

Pre-Press Conference - May 11, 1960



This was the week after the U-2 incident and some of the preparatory material had gone on with the Secretary of State and a very few others.

When I came into the room Jim Hagerty was mentioning a few related questions that might come up: Mr. Khrushchev's warning that he would send rockets to our allied nations; statement by the Department of State that the United States would of course live up to commitments to our allies; how the incident will affect the Summit; the report given out over the weekend (apparently not true) that the President had given orders to ground all flights near Russia.

Bob Donovan will ask a question about the Vice President going to the Summit, if the President is called back, and the President will then clarify statement that if he has to come back to the United States for a couple of days, he will return to Europe if there seems to be reasonable progress to make such a return hopeful.

The President was reminded that Mr. Khrushchev had said recently that the Vice President was a man you could not trust to keep the world peace. In this connection, the President may say, "Mr. Khrushchev has not asked me what I think of any people in the Soviet Union."

Underground nuclear testing statement. The statement issued last Saturday has produced some confusion; the President will clarify. Any nuclear tests will be carried on under the aegis of the three nations, United States, USSR and Great Britain. Negotiations still going on in Geneva.

Korea. If asked about seeing Syngman Rhee, the President will say that he would like to see Mr. Rhee if the present government officials approve and if the opportunity presents itself. General Persons questioned the statement about "present government officials" but the President said he never would see anyone such as Rhee unless the government in power approved.

Russian trip. The President will say he still plans to go. He reminded us what Mr. Khrushchev had said, however, when he was here to the effect that the reception the President would get would depend upon whether he, Mr. K., "winked an eye."

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