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TRANSCRIPT OF PRESIDENT NIXON'S TV AND RADIO INTERVIEW*
WASHINGTON, D. C., MONDAY, JANUARY 4, 1971

(President Nixon) Good evening, ladies and gentlemen.

I wish to welcome the distinguished members of our television panel to the White House Library, and also to welcome all of you, who are listening on television and on radio, to this conversation with the President.

I was thinking when this program was announced that I would have an opening statement as I had, you will recall, six months ago when we met in California. But in view of the record of the 91st Congress and some of the talk that went on at the end, I thought a filibuster would not be appreciated. So, we will go directly to your questions.

(Mr. Chancellor) Sir, you have lived here in the White House and had this responsibility now for two years and I wonder, Mr. President, how you have changed. We heard some talk and read in the papers during the last campaign about the "Old Nixon," but all of the historical evidence we have indicates that the Presidency changes men.

I wonder what changes in yourself you have observed.

* The President was interviewed by John Chancellor, National Broadcasting Company (NBC); Eric Sevareid, Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS); Nancy H. Dickerson, Public Broadcasting System (PBS); and Howard K. Smith, American Broadcasting Company (ABC).

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AMERICAN EMBASSY - TOKYO

(The President) Well, the changes, Mr. Chancellor, are primarily not physical. Physically, as you probably noted from the doctor's report which, incidentally, a President is required to have once a year, and probably that is a good thing, there have been no significant changes there. So, the job must agree with me.

The changes more are in an understanding of the job. When you come into office, the Presidency, one has ideas as to what he can accomplish. He believes he can accomplish a great deal, even though he may have a Congress that is not part of his own party. Then, after he gets in, he finds that what he had hoped in terms of achieving goals will not be as great as the actual performance turns out to be.

So, I would say that in terms of how I have changed, it is in realizing that while we must set high goals and always seek them, we must not become impatient. We must plow forward, recognizing that in the end we are going to make some progress, if not all of the progress that we had hoped.

I would say, in other words, at this time I am not disappointed in the record of the last two years in terms of some of the things we accomplished. But I have great hopes for the next two years, because I think I know better how to do the job. I think I know better how to deal with the Congress. I think I know better how to work with the Cabinet.

This is perhaps how I have changed. I know more. I am more experienced. I hope I do better.

(Mr. Severeid) Mr. President, to be specific about the last two years, what do you now think of as your primary achievement, specifically, and what is your primary failure or mistake?

(The President) Mr. Severeid, the primary achievement is, I think, in the field of foreign policy. We have not yet ended the war in Vietnam. I hoped we would have by this time. But we now see the end of America's combat role in Vietnam. The fact that, for example, when we came in, American casualties in the last year of the previous Administration were 14,500 and the casualties this year are 4,200. That is still much too high. I will not be satisfied until I do not have to write any letter at all to the next of kin of somebody killed in Vietnam.

But we are on the way out and we are on the way out in a way that will bring a just peace, the kind of a peace that will discourage that kind of aggression in the future, and that will build, I hope, the foundation for a generation of peace. That is our major achievement in, I think, the foreign policy field.

In the disappointment side, I think the greatest disappointment legislatively was the failure to get welfare reform. I believe this would have done more than anything else to deal with the problems of poverty in this country, the problems that many of our cities have and our States have, the problems of minority groups who have particular difficulties, insofar as welfare is concerned.

Finally, if I could add one other, I would not like to limit it to just one, I think the greatest disappointment was in terms of the tragedies of Kent State, Jackson State and the University of Wisconsin. It is true that over the past two years we have seen the war wind down. We have seen our cities not as inflamed as they were previously.

We have seen the amount of violence going down some, but during this Administration to have had three such tragedies as that, left a very deep impression upon me. I trust, as we continue to have success in foreign policy, as we continue to solve the problems that people are interested in, that this kind of violence will begin to recede even more.

(Miss Dickerson) Mr. President, I would like to ask you about one of your specific problems, namely the economy. Now, despite the initiatives that you have taken in the past few weeks, there is still widespread pessimism about unemployment. In fact, in places like California, there is a near panic psychology about joblessness. Your own economic advisors say that the basic trouble is a lack of confidence in the economy.

What do you plan to do to restore people's confidence in the economy before things get any worse than they now are?

(The President) Well, first, I believe that that confidence is being restored. Confidence is something that is a very intangible factor, as you know. It is how people feel at a particular moment. And people who may be confident one month may have a lack of confidence the next month.

But let's look at some of the facts. First, we find that insofar as our efforts to control inflation are concerned, that while the progress has not been as fast as we would have liked, that the wholesale price index is half of what it was a year ago; the retail consumer price index is turning down -- not as much as we would like but turning down. We are beginning to make real progress in fighting inflation.

Second, in terms of the unemployment front, here we find that the rate of unemployment for this year will be approximately 4.9 percent. That is too high, even though we could perhaps point to the fact that over the past 20 years there have been only three peacetime years in which unemployment was less than 5 percent, the years of '55, '56, and '57.

But on that score let me say that I take no comfort in that statistic. I know what unemployment does to somebody. I have seen an unemployed man come into my father's store. I have seen the look in his eye when he can't pay the bill. I have seen the look in his children's eyes when he can't pay that bill. So I want a program which not only will turn down the inflation in which we are now beginning to succeed, but one which will expand the economy, and this gets to the specifics that you have asked for.

What we are going to do first is to have an expansionary budget. It will be a budget in deficit, as will be the budget in 1971. It will not be an inflationary budget because it will not exceed the full employment revenues.

We also, according to Dr. Arthur Burns, will have an expansionary monetary policy, and that will, of course, be a monetary policy adequate to meet the needs of an expanding economy.

Now, in addition to that, we are going to have a program that we will present to the Congress, a program that I believe in terms of government reform will be the most significant reform that we have had perhaps in a century. I think that this program will also have an indirect effect in restoring confidence in the economy.

If I can make a prediction -- I made one last year and many people took me to task about it, about the fact that the stock market might go up and right afterwards it went down. But it did go up. And I made that prediction not because I was expecting people to buy stocks and urging them to do so without consulting a broker whose judgments would be better than mine, but because I had faith in the long-term prospects of the American economy.

This is the prediction: 1971 is going to be a year of an expanding economy in which inflation, the rise in inflation, is going to continue to go down; in which unemployment, which is presently too high, will finally come under control and begin to recede. 1971, in essence, will be a good year, and 1972 will be a very good year.

Having made that prediction, I will say that the purpose of this Administration will be to have an activist economic policy designed to control inflation but at the same time to expand the economy so that we can reduce unemployment, and to have what this country has not had for 20 years, and that is a situation where we can have full employment in peacetime without the cost of war and without the cost of excessive inflation.

(Mr. Smith) It is so rare to induce a President to be introspective in public that I want to follow up Mr. Chancellor's opening question and ask you a question about yourself.

The best analysis of Richard Nixon I have ever read has been written by Richard Nixon in his book, "The Six Crises." In that book you say the easiest period in a crisis is after the battle itself. The most dangerous period is the aftermath.

It is then with all resources spent and the guard down that you have to watch out for dull reactions and faulty judgments, and you cite some cases where that actually happened to you.

Now the Presidency is a center of crisis. Do you think you have mastered that aftermath period now?

(The President) Well, one of the benefits, Mr. Smith, of course, having been in this position and having gone through so much before I got here, is that a man tends not to make as many mistakes. That doesn't mean that he doesn't make some mistakes. I have made my share, not only as President but before.

But on the other hand if an individual knows himself so well that he paces himself properly, and if he goes through a period of very great tense activity, he will watch for the moment afterwards when in a moment of let-down he might make a mistake.

I don't mean that I have mastered it completely because I would be the first to admit that I am just as human as anybody else.

(Mr. Severeid) Mr. President, you described what you want to happen with your new economy program in the new year, but what is going to be in it? You have sounded as though there is going to be nothing about controls, prices or wages, or anything of the sort. Is that what we should assume from what you have just said?

(The President) Mr. Severeid, I do not plan to ask for wage controls or price controls. I have noted, incidentally, that all of you, the four commentators here, have commented upon controls in one way or another. I know Mr. Smith, for example, has talked about the possibility of wage-price guidelines, or wage-price push, and Dr. Arthur Burns has indicated that possibly that might be something that we should turn to.

I have considered all of those options. I have decided that none of them at this time would work, and consequently I feel that the best course is to proceed as I have suggested, with an expansionary budgetary policy, but one that will not exceed full employment revenues, and at the same time with a monetary policy that will be adequate to fuel a growing economy. I believe this will reduce unemployment and also I believe it will do so at a time that inflation will continue to come down. Now, there is still the wage-price push and that is what you are referring to.

(Mr. Chancellor) Mr. Nixon, your budget is going to be a full employment budget -- I understand that is going to be true -- which will be deficit spending. In the very good year of 1972, which you have said you hope will happen, will you get unemployment down to four percent, which most people call full employment, which you have just referred to? Will it get down that far?

(The President) That certainly will be our goal, Mr. Chancellor. I am not going to indicate what the number actually will be, because even though I am willing to predict on football games and also the stock market, to say what the unemployment number is going to be a year and a half from now, of course, would be completely irresponsible. But our goal is full employment by the end of 1972.

If I could come back, Mr. Severeid, to another point that you raised, I also should point out that we do not plan -- despite the speculation that you have heard about -- I do not plan to ask for new taxes. I have considered the possibility of the value-added tax as a substitution for some of our other taxes, and looking to the future, we may very well move into that direction.

But this year, I do not think it is realistic to propose a new tax, either new taxes or tax reform, because I am going to give the Congress, and particularly the Ways and Means Committee of the House and the Finance Committee of the Senate, a very full plate in other areas requiring their attention, including, for example, welfare reform that I will submit again, and including also, a new health program which will go to those committees, and including also, a new, what we will call, revenue-sharing, going far beyond anything that we have suggested to date.

(Miss Dickerson) Mr. President, I would like to ask you a little bit more about the man who is unemployed, as you mentioned, the man who went into your father's store. There are an awful lot of those people now and their unemployment insurance is running out, and the idea of expansionary programs doesn't really quite get to them.

How do you convince that man who is out of a job and whose wife has had to go back to work and whose children are leaving college because they don't have any money -- how do you convince him right now to keep cool because you think the things are going to be reasonably better in the future?

(The President) Well, one way you cannot convince him, I can say, Miss Dickerson, is simply by what we call jawboning. People are too smart to listen to even the President of the United States and be convinced that things are going to be better the day-after tomorrow. The way he is convinced is by what happens.

For example, notice the area of Southern California, which you referred to, the fact that we are going to have by far the biggest year in housing in the history of this country is going to have a rather dramatic effect on employment in Southern California; the fact that in areas like the environment we are going to have expanding programs; the fact that in the proposals that we are making to the Congress, these will have an effect in stimulating the economy.

Now, as this movement occurs, that man who is unemployed will see that the rolls go down. That is the only thing that is going to convince him. Not any promises, not any talk.

I can only say that I am convinced that our policies are right. I am committed to an activist policy, and I will assure that man who is unemployed that the President of the United States knows what it means, and I intend to do everything that I possibly can to see that our policies will deal with it and deal with it effectively.

(Mr. Smith) We have so much to cover and so little time, I am going to dare to change the subject slightly. Dr. Pat Moynihan sent you the most widely publicized secret memorandum in the world which recommended a policy of benign neglect towards the racial problem. We know about that. We don't know what your answer or reaction was. What did you think about that?

(The President) He got a bad rap out of that, Mr. Smith. Dr. Moynihan is one of the most dedicated men to racial justice and to justice for all people that I have ever known. He was referred to when he was on the White House staff as the White House liberal. Well, as a matter of fact, we have others who perhaps can also be so categorized. But he was enthusiastic.

He was, for example, the author of the family assistance welfare reform, which I believe will be, as he has said, the greatest single social reform in the last 40 years, and which, incidentally, is the answer to benign neglect.

When he talked about benign neglect, he was not referring to neglecting black Americans or any Americans. But what he was referring to was not to react to violence, not to react to attacks that might be made, verbal or others, by minority groups, black Americans, extremist groups.

His advice was to act on the problems but to have a policy -- and he used the term benign neglect in a philosophical way and then the thing came out and everybody jumped on it and, of course, on me.

But I want to say I am proud that he was a member of our staff for two years. And his legacy, and I promised him the day that he left, the day before Christmas -- his legacy will be that we are going to have welfare reform, and that every family in America with children will have a minimum income.

(Mr. Smith) He was nearly six feet tall so I know your assessment of his is correct.

Someone, I think, told you earlier about telegrams that come to us and ask us to ask you questions. I would like to put one to you from a telegram. In your last news conference you said you opposed forced integration in the suburbs. Well, if a suburban community should use zoning and land use authority to block housing development for minority groups and, in fact, there are cases where it has happened, would you or would you not apply the Federal Fair Housing Law to prevent that?

(The President) Mr. Smith, what we are talking about here, first, is carrying out the law and then, second, going beyond the law.

I also said in that news conference, as you will remember, that I was pledged to carry out the law, this law and every other law, and that I would carry it out.

The law, as you know, does require that there can be no urban renewal funds, that there can be no Federal housing funds, in any community that has a policy which is discriminatory insofar as fair housing is concerned. But now the law does not now require or, in my opinion, allow the Federal Government to have forced integration of suburbs. There is argument on this point.

I realize, for example -- and I do listen to some of your commentaries and I read them all -- I know Mr. Chancellor has very strong feelings on this -- I believe that that is the best course: We are going to carry out the law. We are going to open up opportunities for all Americans to move into housing, any housing that they are able to afford.

But, on the other hand, for the Federal Government to go further than the law, to force integration in the suburbs, I think is unrealistic. I think it will be counter-productive and not in the interest of better race relations.

(Mr. Severeid) Mr. President, if we can return to some foreign problems for a while, for many years the leaders of your party held the Democratic Administration to blame for the loss to communism of East Europe and of China. Do you feel what is happening in Chile now in any way bears upon your responsibility?

(The President) Well, what happened in Chile is not something that we welcomed, although, Mr. Severeid, as you know, we were very careful to point out that that was the decision of the people of Chile, and that therefore we expected that decision and that in our programs with Chile we still recognize the Government and we still have our people-to-people program and we still have our Peace Corps programs. Those programs will continue as long as Chile's foreign policy is not antagonistic to our interests.

Now, as far as what happened in Chile is concerned, we can only say that for the United States to have intervened in a free election and to have turned it around, I think, would have had repercussions all over Latin America that would have been far worse than what has happened in Chile.

I would say, finally, just as I told the Chilean Ambassador, when he paid his farewell call on me, I told him to tell the new President that as far as the United States was concerned that we recognized the right of any country to have internal policies and an internal government different from what we might approve of. What we were interested in was their policies toward us and in the foreign policy field.

So, I haven't given up on Chile or on the Chilean people, and we are willing to keep our contact with them.

(Mr. Chancellor) Let me ask a question about Vietnam, as though nobody was going to ask that question.

Last month you sent a number of bombers into North Vietnam and we were told that they bombed missile sites and anti-aircraft installations because the North Vietnamese had fired on an American reconnaissance plane. But then a few days later, sir, we learned that apparently that opportunity was used to make very heavy bombing raids on supply lines in the Mu Gia Pass and the passes in North Vietnam into Laos.

Now, I am confused because of all of the talk about the understandings with North Vietnam, with the new criteria on the bombing you seem to have put on, and the fact that what many people got out of this one series of raids was that we have quite enlarged the reasons for our going to the North to bomb.

(The President) Mr. Chancellor, I have no desire to resume the bombing of North Vietnam. We do not want to go back to the bombing of the strategic targets in North Vietnam, and we do not want even to bomb military targets unless it becomes necessary to do so, and this is the key point -- to protect American forces.

Now, with regard to the understanding, let us see what it is.

First, there was an understanding. President Johnson said so, and Dean Rusk said so, and Clark Clifford said so, and Mr. Harriman said so. There was an understanding that after the bombing halt, unarmed reconnaissance planes could fly over North Vietnam with impunity. We had to insist on that, because otherwise, we would have no intelligence with regard to when they were planning on an attack.

So, when they fire on those planes I have given instructions that we will take out the SAM site or whatever it is that has fired upon them.

We will continue to do so, and if they say that there is no understanding in that respect, then there are no restraints whatever on us, and so we must have that in mind.

Now, the other understanding is one that I have laid down. It is a new one. It is a new one which goes along with our Vietnamization Program and our withdrawal program. I pointed out a moment ago what has happened in Vietnam, the fact that our casualties are a third of what they were two years ago, the fact that we have 265,000 out of Vietnam now, and that we now can see the end of the American combat role in Vietnam. We can see that coming.

We must realize, however, as Secretary Rogers pointed out in his news conference at the State Department a few days ago, that in May of this year, most American combat forces, ground combat forces, will have been withdrawn from Vietnam. But there will still be 280,000 there left to withdraw.

Now, the President of the United States, as Commander-in-Chief, holds a responsibility to those men to see that they are not subjected to an overwhelming attack from the North. That is why we must continue reconnaissance, and that is why also, if the enemy at a time we are trying to deescalate, at a time we are withdrawing, starts to build up its infiltration, starts moving troops and supplies through the Mu Gia Pass and the other passes, then I, as Commander-in-Chief, will have to order bombing strikes on those key areas.

That was one of the reasons for this strike, and it will be done again if they continue to threaten our remaining forces in Vietnam. But only on those military targets, and only if necessary.

(Mr. Chancellor) Does it bother you, sir, that this wasn't make as clear then as you have made it now?

(The President) It has been made clear only since we began our withdrawal program. You see, this is a new policy.

(Mr. Chancellor) Pardon me, sir. I mean a month ago, in December, when the first announcement came out.

(The President) I made it clear not just a month ago, but in November. You will recall on November 3rd, when I made my speech on November 3rd, I warned the North Vietnamese that if at a time that we were withdrawing they stepped up their infiltration and threatened our remaining forces, that I would retaliate.

I have said that on eight different occasions on national television and national radio. I have said it also in other messages to them that have gotten to them very loud and very clear. So there is no question about the understanding, and that was why we did this.

(Mr. Smith) You talked about the situation through May of 1971. I hate to ask a hypothetical question, but people do ask them.

(The President) Everybody else does.

(Mr. Smith) One of your own military advisers put it to me, not to get an answer from me, but just to tell what was on his mind.

Suppose in 1972 our role is virtually eliminated, we are passive, we have few troops there and then the North Vietnamese attack and begin to come into control of the country. What is our policy then? Do we stand aside?

(The President) Well, Mr. Smith, our Vietnamization policy has been very carefully drawn up, and we are withdrawing in a measured way on the basis that the South Vietnamese will be able to defend themselves as we withdraw, and it is working. For example, do you realize, and I am sure you do because I think it was reported on your network, all of our naval forces now, combat forces, have been removed?

The South Vietnamese Navy has taken over. And so it will be in these other areas. When the time comes in 1972 that you speak of, it is possible, of course, that at that time North Vietnam might launch an attack, but I am convinced that at that time, based on the training program of the South Vietnamese, based on the watershed that occurred when they jelled and became a fighting, confident unit after the Cambodian intervention, I am convinced that they will be able to hold themselves and defend themselves in 1972.

Now, that doesn't answer your hypothetical question, but I am simply not going to borrow trouble by saying that I expect them to fail. I don't think they will.

(Miss Dickerson) Mr. President, I would like to ask you an overall question about our relations with the Communists. When you took office, you said this was going to be an era of negotiation, not confrontation. But in reality, haven't we returned to something of a cold war situation in regard to our relations with the Soviets? And how were our relations affected by their duplicity during the Middle East crisis when they helped rebuild the missile sites?

(The President) Miss Dickerson, when we talk about an era of negotiation rather than confrontation, we must remember that negotiation means exactly that. It means that you have two parties that have very great differences with regard to their vital interests, and the negotiation process will sometimes be very, very extended. Negotiation does not necessarily mean agreement.

Now, let's be quite specific. Mr. Kosygin in his statement just a couple of days ago to the Japanese newspaper manager complained of our policy in Vietnam as he has previously, and he complained about our policy in the Mideast.

We, of course, have been concerned about their movements in the Caribbean. We have been concerned about what you mentioned, their own activities in the Middle East, and, of course, we have been concerned about their continuing harassment from time to time of the Berlin access routes.

Nevertheless, on the plus side, let's see what has happened. Over the past two years the United States and the Soviet Union have been negotiating. We have been negotiating, for example, on arms control. Those negotiations will begin again in Vienna in March. I am optimistic that we will reach an agreement eventually. I do not suggest now that we are going to have a comprehensive agreement, because there is a basic disagreement with regard to what strategic weapons -- what that definition is.

But we are now willing to move to a non-comprehensive agreement. We are going to be able to discuss that with the Soviets in the next round at Vienna.

I am not predicting that we are going to have an agreement next month or two months from now or three months from now. But in terms of arms control, we have some overwhelming forces that are going to bring about an agreement eventually, and it is simply this: The Soviet Union and the United States have common interest in avoiding the escalating burden of arms.

You know they have even cut down on their SS-9 and big missile deployment lately, developments -- and, second, the Soviet Union and the United States have an overwhelming common interest in avoiding nuclear competition which could lead to nuclear destruction.

So, in this field, I think we are going to make some progress. In the Mideast it is true we are far apart, but we are having discussions. On Berlin we are far apart, but we are negotiating. And finally, with regard

to the rhetoric, and the rhetoric in international affairs does make a difference, the rhetoric, while it has been firm, has generally been non-inflammatory on our part and on theirs.

So, I am not without the confidence that I had at the beginning. I always realize that our differences were very great, that it was going to take time. But the United States and the Soviet Union owe it to their own people and the people of the world, as the super powers, to negotiate rather than to confront.

(Miss Dickerson) Mr. President, you always have put a certain value on personal diplomacy. Do you think this would be a good time for you personally to talk to some of the Russian leaders? Do you think it would be a good time to have a summit, of sorts?

(The President) Miss Dickerson, as you know, I have had conversations with the Russian leaders through the years, and, of course, with Ambassador Dobrynin, a skilled diplomat, here in Washington, and with Mr. Gromyko, when he was here.

Now, as far as another meeting is concerned a meeting at a higher level, that is a matter that has been speculated about. If it appears at some time that a meeting of that type would be what is needed to bring about the final consummation in one of these areas, for example the SALT talks, the Mideast or the rest, we will certainly have such a meeting.

But unless there is the chance for progress, a summit talk is not in their interest and it is not in our interest, and not in the interest of world peace. It creates a false sense of security.

(Mr. Severeid) Mr. President, we have no formal alliance with the state of Israel. But isn't it really a fact that we are now so deeply committed morally to the Israelis that if they were in unmistakable danger of defeat wouldn't we have to intervene?

(The President) Mr. Severeid, to speculate on that question would not really be in the interest of peace in that area, as I see them at this point. Let's look how far we have come. We have had a cease-fire for five months, no killing, and for three or four years before that there were killings every day in that part of the world.

Second, as you know, the Israelis have gone back to the Jarring talks and also the other side will be there. That doesn't mean that the prospect for an early agreement is very great. It does mean, however, that there is some chance that there will be discussion.

And, third, it seems to me that we must take into account the fact that the people in that part of the world, the people of Israel, the people in the countries that are Israel's neighbors, they are overwhelmingly on the side of peace. Their leaders are going to have to reflect it.

I think we are at a critical time in the Mideast, a critical time over the next few months when we may get these talks off dead center, make some progress toward a live and let live attitude; not progress that is going to bring a situation where the Israelis and their neighbors are going to like each other. That isn't ever going to happen, perhaps. But where they will live with each other, where they won't be fighting each other.

Now, to speculate about what is going to happen in the event that Israel is going to go down the tube would only tend to inflame the situation of Israel's neighbors.

(Mr. Severeid) Would it calm the situation and help the prospects of peace if we did have some formal alliance with Israel?

(The President) No, I don't believe so, because I think that what we are doing for Israel is so well known to them, and also incidentally it is quite well known to their neighbors, that it provides the balance that is needed.

We just provided a 500 million dollar aid program for Israel. I say "aid" if they are going to be able to purchase weapons to that extent. We have made it clear time and again that we will help to maintain the balance of power in the area, so that Israel would not be in a position that its neighbors could overwhelm them with their superior manpower or with the forces that they received from the Soviet Union. But I do not believe that a formal alliance would be either necessary or would be in the interest of peace in the area.

(Mr. Smith) The thing that bothers me is the tendency toward adventurism in this part of the world by the Russians. They are manning

the SAM sites, and last summer -- it wasn't widely publicized, but eight Israeli jets were on patrol and they ran into eight Egyptian MIGs, and there was a fight and over the radio they heard they weren't Egyptians, they were Russian-piloted MIGs.

The score was four Russians shot down. But how frightfully dangerous that is. If the Russians had been tempted to retaliate, it would be terribly complicated.

(The President) You will remember in the last five minutes of our conversation a year ago -- we didn't get to the Mideast until the last five minutes -- but I mentioned this very point, that the key to peace in the Mideast is held by several people: First, the parties involved, the Israelis and the neighbors, primarily the UAR and Jordan. Second, the key to peace is in the hands of the Soviet Union and the United States, Britain and France, the four major powers.

If the Soviet Union does not play a conciliatory peacemaking role, there is no chance for peace in the Mideast, because if the Soviet Union continues to fuel the war arsenals of Israel's neighbors, Israel will have no choice but to come to the United States for us to maintain that balance.

That is why it is important at this time that the Soviet Union and the United States as well as Britain and France all join together in a process of not having additional arms and additional activities go into that area, because that will only mean that it produces the possibility of future confrontation.

This is the time to talk. Let me say one other thing with regard to talk. I would hesitate to give advice to other nations as they enter such delicate talks, but I am sure of this: These talks will have no chance for success if they are done in a public forum. It is very important that it be done quietly, because every time an offer is made or a suggestion is made, it is talked about in the parliaments of one country or another and on the radio, and you can forget it. If these talks can be quietly conducted, there is a chance for success, and in the end we want to remember that the United States and the Soviet Union and Great Britain and France must all be, and I think will be, in a position to guarantee whatever settlement is made through the United Nations.

(Mr. Chancellor) Sir, can I take you to Cuba?

Last October, just before we all left with you on your European trip, one of your aides here spoke about the potential of a grave threat in Cuba if the Russians introduced what apparently was a submarine missile base, a tender to serve nuclear submarines. Can you tell us what is going on there? Apparently there is a tender there. Will we react if the tender services a submarine in the harbor, or what happens? Can you tell us about that?

(The President) I can tell you everything that our intelligence tells us, and we think it is very good in that area, because, as you know, we have surveillance from the air, which in this case is foolproof, we believe.

First, let us look at what the understanding is. President Kennedy worked out that understanding in 1962 that the Russians would not put any offensive missiles into Cuba. That understanding was expanded on October 11th of this year by the Russians when they said that it would include a military base in Cuba, and a military naval base. They, in effect, said that they would not put a military naval base into Cuba, on October 11th.

Now, in the event that nuclear submarines were serviced either in Cuba or from Cuba, that would be a violation of the understanding. That has not happened yet. We are watching the situation closely.

The Soviet Union is aware of the fact that we are watching it closely. We expect them to abide by the understanding. I believe they will.

(Mr. Chancellor) Could we be close to a crisis if they begin doing that?

(The President) I don't believe that they want a crisis in the Caribbean, and I don't believe that is what is going to occur, particularly since the understanding has been so clearly made out and so clearly relied on by us and as I have stated here today.

(Miss Dickerson) Mr. President, to switch from foreign affairs for a moment to some other areas, I would like to ask you a question that involves whether this Government is really going to be able to govern in the future. It involves how you cut up the economy, how you slice

the pie. The cities are crying. Mayors say they can't run them. They don't have enough money to pay their teachers or their firemen. The State Governors say that States are near bankruptcy.

How soon are you going to be able to reverse the flow of money and power and responsibility from Washington back to the States and the cities that you said you wanted to do?

(The President) Miss Dickerson, if we get cooperation from the next Congress, we are going to begin to make a breakthrough in that area in this historic next Congress, the 92nd. That will be the major thrust of my State of the Union message, how we can take this great Government of ours, and it is a great Government, how we can give the people of this country an opportunity to make decisions with what that Government should be and what it does, and what kind of activities it should be engaged in. That is why when I referred to revenue-sharing a moment ago in answering Mr. Severeid, I pointed out that we were going to have a program that went far beyond any proposal that we had made to this date and it is one that will be, I believe, widely supported by the Governors, by the Mayors, and I trust by the Congress, because, you know, we tried to make a breakthrough when I submitted this in August of last year. The Congress didn't have hearings on it.

This time we expect to get hearings and this is one area where Mr. Connally can help.

(Miss Dickerson) I know that, sir, but, you know, Dr. Moynihan when he left said one of the criticisms was the impression got around that you really weren't behind some of these programs that you had enunciated, and many of the Senators and Congressmen felt that you hadn't really given your personal push to it and that is why it failed to get any hearing at all.

(The President) Well, Miss Dickerson, in evaluating what a President is behind, of course, that is fair game. It is done with all Presidents and I have no complaints about members of the press and others who do this, or members of my own staff.

But there is nothing that I feel more strongly about than the proposal for welfare reform and the proposal for revenue-sharing, the new one that I will be submitting to the Congress.

One of the reasons is that if we do not have it we are going to have States, cities and counties going bankrupt over these next two to three years and we are going to have massive problems in those areas. I believe as the Congress sees that crisis they will act on it.

Let me give you an example with regard to welfare reform. In 1967 there were 660,000 people on welfare in New York City. In 1971 there were 1,200,000 people on welfare in New York City. It just goes up and up and up.

Now, if anybody wants to defend the present welfare program let them be against ours. We are going to propose it again. We are going to put the Congress -- we have a commitment from the Congress to act on it or at least get a vote on it early in the next session. And if we can get revenue-sharing with it this crisis of the cities and local governments -- we at least will have a start in answer to it.

(Mr. Smith) A great deal depends on your getting Congress to act. A liberal Republican Senator has recently said to me that he was never called to confer with you. A liberal Congressman said he has trouble seeing you. I compare this with your predecessor having Congressmen and Senators in droves in small groups here every week of his Administration.

Do you think you have nursed your Congressional relations well enough?

(The President) Mr. Smith, in regard to how many droves of Congressmen and Senators have been down here, I think you will find -- the record, I think, will be put out in the next two or three days because, as you know, at the end of two years people ask for these statistics -- I have seen more Congressmen and Senators than any of my predecessors saw, for good reason. I didn't have a majority.

You see, in the case, for example, of President Johnson he could call the leaders down and they could get the program through. In the case of President Kennedy he could do the same thing. In the case of President Eisenhower, whereas he had a Republican Congress only in his first two years, in the last six years he had -- he was then the majority leader -- Johnson and Sam Rayburn and they could deliver the Democratic vote. I do not have that situation.

You do not have that kind of leadership on the Democratic side or, for that matter, on the Republican side in the United States Senate. No fault of the leaders, but because they are a group of individualists.

But to come more precisely to your question, there is nothing that I mean to devote more of my time to -- and in this field of revenue-sharing and in this field of welfare reform which will be in the Ways and Means Committee of the House and the Finance Committee of the Senate -- nothing that the new Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Connally, is going to devote his time to, than getting that through.

I notice, incidentally, because I was interested in your reactions to the Connally appointment, that some wondered what good it would do. Some thought it had something to do with Texas politics in 1972. Let me be quite candid. We need, I need, this country needs John Connally as Secretary of the Treasury and in this Cabinet because he is persuasive, he is strong, and he will be effective in helping us get through the Democratic Congress the kind of measures that we need in this domestic field that we haven't been able to get through over the past two years. I am confident he will do that.

(Mr. Chancellor) Mr. President, I feel impelled to break in here and ask you a question about the ticket in '72 because you have heard as many rumors as we have, I am sure, that John Connally is being groomed to be your Vice Presidential running mate. I know you are not going to talk to us about that, sir, at this stage, but would you absolutely now rule out any Democrat running with you in '72? Could you go that far?

(The President) I am not even going to comment as to what my own plans are, Mr. Chancellor. You, of course, knew that when you asked the question, but it was proper to ask it, because all of our listeners and viewers would say, "These people are being soft on Nixon."

You would lose your jobs if you started doing that.

Actually, let me say that this is public service time. I know there is an interest in politics. As the President, I am the leader of my party. That is one of my jobs. In a campaign, I try to lead my party. But this is a non-campaign year and now I am going to wear my hat as President of the United States and that is where I will be on this program and other programs for the balance of '71.

(Mr. Severeid) Mr. President, now that we are in the subject of politics --

(The President) You can still ask questions, but I may not give you the answers.

(Mr. Severeid) -- if you had the November election to do over again, what would you do differently?

(The President) I never try to second-guess elections. Here we get back to Mr. Smith's point of a moment ago, or my answer to his question. After what happened to me in the 1960 elections, when I thought of what could I have done differently to have changed 9,000 votes in Illinois or 8,000 votes in Missouri, or 10,000 votes in South Carolina, or 3,000 votes in New Mexico -- I didn't go through that agony then when the national election was involved and frankly, I am not going to go through it now with regard to the '70 elections.

I will only say this: I believe that I had a responsibility, having made certain pledges to the people when I ran for President, to work for the election of Senators, and I campaigned particularly for Senators, as you know, Senators who would support me in those policies. Sometimes we succeeded; sometimes we failed. Now that campaign is over and I am going to work with those that got in despite my opposition and those who went with us as best we possibly can.

I want to also say one other thing, and I want to give credit to the men -- you, of course, were generally not on the campaign tour, but representatives -- Herb Kaplow was on from NBC and others from your networks, Jarriel, and so forth. But they have properly reported that in the 22 States that I visited, I never attacked any of the men, the Senators, that were the incumbents.

I simply went in on the basis of saying that we had a choice between two men, one of whom was pledged to support the President on some basic issue and one of whom honestly felt otherwise, and I asked the people for support. I think that was my responsibility. I would do that again.

(Mr. Severeid) One specific technical matter. Do you regret the rebroadcast of the Phoenix speech about the San Jose incident?

(The President) Yes, I think that was a mistake. As a matter of fact, we apparently felt at that time, that the speech said some things that needed to be said, but having the rebroadcast the night before election is not something that I would have perhaps planned had I been, shall we say, running the

campaign. Incidentally, when I am the candidate, I run the campaign.

(Mr. Smith) It was a technically bad tape, too. You could hardly be heard.

(The President) Yes, it was technically bad and I do not think it was the right speech to make the night before election. I would have preferred to go on, as you know I usually do, in a quiet studio type of program, talking quietly to the American people about the choice and then letting them make their choice, and if I am in another campaign, that is the way it will be the night before election. We wouldn't run that type of tape again.

(Miss Dickerson) Speaking of your campaigns, you made the kick-off address in New Hampshire in 1968, your first speech I remember.

(The President) You couldn't be that old.

(Miss Dickerson) Oh, yes I am. I was there when you were running for Vice President. You made a speech how the next President had to give this country the lift of a driving dream.

Well, as yet, many people have failed to perceive the lift of a driving dream. I wondered if you could articulate that dream for us briefly and tell us how you plan to specifically get it across to the people in the next two years.

(The President) Miss Dickerson, before we can really get the lift of a driving dream, we have to get rid of some of the nightmares we inherited. One of the nightmares is a war without end. We are ending that war. One of the good things incidentally about the campaign of 1970 was that the war was not an issue. That is good. The American people finally realized that we are ending the war.

When I appeared on the program, you may recall, in July with you, at that time, a poll had just been taken of college students, and indicated four million college students, because of their disenchantment with the war and Cambodia and the rest, were going to campaign for the peace candidates in the November election. They didn't.

That doesn't mean that they are for war, but they had in some way become convinced we were sincerely trying to end the war. We are ending it.

Second, we have to quiet this country down at home. We made some progress in that respect -- not enough.

Third, we have to make that delicate transition from a wartime to a peacetime economy. The fact that 1,700,000 Americans have been let out of defense plants and out of the Armed Services has contributed to some unemployment to which we referred. But I think most Americans want this Administration to succeed in achieving not only the end of a war, but a peace that will last -- something we haven't had -- a peace for a generation -- and not only the ending of a war, and a peace that will last, but a new kind of prosperity, and era of opportunity for all Americans.

This is why I believe that we are now right at the break point. The war is beginning to end. We are seeing the economy moving through the difficult period of transition. We see that unemployment, I believe, will move down over the period of 1971 -- not as fast as we would like, but it is going to go down. Inflation is going to be checked. Then we can move forward in the field of welfare reform, in the field of returning decision-making power to the people of this country, and we can move forward on great programs in the environment.

For example, did you happen to see the cover story in Life this week on youth in America. Three-fourths of them, I noticed, said they would not work for a plant that was guilty of polluting the environment. That shows you that this is an issue.

Incidentally, I will give credit to our Democrat friends who are just as interested in it as we, but we are in it and we are pushing.

But if we can get this country thinking not of how to fight a war, but how to win a peace -- if we can get this country thinking of clean air, clean water, open spaces, of a welfare reform program that will provide a floor under the income of every family with children in America, a new approach to government, reform of education and reform of health -- if those things begin to happen, people can think of these positive things, and then we will have the lift of a driving dream. But it takes some time to get rid of the nightmares. You can't be having a driving dream when you are in the midst of a nightmare.

(Mr. Severeid) Mr. President, in line with what we are speaking of, we are now going to have the 18, 19 and 20-year-olds voting for Federal elections. What political party or philosophy of government do you think that this may unbalance or benefit?

(The President) At the present time it will benefit, referring to this Life piece -- it was based on a poll, I understand -- it would benefit the Democratic Party more than the Republican Party. But the significant thing about the poll and I quote this poll only because it was taken by someone else, because I don't quote any if I have taken them -- but the significant thing about this poll is that it showed that 40 percent of the 18 to 21-year-old voters had no opinion. They had no party.

So this means that the young people of America are a very volatile group, that they are a group that both parties are going to have to go out and have to try to win. I think that we have just as good a shot at them as others do, but we don't have the confidence of young people that some in the other party have, which they have at this time, because we have all of the problems and we are responsible for them.

But if we can end the war, if we can end the draft, if we can bring jobs and equal opportunity without the cost of war and without the cost of the rise in inflation, I believe that young people as they see our very imaginative programs for reforming government, for the environment and the rest, they will be attracted to our party not as a party, but to our principles beyond party.

(Mr. Chancellor) Mr. President, you signed two bills last week, one setting Federal standards on water pollution, and another on Federal standards on job safety. How do you reconcile the necessity for Federal standards in this country with your avowed desire to return some of this power to people?

(The President) You cannot return all of the power to the people, Mr. Chancellor. For example, Social Security is an area that should be handled at the Federal level. In the case of job standards these things cross State lines. You see, they involve interstate commerce, and that is what can't be returned to the people.

But if you will listen to my State of the Union message -- I have been working on it for the past month -- this program will separate out those programs that must be kept by the Federal Government, and have others go to the people.

(Mr. Smith) Mr. President and ladies and gentlemen, we have just about run out of time. I don't think we have asked one-third of the questions we wanted to or had time to get one-third of the answers. But on behalf of my colleagues I thank you very much for this conversation.

(The President) Thank you very much, Mr. Smith. I would like to say that since you said exactly that same thing six months ago, that means you got one-third six months ago, and one-third tonight, and so we will give you another shot about six months from now, if you would like.
