

## Interview with George Ball (Princeton, August 1988)

**Caption:** On August 1988, the American diplomat George Ball gives an interview in which he refers to the efforts made to encourage British accession to the EEC and African association with the Community.

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George Ball

Draft

*George Ball, interview by Pascaline Winand, Princeton, August 1988. (Questions not always written in full)*

Pascaline Winand(PW): What were your contacts with the British at the time, Macmillan, Ted Heath ? How often did you meet?(Question not on tape - basis for question: George Ball's Memo on British entry, and African association with the EEC)

George Ball(GB): I talked to him very often about the EEC and Europe, and the desirability of making it possible for the British to come in on the proper terms. What disturbed me most at that time was that the British might slide in without taking any of the real commitments of the Rome Treaty and that it would be a kind of half-hearted sort of relationship. I was convinced that while the United States certainly should favor British membership in the EEC, it should be on the basis of...Britain would come in as a full partner with ~~the~~ all of the obligations. And this was something that I told Heath at that time and made it very clear to him. I think he was Lord Privy Seal. As far as Macmillan was concerned, he confused me because he pretended, his position in private conversations was extremely favorable to the idea of Europe and the need for Europe, the absolute necessity for it. In the second World War, or in the first World War, his whole battalion had been decimated and his two brothers had been wounded, one of them may have been killed and he was very eloquent about, this can't be permitted to happen again, Europe must never be in a position where we could get this kind of fumble(?). So that in his private reactions he was splendid, when it came down to the problem of putting the situation to the British public he did it almost entirely on a tradesman basis. That this was<sup>9</sup> very useful necessity for Britain because of the treaty advantages it would give it, but he totally - PW: He forgot the political dimension - GB: He suppressed the political side of it, which I must say surprised and rather discouraged me at the time because privately he had been so enthusiastic and quite eloquent.

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PW: Were <sup>you</sup> in touch very much at the time with the Comité d'Action pour les Etats-Unis d'Europe? - The Action Committee for the United States of Europe. - In his memoirs Monnet said that he came periodically to the United States. Did the President like Monnet, did they get along fine?

GB: The President was very impressed with Monnet and he more or less took my word for what Monnet was trying to do. My word and also McGeorge Bundy's. He and I were very close together on this although I think I was the one that had more effect on McGeorge Bundy than he did on me. I mean I was very keen on this and the ~~the~~ general impression is that this was something he left for me to try to work out. The basis of this started within a very short time after Kennedy's inauguration, I think it was about March of that year. And when I had met with Heath and, who was the fellow who died, a very nice fellow, a very great friend of mine, in London, it was? (Shuffles through papers) - Vernon Warren who became the Permanent Undersecretary of the Foreign Office, but he had arranged for me to meet with Heath whom I had never met before. So this was the initial discussion of this. Heath had to leave to attend a meeting in the House, but I worked it out with Sir Frank Lee with whom I was completely on rapport and he was fully in accord with the fact that Britain had to come into Europe and this had to be done on the basis where if we could help them solve some of their problems, the EFTA problem, the problem with the old members of the Commonwealth, the Australians and so on, that they would be able to do it and that as far as Lee was concerned this was absolutely indispensable and he assured me that Heath had the same views, which I later found out was indeed the case. Well then when we met in April - see the meeting in London, the first one, was on March 30, of 1961, and that was just in advance of Macmillan's visit and he came on April 4, and when the problem of the European Community came on, the President simply said well Undersecretary Ball will respond to you on that. - PW: So you were pretty much in charge of that. - GB: I was in charge of that. I was very close to the

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President, I saw him every day, when he was President. Then that night at a reception at the British Embassy after I had made my speech in the morning, Macmillan came around to me in great excitement, he said this was a great day, he said: we are going in, we made this decision this morning and he said you've got to help us but we're going in. Again I saw him a second time that night and he said exactly the same thing to me, which was very encouraging. So I had a feeling that things were pretty well set, that when he got back to England if he took strong views - I hoped he would - that it was pretty well set. But instead he took a very,...what I thought he was trying to slide in sideways like a crab rather than frontally sell the idea to the British people.

PW: Where were you very much in touch with Monnet? Did you talk on the telephone?

GB: I was constantly in touch with Monnet. I'd call him up, we were both concerned about making sure that Britain became a part of the European effort.

PW: It was a pretty unique relation?

GB: It was a very special kind of relation.

PW: Did you and Monnet meet with the President?

GB: O yes, sure every time Monnet came to Washington, I would take him to see Kennedy and we would sit down and talk together or have lunch together. Kennedy was very attracted to him, had a great respect for him. I had given him a long background about what Monnet had done.

PW: Did McGeorge Bundy join you? Did you see him often?

GB: O yes he was there and he would help arrange lunch and McGeorge Bundy I think was fully in accord with the idea that we had to try to bring the British in.

PW: Starting from the same memo again. African association with the EEC. You are talking about the President, you had been exploring some imaginative new approaches to the problems of trade and economic development involving association, and you would wish to have joint US-UK-EC discussions on the subject at an early date. Did you in fact have these discussions, with

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Mister Hallstein? I know that the President talked with Hallstein, did you also discuss this with him?

GB:I knew Hallstein very well because you see, the fact was that through my relationship with Monnet and the fact that I had worked very hard in with Monnet when we were involved first with the treaty of Paris and then afterwards the Treaty of Rome. Then when Monnet became the first head of the High Authority of the Coal and Steel Community then he asked me to be his American adviser. So I served him in that regard and then I later became the adviser to Hallstein. This was when I was still a private lawyer before I came into the the government. So I knew Hallstein very well.

PW: Do you specifically remember this discussion about African association with the EEC?

GB: Yes, well it was a problem, how one could work out the British coming in and still maintain their relationship with the African states, I don't remember the details, I was trying to find a pattern that would be consistent with a complete British entry, and yet I didn't want to interfere with the relationships that would be useful...

PW:What was the pattern there, I was really interested in the "new arrangements" that the President was thinking about.

GB:I don't think there was any general new arrangement, but there was ...What we did was work it out specifically in relation to each one of the African countries. Just so we had to work it out specifically in relation to the EFTA countries, in relation to the Australians, the Canadians and so on.I kept Hallstein informed of what we were doing and he kept me informed. He knew what I was doing.

PW: When Hallstein came to the US, he met with other officials besides the President and yourself.Who were they?

GB:I don't know, I suppose it was the Secretary of Commerce at that time and the Secretary of the Treasury, Douglas Dillon who was also very sympathetic with this, he had preceded me as Undersecretary of State.

PW:Harold Caccia, did you know him well?

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GB:O yes.

PW:What was his role, what was his influence, was he listened to? He came at some point to discuss with you your aide-mémoire to MacMillan, and the relationship between the EEC and EFTA.

GB:I think on the whole Caccia was more or less on board as far as these things were concerned, we were on all fours, we saw eye to eye.

PW: The May 2 aide mémoire, was this also your work? (on the relationship between the EEC and EFTA)

GB: Yes that was mine. All of the memoranda that were written that expressed the American position at the time I wrote.

PW: Memo about sliding sideways into the Common Market, August 7, 1961. After the debate in the House of Commons, July 31, there was a letter of the Prime Minister to the Chairman of the Committee of Ministers of the EEC, and then he really stressed that "Her Majesty's government had need to take into account the special commonwealth relationship as well as the essential interests of British agriculture and of the other members of the EFTA... You must have been pretty disappointed to see this.

GB: It seemed to me that he was walking back quite a ways from the views he had expressed to me.

PW: What was the President's reaction?

GB: The President was a little disappointed. But this was not central to his mind, important, but it did not dominate his thinking. McGeorge Bundy can give you a better impression on that. I'm sure he talked more directly with the President about these matters at the time than I did. Works at New York University. I'll give you his telephone number.

PW:Specific question on a very interesting memo from you to the President on the UK's adherence to the Common Market. Do you remember this State Department's study mentioned in the document? Who drafted it?



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GB: I don't have a copy of it, but I'm sure this is one I commissioned. ...

PW: So you had organized a study group on this?

GB: O sure, we had the economics department, branch within the State Department and I would simply ask them to prepare a study of this kind.

PW: Do you know who was working on it?

GB: Schaetzel (Robert) might have been working on it.

PW: I've read some of his correspondence.

GB: Well, if you get in touch with him, I'll give you his telephone number. He was directly on my staff, he was kind of a deputy to me at that time, so he would know with more precision than I would.

PW: Were you aware of the long time Acheson-Schaetzel correspondence? It's at Yale, I read it. It started towards the end of the Johnson administration, and continued until Acheson died.

GB: No, I never saw it. I think Schaetzel mentioned to me that he had been in touch with Acheson, but Acheson never mentioned it to me.

PW: Did Acheson still have very much of an influence on European affairs at the time, when you were in the government?

GB: Well, I consulted Dean very often, he was a close friend. And we either took his advice or didn't but we asked him.

PW: Were there frequent reports or was it more on an informal basis?

GB: Quite often, although it depended, it might be six months and I wouldn't talk to him and then I might talk to him again two or three times within another month. It just depended on what was happening.

PW: What about Robert Schaetzel, did you work very closely with him?

GB: O yes, he was working with me every day, he organized my papers for me.

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PW: [Parenthesis: identifying an aide-mémoire mentioned in another document- Is this(setting forth the basic requirements of American policy including our opposition to any extension of Commonwealth preferences to the Common Market countries) the aide mémoire?]

GB: This was it. It's possible that Schaetzel may have many more papers than I do, whatever I had I gave to the Kennedy library.[trying to identify more documents: Deniau, the Seattle World Fair] You'll have to ask Schaetzel. Schaetzel knew more about my own life at the time than I did myself, I'm sure, and he was concentrating more on this, I had everything else in the world to worry about. I'll call him for you if you like ... [telephone call to Bob Schaetzel in Washington D.C. to set up appointment]

PW: Question on Richard Vine who was working for the office of European affairs. How were you working together?

GB: He was very close to this negotiation and he was very keen on British entry on the same terms that we were.

PW: How was your work organized, were there several offices?

GB: Schaetzel was the one who did it. He reached into the bowels of the Department and had his people there who were prepared to respond and prepare anything that we needed at the time and Vine was one of them. When you get involved in something like this, it develops that there are certain people whom you immediately recognize as sympathetic with your own views, and you tend then to draw them into the situation, so that I had a little group around me whom I could trust implicitly because they knew my views and we were fully in accord.

PW: Who were they?

GB: My problem is that I am 78 years old, and I've had one stroke and I don't have the memory that I used to have.Schaetzel could help. But we had extraordinarily good relations. There was Bruce on the one hand in London...



PW: Did the organization for European affairs change markedly under Johnson. Were key people removed?

GB: Not really. The personalities changed a little bit not too much. As far as I was concerned I started out with responsibilities only in the economic section but that was only a matter of a very few months, then the Secretary drew me in as his full deputy so I then had the whole world along with Rusk, Europe and all these matters, he automatically pushed over on me.

PW: Question on Nassau. In his book, (Charles) Bohlen mentions you went to see Couve(de Murville) in January 1963. He implies that because you mentioned the MLF to him, you could have triggered De Gaulle's no in January 1963. Was Bohlen with you at that meeting?

GB: I don't think Bohlen was with me. He would go with me to see de Gaulle. Couve was an old friend of mine because as a private lawyer I had been the counsel, the legal adviser to the French Ambassador in Warsaw(?), when Couve was French Ambassador. So we knew one another very well, so I don't think he would bother to go with me to see Couve. De Gaulle was another matter.

PW: Newhouse's account of the period, reliable or not? Have you read it? Did he interview you?

GB: I know John Newhouse very well, he is a very careful fellow. (Has good contacts with the American administration)

PW: Despite Couve's assurances to the contrary there were warning signs of the General's coup d'éclat in January 1963. In your mémoires you mention Charles Combeau (check) the editor of France Soir called you on the phone.

GB: Actually he came to see me twice, he brought one of his correspondents, a man who covered the Elysée. And this correspondent had actually been at a private press briefing at the Elysée just the day before I saw Couve. And he had been told exactly what the General was going to say and when I confronted Couve with this he said: look George you've been around too many years to believe any of the stuff that you get

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from the press quarters, there are no ideas of that kind in this house, meaning the Quai d'Orsay. It was very curious, because on that same day Ted Heath had lunch with the British Ambassador and Couve, and Couve told him exactly the same thing that there weren't going to be any problems. I never understood it. I've talked to Ted Heath about it repeatedly and he doesn't understand it. I don't believe that Couve deliberately lied, he wouldn't do that. On the other hand the Elysée Palace could be giving press conferences and the Quai d'Orsay not knowing anything about it, it sounds incredible to me. It is one of the great mysteries.

PW: There were other warning signs. (Cecil Lyon's cables, from the US Embassy in France, one of them mentioning an article in the "Télégramme économique" and the possibility of an Atlantic Free Trade Area in industrial products as an alternative to UK entry into the EEC. Also, during a NATO meeting, some French officials mentioned the same thing. Lyon also reported on a golf party he had with Couve and Sulzberger on December 24. Couve almost gave a summary of de Gaulle's conference then. Did you ever see these documents?

GB: No. Maybe it shouldn't have but it took every one by surprise, the De Gaulle press conference. He was so firm and strong about it. It caught the British off base, it caught us off base and it caught the Germans off base because I had spent the morning with Adenauer and there had been no indication from Adenauer that there was going to be any problem and he and I, we were talking about the MLF, the multilateral force, and he had given me his usual treatment because he was trying to be very mean and put the stiletto slightly into you if he could, just to make you feel uncomfortable for the moment. He had started the conference in the morning by saying Mr Secretary I had a very bad dream last night I dreamed that Secretary Ball and I were going to have a big fight this morning. So after the conclusion of the discussion in the morning, he said that all of his concerns had been dissipated and that they were going to join wholeheartedly. Then we went

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in and had lunch, it was a very gay lunch. We were giving a cocktail party at the American Embassy in Bonn for Adenauer and the top German ministers and I never saw a more crestfallen lot in my life, they were completely taken aback after having gotten word of what the General had actually said. So it was a traumatic kind of experience, it caught us completely by surprise. I had been warned, and I had enough confidence in my French journalistic friends to know that they weren't putting me on, that there was something going on, but then when I got those reassurances from Couve de Murville, I felt, particularly after Heath confirmed that he had gotten the same assurances.

PW: Did you usually accord any importance to Lyon's cables?

GB: Well, Lyon was the Chargé d'Affaires while the Ambassador was away at that time. If I saw this, it didn't make much of an impression on me at the time.

PW: Dec 29, 1962. Mc George Bundy's memo on Hervé Alphand, whom he said reported a very sour view of Nassau from Paris, apparently not from de Gaulle himself, but from Couve. Alphand said that the French regarded the MLF as merely a device for destroying their nuclear independence and increasing in an unacceptable way their expenditures in nuclear forces. Mc George Bundy's commented on this: "actually as you know the whole theory is that you can save them money if they'll let us." He then said: "meanwhile here in Washington there is evident tension between those led by Bob McNamara who want to make the Nassau Pact lead on to prompt new arrangements with France and other NATO countries, and the convinced multilateralists at the Department of State who continue to believe that serious cooperation with France on the Nassau model would be a mistake." Do you remember the interplay between these two groups and who was on what side, the whole debate?

GB: The real question was how much nuclear cooperation we gave the French, and I had a feeling that we shouldn't encourage it, that we had enough problems with the British having a nuclear capability and an additional one was just

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compounding our difficulties. So that I took this line, I thought if we do have any developments of that connection they ought to be in a NATO context rather than just a bilateral arrangement with the French.

PW: What new arrangements did Bob McNamara contemplate?

GB: Well, Bob McNamara was the only one who really stood firmly in favor of the MLF with me, the two of us at the end. But at that time I think he wasn't convinced. He wasn't convinced at Nassau. It was only afterwards that he.. he had a feeling that we could work more closely with the French than indeed proved to be the case.

PW: How closely did you think you could work with the French? What did McNamara think at the beginning then?

GB: He had in mind setting up a sort of nuclear committee within NATO in which the French would play a key role and he finally did it and I had no objections to that. But I think that Bob was wrong in thinking that we could have gone far down the road in close nuclear collaboration with the French, without creating enormous problems.

PW: What would the close collaboration have involved?

GB: The close collaboration would have involved exchange of technology and some provision of uranium.

PW: Telegram to Ambassador Gavin(written by Rusk or you);says: do not furnish enriched uranium to France.Who came up with the idea of proposing uranium to the French?

GB: Gavin proposed this. Gavin was between us rather simple about all this. He was a very direct nice soldier but he had a feeling that sure we would take the French into complete confidence and they would be a nuclear partner but it was unrealistic. I had told my French friends what I thought of that, that was before I was in the government. When Felix Gaillard was the Prime Minister and I walked in to see him one day, we were very old friends and he was very excited and he said we just launched the nuclear program and I said you know Felix it's going to get you into some deep trouble...

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PW: Did the President himself ever consider furnishing enriched uranium to the French?

GB: I don't think so. There may have been some people in the Pentagon.

PW: What other offers did the President contemplate to make to France? Was there anything else besides the same deal as the British?

GB: The only thing that was seriously talked about was McNamara's idea of an atomic committee where these people would be given a sense of participation without actually having weapons of their own.

PW: I have a delicate question about Ambassador Gavin, he resigned for "personal reasons." Was there anything else?

GB: I'll give you just a personal assessment. I think he was totally inadequate for the task, he had no background.

(Second part of tape) There was a kind of general disappointment on both sides. Gavin that he was getting nowhere, that Washington was paying no attention to him, and a feeling in Washington that Gavin was just not well equipped for the task he had.

PW: Question about De Gaulle's potential visit to the US. On September 17, 1962, de Gaulle indicated through Ambassador Alphand that he might be interested in coming. Then he wrote an official letter on November 2, and the President answered on November 8, 1962. In this letter he said well you should certainly make an informal offer of invitation to de Gaulle because I am getting some feelers from Macmillan that he wants to come in December, and I want de Gaulle to know that we want to see him before I say anything to Macmillan. What was de Gaulle's answer to the informal invitation? This was just before Nassau.

GB: Nassau was not intended as an important meeting at all, it was a kind of routine meeting between the United States and Britain, and the only thing that made it important was McNamara's decision to cancel Skybolt and once McNamara got an idea of doing something there was no stopping him. I did my



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best to persuade him that this made no political sense. He was always very quantitative in his approach to things and he said but we can't go on developing this because it isn't going to work. I said you could spend a few more million dollars and keep it going and not get into a political crunch at a time when we are trying to bring the British into Europe. But I got nowhere, he was absolutely firm and clear that he was going to cancel Skybolt. Once he decided to cancel Skybolt then it transformed the Nassau meeting.

PW: Document signed "RUSK", or rather stamped 'Rusk', on the uranium.

GB: Probably written by Tyler, who was at that time the Assistant Secretary for Europe, it was just repeating an American position, and trying to get to calm down Gavin, because Gavin was regarded as rather naive in this situation. The French have asked for this so why don't we give it to them? (Laughter) Every telegram that went out of the Department was signed "Rusk", unless Rusk were away and then it was signed Ball. But only while I was Acting Secretary would it be signed Ball, otherwise it would be signed Rusk, it didn't mean that Rusk had ever seen it. Tyler etc.. would send it out. I'm sure Rusk knew about this, and I'm sure I knew about it at the time, I'm sure Tyler told me, or we discussed it with the Secretary or we both did.

PW: Question on the political organization of Europe. Based on three main documents: May 21, 62 (Couve, Ball, Gavin), May 63, June. Couve is always heavily involved in all of this. First document. During your meeting with Couve on May 21, 1962, you talked about the question of political treaty, and asked Couve how he envisaged the development of the negotiations for such a treaty. How did he envisage the development of such a treaty and did you get a sense that his views were in accordance with those of de Gaulle?

GB: I'm sure he was speaking for De Gaulle on this. Couve was an entirely disciplined diplomat.



PW: Other memo, more specific on this, 1963, especially pages 3 and 6. Confederation leading to federation.  
(Interruption for reading the Memo)

GB: De Gaulle was primarily committed to a Europe of nations so that a confederation would be simply a meeting of the various presidents or heads of state. I didn't think this would constitute any kind of serious political Europe. It could be a transitory form but you had to look for something beyond that, and we weren't in a position where we could waste time on purely transitional matters unless we very clearly saw this as an intermediate step towards something that offered more possibilities of unity. That was all, it was a kind of philosophical argument. I don't think Couve was all that serious about a confederation leading to a federation. He saw it as a kind of interesting philosophical debate. I had long ago, and Monnet had long ago gotten over any idea that you could take a very definite form by which you evolved into some kind of unified government, or that it would necessarily resemble anything that we had known before. That this was a matter of letting the thing evolve, but that we ought to have certain very specific guidelines we were looking toward all the time and what was really a unified government and what would be simply a debating society.

PW: Monnet also talked about confederation at some point, how would you see the main differences, between his and Couve's approach?

GB: What seemed to me clear is that De Gaulle wasn't prepared to go beyond a very loose confederation, Monnet saw confederation as a step towards something approaching unity which I myself did. That (referring to his conversation with Couve on European confederation) was what we were saying on the ship while going down the Potomac you see. It was a serious discussion, but not in the most formal setting. I don't think Couve was talking for De Gaulle at all when he said that he foresaw a government of Europe having the life or death

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decision about the use of nuclear weapons. That was just a conversation.

PW: Question on the Franco-German treaty. Article in "La Nation", says the French ratification of the treaty would open the door to the political unity of Europe and be the key stone of the political construction of Europe. What did you and the President think of the possibility of expanding the Franco-German treaty?

GB: That whole Franco-German treaty seemed to us to be just a case of a love affair between two old men, with De Gaulle exercising his entrapment over Adenauer.

PW: So you were not afraid of the consequences of this treaty?

GB: We were afraid, it was alarming to us that this was being done without our knowing anything about it. And this was simply put to us after we had had the disappointment of the British entry and so on. What happened was that we got a fellow named Karl Carstens who came over from Germany and he was a kind of permanent Undersecretary of the German foreign office and I gave Karl a very very hard time. I said this is catastrophic if you go down this road because you're going to open the door for a division of Europe which is going to be fatal. So he agreed at that time that they would do something, he didn't want to be specific. So they added a preamble which nullified the treaty completely, nothing came out of it.

PW: But what did you think about expanding the treaty?

GB: We never believed that the treaty could be expanded as a basis for the unification of Europe. Given the personalities of the two old men, neither of whom had that in mind it seemed to us that this was a way in which the French and the German were in fact ganging up on the rest of Europe. The Franco-German treaty had a very bad reception in Washington, we had two or three meetings in which there were a lot of alarmist stories about this being part of a deal the French had been making with Moscow and so on. It created a very bad effect for two or three days until we could get Carstens

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over and have a serious talk with him about what this was all about and he was just as mystified as anybody that this had happened, because Adenauer had told no one.

PW: Did you see Raymond Aron often? Did you have contacts with him throughout the administration?

GB: Yes, sure. He was an old friend that I had known when I was a private lawyer.

PW: The Alsop article, and McGeorge Bundy's letter.

GB: Bundy was expressing the views that we all held if we had had to do it again we wouldn't have made the treaty with the British.

PW: Proposed aide-mémoire to the British, did you ever send this? Bruce was opposed to it.

GB: My guess is that belongs to Schaetzel. We were just asking what the effects would be of sending this aide-mémoire, then I'm sure it wasn't sent. I thought it was a bad idea anyway but there was no harm in asking the embassies for their reactions to it.

PW: Then you said: "it is very important that I meet with the President on Monday together with Freeman and Charlie Murphy and Hodges or Eddy Goodman to discuss this." Do you remember this?

GB: I was opposed to the idea and I thought this was a good way to get it killed.

PW: What did Orville Freeman say at the time? What was your relationship with him?

GB: We had no particular feuds, we didn't always agree, but I had a good relationship with Orville Freeman. We saw each other often. If I read this right I didn't want to torpedo the idea of such an aide-mémoire, I wanted to get other people to do it that's why I put it in this context: there would be enough problems with it that we wouldn't do it. The President would make the decision not to go forward and then I wouldn't have been in the position of having to overrule a lot of people...

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PW: Tuthill wrote a letter saying that "we are not getting anywhere in these negotiations between the Six and the EEC and the situation is in a state of drift.." He recommended that something be done about this. Then you have a conversation with Hallstein. (George Ball reads memos). When you proposed to Hallstein that the Commission would act as a bridge between the UK and the Six, what did Hallstein say?

GB: I think he gave me a very ambiguous answer. I think he didn't really feel that he had the political clout within the Community to be able to swing it. But later he said that he had very much shaken by this conversation (letter).

PW: Question about Spaak? Did you meet with him often?

GB: We had a very good relationship. I liked him very much, he was certainly a very useful element at that time. He and Monnet did not see eye to eye completely. Monnet thought that Spaak talked too much. (Laughter) He thought Spaak enjoyed being too much of an orator, Monnet was not his style. (identifying more documents)

PW: Question on de Gaulle, and George Ball's tendency not to observe the "rule of silence" imposed by President Johnson, and still make statements.

GB: I had rather strong views and I was making speeches and every now and then I would say something that Johnson would get upset about, not seriously but...While Johnson was mildly unhappy about my comments, when he had to send somebody to De Gaulle, it was me he sent.

PW: Your sense of Johnson in European affairs. I know of course that the Vietnam war occupied much of his time, but was he very well versed in European affairs?

GB: I don't think he had strong views on European affairs, he was willing pretty much to go along with what we suggested to him.

PW: He was not particularly interested in it?

GB: Not really.

PW: Dean Rusk?

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GB: Dean didn't feel deeply engagé. We had a kind of tacit division of the world. His background had been all in the China-Burma-India and he was far more interested in the Far East than I was, and I was far more interested in Europe than he was. So we divided the world.

PW: Article by André Fontaine: "The ABC of the Multilateral Force." Says Johnson contemplated that a united Europe might one day acquire control of the MLF nuclear missile fleet.

GB: I don't remember that and I was struck in one of the memos you gave me that Europe might buy out the American interests in the MLF. It's the first I can remember ever hearing about it.

PW: Did you ever consider giving Europe control of the MLF?

GB: It never occurred to me that we would give Europe control of the force. I had never heard of the idea before. I don't recall..there was really no serious discussion.

PW: What do you think of a similar idea nowadays?

GB: My own view of it, and always has been is that the fewer people who have it the better. The thing is a potential catastrophe in anybody's hands and it's not a weapon that can ever be used as a way of settling a problem. I myself feel that it has accomplished one thing that the nuclear standoff means that the cold war has ended and I've got a piece that I have submitted at their request to the New York Times magazine on this.

PW: Western European Union has been revamped, what do you think of their efforts? You seemed not to like the WEU at first, do you now think it has a chance of developing into anything?

GB: Not sure. I haven't followed that that closely.

[PW: East-West trade? Pipeline Embargo...

GB: Eleanor get volume of my speeches, NY Times magazine to find information of my article on the efficacy of trade denial...]

PW: On de Gaulle, and his withdrawal from NATO.

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GB: After meeting with de Gaulle, I couldn't get anybody to believe me. He told me exactly what he was going to do, and I believed he would.

PW: What was your role and that of Monnet in drafting President's Kennedy's Philadelphia declaration, July 4?

GB: This was a speech we all concocted together. It was after I had talked with the President and McBundy; Ted Sorensen is actually the one who wrote the speech. Bundy will tell you the background. That was a partnership speech.

PW: You were very much involved with foreign aid, what did you think the cooperation with European partners could be there?

GB: I had responsibility for it initially. There were people in the administration like Walt Rostow who were always calling me and saying constantly why don't you lean on the Germans and get them to give more money to Zambia or something. That seemed to me outrageous, we weren't dictating to the Germans how they spent their money. Yet there was that attitude, it was close enough to the end of the war that there was this feeling that they ought to do what we told them to do.

PW: Did you meet with Walt Rostow often?

GB: He was briefly in the White House and then he was back in the State Department on the Policy Planning staff. I knew him well, I had known both his brother and him for many years. He would call me and agitate with me to try to do something to lean on the Germans, which I wasn't very anxious to do.

PW: Did you see eye to eye on many issues?

GB: Not many, we were in opposition on the whole Vietnam thing.

PW: Question about Kissinger and Nixon. Kissinger worked as consultant in the Kennedy or Johnson administration? Did you meet him at that point?

GB: I met him at that time, he was working with McGeorge Bundy, and we asked him to do two or three errands, missions.

PW: What did you think of his stand on European issues?



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GB: I never discussed European integration with him at that time.

PW: What about future President Nixon?

GB: I was very much anti-Nixon and said so when I left the UN to try to help Humphrey, because I was particularly anxious that Nixon not become the next president. I was particularly outspoken on the national television, saying that he would be a disaster and that he was a man with no subtle principles. I didn't think he had very strong views pro or con European integration. Kissinger was rather lukewarm on the idea of the whole EEC.

PW: This was my last question. (concluding comments, future interviews planned etc...)