CHAPTER XXIII

The Summit That Never Was

For a man by nothing is so well bewrayed,
As by his manners.

—Edmund Spenser

FROM the autumn of 1959 to the spring of 1960 most people of the Western world felt that a slight but discernible thaw was developing in the icy tensions which had become normal between the West and the Soviet Union. This impression resulted partially from Mr. Khrushchev's agreement at Camp David to remove his threat to end the presence of Allied forces in West Berlin. His action made it possible for the Western nations in December to agree to attend a summit meeting without sacrifice of self-respect and under no hint of blackmail. Plans for a spring conference began with a place and date: Paris, in mid-May of 1960.

That meeting at the summit was never to be held.

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On the afternoon of May 1, 1960, General Goodpaster telephoned me: "One of our reconnaissance planes," he said, "on a scheduled flight from its base in Adana, Turkey, is overdue and possibly lost." I knew instantly that this was one of our U-2 planes, probably over Russia. Early the next morning he came into my office, his face an etching of bad news. He plunged to the point at once. "Mr. President, I have received word from the CIA that the U-2 reconnaissance plane I mentioned yesterday is still missing. The pilot reported an engine flameout at a position about thirteen hundred miles inside Russia and has not been heard from since. With the amount of fuel he had on board, there is not a chance of his still being aloft."
The U-2 reconnaissance program had been born of necessity. In the middle fifties the United States found itself, an open society, faced by a closed Communist empire which had lost none of its ambitions for world conquest, but which now possessed, in airplanes and guided missiles armed with nuclear weapons, an ever-growing capacity for launching surprise attacks against the United States. As long as the Communist empire remained closed, this capability would become ever more dangerous; we could grow without our knowledge; it could mobilize for instantaneous attack; at the very least its hierarchy could continue to attempt blackmail campaigns, boasting of a nuclear strength and delivery capability out of all proportion to that which actually existed.

To anyone bearing responsibility for the security of the United States the situation was highly unsatisfactory. When I had submitted the “Open Skies” proposal at Geneva in 1955 we knew that, if taken seriously and agreed to by the Soviets, it would have done much to reduce this danger to the United States and the chances of a global war. The Soviets were willing to present to the world this valid evidence of a desire for the peaceful purposes they professed to want. The proposal was never even seriously considered.

Obviously we had to have accurate intelligence. In the circumstances Allen Dulles believed that the answer was a new type of aircraft built specifically for high-altitude reconnaissance missions.

Back in November of 1954, Foster Dulles, Charlie Wilson, Allen Dulles, and other advisers had come to see me to get authorization to go ahead on a program to produce thirty special high-performance aircraft at a total cost of about $35 million. A good deal of design and development work had already been done. I approved this action.

“Go ahead and get the equipment,” I said, “but before initiating operations come in to let me have one last look at the plans.”

Foster agreed with the decision.

“Of course difficulties might arise out of these operations,” he said, “but we can live through them.”

Secrecy was of the essence. Any leak of information either at home or abroad could compel abandonment of the entire idea. Consequently conferences affecting it were held only at the highest level; even the manufacture and assembly of the plane were so conducted as to minimize chances that its intended purpose might be exposed to public knowledge.

Within the White House itself, according to my recollection, the only persons aware of the existence of these planes were General Goodpaster’s principal assistant, Gordon Gray, and, somewhat later, Goodpaster’s principal assistant, Mr. Richard Bissell.

The importance of the effort at that time cannot be overemphasized. Our relative position in intelligence, compared to that of the Soviets, could scarcely have been worse. The Soviets enjoyed practically unimpeded access to information of a kind in which we were almost wholly lacking. For example, some years earlier a book had been published by a member of the Atomic Energy Commission giving detailed descriptions and locations of several of our most important nuclear establishments. At almost every book store in important cities accurate maps of important bridges, industrial establishments, highways, and railroad centers in the locality were available to any traveler in the country. No so in the Soviet Union, a region in which information of this kind was known only to a selected few, and to no foreigners. On top of this we knew that the Soviets maintained in America an active and comprehensive spy system from which there was constantly pouring into the Kremlin information of the kind that in the event of war might be decisive. Considering all these things, I approved the recommendation of the intelligence chief that he employ the U-2 reconnaissance planes over Soviet territory.

The U-2 was more of a flying glider than a conventional airplane. So large were the wings and so light the construction that wheels were provided for the wingtips to prevent them from dragging on the ground on landing and taxiing. Several characteristics made the U-2 an almost ideal craft for its purpose: It was constructed in such a unique configuration that there was little chance of its being mistaken for a bomber; it was capable of carrying heavy camera equipment to altitudes well in excess of sixty thousand feet, high enough to be safe from any known Soviet fighter interceptors. Proof of the plane’s capacity to produce photographs of excellent definition was striking. I was shown photographs, taken from an altitude of seventy thousand feet, of some of our important cities. On these we could easily count the automobiles on the streets and even the lines marking the parking areas for individual cars. There was no doubt about the quality of the information to be obtained.

We then tested the probability of the U-2s being discovered by the Soviets as it flew over the territory of that nation. So, a number of test flights were made over our own country. Even though our radar systems had been warned of strange airplanes flying over our national territory, the U-2 flights were either unseen or were tracked imperfectly. This gave us confidence that, in the then-existing state of radar efficiency and the inability of fighter planes to operate at altitudes above some fifty thou-
sand feet, U-2 reconnaissance could be undertaken with reason and safety.

A final important characteristic of the plane was its fragile condition. This led to the assumption (insisted upon by the CIA and the Chiefs) that in the event of mishap the plane would virtually disintegrate. It would be impossible, if things should go wrong, they said, for the Soviets to come in possession of the equipment intact—or, unfortunately, for a live pilot. This was a cruel assumption, but I was assured that the pilots undertaking these missions were doing so with their eyes wide open and motivated by a high degree of patriotism, a swashbuckling belief that their actions were for the good of their country, and certain material inducements.

The U-2 reconnaissance flights began in 1956. They were flown intermittently and infrequently because of the exacting requirements in nearly perfect weather, which thus afforded only a few operational opportunities a month, and then only in favorable seasons. Each series of flights was planned and executed with my knowledge and permission, in the awareness of the stern diplomatic consequences we would face if any combination of events should go wrong.

During the years since World War II, the electronics industries of the nations were (and are) making tremendous progress in perfecting equipment and techniques. Almost from the very beginning, we had been aware that the Soviets knew of the flights and had had time to study the partial radar tracks of the courses flown. Moreover, in both the Soviet and our nations, intensive work was going ahead on developing defense rockets—types designed to knock down planes flying beyond the range of antiaircraft guns and interceptors. Knowing of these developments, I anticipated a new series of flights was proposed, we held a closed meeting to determine whether or not new information on developing technology would indicate the unwisdom of proceeding as before.

Of those concerned, I was the only principal who consistently pressed a conviction that if ever one of the planes fell in Soviet territory, a wave of excitement mounting almost to panic would sweep the nation, inspired by the standard Soviet claim of injustice, unfairness, aggression, and ruthlessness. The others, except for my own immediate staff and Bissell, disagreed. Secretary Dulles, for instance, would say laughingly, "If the Soviets ever capture one of these planes, I'm sure they will admit it. To do so would make it necessary for them to admit that for years we had been carrying on flights over their territory while the Soviets, had been helpless to do anything about the matter." We knew that on a number of occasions Soviet fighters scrambled from their bases to attempt an interception, but they could never come close enough to damage a U-2; probably the pilots never even saw one of the planes.

Nevertheless, I pressed a conviction that on a number of occasions Soviet fighters scrambled from their bases to attempt an interception, but they could never come close enough to damage a U-2; probably the pilots never even saw one of the planes. However, I said that while I wholeheartedly approved continuation of the program, I was convinced that in the event of accident we must be prepared for a storm of protest, not only from the Soviets but also from many people, especially from some politicians in our own country. There would never be a good time for a failure.

But, with a record of many successful flights behind us, the intelligence people became more and more confident that the outcome of each future venture was almost a certainty. Furthermore, the information obtained was important. So when a spring program for 1960 was proposed, I again approved. All of these things were clear in my memory as Goodpaster finished his climactic report to me the morning of May 2.

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There was, to be sure, reason for deep concern and sadness over the probable loss of the pilot, but not for immediate alarm about the equipment. I had been assured that if a plane were to go down it would be destroyed either in the air or on impact, so that proof of espionage would be lacking. Self-destroying mechanisms were built into each U-2 reconnaissance plane.

Beyond this there was the possibility that Foster Dulles' judgment might prove right: Khrushchev, unwilling to admit that United States planes had been for years penetrating deep into his territory, might suppress the facts. We knew, for example, that he was aware of a similar flight that had traversed Soviet territory on the 9th of April; for his own reasons, he had said nothing of it.

There being nothing further to do about it that May morning, I asked General Goodpaster to keep me informed and continued with my daily schedule. I addressed the United States Chamber of Commerce, dedicated a window in the Washington National Cathedral commemorating pioneers of the labor movement, and, in the evening, attended a dinner sponsored by the Committee for National Economic Growth and the Committee to Strengthen the Frontiers of Freedom. The day ended with a brief stop by Mamie and me in the East Room of the White House.

1 During the four years of its operations, the U-2 program produced intelligence of critical importance to the United States. Perhaps as important as the positive information—what the Soviets did have—was the negative information it produced—what the Soviets did not have. Intelligence gained from this source provided proof that the horrors of the alleged "bomber gap" and the later "missile gap" were nothing more than imaginative creations of irresponsibility. U-2 information deprived Khrushchev of the most powerful weapon of the Communist conspiracy—international blackmail—useful only as long as the Soviets could exploit the ignorance and resulting fears of the Free World.
where we were giving a party for a group of friends of John and Bob.

The next morning I departed for Fort Benning to witness a firing of the Army’s newest weapons.

Nearly two days after Goodpaster’s first report went by without reaching me from any source as to the fate of the missing pilot. I was on the way to Fort Benning, the National Aeronautics and Administration, acting in good faith, put out a statement that other weather reconnaissance planes was missing.2

Then, on May 5, while I was attending a meeting of the National Security Council, we learned of the Soviet reaction. Early in the meeting, Allen Dulles reported on the first portion of a current speech by Khrushchev before the Supreme Soviet, in which he made lavish promises. Russian people—less work and lower taxes, for example. The rest of the speech text had been coming in on the wires when Mr. Dulles left for the Council meeting, but he thought a tough statement of this kind regarding the United States and the summit was the next to this point, General Goodpaster, with the missing U-2 very much on mind, got up and left the meeting to arrange for the complete text sent to us by secret teletype.

The text arrived just as the meeting ended. Khrushchev had announced the shooting down of a United States reconnaissance plane that had penetrated deep into Soviet territory. The theory that Khrushchev would admit such an occurrence was demolished.

2 "A NASA U-2 research airplane, being flown in Turkey on a joint NASA, Air Weather Service mission, apparently went down in the Lake Van, Turkey, at about 9:00 A.M. (3:00 A.M. E.D.T.), Sunday, May 1. "During the flight in southeast Turkey, the pilot reported over the radio frequency that he was experiencing oxygen difficulties. The flight originated in the United States with a mission to obtain data on clear air turbulence. "A search is now under way in the Lake Van area. "The pilot is an employee of Lockheed Aircraft under contract to NASA. "The U-2 program was initiated by NASA in 1956 as a method of increasing the altitude weather studies."

A major problem in pursuing a program such as the U-2 was that of maintaining secrecy in the field. Although the existence of the plane itself could not be concealed, its major mission could be. The Reconnaisance Detachment performed reconnaissance missions was assigned to NASA and flew weather missions. The operation was kept in the dark as to the unit’s duties. The NASA information officer who gave out this statement was the truth as he knew it.

The Department has been informed by NASA that, as announced May 3, an unarmed plane, a U-2 weather research plane based at Adana, Turkey, piloted by a U.S. plane has been shot down over the U.S.S.R. on that date.

3 The instruction, which later leaked to the press, was confused in many minds first as constituting a cessation of U-2 flights, and further an admission that the U-2 flights had been conducted by the military. This was totally untrue; General Twining had nothing to do with the operation of the U-2. There was no need to suspend U-2 flights because further series was scheduled or approved.
The uninjured pilot of our reconnaissance plane, along with much equipment intact, was in Soviet hands. Francis Gary Powers, the pilot, had confessed to those aspects of the flight that were obvious from evidence and thus the world was aware that his mission had been a failure. My acknowledgment of responsibility for the over-all incident and the nature of the storm it had created. This, I thought might prove to be a mistake, but Mr. Herter felt anything but apologetic.

At home, and abroad, reaction was mixed. Some Americans were to receive the revelation with a sense of relief. One columnist, a hard-line pessimist, entitled his column for the day, "The Wonderful News," an oxymoron over the fact that the United States had been able to conduct such reconnaissance missions with impunity over Soviet territory for a long time. Others greeted Khrushchev's belligerent manner with heavy applause. A few were fearful that his rage could touch off a general war. Others began debating the wisdom of going ahead with the signatures for the summit. The real issue at stake was not the fact that both sides conducted intelligence activities, but rather that the conduct and announced intentions of the Communists created the necessity for such clandestine maneuvers. At a White House meeting later that day, May 9, I brought up the U-2 incident as the first order of business. There was nothing for the administration to do but review the events surrounding the U-2 and to mend a statement admitting the essential truth of the Soviet charges.

The State Department put out a statement pointing out the need for intelligence-collecting activities, but still lamely adhering to the cover story. This I thought might prove to be a mistake, but Mr. Herter felt it necessary that the matter be put in perspective. It would, on the part of the administration, disclose the fact that directed information-gathering by every possible means to protect the United States and the Free World against surprise attack. Several colleagues emphasized—and I fully agreed—that any statement be utterly and meticulously accurate. I approved a draft after changes in some of the wording to eliminate any phrase that seemed to be defensive in tone. I felt anything but apologetic.

My acknowledgment of responsibility for espionage activities was unprecedented in history, but so were the circumstances. Francis Gary Powers was no individual traveler sneaking across borders to work for intelligence-collecting activities, but still lamely adhering to the cover story. This I thought might prove to be a mistake, but Mr. Herter felt anything but apologetic.

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Turning to the future, I specified that there should be one department only within the government authorized to speak on the U-2 incident to the State Department. No one else was to comment. 7 I anticipated correctly I believe, that any statements by others would inevitably result in minor discrepancies, which the press would dissect. “We will not have to endure the storm,” I said, with everyone fully realizing that I personally—and rightly so—who would do the enduring.

* * *

In the midst of all this turbulence, it was necessary to avoid each other’s sight of the next immediate issue: the effect of the U-2 on prospects for success at the forthcoming summit meeting in Paris. On the question of the advisability of my attending a meeting where Mr. Khrushchev would be present, I told the Secretary of State that I had no intention of altering my plans. The only developments that could prevent my attendance would be information that the meeting was to be canceled or that Khrushchev would not be present.

We knew that at such a summit there would be no sign, even on the surface, of geniality. In a sense this was advantageous; there was no necessity to try to conceal, under a false cloak of camaraderie, sharply conflicting views both sides held about the major problems of the cold war. For me, the attendance had become a duty. It might be unpleasant, but I had no intention of evading it. Indeed, I welcomed the opportunity to uncover more Soviet hypocrisy.


Before my departure, I informed the appropriate agencies that I would not resume flights over Soviet territory. For these two reasons, one fairly obvious, the other less so: the first being the view of the rapid advances in ground-to-air rocketry and radar, and the U-2 was probably no longer a reliable plane to use for this purpose. The second was that considerable progress was now being made in the photography of the earth from satellites. At the same time, a few of my associates (and certain members of Congress) were recommending that we punish, either by reprimand or dismissal, selected officials who had closely engaged in the U-2 operations. The thought was that such a step would provide at least an implication that the flights had taken place without my authorization or possibly even without my knowledge—that I had been a victim of overzealous subordinates.

This argument I could not see. To deny my own part in the entire affair would have been a declaration that portions of the government of the United States were operating irresponsibly, in complete disregard of proper presidential control. And it would have been untrue. Moreover, to enter a conference with Khrushchev when he could refer in pity to my inability to control important matters in our government and scornfully dismiss any argument of mine on the ground that obviously I could not speak authoritatively for my government was out of the question. Finally, to pretend, by taking punitive action against subordinates—when all involved in the operation well knew of my personal approval—would have been to do a glaring and permanent injustice to whatever person or persons could have been designated as guilty. I rejected the whole notion out of hand.

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We landed at Orly Airport near Paris on the morning of the 15th.

Not long after arrival, I learned from Prime Minister Macmillan who had reached Paris ahead of us, that he was in receipt of a message from Khrushchev which was apparently a copy of one sent to President de Gaulle, the chairman of the planned conference.

The message, after reciting in extended fashion the feelings of outrage and resentment experienced by the Soviet government and its entire people at the effrontery of the United States government in authorizing flights over Soviet territory, laid down conditions that would have to be complied with by me before Chairman Khrushchev would attend the summit meeting. The first of these conditions was that I should denounce the U-2 flights as acts of inadmissible provocation committed by the Air Force of the United States in regard to the Soviet Union; secondly, that I should renounce the continuance of comparable acts for the future; and, finally, that I should have to “pass severe judgment” on those immediately responsible “for the premeditated violation of the frontiers of the U.S.S.R. by American planes.” Khrushchev’s message went on to say that unless all of this were done, “I cannot be among the participants in negotiations when one of them has made perfidy the basis of its policy toward the Soviet Union.” It concluded by saying that if all of these things were done, Mr. Khrushchev would, as the head of the Soviet government, be ready to participate in the conference and do everything possible to contribute to its success.

I promptly told the Prime Minister that there was no possibility that...

7 It was reported to me that there soon broke out a rash of Washington party conversationalists who had been on the “inside” and had “known” the U-2 before it fell. This had its funny side—but the talk, at times, was mis
I would apologize for acts that I thought necessary to the security of the United States, particularly in view of the proof in our hands of espionage activities in our nation by numbers of agents.

That same evening President de Gaulle invited Prime Minister Macmillan and me to join him at the Elysée Palace for preliminary sessions, especially of Khrushchev's note. I remarked that the Khrushchev complaint was about me and I saw no reason it should not have been made directly to me. Khrushchev had communicated with both President de Gaulle and Prime Minister Macmillan to register his protest and forth his conditions but had made no move to inform me.

I frankly admitted to the Western members of the conference that our相对 intelligence position was so dangerous that I had no recourse. Both understood my reasons and appeared sympathetic. By no means did I intend, at the forthcoming conference, to raise my hand and swear that we would never again do anything in the field of espionage. I would not permanently tie the hands of the United States government for the single purpose of saving a conference.

Our conversation turned to the kind of reply that I should make to Khrushchev if he opened the meeting the following morning with a violent blast. President de Gaulle thought the best reply would be: "Everyone does this, you Soviets do it too."

At first the Prime Minister believed it possible that Khrushchev, being adamant because he had gotten into something of a scrape with his Kremlin. Everyone agreed that the Soviet message, delivered to De Gaulle and Macmillan, had all the earmarks of one carefully prepared dissertation, speaking from a prepared text. He not only repeated the allegations and demands made in the message previously sent to President de Gaulle and Prime Minister Macmillan, but went on into a much longer dissertation on the reasons it had now become necessary for him to revoke the invitation that he had previously extended to me to visit the Soviet Union later in the spring.

The length of his explanation and the emphasis he gave to this subject clearly indicated that he was determined to keep me out of Russia. His document was repetitious, and at one point he became so vehement that I could not help grinning. He happened to notice this, and thereafter kept his eyes glued to the text of his speech.

I then asked for the floor and made a brief reply, restating the reason why my government had felt it necessary to conduct intelligence activities, pointing out that these activities had no aggressive intent but were to assure the safety of the United States and the Free World against surprise attack. I informed them that the overflights themselves, conducted by unarmed planes, were suspended and not to be resumed. I remarked also that if Mr. Khrushchev's basic purpose was to keep me out of his country he did not need to go into such a long and dreary explanation of why he chose to do so; a simple statement that I was no longer welcome would have served his purpose more quickly and just as conclusively.

I went on:

I have come to Paris to seek agreements with the Soviet Union which would eliminate the necessity for all forms of espionage, including overflights. I see no reason to use this incident to disrupt the conference. Should it prove impossible, because of the Soviet attitude, to come to grips here in Paris with this problem and the other vital issues threatening world peace, I am planning in the near future to submit to the United Nations a proposal for the creation of a United Nations aerial surveillance to detect preparations for attack. This plan I had intended to place before this conference. This surveillance system would operate in the territories of all nations prepared to accept such inspection. For its part, the United States is prepared not only to accept United Nations
aerial surveillance, but to do everything in its power to contribute to rapid organization and successful operation of such international surveillance.

We of the United States are here to consider in good faith important problems before this conference. We are prepared either to this point no further, or to undertake bilateral conversations by the United States and the U.S.S.R. while the main conference proceeds.

When I finished, General de Gaulle made the interesting offer that within the last few days a Soviet satellite had been passed over France and for all that the French had been told about the orbiting vehicle, reconnaissance photographs could have been of all French territory.

Khrushchev broke in to say he was talking about airplanes, not satellites. He said any nation in the world who wanted to photograph the Soviet areas by satellites was completely free to do so.

In any event, deadlock was apparent, and Khrushchev, delegation, stalked out, saying that he was going to give his written report to the press, at the moment of his own choosing. After his departure the three of us remained in informal conversations for a little over an hour in discussing the whole performance. Both President de Gaulle and Minister Macmillan suggested that Khrushchev was acting more like a student reciting a difficult lesson than as a person who was speaking from his own convictions and beliefs.

As we walked out of the meeting, General de Gaulle touched my elbow and said, "Whatever happens, we are with you." To me, at least, of my two colleagues, De Gaulle and Macmillan, was the bright hope of the whole affair.

The following morning the Western allies met again at the Elysée Palace. At that meeting it was decided that President de Gaulle should send, in writing, an invitation to Khrushchev to meet with him the next day at three o'clock that afternoon, and request an answer, in writing, to our intentions. While we had been informed by telephone that he would be present, he deliberately boycotted the meeting without notice. However, we were able to discuss the whole future of the conference. We decided to draft a perfectly truthful statement of the incident and to issue it as soon as we saw that any effort to get off was completely hopeless. We met again late in the evening at the Elysée Palace to agree among ourselves on the exact wording of the statement.

Because I had already made an engagement to stop in Lisbon on the 19th, I spent the day of the 18th visiting Notre Dame Cathedral, having lunch at the Elysée Palace; that evening, at the American Embassy, we enjoyed, in a family atmosphere, dinner with Amory and Laura Houghton. While there I received a curious telegram from Senator Lyndon Johnson, who with Adlai Stevenson, Sam Rayburn, and Senator Fulbright, asked that it be delivered to Khrushchev. It was a request to the Soviet Chairman that he not torpedo the conference. This was a somewhat awkward attempt, I thought, to interfere in the day-to-day conduct of foreign relations. In any event, I told my staff to reply that the conference had already broken up, so whether or not the cable was transmitted to Chairman Khrushchev, I was leaving Paris early the following morning. Secretary Herter telephoned Senator Johnson to tell him of my decision and to ask whether or not the authors desired to withdraw the cable. Senator Johnson hoped it would still be delivered. Why, I've never known but the message, as I recall, was delivered by a staff officer to the Soviet Embassy in Paris.

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Departing Paris on the 19th, I stopped at Lisbon for a day's visit with that Allied government. I had interesting talks with the Portuguese Prime Minister, Mr. Salazar. In the evening, our party attended a state dinner and the following morning I left for Washington.

For a few days after the breakup of the Paris meeting, the American public and, I suspect, those elsewhere, were uneasy and apprehensive. The atmosphere was strained by a doubly unfortunate coincidence: an American C-47 transport was forced down over East Germany. At the moment we did not know the facts. If it were to become standard Soviet practice to shoot down all American planes approaching the border, then we could be close to war. Soon we learned that this was not the case; our plane had lost its way and the incident was of no larger or lesser diplomatic significance than many others.

Even after the immediate tension abated, Khrushchev continued to bluster. But significantly he made no additional threat against Berlin; indeed, he scarcely mentioned the city. He said, in fact, that he could be close to war. Soon we learned that this was not the case; our plane had lost its way and the incident was of no larger or lesser diplomatic significance than many others.

The Paris meeting was the last time I saw Khrushchev in person. In a way I was sorry this was so. There was no denying that he was an interesting man. Of course he stood for everything that, to me, was unacceptable, even abominable. He was shrewd, tough, and coldly deliberate, even when he was pretending to be consumed with
Khrushchev had such full opportunities to learn about American life that it was not possible to give any credibility to his expressions of disbelief.

When I have been questioned about the wisdom of the U-2 flights, I have replied with a question of my own: "Would you be ready to give back all of the information we secured from our U-2 flights over Russia if there had been no disaster to one of our planes in Russia?" I have never received an affirmative response.

The indication reached by my two colleagues as to the reason for Khrushchev's actions. It was, they thought, to prevent me from visiting the Soviet Union. President de Gaulle and Prime Minister Macmillan outlined their reasons for such a conclusion.

It was necessary, they said, to keep in mind that Khrushchev had known of the U-2 flights for quite some time, but had not revealed that knowledge. When Powers was brought down, obviously Khrushchev could have kept the matter secret, at home and abroad, if he had wished. So clearly he deemed it wise to publicize the matter.

At this point, they went on, we must recall Nixon's visit to Russia and Khrushchev's to the United States. In Russia, Nixon had talked to hundreds of thousands of men and women who had never before heard what life was like in the United States. On one occasion Nixon spoke by national television to all parts of the Soviet Union. Most did not believe the fantastic (but truthful) things he told them about our production, our schools, our culture, our transportation, and—most fascinating of all—what a laborer's family could buy on his income. Khrushchev pretended he did not believe Nixon, but he was, according to Nixon and my brother Milton, disturbed by this exposure of his people to Western ideas and facts.

When Khrushchev visited the United States he of course had no further excuse to pretend ignorance about life in our nation. And if a visit by the United States Vice President had raised misgivings and questions in the minds of his people, what would be the consequence of a visit by the United States President who, offered reciprocal courtesy, would be free to speak to the masses throughout Russia, as Khrushchev had done in the United States?

Regarding the U-2 program itself, I know of no decision that I make differently, given the same set of facts as they confronted at the time.

I deeply regret that one of our young pilots had to pay a prison sentence for the failure of his plane in its final flight over Francis Gary Powers was freed after my retirement from the White House. Through an exchange on a bridge in Europe, Powers was safely back into American hands as we turned over one Colonel Abel, a master Soviet spy caught in Brooklyn, U.S.A. This, I have observed, was a tacit admission by Khrushchev that our "outside" U-2 pilots have their opposite numbers operating within the borders of this country.

Technically, the entire program was a success. The information did much in influencing the size and character of our security program, in revealing the pattern of Soviet industrialization, and in locating establishments of greatest threat to us in the Soviet Union. Armed with U-2 knowledge, which supplemented the strength of our Armed Forces, we were better able to plan our own political-military course.

One aspect of Khrushchev's scuttling of the Paris conference...