

December 16, 1953



GENERAL OUTLINE FOR AGRONSKY PROGRAM  
December 16, 1953

ABC-TV - 8 PM  
channel 7

Sp-Text

Introductory remarks.

QUESTION: What was in the President's mind when he decided to make the speech?

ANSWER: Outgrowth of Operation Candor. President's own speech. Others involved Secty. Dulles, Admiral Strauss, others. CDJ acted as Chief of Staff.

2 1/2 mos  
The President felt that simply to talk about the atomic danger to the United States and America's fantastic power of retaliation, which was all that was originally thought of in terms of informing the American people, was not enough. That would present only a picture of desolation on both sides. He wanted any message to the Amer. people not to wind up on a note of destruction, but of hope. And it had to be hope in terms of an atomic solution.

QUESTION: Why was this particular time chosen? Why born at Bermuda?

ANSWER: (as previously) -- Started thinking 2-1/2 months ago..then came problem what audience? what occasion? UN renewed invitation, which coincided with adjournment of Bermuda <sup>speech</sup> and also afforded opportunity to check this serious and important <sup>speech</sup> with our allies. Calendar and historical coincidence.

QUESTION: Was the speech written in Bermuda...anything prepared on arrival?... Churchill authorship?

ANSWER: (as previously) -- already several drafts in its evolution. Draft #7 in hand on arrival. Worked on there by Pres. and others. (Churchill déd see.)

Scene on plane -- no change. Again, it was President's speech.

QUESTION: From your knowledge, what was the intent of the speech?

ANSWER: There were certain things it was supposed to be, and others it was supposed not to be. First, let me tell you what it was NOT.

1. Not disarmament plan for conventional or atomic weapons.
2. Not plan for intl. control of atomic energy.
3. Not plan for exchange of atomic secrets with Russia or anybody.
4. Not a plan for pooling stocks of weapons.

QUESTION: Then what is it?

ANSWER:

down runway at Laguardia, but not one minute earlier. And it was President's speech throughout.

QUESTION: <sup>?? 7 3 4 2 8) 2 1 ?</sup> What was the intent of the speech?

ANSWER: <sup>2 0 0 5 8 1 - 2 3 = 8 1 ✓</sup> First, let me tell you what it is NOT.



1. It is not a disarmament plan for conventional or atomic weapons.
2. It is not a plan for the international control of atomic energy.
3. It is not a plan for the exchange by our country with Russia or any other country of atomic secrets.
4. It is not a plan for pooling stocks of weapons.

QUESTION: Then what is it?

ANSWER: It is a small beginning, but a revolutionary one, designed to break the deadlock of not being able to get together on any basis to see what can be done about this terrible danger to the whole world.

QUESTION: Do you see this small beginning as relating to the overall world crisis? Is it, or was it, your intention to use this proposal as a weapon in the cold war?

ANSWER: This proposal was NEVER thought of as a weapon in the cold war. It would be disastrous for anyone to attach "psychological warfare" overtones to this speech. Best refutation of that idea is that if this had been a psychological warfare "trick", we would immediately have pounced on the initial negative reactions on the part of Russian commentators, Pravda, Vischisky, etc., and said "There they go again; we have won." However, since we meant this proposal, we are ignoring those first reactions and waiting to see the result after there has been time for real consideration on their part. *Add withheld newspapers.*

*Insert Bohlen  
Molotov*

The reason this proposal had such terrific impact is that it stands on its own feet -- it is a reasonably offered, feasible project; it does not require loss of face or invasion of national privacy -- all things that the Soviets are self-conscious about. It is something that millions of people can grasp and understand. It is doable. It does not require a lot of complicated inspection machinery.

QUESTION: What would be the mechanics of the plan?

ANSWER: We have thought them through carefully, and know the answers, but this is not the time or place to discuss them. To do so would vitiate our statement that we are prepared to sit down in private conversations to explore them further.

QUESTION: All this is fine idea, but how do you expect to work with Russia on things that require give and take on our part when we have been unable to work even with Britain and Canada? David Lilienthal, in a comment last Sunday on this proposal, cites our difficulties in the past with our allies, and says it illustrates how greatly our own attitudes will

*optional*  
*optional*

have to change if the President's program is to have a chance of acceptance even by our Congress and the American public. Won't our own attitude be as much of an obstacle as the Russians'?

ANSWER: Within the past few weeks, cooperation between the Americans and the British on the non-military aspects of atomic power has increased tremendously. Certain definite moves have been taken. As far as the American people and Congress are concerned, reaction thus far has been great approval and understanding. And as the President said, he will put it before the Congress.

3 Lewis Strauss points book

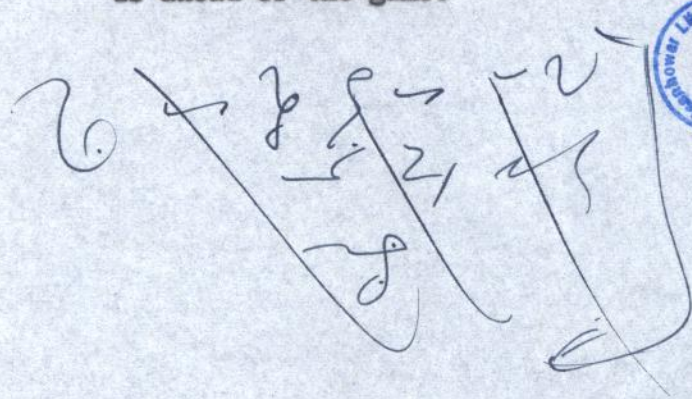
QUESTION: Have you made the preliminary preparations in Congress?

ANSWER: (TO BE CHECKED -- certain preliminaries have been undertaken)

QUESTION: How would you define the President's basic objective in making this proposal, aside from breaking the atomic deadlock? Does this indicate that we are prepared to see where it is possible to co-exist with Russia? Does this signify a willingness on the part of our country to say that we can live at peace with Russia?

ANSWER: Please do not use the word "co-existence" now -- you are way ahead of the game. Obviously, no one wants to die in an atomic holocaust, nor do we want to abdicate to the Soviets. At the same time, the combination of the diplomatic deadlock and the atomic arms race have reached such proportions that the President decided it was impossible to try to solve it in one fell swoop.

So -- he decided to make a simple proposal in one area, which could lead on to other things. If we are successful in this, we will be hopeful that we can be successful in further undertakings. And somewhere or other along the road we will discover the Soviet intentions toward co-existence. But it is a gradual development which will result from DEEDS -- and for us to flip a coin now on whether or not we can co-exist is ahead of the game.



Emphasize - Pres' speech  
No P.W.  
No Coexistence  
Not Amer. tradition  
Predestination  
Lambert