

November 14, 1962

Memorandum of Large-Group Meeting of FRG Chancellor Adenauer and US President Kennedy, Washington

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<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/115399>

Summary:

A record of the large group meeting between U.S. President Kennedy, the F.R.G. Chancellor Adenauer and others in which they discuss the results of the Cuban Missile Crisis, that the situation as a whole is still ongoing, and what needs to be done to restore security to the situation.

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14 November 1962

Record of the large group meeting on 14 November 1962 in the morning between President Kennedy and the Chancellor.

President Kennedy opened the talk by indicating that the Cuban crisis is not yet over. According to American intelligence, the Soviets have probably removed all their missiles from Cuba. The Americans had confirmed 32 or 33 missiles in Cuba, but under the assumption that there could have been as many as 48 there. From the Soviet point of view, it is certainly better to transport the missiles back to the USSR on boats than to leave them in caves in Cuba which would lead to problems with the Cubans.

Another problem, continued the President, is the bombers and Soviet personnel. By the end of the week, we'd like to learn a bit more about the bombers.

The Chancellor asked if all Soviet technicians had left Cuba.

The President answered that we don't know exactly about the rocket experts. They could still be there.

The Chancellor said that the presence of the technicians would be a big issue, since they would want to have something to do.

The President joked that we unfortunately can't tell from the air, if someone is a missile expert or not.

Mr. Smith¹ answered "yes" when the Chancellor asked if all the missile-launchers had been removed. He added that the American experts had no doubts that the missiles have been removed. Eight ships took them. We photographed these ships from low altitudes and confirmed the rockets on deck.

The Chancellor asked how they got the rockets to Cuba.

Mr. Smith said they were below deck. On the return trip they were placed in haste on the deck. This is certainly not the best way to handle missiles. The Americans photographed every ship and counted 42 rockets...

President Kennedy concluded that as far as one could verify, the missiles have left Cuba...

President Kennedy stated that the US had succeeded in having its way on Cuba, because it had superior conventional and nuclear forces. The situation in Berlin is not the same. One must have the same possibilities in Europe. In Cuba the US was in a position to play the whole gamut of conventional and nuclear forces. It must be our goal to strengthen both Western conventional and nuclear forces, both in general and particularly in regard to Berlin.

The Chancellor said that he shared this interpretation fully.

The Chancellor then asked the President if he knew anything about Khrushchev's present state of health. He had heard that that recently Khrushchev had been drinking diligently [fleissig].

The President answered that people say bad things about all heads of government. Sir Frank Roberts [the British ambassador in Moscow] had even reported during their short talk that Khrushchev looked tired, but then perked up.

The Chancellor asked again if Khrushchev was drinking again.

Ambassador [Llewellyn E.] Thompson, asked by President Kennedy for information, stated that Khrushchev does drink a little sometimes. In general, he is in good condition.

The Chancellor points out that Khrushchev was a drunk [Saufer]. He stopped drinking, but started again. We should put his health and psychological state under observation.

The Chancellor continued that he shares the President's wish to see the free peoples stronger, both in nuclear and conventional weapons. This matter lies close to his heart [am Herzen liegen].

Then, turning to NATO...

[1] Ed. note: Not further identified; possibly Abbott E. Smith of the Board of National Estimates of the Central Intelligence Agency.