was ready for the biggest folly and that only Stevenson's personal intervention has prevented Kennedy from committing such a reckless act.

KHRUSHCHEV: I am familiar with Stevenson and I hold him in great esteem. Not always he has the chance to say what he thinks, but he still has a say. I agree with your assessment of the situation and the dangers that the President's young age could determine. We really enjoyed Dulles, obviously, in our way. He hated us but he did not want war and he was trusted in United States and elsewhere.

FANFANI: I will tell you frankly and confidentially that, if we were not so close to the German elections, we could soon propose a re-opening of negotiations on the German question. During my recent trip to the USA, Kennedy, at his wits' end, told me: "These elections in West Germany take place in the worst moment! Even now, everything could be different."

KHRUSHCHEV: I will answer to your revelations with the same confidence. Macmillan recently told me that, after the German elections, he will take appropriate steps to address the international situation. I do not mean to say that Macmillan stated that his opinions are different from those of Kennedy and De Gaulle on the international problems, even though I think so. However, as you can see, both Kennedy and Macmillan relate the worsening of the international situation with the approach of West Germany's elections: this intensification of the international tension is therefore short-termed.

FANFANI: This is a factor of weakness for Western leaders and I had occasion to notice it, because they meet in ten, they take decisions over any issue the way they understand it and they think that such decisions are good for everyone. But you, Mr. Khrushchev, can actually astonish them, because you address tens and hundreds of millions of men and you address issues that directly concern them. I would also like you not to forget what I told you during the lunch at the Italian embassy about how important it would be to achieve at least some understanding between the USSR and the Vatican; that would be a great achievement and a major contribution to the strengthening of peace.

KHRUSHCHEV: I remember your words.

FANFANI: In my opinion, which I think is shared by many Western politicians and observers, there is much in common between you and the Pope. You both have great

foresight and a high degree of understanding concerning social and international problems and, generally, the problems of humanity.

KHRUSHCHEV (laughing): All in all I am not only a communist, I am also a man.

FANFANI (also laughing): Last April, during my visit to the Vatican, the Pope told me the same thing - that he is not only the Pope of Rome but he is also a man.

(Fanfani eventually asks to address a sensitive but important question - the Visit of N. S. Khrushchev in Italy).

I ask you to please understand me correctly. In my opinion if, in the near future, you should come to Italy, the same unfortunate incident which took place at the time of Hitler's visit could happen: the Pope left Rome in protest, arousing great fanfare. In case such an event would take place during your visit to Italy, that would not benefit neither the Soviet Union nor Italy or someone else.

(Fanfani apologizes for the unintentional and inappropriate analogy and adds that he could get back later on the hypothesis of Khrushchev's visit, after having worked on it. Khrushchev affirms that he totally understands Fanfani's words. He replies to Fanfani's positive observations about the warmth of Muscovites and of the citizens of Leningrad, as well as about the warm attitude they demonstrated towards Khrushchev and the other Soviet leaders. Khrushchev answers that it is not the result of the personal authority of this or that leader, rather it is the fruit of the CPSU and the Soviet government's policy).