

February 27, 1963

**President Kennedy to Honorable William Tyler
[Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs]
and Honorable Paul Nitze [Assistant Secretary of
Defense for International Security Affairs]**

Citation:

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Summary:

In a memorandum to senior officials at the Departments of Defense and State, President Kennedy expressed doubts over whether West Germany would abide by the non-nuclear weapons commitment that West German Chancellor Adenauer had made in 1954. Also mentioned in the memorandum is Kennedy's description of a meeting with West German defense minister Kai-Uwe von Hassell to discuss these concerns; von Hassell assured the President that West Germany would not go on any "nuclear adventures."

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MEMORANDUM FOR

THE HONORABLE WILLIAM TYLER
THE HONORABLE PAUL NITZE

The President dictated the attached memorandum after his conversation with Minister von Hassel, and asked me to send you a copy for most limited handling within your Department.

McGeorge Bundy

~~TOP SECRET ATTACHMENT~~

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 27, 1963

MEMORANDUM FROM THE PRESIDENT

I talked with von Hassel at the conclusion of our meeting privately.

I asked him whether the Federal Republic would join with France in a joint nuclear program or whether there was strong pressure for the Federal Republic to develop its own nuclear force.

He informed me that he did not believe that the French, who are "seeking the leadership of Europe", would ask the Germans and if they did he would be opposed and feels his colleagues believe the same to joining the French. He stated that after the history of the last thirty years, that it would be a great mistake for the Germans to engage in a nuclear development of this kind, that it would be bound to create a great increase in tension and they are not inclined to partake of this "adventure".

His assurances were flat.

Copies to: Mr. Bundy
Mr. Nitze
Mr. Tyler

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