

West Germany's Nuclear Role Will Top the LBJ-Erhard Agenda

Johnson City, Tex., Nov. 23 (AP)—President Johnson is preparing for broad-scale discussions with Chancellor Erhard in which the way might be opened for added West German nuclear responsibilities.

Johnson, alternating work and relaxation at the LBJ Ranch, is keeping in telephone communication with Presidential Assistant McGeorge Bundy, directing a White House team preparing for the Erhard meeting, now set for Dec. 2-3.

Bundy has been consulting with Secretary of State Rusk—and with his assistants in the secretary's absence at the Rio conference—on matters to be

discussed by the President and the Chancellor.

These were said authoritatively to include not only the question of nuclear force participation and Bonn's future role in Nato, but German relations with France, the Berlin situation and a proposed expansion of German aid to developing countries.

But there was insistence in White House circles that no final decision has been reached on the American position toward Erhard's obvious desire for a greater West German share in nuclear responsibility and management.

There was no immediate

White House reaction to reported British proposals for greater consultation on and coordination of nuclear policies in Europe, including the deployment of weapons and ultimate sharing of the actual handling by allies.

But there seemed little prospect of any immediate change in arrangements by which, Press Secretary Bill Moyers said, nuclear weapons made available to NATO countries, including Germany, remain under American control and cannot be used without specific authority from the President.

Erhard has said that all the allies should be given a share in the nuclear defense in keeping with the danger and burdens they bear. He said he is not asking for national control of weapons but only participation in a joint organization.

In response to reports that German planes and missiles had been secretly armed with nuclear warheads, with Johnson being kept informed of only the general program, Moyers said in a statement yesterday that custody remains in American hands. He added that "President Johnson is, and as Vice President was, fully aware of the specific arrangement made by the Dept. of Defense with our NATO allies."