dictator Joseph Mobutu). After Mobutu's downfall, in 1997, the name was changed to Democratic Republic of the Congo. [GS]

29. No secretary general of the UN was elected in 1960. Khrushchev suggested to Hammarskjold that he resign, but Hammarskjold refused. [SK]

30. U Thant (1909–74) was acting secretary general of the UN in 1961–62 and secretary general of the UN from 1962 to 1971. See Biographies.

31. Dag Hammarskjold died in a plane crash while on a peace mission to the Congo in 1961. [SS]

32. This is a reference to the expulsion of the Soviet Union from the League of Nations on December 15, 1939, in connection with the Soviet Union's war against Finland.

33. It seems that Macmillan said this, not in Geneva, but in Paris, at the time of the failed summit meeting in May 1960, as Khrushchev described in the previous chapter. [GS]

34. The Soviet leaders at that time apparently did not consider the U.S. presence in Puerto Rico, the Panama Canal Zone, Guantanamo Bay, the Philippines, and so on, that of a "colonial" power. [GS]

35. The balcony was apparently just above the street, on the second floor of the building. [GS]

JOHN KENNEDY AND THE BERLIN WALL

The time came for the election of a new president in the United States, in autumn [November] 1960. Eisenhower had served his maximum two terms. When I was in the United States, he commented to me that his term in the White House would soon be ending. I asked him whether he thought it possible to remain for a third term and wondered whether there was an organization that might propose his candidacy. There had been such precedents. "No, no," he answered, "I'm fed up to the teeth with this job. I don't want to be president anymore. Besides, as a general rule that [seeking a third term] shouldn't be done. I want to end my political career." I think his answer was sincere. His authority was very high then in the United States, and if he had wanted to, he could have been elected to a third term, like Franklin Roosevelt. It's true that, as Eisenhower explained, World War II was still going on then [when Roosevelt was elected to a third term], and the people wanted Roosevelt to remain in his post. So he agreed to have his candidacy put forward a third time. Now, however, under a law passed after what happened with Roosevelt, a president is not allowed to have a third term.

Among the candidates nominated for president were: Eisenhower's protégé and vice president, Nixon; and from the Democratic Party, Kennedy and Stevenson.[1] The election campaign began. Eisenhower personally spoke in support of Nixon, and that was very weighty support. For the Soviet Union all the candidates were the same. They all stood in favor of capitalism. It was clear that any of them would continue the same policies that Eisenhower had followed. But of course there were shades of difference, and some of them were

substantial. Eisenhower and Nixon were candidates of one and the same Republican Party, but there were differences between them, too. The former was more acceptable to us. As for John Kennedy, we didn't know much about him. It was said in the press, incidentally, that he had an excellent mind. During my visit to the United States the Senate Foreign Relations Committee had organized a reception in my honor. The chairman of that committee had been Fulbright.[2] He introduced me to the others present, and when it came Kennedy's turn, Fulbright mentioned his name: "This is Senator John Kennedy." I shook his hand and said: "It's being said that a great future lies ahead of you." I always tried to say a few appropriate words to anyone I was introduced to. Our acquaintanceship went no further at that time. However, we knew that Kennedy differed from other congressmen in his ability to react to events quickly and sharply, his high level of education, and his tactfulness.

Stevenson came to the Soviet Union, and I met with him, but I had especially warm meetings with him at Roswell Garst's farm.[3] Garst and Stevenson had told me at various times that they were friends. At the farm we were photographed together, standing with our arms around one another's shoulders as we posed for the reporters and photographers. Mr. Stevenson had a friendly attitude toward the Soviet Union and thought improvement in our relations was necessary.

Naturally, for us, his candidacy was the most acceptable, but the Democratic Party failed to nominate him—on the grounds that he had lost the election twice and they didn't want to risk losing it a third time. It would be hard for me to try and judge on behalf of the voters of the United States. Besides, I understand that the voting public there is very fickle. When working people vote for a candidate, they are giving him real power, but in doing this they vote for people who pursue policies that are not in agreement with the interests of the workers themselves. Judging from our own class positions, the president of the United States carries out policies in behalf of big capital, the monopolies. Clearly Stevenson would also pursue such policies. Still, the Democrats decided it would be better to place their bets on John Kennedy. He was a young man, and besides that, he was a millionaire. Stevenson, it seems, was not wealthy.

The race between the candidates grew heated. The Americans know how to wage intense presidential campaigns. It might have seemed that the contest between the Republicans and Democrats was over fundamental and vital issues, but the ruling capitalist circles know that when these candidates are put forward, regardless of which one is elected, the foundations of capitalism will not be shaken. When Nixon was nominated as the Republican candidate

and Kennedy as the Democratic candidate, we had more hopes for improvement in relations between our countries if the latter were to enter the White House. We had no great expectations for Nixon. His aggressiveness toward the USSR, the anti-Communism that he preached, and his former ties with the reactionary and obscurantist Senator Joseph McCarthy promised nothing good. He was the candidate of the reactionary circles.

When I had been Eisenhower's guest, as I have said, Henry Cabot Lodge accompanied me on trips around the country, and good relations were established between us. Lodge came to Moscow before the election campaign. He arrived, as I recall, simply as a tourist. He had not been invited by the Soviet government, and he made his trip on a "freelance" basis. Lodge asked to be received by me, and we met as old friends. I had many pleasant things to say to him because he had done everything he could to make my stay in the United States more comfortable. Our conversation went further. He tried to demonstrate to me that if Nixon were elected, our relations would not change. He said that Nixon was not really the person he sometimes pretended to be in the speeches he made at election rallies. "Mr. Khrushchev, you should pay no attention to these campaign speeches. Once he's in the White House the situation will be different. I'm sure the position he'll take will be for maintaining and even improving relations between the USSR and the USA."

Lodge had an interest in discouraging our press from attacking Nixon, because it was none other than Lodge himself who had been nominated as Nixon's vice-presidential candidate. This twosome wanted to enter the White House together. I think Lodge came to the Soviet Union at the urging of both Nixon and Eisenhower. They wanted him to talk with me because he and I had a good relationship. In general they wanted our press not to praise either of the candidates. "Your intervention in support of one or another candidate is not something we need. On the contrary, it would be harmful. Our request is that you maintain strict neutrality. Don't interfere in our internal affairs during the presidential elections." That is the course we were planning to follow anyhow. In general that is a sensible line to take. Still, inwardly our orientation was more in favor of the candidacy of John Kennedy.

At the culminating stage of the election campaign, just before the voting, the U.S. authorities officially requested that we release and send home Gary Powers [the U-2 pilot shot down on May 1, 1960], as well as the other airmen [from the RB-47] who had been taken captive after their plane had been shot down over the Barents Sea [on July 1, 1960].[4] Powers had already been tried and sentenced. His relatives had attended the trial. Everything had been done properly from the legal point of view in dealing with him. As for the other

two or three airmen, no agreement had been reached. Washington asked that we grant Powers an amnesty and simply turn the other airmen over to the U.S. government. That actually was our position, too. We didn't think it necessary to keep them in prison. But the timing of their release and return home had a certain political significance. When we received the appeal from Washington, I expressed my views, with which the other members of the Politburo agreed.[5] I said: "We shouldn't do this now, because the presidential candidates are trying to use this issue to their advantage, and voices can be heard on the radio saying that this or that candidate is better able to ensure good relations between the USA and the USSR." (In fact they said "with Khrushchev personally." The capitalist press always tries to single out a specific individual rather than emphasize the social position of this or that person, that is, the position they hold in their society.) "If we release the prisoners now, that will be to Nixon's advantage. Even the slightest shift that might tip the scales in his favor would not be good for us. Let's not take this step now, because I don't expect that our relations will improve if Nixon becomes president."[6]

We didn't release the prisoners then, and we were right not to, because in the end Kennedy won the election.[7] However, he won only by a slim margin, so that any fluctuation in the numbers could have worked to Nixon's advantage and he might very well have received the necessary number of votes. I said: "As soon as the new president is inaugurated, we will return their people [the captured airmen from the RB-47], but for the time being we will hope for a victory by Kennedy." And that's how things turned out. Later when I met with Kennedy at Vienna [on June 3–4, 1961], he and I talked and sometimes joked a little.

He was an intelligent man, and it was pleasant to converse with him. At one point I asked him: "Mr. Kennedy, do you know that we voted for you?"

He looked at me quizzically: "How so? How is that to be understood?"

I informed him about the appeal from Washington to Moscow just before the end of the election campaign, giving the exact date, and said that if we had returned Powers and the others at that point, it would have been considered an accomplishment of Nixon's.

He began to laugh and when he had collected himself he replied: "You've drawn the right conclusion. I agree that, just at that time, even the slightest shift in the balance could have been decisive. So I grant your point that you took part in the elections and voted in my favor."

This joking reflected reality. I should say that I have no regrets about the position we took. After Kennedy became president, hopes for an improvement in our relations increased.

Public opinion in the United States was being expressed more and more loudly in favor of improving our relations. Such voices were heard in Democratic Party circles and in business circles. Kennedy understood better than Eisenhower the necessity and the rationality of taking such steps, not only for commercial reasons, but mainly because the Cold War, which was still going on then, could develop into a hot war. And he didn't want that. Of course Eisenhower didn't want it either. He told me more than once that he was afraid of a world war. Kennedy didn't tell me he was afraid of a new world war, but he understood that such a war would be no picnic, that it would be a very bloody conflict and invariably would have an impact on the territory of the United States. In the first two world wars, in which the United States had participated, its soldiers operated on European and Asian territory. There been no damage to the productive capacity of the United States; on the contrary, its economic potential had increased, along with its military and economic power in general. The monopolists had profited from both wars, but in a future war they might lose a great deal, because it would be a war of nuclear missiles. Kennedy understood all this perfectly well. He knew how to analyze events and was not afraid to call things by their real names. That's why the first action he took in the realm of international affairs was to seek closer contacts with the USSR. He also wanted to come to an agreement about disarmament, so as to stop any further rise in tensions and to obtain assurances that no military conflicts would break out unintentionally, through accident or misunderstanding.

Kennedy informed us that he would like to meet with the head of the Soviet government. We held a similar view. When he entered the White House, we wanted to establish contact with him and try to reach an agreement on a rational basis.

We were also afraid of war. Only a fool would not be. I'm not afraid to say this. We were afraid of war, because it would bring ruin and destruction to our country and to our people, causing very heavy casualties. That doesn't mean you can buy yourself out of war at any price, to the detriment of your country's prestige. I think that any intelligent person can understand the difference. When I was head of the government, there were many cases in which the USSR very jealously defended its prestige, dealing a rebuff to the aggressive forces and achieving moral victories without war.

Kennedy was a flexible man. The foreign policy of the United States was something that he personally decided. He brought a number of young, intelligent, and educated advisers into the White House. They too were flexible on questions of international policy, and the advice they gave him was

along those lines. Since Kennedy himself was deciding the line of policy, the assistants he chose for all posts were those who understood his goals and whose abilities impressed him. Meanwhile, the American press was speaking in favor of a personal meeting between Kennedy and Khrushchev. Finally [on June 2, 1961] we received an official proposal to meet on neutral territory. That is, neither in the USSR nor in the United States. We couldn't hold a summit meeting in Paris, because the attempt to hold a four-power summit meeting there had failed so recently. We had some preliminary talks about where to hold the new meeting. Vienna, Geneva, and Helsinki were put forward as possibilities. Kennedy proposed Vienna. We thought that Helsinki would be better—and when I say "we," I include myself personally—because it was our assumption that Finland would take a more understanding attitude toward our policies. But we were not afraid of Austria either. Its government had adhered closely to the obligations it had assumed to pursue a policy of neutrality. In general, Vienna was a city that symbolized peace. And so we agreed to meet in Vienna. We received a confidential communiqué that the president would be accompanied by certain officials and by members of his family. His wife and mother were going to come with him.

I decided to bring [my wife] Nina Petrovna with me, since the president was bringing his wife and mother. My hope was that the women could have some talks among themselves. I personally would not have advocated this. I must confess that such asceticism was probably a holdover from the Stalin era. I never saw women at official receptions held by Stalin. The only exception he made was in the case of Molotov's wife [Polina Zhemchuzhina]. In the government box at the theater, Voroshilov's wife would sometimes show up, though rarely. The company there was almost always exclusively male. Mikoyan, who had a reputation among us as a man who knew more about international protocol and etiquette, told us that the presence of my wife would be received favorably abroad and that we ought to follow international protocol in this respect.

As we formed our official group, we invited our foreign minister [Gromyko] and other foreign ministry officials who would be needed to prepare reports and give advice. They could help us orient ourselves correctly on one or another question that might arise during the talks on military, economic, and diplomatic matters pertaining to situations that needed improvement. The dispute over lend-lease had been hashed over at fairly great length, and therefore we hoped that now it could be resolved. Nevertheless, we prepared ourselves for a further exchange of opinions on that question.

An official welcome was arranged in Vienna, appropriate to the rank of the arriving officials. The Viennese gave us a very good welcome.[8] We observed no hostile thrusts or sallies. Cordiality and attentiveness were displayed throughout our visit. The Viennese said they were very pleased that their city had been chosen as the place for the two leaders to meet. We were treated warmly, because in 1955 we had concluded a peace treaty and withdrawn our troops from Austria. Our troops had been there for ten years, and their withdrawal was attributed to me personally. Of course that had been done by our government, but I don't deny my personal initiative in the matter. Not many people know about the internal struggle that went on among us over the question of concluding a peace treaty with Austria.[9]

I am pleased that the correct decision was made and that we signed that treaty. I knew the Austrian prime minister [actually, chancellor][10] and deputy prime minister [actually, vice chancellor][11] personally. I was also acquainted with the foreign minister, [Bruno] Kreisky.[12] I had good relations with this man in general. He had an understanding attitude toward the need for friendship between our countries. Of course, as a Social Democrat, he did not sympathize with our social system, and like all Social Democrats in the West, he basically held a pro-capitalist position. Nevertheless, among the reactionaries he was considered a liberal.

I arrived in Vienna accompanied by Foreign Minister Gromyko, and President Kennedy was accompanied by Secretary of State Dean Rusk.[13] We first made the customary visits to the president[14] and prime minister of Austria. Our delegations were given very good lodgings. Then the time was set for the first meeting. I don't remember now how many meetings there were, two or more. Our bilateral talks began. We exchanged opinions on the same questions on which we had been unable to arrive at agreement with Eisenhower—that is, Germany, West Berlin, disarmament, trade, and mutually advantageous economic ties. Those were the questions we touched on, and which would presumably normalize relations between our countries if they were resolved favorably. The fate of Germany remained the most sharply disputed question, although disarmament was no less important. Disarmament will always be the question of questions, but it was impossible to resolve that question without an agreement on Germany. West Berlin was also a serious snag, like a malignant growth on a healthy body. To keep the body healthy, the growth has to be removed. That's why we pressed for a solution first of all to the problem of Berlin. Without deciding the fate of Berlin we could not decide the fate of Germany or the question of a peace treaty. All this was interconnected.

Our exchange of views began. Kennedy took the same positions that Eisenhower had. The policies pursued by the representative of the Republican Party, Eisenhower, and the policies of Kennedy, representing the Democratic Party, were one and the same. There was only a slight change in terms of personality. The method by which the same policies were pursued also changed a little. But the essence, the foundation on which these policies was based, was the same. The primary concern was for the interests of big capital, and the aggressive aims of U.S. capital persisted. That is the main thing. They had no regard for any other country. [Their motto could have been:] "Do whatever my left leg tells you—that is, do whatever strikes Uncle Sam's fancy." What counterarguments did we have? The same ones, of course, that we had made during the talks with Eisenhower, but time was working in our favor. With every passing year our economic strength increased, as did the power of our weapons. We were constantly making progress in our space program while enlarging and improving our arsenal of nuclear missiles. We had a wider variety of them, from tactical to strategic missiles. This gave our arguments more weight and increased the resonance of our voices, although we did restrain ourselves—lest our counterparts make the observation that we ourselves were beginning to speak from positions of strength. We didn't want to slip inadvertently into the kind of position taken by Dulles, the kind of thing we had to fight against previously. For the time being the United States was dueling with us on the basis of trying to apply pressure. They had grown weaker, and we had grown stronger, like a child in a fairy tale who grows into a mighty warrior not from day to day, but from hour to hour.[15]

We placed our emphasis mainly on a solution to the German problem. What did Kennedy propose that was new in this regard? Nothing new. The only difference was that he approached the matter more flexibly. Kennedy accepted the formula of peaceful coexistence, and that changed the situation. During a conversation with Eisenhower about wiping out our debt in regard to lend-lease, the assistant secretary of state, Dillon, asked in reply to my question about peaceful coexistence: "And what exactly does that mean?" Kennedy of course didn't ask such stupid questions. On the contrary, he himself acknowledged that peaceful coexistence must be ensured, and he stated as much in his public speeches. This was a step forward. It provided a basis for reasonable discussion. Once there was agreement on peaceful coexistence, it was necessary to resolve all matters that would help ensure peaceful coexistence. One of the realities that had to be accepted was the existence of two Germanys: the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany. Without the recognition of the two existing German states, as

well as the special status of West Berlin, there could be no talk of normalization of our relations. A resolution of those problems would mean that the way was made clear for peaceful coexistence and a normalization of contacts in all areas.

Kennedy understood all this, but inwardly he was not ready for such changes, nor was public opinion in the United States ready for them, and so he refused to agree with our arguments. To put it crudely, there was a painful corn on the toe of the United States, located in Europe, which we could step on at any time, depending on our needs, to put pressure on them. That sore spot was the tenuous connection the Western powers—that is, our former allies—had through the territory of East Germany with West Berlin. Stalin had put pressure on this sore spot more than once. When he tried to blockade West Berlin [in 1948],[16] he suffered a defeat and was forced to lift the blockade. An additional agreement to supplement the Potsdam agreement had been signed with the Western powers, and that made our position in West Berlin worse.[17] After Stalin's death the same situation obtained. East Germany was our ally, and therefore we did everything we could to further its interests. And our interests coincided in general. We had a unified approach to the problem. We were equally interested, as were the other socialist countries, especially those belonging to the Warsaw Pact, in solving the problem. But Kennedy did not agree with us on the question of West Berlin. We made the official proposal that a peace treaty be signed with Germany and stated that if the West did not agree, we would be forced to sign a separate peace treaty with East Germany. In that case the stipulations of the Potsdam agreement would no longer apply to its territory, but the terms of the peace treaty that the USSR would sign with East Germany, along with any other countries that wanted to sign, would go into effect.

Kennedy had a very pained reaction. He realized that we could do what we said. I saw that Kennedy was taking our arguments literally. He took them to mean that once we had signed a peace treaty, we would solve the problem of West Berlin by occupying it. Naturally we had no such intentions. We wanted it to be given the official status of a "free city"; otherwise a military conflict might occur. Of course, in the event of such a conflict we could resolve the matter in our favor very quickly, because the Western powers did not have large armed forces in West Berlin. But whether they were large or small, once shooting started, it could develop into a war. Therefore we didn't pursue that aim. We didn't want a military conflict. Our specific aim was to transfer to East Germany all the functions pertaining to access by the Western powers through East German territory to the city of West Berlin. As a sovereign government, East Germany itself should deal with this matter,

and naturally it could pose the question more sharply, as was the inherent right of any sovereign government. The Western powers would be forced to take the East German government into account, even though they didn't recognize it and they still don't recognize it today. And in such a situation some sort of military conflict with unpredictable consequences could always arise.

Kennedy resisted and argued that the West could not agree to what we were proposing, that the Potsdam agreement had specified the existence of a single Germany, and that a peace treaty could be signed only on the condition that a unified Germany had been established. The West had constantly made such arguments. But now the situation had obviously changed. Willy Brandt, the prime minister of West Germany,[18] has been forced [in 1971] to acknowledge de facto that two Germanys exist. But back then [in 1961] our discussions on the German question continued in a highly strained atmosphere. We resolutely defended our right to sign a peace treaty, with all the consequences flowing from that act, and we stated our position that we regarded West Berlin as part of East German territory and we considered the presence of Western troops there illegal. Kennedy argued the opposite.

What did he say about peaceful coexistence? This is very interesting: he recognized the need for us to develop our relations, with the aim of ensuring peaceful coexistence, ruling out war and military conflicts, but he understood this in his own special way. According to his understanding, we should come to an agreement and make this official in writing in the form of a treaty stating that both sides stood on the basis of peaceful coexistence. But he interpreted this as freezing the existing socio-political system in every country and not allowing any changes. This position was absolutely unacceptable to us, and I told him so. We were agreeable to strictly adhering to the conditions of peaceful coexistence, that there should be no resort to force on disputed questions or interference in the internal affairs of other countries. However, other countries should also not interfere in the internal affairs of our country. The question of the political system in each country should be decided by the people of that country themselves, and even if the social system was changed by the decision of the people themselves, there should be no outside interference. That was our understanding of the matter. "No," Kennedy replied, "there should be intervention, because agents of another country could be sent in." That is, he tried to impose on us his conception of peaceful coexistence as an arrangement ensuring not only the existing borders but also the internal arrangements within each country, a permanent status quo. The first half of the formulation, guaranteeing the security of borders, we could accept. We also considered interference in the internal affairs of other countries unthinkable and impossible.

I made a brief excursion into the history of the United States. I said: "At one time the United States was a colony of Britain, but the people rose up and fought a war in which they were victorious. Thus the United States became an independent country. History confirms that internal questions exist that the people themselves must resolve, and noninterference in such internal developments must be guaranteed."

The people of Russia had also made a revolution, and that too was an internal matter. "According to you," I said, "other countries have a right to intervene, and that's what they did. The United States, Britain, and France encroached upon and intervened against the young Soviet state, but how all that ended, you know very well. Tsar Nicholas I in practice pursued the same policy that you are now advocating. He helped the Austrian monarchy suppress the Hungarian revolution [in 1848–49].[19] That was a shameful intervention in the internal affairs of another country, but in that case, one emperor was helping another to preserve a reactionary regime. You also know perfectly well how that ended. History demonstrated the bankruptcy of such a policy. Later on, the Austro-Hungarian empire [as well as the tsarist Russian empire] collapsed. Today, generally speaking, everything has changed drastically. Yet you want us to return to the times when agreements were made among monarchs to ensure the stability of their thrones and to combine their efforts for the sake of suppressing the people in rebellion, if the people of any particular country dare to display a desire for a change in the internal situation of that country. We will never agree to such a policy and will fight against it by every available means."[20]

Kennedy was an intelligent man, but he was defending the interests of his class. I was somewhat surprised, and during our talks I expressed myself in a rather ironical manner, making fun of the position he was taking as old-fashioned and outdated. Finally he admitted that to achieve a relaxation of tensions, peace had to be maintained between the USSR and the United States. But that was only one rung on the ladder, and the lowest one on the ladder of peaceful coexistence. If Kennedy were to accept the full profundity of the formula of peaceful coexistence and would go to its root, the kind of proposal he made would have been excluded—because he was proposing not only that the borders between countries be fixed in their current positions but also that the status quo be maintained in regard to internal socio-political systems. But what about the countries whose status was that of colonies? Did he think we should help the colonialist rulers maintain that status quo? Such a proposal was reactionary, and we attempted to expose its reactionary nature, to demonstrate its bankruptcy. Our sympathies were with the forces seeking

to change the existing order, but without interfering in the internal affairs of those countries, simply expressing our sympathies with their people.

In regard to lend-lease we also had an exchange of views, but the same old views remained. I repeated what I had said to Eisenhower earlier: "You helped us, and we are grateful to you for that. But you and we were waging a war together against a common enemy, and we paid with our blood for the war materiel you provided. Human life is dearer than any of the materials we received from you. That's why we think we have long since repaid with interest the cost of the lend-lease materials you delivered." Kennedy reiterated the U.S. position.

Our meetings were held during the day, and in the evenings the Austrian government honored us with lavish receptions. We visited the opera. Then we were shown a circus performance featuring [dancing] horses [probably the Lipizzaner stallions], a very splendid spectacle. Vienna took pride in the fact that the use of horses in circus performances originated there. All circuses now use performing horses, but a huge number of riders take part in the highly theatrical presentations in Vienna. We were also taken around to see the sights, of which Vienna has no shortage.

At a reception Kennedy introduced me to his wife and mother. His mother made a good impression on me: a pleasant woman! As for his wife, Jacqueline, she was a young woman who I had read about in the newspapers a great deal. The journalists always described her as a striking beauty, who enchanted men with her loveliness, but she made no such impression on me. Yes, she was young and energetic and pleasant, but without any special glamour to my eyes. I mention this only because they always wrote the opposite about her in the press. Obviously she was quick of tongue, or as the Ukrainians say, she had a sharp tongue in her head, and she was a resourceful conversationalist. Don't mix it up with her; she'll cut you down to size. I met her at the theater on one occasion during the intermission and we went to the snack room. But what kind of conversation could we have had in that situation? We merely exchanged commonplaces. Even in this case she displayed a sharp tongue. As the head of the Soviet delegation, it was of no concern to me what she was like. That was her husband's business. If he liked her, more power to him and her. As for his mother, we also wished her well, but we reminded ourselves that she was a millionaire, and so we should never forget who we were dealing with. We could smile and shake hands politely, but we were people from opposite ends of the spectrum.

During the conversations between Kennedy and me, only the interpreters were in the room with us—along with Rusk and Gromyko. Our conversations

took the form of debates. I don't remember that Kennedy turned to Rusk with any questions or that Rusk made any comments. There was none of that. That's why I had the impression that Kennedy himself knew his way around quite well on international questions and was well prepared for the talks. Before our meeting, he had obviously studied all the questions we were likely to exchange views on, and he had absolutely full command of the material. This was not by any means what I had observed in the case of Eisenhower. This spoke in Kennedy's favor, of course, and in my eyes he grew in stature. Here was a counterpart to whom I could relate with enormous respect, even though we held completely different positions and in fact were adversaries. I valued his qualities. If the president himself knew his way around on the details of foreign policy, this meant that he was the one deciding policy. And since the president had expressed an understanding attitude on peaceful coexistence, it meant that we could have some degree of certainty that he would not make hasty decisions that could lead to a military conflict. With every meeting we had he grew in stature in my eyes.

We continually probed the possibility of finding some sort of agreement on the most disputed questions in order to ensure mutual security. Our conversations were drawing to a close, but it was evident that we could not reach any specific agreements, because the understanding each of us had of the situation was too sharply opposed to the other. Neither side could find terms that were acceptable for agreements. What was acceptable to one side proved to be unacceptable to the other. Actually that was the basis of the Cold War and the state of tension [in world affairs]. Each side wanted to preserve peace, but each interpreted the preservation of peace in its own way, in a way that contradicted the interests of the opposing side. That was the kind of position the West took. Even today the West takes the same position, with the only difference that today it cannot deny the increased military might of the Soviet Union. For that reason the opposing side has been forced to adapt its policies to us. Back then our meeting was conditioned by the fact that the United States had lost its assurance that it could achieve its aims by operating from positions of strength, as it had done in the time of Truman and Dulles. The balance of forces had changed, and therefore Kennedy was forced to seek opportunities for coming to an agreement on a new basis, but of course it had to be an agreement suitable to the United States. For our part, we wanted to come to an agreement on a basis that would be suitable to us as well as to the United States, but they didn't think about us. Therefore no real possibility arose for us to come to any kind of agreement.

I was grateful to the Austrian government, and to its prime minister and president, for doing everything they could to ensure that our meetings would not come under a cloud of negative influences. The people of Vienna took a very friendly attitude toward us, and I don't recall any incident that might have cast a pall on my stay in Vienna. The government of Austria really did carry out its obligations to observe neutrality. The very warmest feelings remain with me in regard to the policies of the Austrian government. The president [actually, chancellor] at that time was a Social Democrat. For his part, too, he did nothing that might becloud our visit. I don't know if Raab was still alive. He had been [chancellor] when the peace treaty with Austria was signed, but his successor followed the same line.

Our last meeting with Kennedy took place at a reception or at a theater. Kennedy was very gloomy. He was not just preoccupied but actually glum. When I looked at the expression on his face, I sympathized with him and felt sorry for him. I wanted us to part on a more cheerful note, but there was nothing I could do to help him. Politics is implacable, and our differing class positions did not allow us to come to an agreement, regardless of any efforts on my part. As a politician I understood this, but as a human being I sympathized with Kennedy. He was disappointed, and his internal enemies in the United States, especially the aggressively minded elements, would gain satisfaction [from his lack of success]. They would say: "There, you have it. You hoped you could achieve some sort of agreement by meeting with Khrushchev, but now you see for yourself that we were right to base our policy on positions of strength. We have no choice, because force is the only language the Communists understand. You wanted to discuss with them in the language of agreements, and in reply you got a punch in the nose, and you returned home discredited. You proclaimed to all that you were going to this meeting with the assurance that you could reach an agreement, but you've come back empty-handed. This shows that our policy was the right one and you were mistaken."[21]

That is roughly what I imagined the president was going through, and I sympathized with him, but I gave no outward sign of that. I also sympathized with him because no preliminary basis had been laid for something better, and once again we were being thrown back, possibly to a state of even greater tension and to a continuation of the Cold War. We were going to have to pay for that, because the arms race would start up again. More resources would have to be allocated to arms. First that would happen in the United States. That would force us to follow suit. We were familiar with such events. They added to the burden of the budget and reduced the economic potential

available for civilian needs. That was the main thing that made me sympathize with the president. I understood the reasons for his distress. The failure of his foreign policy would be reflected in both of our budgets and consequently in the standard of living of our populations. But I kept the pressure on, in order to place the president in a hopeless position and force him to recognize the necessity of meeting us halfway; otherwise a military conflict would be possible. As for Kennedy, he didn't want to come to an agreement under pressure. My appeals for him to recognize the reality of our arguments were left hanging in midair. We both remained in the positions from which we had started.

Kennedy left first, seen off by the president of Austria and other officials. After he had gone, Foreign Minister Kreisky expressed the desire to meet with me, and I received him with pleasure. I knew that during the war Kreisky had been an émigré in Sweden together with Willy Brandt, who today [in 1971] is the prime minister of West Germany and at that time was the mayor of West Berlin. I was informed that they were friends; besides, both of them were Social Democrats. My meeting with Kreisky was useful. He told me his impressions from seeing Kennedy off: "The president was very glum, very downcast; he looked terribly upset and didn't seem to be himself. Apparently that's how the outcome of the talks affected him."

I answered: "Yes. He's easy to talk with, and even quite pleasant, but when the time comes to make a decision he displays no understanding. He doesn't understand the times we're living in and the new balance of forces. He's living according to the outdated concepts of his predecessors and is evidently not yet ready to make serious decisions. Our meeting was useful in the sense that we sounded each other out and now have a clearer grasp of one another's positions. But that's all, and of course that's not much."

I must confess that I told Kreisky the substance of my talks with Kennedy because I hoped that our position—as I now presented it in sharply worded terms, a position that Kennedy was well aware of—would be made known through Kreisky to Brandt. Perhaps this would cause them to reflect; perhaps they would finally realize that our intentions were irreversible, and perhaps in the end, rather than raise the temperature to the boiling point, they would agree to reasonable negotiations. Of course I knew that Kreisky sympathized with Kennedy more than with us. The policies of the U.S. president were closer to him than ours were, and therefore I regarded him as an unspoken agent of the policies being pursued by the capitalist world in relation to the USSR. But there was no question that he would report my words in detail to Brandt, and something might result from that. As the mayor of West Berlin,

Brandt could exert some influence toward reaching an agreement, although on the questions in dispute he was also on the opposite side and did not accept our policy line. But our policy was the only correct one, and even today it remains that, both for West Germany and for West Berlin especially.

Some events sponsored by the Austrian government were then organized in my honor (a reception and a dinner); we were given the customary ceremonial sendoff, and we flew to Moscow. After that meeting we intentionally began to publicize—through our press, at official meetings, at diplomatic receptions, and by other means—the point that we intended very soon to carry through our intention of signing a peace treaty with East Germany. We waged this campaign quite energetically, seeking to put pressure on public opinion through the press and through official meetings. In short, we set into operation all the means that were available to us with the aim of impressing it clearly and strongly on our adversaries that if they did not behave reasonably and try to come to an agreement, we were going to go ahead with our plans. What measure did Kennedy decide to take after our meeting? He appointed General Lucius Clay[22] as his representative to West Germany. Clay had held that position immediately after the war. The United States was demonstrating by this means that it was getting ready to respond to our threat of signing a peace treaty with East Germany. By appointing to that post a general well known to us, they intended to show that the United States was also ready for military conflict. The commander of Soviet troops in East Germany at that time was Yakubovsky.[23] I proposed to the Soviet government that in response to the American action we should make a chess move with our "knight," by appointing Konev to be the commander of our troops in East Germany.[24]

By making this appointment we wanted to show the Americans that we understood their move and were accepting the challenge. We appointed Yakubovsky (who in the future would become a marshal) as deputy to Marshal Konev. Our decision was made public, but among ourselves we agreed that the real commander in Berlin would continue to be Yakubovsky, as before, although Konev could also take any measures he deemed necessary. We were confident that everything would soon return to normal and Konev would return to Moscow.

Our chess moves and countermoves—with the United States moving its pawn [Clay] and us moving our knight [Konev]—did not of course lead to reduced tensions; rather, they again increased the tensions in our relations. President Kennedy made public a statement that a certain number of troops were being transferred to West Berlin to strengthen the garrison. We made no equivalent countermove, because we had a sufficient number of troops

in East Germany without doing that. The garrison in West Berlin was weak, and we could have dealt with it quickly and suppressed any resistance by it if we had needed to. Of course a quick beginning could have been made, but no one knew how things would end up after that, and actually we didn't want a military conflict. All we wanted was to "lance the abscess," with a precise surgical operation. We didn't want a crude surgical intervention with a big butcher knife. And before all else, we wanted to anesthetize the area of the operation, to take all necessary measures so that the organism would not suffer any great pain and no harmful consequences would result from the operation. We wanted to carry out everything strictly on the diplomatic level without the use of arms. But Kennedy wasn't willing to do that. Apparently the military, which had a great deal of influence in Washington, was putting pressure on him. I think that the military exerts even greater pressure on the U.S. government now.

Konev left for Berlin. When he arrived there he announced that he was undertaking his duties. We recommended to Konev that he visit the commander of the American forces, especially because he was personally acquainted with Clay. The point was this: we needed to establish direct contacts. At the same time we had already agreed with Ulbricht[25] and the leaders of the other socialist countries on the official establishment of a border that would pass through Berlin and establish a clear separation between East Berlin and West Berlin. In this way East Germany would acquire the capability of controlling its own borders. Free passage from West Berlin into East Germany was a loophole used by all the intelligence agencies of the capitalist countries. They could penetrate to the areas where our troops were deployed, find out what weapons our troops had, and gather other intelligence information. Besides that, free access to West Berlin caused great losses to the economy of East Germany. An unstable situation was created overall. Many intellectuals and other individuals left East Germany for the West, and in West Germany at that time there was a big industrial boom. West Germany needed labor power; it recruited workers from Italy, Spain, Yugoslavia, Turkey, and other countries. Students who had been given a higher education in East Germany also left the country because at that time (and probably now as well) West Germany paid for the labor of intellectuals and skilled workers at a higher rate than did East Germany and the other socialist countries. The question of the progressive character of one or another social system is a political question and a question of people's ideas and convictions, but many people decided this question with their bellies. They didn't look at what they might receive in the future. All they saw was that today West German society was paying

more than a person could earn in East Germany. Otherwise there would not have been a mass exodus; rather, it would have been politically discontented or hostile elements only who left East Germany. A difficult situation had developed, and Ulbricht asked us to help him by providing some workers.

Of course we could have helped, but only with menial laborers; when it came to skilled workers we ourselves didn't have enough. I told Comrade Ulbricht: "Germany imposed a war on us. The Soviet people shed their blood. We were the victors. Our workers are not about to come clean your toilets. That would simply be humiliating. A proposal like that would only exasperate our people. So we can't do that. You'll have to find a way out of the situation with your own resources." What could Ulbricht do? His gates were wide open. If he appealed to his people for greater discipline or took administrative measures, the Germans would just flee the country, especially the skilled workers, because they could easily find well-paid work in West Germany. A single nationality exists there, with a common language, and so there would be no difficulties.

For a long time I had had the idea of establishing some sort of control of the borders, closing all the gaps and loopholes. I asked our ambassador, [Mikhail] Pervukhin,[26] to send me a detailed map of Berlin indicating the boundaries of the different sectors. He sent one, but it turned out to be unclear. It occurred to me that he would have trouble finding the required type of map, and I asked him to apply directly to Ulbricht, in my name, telling him about my idea. I made the same request of Yakubovsky—but in his case I asked that he send a military-topographical map. When Ulbricht heard about my idea from Pervukhin, he was ecstatic and, beaming joyfully, proclaimed: "I am a hundred percent for it! This will really be a help!"

I warned Pervukhin and Ulbricht that for the time being we would keep the plan top secret. After we received the necessary maps, we discussed the plan in the Soviet leadership and unanimously made the decision to put this plan into effect as soon as possible. In coordination and agreement with Ulbricht we convened a secret session of the representatives of all the countries belonging to the Warsaw Pact.[27] Only the secretaries of party Central Committees and chairmen of Councils of Ministers of those countries attended. A brief report was given and this tactical operation was proposed: at a set hour barriers with swing booms and other border-control apparatus would be set up, and [Warsaw Pact] troops would approach the border, with German soldiers in front to establish controls and checkpoints, but behind them at a certain distance would be a line of our troops. The purpose of this was so that the West would see our soldiers behind the Germans. We chose the date

of August 13 [1961]. The number was considered unlucky, but I told the doubters that for us this number would turn out to be lucky. Everything was kept strictly secret, and on the given day the troops established the border.[28] A huge uproar was made [by the Western media], and precisely at that moment the United States strengthened its garrison in West Berlin.

The appearance of this strictly controlled border immediately brought order to East Germany and raised the level of labor discipline. The factories and the agricultural collectives began to work better. Among other things the buying of cheaper East German food and consumer goods by "foreigners" [West Berliners] dropped off sharply. Ulbricht reported to us that the savings for East Germany added up to millions of marks. The West German population used to purchase many goods in East Germany and make use of East German municipal services, which were cheaper. The purchasing power of the West German mark was considerably higher than the East German one; thus the East German mark kept losing value. That is, the West Germans were extracting big economic advantages from the situation as well as political ones. And all of this was a heavy load on the shoulders of the workers and peasants of East Germany. Now the situation had changed. Without the signing of a peace treaty East Germany had nevertheless asserted its sovereign rights. As things turned out, it was as though a peace treaty had been signed, except of course for the moral aspect of the matter: officially the state of war persisted. We were all very pleased with our decision. I gained some personal satisfaction in particular. Without signing a peace treaty we had extracted from the West something that by rights was ours. This action gave East Germany every opportunity to develop its economy in a normal way, as every other country did.

In October of the same year [1961], we received information that the Americans were making preparations to destroy the wall [at Checkpoint Charley], in order to restore the situation that had existed before August 13 and reestablish free passage to and from either part of the city. We found out what their plan was: jeeps carrying infantry would be in the forefront; the infantry would have small arms only; behind the jeeps would be powerful bulldozers that would destroy the wall; behind the bulldozers would be tanks to provide cover. Konev and I worked out our tactics, deciding to let the jeeps with soldiers pass through the border-control points; let them go wherever they wanted. We had established our border controls to restrict the movement of civilians, but the terms of the Potsdam agreement still applied to the movement of military personnel: just as Western military personnel could visit the East Berlin sector, so too our military could freely visit West Berlin.

I myself had exercised this right at one time and had driven around West Berlin together with the Soviet commander of the city, but we never got out of our vehicle. We simply drove around in order to get a picture of conditions in West Berlin. Of course we made that trip before the Berlin Wall was set up, and we traveled incognito.

In our country the Twenty-Second Party Congress was under way.[29] Konev attended the congress as a delegate and reported to me that the Americans were going to move at a designated hour. We decided to keep our tanks out of sight, in the alleyways of East Berlin. After the infantry had crossed the border, as the bulldozers were starting to approach, our tanks would emerge from the alleys and move to confront the bulldozers, in order to prevent the wall from being destroyed. And that's what we did. Konev later reported that as soon as the jeeps with infantry had gone past, our tanks emerged and headed toward the bulldozers and the American tanks. The latter stopped their forward movement. As for the infantry, which had nothing to do, they turned their jeeps around and went back to West Berlin. Our tanks stopped their forward movement, and so did the American tanks. I no longer remember what happened with the bulldozers, but presumably they too remained in fixed positions. Each side stayed in position all night. In the morning, when the sessions of our party congress resumed, Konev again reported: the situation had not changed; our tank crews were still in their tanks. Sometimes they would get out of their tanks and chase one another around to warm up, because the night had been chilly. It was already autumn. The men in the American tanks were apparently feeling even colder.

I understood that some way out had to be found, and I said to Konev: "Let our tanks turn around and go back to the alleyways from which they emerged, so that they are no longer visible to the Americans. I am sure that in no more than twenty minutes (some time would be needed for reports to go to their superiors and to receive the appropriate orders), the Americans will remove their tanks, because right now it's awkward for them to remove their tanks while facing the barrels of our guns. They put themselves in this situation, and now they don't know how to back out. The fact that they haven't gone into action shows that they also want to find a way out. We will provide that for them. We will be the first to withdraw our tanks and they will follow our example."

That's what Konev did. Soon he reported: "Sure enough, as soon as our tanks withdrew, within twenty minutes the American tanks also turned around and disappeared from view." This was a de facto recognition of the closing of the border and the separation of Berlin into two parts: a Western capitalist

part and an Eastern socialist one. All this was played up to a very great extent in the press. The Western newspapers raised a great hue and cry, publishing all sorts of protests and statements of condemnation, but the facts did not change; reality remained what it was.

Subsequently, as I recall, the borders were violated by some citizens of East Germany who tried to flee and in some cases succeeded. It was reported to me that a group of people in a truck had smashed their way through a gate with a swing boom and had reached West Berlin. To prevent the repetition of such events, so that violators could not break through by force (spies could also avoid having to stop at the checkpoints if there was a danger of their being arrested), the border had to be strengthened. I said: "This is not real control of the border. These violations are discrediting our people guarding the borders, making it look as though they don't know how to protect the borders." New measures were taken, but we still had doubts as to whether the East Germans could establish the necessary strict control. A situation could arise in which it would be necessary to use weapons, and it would be a painful situation if Germans were firing at Germans. We expressed our doubts, and the East Germans answered as follows: "You had a civil war in your country for many years, with Russians fighting against Russians. There were working people fighting not only on your side. Some workers fought on the side of the White armies; they had been misled by tsarist generals and officers. Still, you shot at them. Why do you think the Germans don't understand class war? When it comes to carrying out our soldierly duty and defending our socialist republic, our hands will not tremble." And that's what happened. Even today incidents occur, but the troops of East Germany are trained in Marxist-Leninist doctrine, understand the class essence of the situation, and take a firm stand in defending the borders of their socialist fatherland.

After some time had gone by, the West began to let it be known through confidential channels, and sometimes in official conversations, that the existing situation could not be changed, that the border should be recognized de facto, and that no further heating-up of tensions in our relations should be allowed. The Americans recalled Clay. As soon as that happened I proposed that Konev be recalled. To speak figuratively, we withdrew our "chess move with the knight," transferring him back to his Moscow homeland. The American troops who had been sent to reinforce the garrison were also withdrawn from West Berlin. Thus the status quo was restored. These were the first consequences of our unsatisfactory meeting with Kennedy in Vienna. It could be said that he suffered a defeat. The alternative for him would have been to start military operations against us. But that would have been totally irrational. As an

intelligent man, he understood that the risk was too great. There was no particular sense in taking such a risk. Thus we confronted the West with an accomplished fact. Our former allies in the war against Nazi Germany were forced to swallow this bitter pill.

1. On Richard Nixon, John F. Kennedy, and Adlai Stevenson, see Biographies.

2. James W. Fulbright (1905–95) was a senator from 1945 to 1974. In the 1960s he chaired the Senate foreign relations committee. See Biographies.

3. See above, the chapter "From New York to Iowa." [GS]

4. See note 18 to the chapter above, "The Four-Power Summit Meeting in Paris." [GS]

5. Although Khrushchev refers here to the top leadership body of the Soviet Communist Party as "the Politburo," its official name at that point was the Presidium. [GS]

6. On February 10, 1962, Powers was exchanged for the Soviet intelligence agent KGB Colonel Rudolf Abel, who had been sentenced in the United States for espionage.

7. John F. Kennedy (1917–63) was a naval officer during World War II and a congressman from 1947 to 1961. He was elected the thirty-fifth president of the United States in 1960 and took office on January 20, 1961. See Biographies.

8. Khrushchev and Kennedy arrived in Vienna on June 3, 1961, and had their first meeting on June 4, 1961. [SS]

9. In the first chapter of this volume, entitled "Before and After the Peace Treaty with Austria," Khrushchev tells about disagreements with Molotov over the signing of the peace treaty. [GS]

10. The federal chancellor of Austria at this time was Alfons Gorbach from the Austrian People's Party. He had replaced Julius Raab on April 11, 1961, and remained in office until 1964. [MN/SS]

11. The federal vice chancellor at this time was Bruno Pittermann of the Social Democratic Party of Austria. He held the office from 1957 to 1966. [SS]

12. Bruno Kreisky (1911–90) was foreign minister of Austria from 1959 to 1966. Later he was federal chancellor (from 1970 to 1983). See Biographies. [SS]

13. Dean Rusk (1909–94) was secretary of state from 1961 to 1969. See Biographies.

14. The federal president of Austria at this time was Adolf Schärf from the Social Democratic Party of Austria. He held the office from 1957 until his death in 1965. [MN/SS]

15. There are many Russian fairy tales that feature such a fast-growing child. One example is "The Tale of the Tsar Saltan" *(Skazka o Tsare Sultane)* by Aleksandr Pushkin. It was published in an English translation by Dial Press (New York) in 1996. [SK/SS]

16. In 1948 the Soviet occupation forces blocked land communications between West Berlin and West Germany. The former wartime allies of the USSR organized an "air bridge" to maintain communications with West Berlin. Later in the year the blockade was lifted.

17. After World War II the four Allied powers created a single commandant's office and city council for Greater Berlin. By the beginning of 1948 these bodies no longer existed.

18. Willy Brandt was federal chancellor from 1969 to 1974. See Biographies.

19. Khrushchev is referring to the Hungarian revolution of 1848–49. The Russian army took part in its suppression between May and August 1849.

20. When Khrushchev speaks of "agreements . . . among monarchs to ensure the stability of their thrones," he is referring to the Holy Alliance. In the wake of the Napoleonic wars and the upheavals begun by the French revolution, the monarchical powers of Europe, particularly Russia, Austria, and Prussia, agreed to act in concert to suppress revolutionary and nationalist movements all over the Continent. The Alliance was called "Holy" because the rulers claimed to act in accordance with "Christian principles." Reactionary policies, guided especially by the Austrian diplomat Metternich, including strict censorship and police surveillance, were carried out in the name of the Holy Alliance. These policies, aimed at maintaining the status quo, dominated much of European life in the period 1815–48, but the revolutions of 1848 (and coincidentally the publication of the *Communist Manifesto* by Marx and Engels) showed that the Holy Alliance could not, after all, hold back a mounting tide of unrest and desire for change. [GS]

21. Where I have given the phrase, "You've come back empty-handed," the Russian text says, "You've returned to the broken washtub." This is a reference to the fisherman's wife in Pushkin's *Tale of the Golden Fish,* who after having many wishes granted by a magic fish, became too greedy and ended up back in her impoverished hut with the same broken washtub she started out with. [GS]

22. On General Lucius Clay (1897–1978), see Biographies.

23. Marshal of the Soviet Union Ivan Ignatyevich Yakubovsky (1912–76) was first deputy commander in chief and commander in chief of the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany from 1957 to 1965. See Biographies.