

Leo S. LARD

Confidential

Conversation with K on October 5 1960

Recorded from memory on October 9  
on the basis of notes made on the  
day of the conversation.

I started out by saying that some time, when his time permits, I would like to have a leisurely conversation with him on the question of what the real issues are, the kind of thoughtful conversation which one cannot have if one is in a hurry. I said that today, even though time might be very limited, I would still hope to talk about a few serious matters but, perhaps first I could take a minute and talk in a somewhat lighter vein.

I said that I had brought him a sample of the Schick Injecto razor, which is not an expensive razor but is very good. The blade must be changed after one or two weeks and the blades I brought with me should last for about six months. Thereafter, if he would let me know that he likes the razor, I would send him from time to time fresh blades, but this I can do, of course, only as long as there is no war.

K said that if there is a war he will stop shaving, and he thinks that most other people will stop shaving also.

I said that I was somewhat distressed to see that, during his stay in New York, he stressed only the points where he was in disagreement with American statesmen and that I thought he might have found a few points on which he was in agreement with American statesmen. K asked what points I had in mind and I told him that he might have said, for instance, that he was in agreement with Senator Kennedy on everything that Kennedy was saying about Nixon and he could have added that he was in agreement with everything that Nixon was saying - about Kennedy.

Turning to more serious matters, I gave him a Russian translation of a short letter which I had written him immediately before the interview, a copy of the letter which he wrote me from Moscow, and a Russian translation of a letter which I had received from William C. Foster, to whom I have transmitted K's letter.

After he had read through these documents, I said that I was convinced that, irrespective of whether Kennedy or Nixon is elected, an attempt will be made to look for constructive solutions of the problems. K said that he believes that also.

I said that some time when it might be possible to have a longer conversation I

would like to discuss with him certain points and that, in preparation for such a conversation, I have written a 7-page memorandum of which I have a Russian translation also available. He asked to see this memorandum. I gave it to him, he read it and said there was nothing in this memorandum to which he could object and it showed to him that I did understand quite well the true nature of some of the difficulties.

I asked him whether there was any point in the memorandum which he would particularly like to discuss since we would not have time to cover them all and he said that he would leave this choice to me. Since I did not know how long the conversation would last, I thereupon took up these points in their order of importance rather than in the logical order in which they are listed in the memorandum, but in reproducing the conversation here I find it easier to reconstruct the conversation by taking point after point in their logical order.

Our conversation started at 11 a.m. and went on until we had covered all the points raised in the memorandum; by this time it was 1 o'clock. I had repeatedly asked the Ambassador, who was sitting next to me, whether we should terminate the conversation and *each* he said: *each* 'why not just go on'. After we had covered all the points and also discussed some additional topics which emerged in the conversation, I terminated the conversation at 1 p.m. I told K at that point that I would like to show him now how to insert the blade into the Schick Injecto razor and how to open the razor when it is to be cleaned. After this was done, K said that he too would like to give me a present and how would I feel about his sending me a case of vodka. I said that if I could, I would like to have something better than vodka. He asked me what I had in mind and I said: 'Borzumi'. He said that they had two different kinds of mineral water and that he would send me samples of both.

Two days later, I received a case, packed with two kinds of mineral water, samples of canned food, caviar, and three smoked fish (with the compliments of K and his wish for a speedy recovery).

*(of my memorandum)*  
In discussing paragraphs 5 and 6, I told K that, among my colleagues, those who believed that America might have to fight a war by using small atomic bombs against troops in combat were, by and large, the same as those who pressed for a continuation of the bomb

tests. K. said that Russia was not thinking in terms of using small atomic bombs against troops in combat because to prepare for this type of warfare would be too expensive and very complicated. K. added that the Russians were not interested in underground bomb tests because the large bombs could not be tested underground and they had no intention of developing the small bombs.

Concerning paragraph 8, I told him that, up to a year ago, private citizens in America were not very much interested in any serious study of the problems of disarmament. Two years ago, when a group of M.I.T. and Harvard Faculty members wanted to set up a Summer Study, they were not able to obtain the necessary funds from either the Ford Foundation or the Rockefeller Foundation. This year, however, the Twentieth Century Fund appropriated an adequate amount of money to carry out such a study.

I told K. that I have not yet seen the result of that study, but, even assuming that it was a very good study and that its results would be published in book form, it still would not be likely that it would be widely read or have much influence.

Therefore it occurred to me that perhaps K. ought to write a book on this subject and publish it in America. I explained to K. that what I had in mind was not a blueprint for disarmament in the form of a draft agreement which would then more or less bind his government, but rather a thoughtful book which would point out what the real difficulties were and list various possible approaches to the various issues involved. K. said that this might be a good idea but he would want to think more about it.

About half way through our conversation, he came back to this point and said that he now thinks that such a book could be more lively and useful if a group of private American citizens <sup>(were to)</sup> put forward their ideas on this subject, and put them perhaps even in the form of a draft agreement, and sent this material to him. He would then comment on it and describe where he saw difficulties and what kind of solutions might be acceptable to Russia and what kind of solutions might not be acceptable. He thought that such an exchange of views could then be published and might be a lively and interesting book.

I said that, in order to get a good book, it would be necessary to follow up the exchange of views by finally getting together to revise the manuscript, leave out all

extraneous material and leave off all the questions which did not result in some constructive suggestion. K. thought that there was no reason why one should not do this.

I said that I saw another difficulty inasmuch as the American participants would be private citizens, whose views <sup>would</sup> ~~is~~ not necessarily reflect the thinking of the Government, whereas what he would say would be taken as an expression of the views of the Soviet Government. K thought that this was a difficulty but not sufficiently serious to make the project impossible.

I said that I would discuss this matter with my colleagues and see what kind of material we could get together and send to him, in order to get such <sup>an</sup> <sub>h</sub> "exchange of views" started.

Concerning paragraphs 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13, and in particular the underlined passage in paragraph 11, K said that he believed he understood what those passages meant, that he wholeheartedly accepted the underlined passage and that, if there is any doubt that we mean the same thing, I could write out a statement covering this point and he would read it and sign the statement if it says what he now thinks it will say. He said that, if I wanted to do this, we could do it right away. I said that I would rather not do this right away because it might use up all of our time and there were other points still to which I would very much like to get his response.

When we started to discuss paragraph 14 of my memorandum, he read from my memorandum a sentence from this paragraph which reads: "Clearly, a world police force, under the central command of the Secretary General of the United Nations, would not be acceptable to the Soviet Union in the present circumstances and it might not be acceptable to the United States in the circumstances that might prevail a few years hence."

K said that this sentence shows him that I understand where the difficulties lie and that one of these difficulties could be removed, in his opinion, by reorganizing the Secretariat of the U.N. I said that I was not certain whether the reorganization which he proposed would be workable from an administrative point of view and that I ~~had not thought~~ <sup>was not speaking for</sup> <sub>h</sub> about the broader <sup>the moment</sup> problem which is involved, but only about the specific question of how the

armed forces which might operate under United Nations' auspices might be set up in order to make them acceptable both to the Soviet Union and to America. K encouraged me to say what I had in mind in this regard and I thereupon said the following: Within a few years there might be a number of disturbed regions in the world where there would be a need for a United Nations police force. There might be three such regions or perhaps even six. Instead of thinking in terms of setting up a world police force operating under a central command, I believe that we should perhaps think in terms of setting up a number of regional police forces, one for each troubled region. Each such regional force should then be controlled by a slate of say five nations who, by majority vote, would appoint the commander-in-chief of the regional force. All such regional forces would operate under United Nations' auspices inasmuch as the slate of the five nations, in charge of a given region, would be selected by the Security Council and would need to have the approval of the majority of the Security Council, with the five permanent members of the Security Council concurring. Clearly, the selection of these slates would require negotiations among the Powers. America might agree not to veto a slate favored by Russia for a certain region if Russia would agree not to veto a slate favored by America for a certain other region. I stressed that it would be much easier for Americans to accept general disarmament if America could free herself from her commitments militarily to protect regions which are geographically remote from America, by turning over this responsibility to police forces operating under the United Nations.

Prior to the advent of the atomic bomb, America's military sphere of influence did not extend to remote regions of the world and the same was true also for Russia. If there are long-range rockets and bombs available to America and Russia, they can extend their sphere of military influence to any part of the world. If there is general disarmament, then once more Russia's and America's sphere of influence will shrink and, as far as direct military influence goes, it will be limited to areas lying in their own geographical proximity. If there are no long-range rockets and bombs, Russia would be in no position to protect Cuba against a possible American military intervention, nor would America be in a position to protect, say, Turkey or South Korea against a possible military intervention.

If there were set up regional police forces under the United Nations and America and Russia have influence on the selection of the slate of nations who are in control of the various regional forces then, in some sense, to a certain extent remote regions might come within the sphere of influence of America and Russia.

K said that this is precisely what he would be afraid of and that he would fear that the nations in the region where such a regional force operates would come under the control of the nations who controlled the police force. I said that, while the Great Powers might be able to exert a certain amount of influence in such regions, at least their control would not be direct but rather indirect.

I did not want to belabour this point any further because what I tried to do was to reach a meeting of the minds with K on what the real issues <sup>were</sup>, and ~~it would have been foolish to attempt~~ <sup>I did not want</sup> to go further and to try to reach a meeting of the minds on any specific solutions of the issues.

I told K that I would like to get his guidance on just what subjects it might be worth taking up in informal discussions with Russian scientists at this time and I specifically asked about the following point: those in America who try to devise a set of rules under which a rocket may be launched are guided by two considerations. One is to safeguard the rocket launching base against a surprise attack which would make it impossible for America to strike a counter blow; the other is to eliminate the possibility of the launching of the rocket through an accident or through an unauthorized action of a local commander. The difficulty to reconcile these two requirements is particularly great in the case of reliance on submarines equipped for the launching of rockets and discussion of this issue with our Russian colleagues would necessarily be highly technical and it could lead to constructive suggestions only if we met the Russian scientists who are specifically concerned with this problem. <sup>PP</sup> K said that he did not see why it would be necessary to become so technical. After all, what does it matter just how the rocket is constructed and through what device it is launched, and therefore he did not see much point for us to get into such a discussion. When I told K that the subject of discussion would be not how rockets are launched but the set of rules which would need to be laid down by the Soviet Government and the American Government, in order to minimize the danger of an accidental attack, K said that this might perhaps be a useful thing to discuss.

Concerning the second half of paragraph 16 of my memorandum K said that the installation of such a telephone connection might be of value, particularly if it becomes necessary to dispel quickly doubts which might arise in connection with some manoeuvre. K said that, just before he embarked on the Baltika, an American manoeuvre was reported to him, about which there was some doubt, which forced him to order "rocket readiness" and he added that, incidentally, this readiness has still not been rescinded? I told

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\*Footnote: I felt that it would not be proper for me to ask what American manoeuvre was responsible for this action. Instead, after the interview was over, I contacted Charles Bohlen in New York and reported to him the statement that K made to me. Bohlen said that the same statement had been made by K in public and that they knew about it.

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I told K that two considerations could be cited in favor of having such a telephone connection installed; one is that the availability of such a telephone connection could be useful and perhaps vital in case of an emergency, and the second consideration is that the installation of such a telephone connection would dramatize the continued presence of a danger which will stay with us as long as the long-range rockets and bombs are retained. K said that he would be willing to have such telephone connections installed if the President is willing to have them. I said that I did not see how the President of the United States could object to a telephone. K said that he himself finds it difficult to get away from telephones, and even when he is at the beach they mount a telephone on the beach and the only way he can then escape the telephone is to go into the water.

Concerning paragraph 17 of my memorandum, I told K that one of the most important tasks of the informal discussions that we hope to hold in November and December would be to try to discover what would have to be the nature of the first major step of arms reduction and how far this step would have to go in order to make it possible for Russia to accept satisfactory safeguards against secret evasions. I told K that I am concerned whether we would be able to meet, through our present contacts, those Russian scientists with whom this point could be successfully discussed, and that I would look to him for guidance on reaching those advisers of the Soviet Government who

would be competent to discuss this problem with us. I told K that I know that I can reach him when he is in America through the Soviet Ambassador in Washington and I asked him how I could contact him when I am in Moscow. "Who is the Soviet Ambassador in Moscow?" - I asked. K said that Topchiev, the General Secretary of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, will be able to arrange all the contacts that we might want.

Finally, I asked K whether he would like to discuss the issue of Berlin and he said "why not?". I told him that my concern with this issue stems from my concern about American commitments for the defence of geographically remote areas which might make it impossible for America to accept general disarmament, unless America can free herself from commitments of this type without loss of prestige. I said that, in discussing this issue, I would start out with three facts, the first being that members of the German Bundestag very much disliked living in Bonn and would much prefer to live in Munich. The second is that to many people in Europe the vision of a united Germany with Berlin as its capital is something of a nightmare. K said that that vision is a nightmare for Adenauer also. I said that I was well aware of that fact. The third fact, I said, was that the Soviet Union has suggested that West Germany and East Germany might form a confederation. K interposed to say that this was suggested by East Germany and the Soviet Union merely expressed its approval.

*P* I said to K that, in <sup>view of these facts</sup> ~~these circumstances~~, perhaps one could arrive at a solution of the Berlin problem without loss of prestige either for the East or for the West by proceeding as follows: East Germany might offer to shift its capital from East Berlin to Dresden on condition that West Germany shifts its capital from Bonn to Munich. If that is done, then it would become possible to create two free cities: East Berlin and West Berlin, and there might be formed a confederation between East Berlin and West Berlin with a view of perhaps forming, at some later time, a similar confederation between East Germany and West Germany.



I said that one of the merits of this type of solution of the Berlin issue would be that it would free America from any specific commitment to Berlin without loss of prestige either for the West or the East. K appeared to get the point even though he said that he could not very well ask Grotewohl to shift the capital of East Germany away from East Berlin.

I told K that we now had covered all the points raised by my memorandum and there was only one major issue left which I should like to discuss with him on some suitable occasion. Inasmuch as the world might have to live with the so-called atomic stalemate for an indefinite number of years, it is very important that both the Soviet Government and the American Government fully understand the nature of that stalemate. I did not think that this was the case at present. Therefore I have written a little book - "The Voice of the Dolphins" - which describes how the nature of the atomic stalemate may change in the course of the years to come and lead to a situation which may force disarmament on a reluctant world. In this book I give the "history" of the next twenty-five years. I have picked the course of events which I describe for the purpose of demonstrating what it would take to go through the next twenty-five years and end up with disarmament, without going through an atomic war. I am afraid it is more likely that events may take another course which is less pleasant to contemplate.

Because most statesmen are too busy to read a book, I have prepared an excerpt, consisting of a straight narration of the history of next twenty-five years. This Excerpt can be read in about one hour and ten minutes. I am going to have it translated into Russian and if Mr. K. would want to take the time to have it read to him in my presence, he could stop at any point and ask me why I am saying what I am saying. K. said to go ahead and have the Russian translation of the Excerpt prepared and he would be my first reader in the Soviet Union.

*The End*