DEPARTMENT OF STATE

WASHINGTON

Eyes Only -

SECRET

June 28, 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT
THE WHITE HOUSE

SUBJECT: Berlin

Attached is a preliminary version of my report on Berlin.

I will revise this report in the light of discussion with you and the Secretaries of State and Defense.

Recommendations and conclusions, which could serve as a draft policy directive, will be included in the final version of my report.

Dean Acheson

Attachment:

Report on Berlin.

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PRELIMINARY DRAFT

The Berlin Crisis

June 27, 1961

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I. Foreword

A. The Nature of the Issue

The issue over Berlin, which Khrushchev is now moving toward a crisis to take place, so he says, toward the end of 1961, is far more than an issue over that city. It is broader and deeper than even the German question as a whole. It has become an issue of resolution between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., the outcome of which will go far to determine the confidence of Europe -- indeed, of the world -- in the United States. It is not too much to say that the whole position of the United States is in the balance.

Until this conflict of wills is resolved, an attempt to solve the Berlin issue by negotiation is worse than a waste of time and energy. It is dangerous. This is so because what can be accomplished by negotiation depends on the state of mind of Khrushchev and his colleagues.

At present, Khrushchev has demonstrated that he believes his will will prevail because the United States and its allies will not do what is necessary to stop him. He cannot be persuaded by eloquence or logic, or cajoled by friendliness. As Sir William Hayter has written, "The only way of changing /the Russians'/ purpose is to demonstrate that . . . what they want to do is not possible."

Until that demonstration is made, no negotiation can accomplish more than to cover with face-saving devices submission to Soviet demands.

Once the demonstration has been made, negotiation can resolve the issue in a number of ways, from face-saving for a Soviet retreat to mutual concessions on non-vital matters. Solutions of this nature are outlined in Chapter III, below.

To offer any concessions now, however, will only result in an appearance of weakness and real impairment of future negotiating position.

Ambassador Thompson has stated the principal objectives of the Berlin offensive:

1. To stabilize the regime in East Germany and prepare the way for the eventual recognition of the East German regime;

2. To

2. To legalize the eastern frontiers of Germany;

3. To neutralize Berlin as a first step and prepare for its eventual take-over by the GDR;

4. To weaken if not break up the NATO alliance; and

5. To discredit the United States or at least seriously damage our prestige.

It is plain that, if carried to its conclusion, the Berlin offensive strikes at the power and world position of the United States. Even its more limited purposes are gravely damaging to the United States and the Western Alliance. This is the nature of the crisis which confronts us; not the fate of a city, or of its two and one-half million people, or even the integrity of our pledged word.

So long as issues of the magnitude outlined are sought by the U.S.S.R., and believed by them to be within their grasp, real negotiation is impossible. Only by winning the test of will can we change the Soviets' purpose. Only thus can we demonstrate that what they want to do is not possible.

B. The Nature of the Demonstration

West Berlin has been protected, in the last analysis, by the fear that interference with the city, or with access to it, would result in war between the United States and the Soviet Union. War, as used here, means eventually nuclear war.

If Khrushchev now contemplates embarking on a course of interference, and later does so, it means that his fear of war resulting has declined. He has been quoted as saying as much.

The capability of U.S. nuclear power to devastate the Soviet Union has not declined over the past two years. The decline in the effectiveness of the deterrent, therefore, must lie in a change in Soviet appraisal of U.S. willingness to go to nuclear war over the issue which Khrushchev reiterates his determination to present.

This being so, the problem is how to restore the credibility of the deterrent -- that is, how to cause Khrushchev to revise his apparent appraisal of U.S. willingness to resort to nuclear war, rather than to submit to

Soviet

Soviet demands.

Two methods commonly suggested completely miss the nature of the problem.

The first of these is for the United States to threaten to use its nuclear weapons if the Soviet Union should give control of access to Berlin to the East Germans and if they should attempt to exercise it. But, if Khrushchev's belief in U.S. willingness to use nuclear weapons over this issue is not sufficient to deter him from going forward with the plan, the threat to use them would not deter him either. He would not believe that we would carry it out.

The second suggestion is that, if and when the East Germans take over the control points and attempt to exercise control, a small allied military force, e.g., a few vehicles, should brush aside the control officers and proceed towards Berlin. If this force is not stopped by the East Germans, so the argument runs, the latter would have been deterred from exercising control of Berlin traffic. If the force is stopped and turned back, and if protests, military preparations, economic pressures, and diplomatic moves are not effective, the next resort would be use of force on the order of a battalion or somewhat larger. If this force were turned back, eventual resort would presumably be to nuclear war.

There are several conclusive objections to this suggestion.

The principal one is that it is not addressed to the main point -- Russian disbelief in U.S. willingness to use nuclear weapons. If this disbelief continues, the East Germans would wave the small force, and then the battalions on to Berlin and continue to control traffic on unacceptable terms, or they would stop both the force and the traffic. They would not have been deterred. If the U.S. then resorted to nuclear war, it would be doing so not to deter interference with access to Berlin, but because deterrence had failed. The United States would have failed to convince Khrushchev that it would do what, in the end, it did do -- and failed largely because it would have made no effort to convince him by its conduct prior to final action.

Thus we would have suffered the worst of both worlds. We would have started nuclear war without having had the benefit

benefit of the deterrent effect which our determination to start that war, rather than submit, would -- if known -- have had on Russian decisions.

The lesson of this reasoning is plain. The resort to nuclear war is not a deterrent; nuclear weapons are not the last and most powerful weapons in the hierarchy of violence to be employed to protect Berlin. Their employment would mark their failure as a deterrent, and would be designed to protect the United States and its allies from the consequences of that failure.

Thus we are continually thrown back on the necessity of devising, and starting quickly, a course of conduct which will change the present apparent Russian disbelief that the United States would go to nuclear war over Berlin, rather than submit. This report submits a plan to do this. Before coming to the plan, an early, secret, and vital decision is necessary.

C. The Decision to Resort to Nuclear War, If Necessary

Nothing could be more dangerous than to embark upon a course of action of the sort described in this paper in the absence of a decision to accept nuclear war rather than accede to the demands which Khrushchev is now making, or their substantial equivalent.

To do so would be a policy of bluff, with disaster as the consequence of the bluff being called. The disaster might even take the form of our receiving a nuclear strike if the impression we made was better than our determination.

To think of the bluff as a "calculated" risk is pure self-deception because there can be no quantitative calculation of that risk in the Berlin situation.

All that can be safely said is that Khrushchev probably would not incur the certainty of nuclear war over Berlin if he could see far enough ahead that war was certain. But, given his background and the inherent obscurity of the situation, we cannot be sure that before events had passed beyond control he would see that war was certain.

To sum up the situation: There is a substantial chance, not subject to evaluation, that the preparations for war and negotiation outlined here would convince Khrushchev that what he wants is not possible without war, and cause him

him to change his purpose. There is, also, a substantial possibility that war might result.

It is, therefore, essential to make an early decision on accepting the hazard and preparing for it. The "substantial possibility" of the success of the course of action here depends on the existence of a core of hard decision, understood in all its grimness and cost. Furthermore, the condition of the country in the event of war will also depend on an early and deliberate decision. A hasty and improvised decision in the eleventh hour of approaching panic and hysteria could add vastly to the cost of war.

II. Preparations

II. Preparations

To convince the Soviets that we are in earnest about defending Berlin we must be in earnest about it.

This means that the military, economic, and political power needed for this defense should be made ready for use. Measures to this end should be begun immediately and should be increased over the time available.

It is not necessary that all military preparations have been completed by the time that East German personnel are expected to replace Soviet personnel along the access routes. The use of force might be deferred for some time after this, while final military preparations are being completed. This would enable us to avoid steps which would prematurely raise tensions, at a time when this might divide the alliance and circumscribe Khrushchev's flexibility in negotiations -- thus hindering attainment of our basic purpose. The more drastic of our preparations will be more impressive to Moscow, and perhaps, have a less disturbing effect on our allies if taken later on as the crisis deepens, when they will be more suited to the immediacy of the threat.

The purpose of the preparatory measures will be twofold: (1) to put us in a position, at an appropriate time, to use the power necessary to achieve our purpose; and (2) to convince the Soviets, by the extent of our preparations and of our commitment, that we have determined to go to the use of force, including nuclear war, rather than submit.

If these preparations are to have their full and essential effect, they must be wholly authentic and real. They must not be affected or deflected by alleged psychological considerations designed to impress the Russians. Both to impress the Soviets and, later on, to preserve this nation, the preparations must be as solid and sound as time permits. The phoney is easily recognized and almost surely will be disastrous.

We should neither conceal nor dramatize our preparations. To conceal them would be impossible. To dramatize our preparations would be self-defeating, both in suggesting to the Soviets that these preparations were designed primarily for effect and in frightening our own people, our friends, and neutrals. Announcements should be made in a low key and related to world tensions rather than to Berlin alone, so as to avoid giving the appearance of laying down a direct challenge to Khrushchev on this issue.

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Along with these preparations should go constant education as to the real nature of the Berlin issue, assertion of our continued readiness to meet and discuss this issue with the Soviets, and frank elucidation why basic interests are not negotiable.

The preparations, and the subsequent action, suggested here will require the closest consultation and planning with our allies, first with the British and French and then with all our NATO allies. This government should lead the joint planning both in proposals and, more importantly, in action to put them into effect. The British, especially, and perhaps the Germans, too, will be more ready to follow action rather than to accept proposals. The latter can be delayed and frustrated by endless debate and refinement. Our unilateral action should generally be timed so as to spur decision and action by our allies.

We should not argue publicly with our allies if they hesitate to go as far and fast in their preparations as we do; this would only advertise divisions in the Western camp. Nor should we decrease the extent or speed of our preparations, to correspond to theirs.

If it becomes clear that our preparations are causing our allies to defect from the basic Western position regarding Berlin, we should, of course, reconsider the matter. Barring this eventuality, however, we should move forward vigorously and seek to persuade our allies to go as far as possible with us, rather than join those who will be clamoring for a face-saving surrender to Soviet demands.

So far as positive help is concerned, the Germans are probably the most important of our allies and the French, for logistic reasons if nothing else, second. If West Germany should collapse along the way, the Western position would be in bad shape. A "damage control" operation would be in order and should be in the plans. (See Chapter V)

B. The Stages of Preparatory Action

Preparatory action should be taken in three stages, increasing both in seriousness and in being pointed directly at the Berlin crisis.

1. The first stage should be between the Fourth of July and the German elections on September 17th.

2. The second stage should be between September 17th and the signing of a USSR-GDR peace treaty.

3. The third stage should comprise the period between the signing of the peace treaty and the turning over to the GDR of control of access to Berlin.

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By the end of the third period the U.S.A. should have its forces in being in improved readiness, with necessary arrangements poised for the final preparations required to be able to use force. It should have completed at home and abroad intensive education on the nature of the issue centering around the Russian demands regarding Berlin. It should have allied economic sanctions in a state of readiness. It should be prepared to conduct political moves and to undertake or resume diplomatic negotiations, should the preparations suggested here have the desired effect on Khrushchev and make negotiations possible (assuming that this has not already occurred).

C. Military

C. Military Preparations

The military preparations should be of three distinct types:

1. Preparation of non-nuclear forces for substantial use on the ground and in the air in Europe and on the high seas. Examples of the actions to be taken to this end, subject to further military judgment and to questions of order and priority, are:

(a) Seek, by measures initially short of partial mobilization, to compress the time needed to bring necessary units of reserve components to a state of battle-readiness, so that they could be called up in the event force had to be used over Berlin. Encourage our allies similarly to increase the readiness of their reserves, and offer to help supply such equipment as we can and as is needed for this purpose.

(b) Bring US forces in Europe up to full strength. Try to persuade our allies similarly to raise the manning levels of their existing forces on the continent.

(c) Move some STRAC and USAF units to Europe, gradually raising the level of forces there and replacing the forces despatched there from the US by calling up Guard and reserve units.

(d) Improve our ability to transport and deploy additional forces to Europe.

(e) Move equipment needed by our forces in Europe to the continent, and build up stocks of combat supplies on the continent.

(f) Increase US stocks of non-nuclear ammunition.

(g) There is one further step of the utmost importance which should be taken in preparing for substantial use of non-nuclear force in Europe: that is to tighten SACEUR's physical custody and control over nuclear warheads in Europe. The whole purpose of a substantial use of non-nuclear force in Europe would be defeated if it should escalate into general nuclear war by Western action, before this was intended. To prevent this, it is necessary to ensure that NATO

nuclear

nuclear weapons in Europe will not be fired by our allies or by subordinate US units without explicit Presidential and SACEUR directive - even in the midst of substantial violence and great uncertainty as to whether nuclear warfare is not about to start. This will be difficult, at best; present physical arrangements may not be ideal in this respect. The President should direct that whatever steps are needed to improve these arrangements, and thus assist SACEUR in controlling the allied and US nuclear capable units committed to his command, should be taken by the Secretary of Defense as a matter of urgency.

2. The second category of military preparations would be designed to increase our ability to mount counter-measures on the high seas. This might mean preparing our naval forces so that they could readily force Bloc shipping in specified areas to return to Bloc ports, and

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increasing the over-all readiness of the Navy to engage in the combat operations which might ensue.

3. The third category would include measures to prepare for general nuclear war. This would mean placing SAC in a suitable state of readiness, which could be maintained over the period of a prolonged crisis without degrading SAC capabilities or generating pressures for a pre-emptive strike. It would also mean taking civil defense measures, including possibly construction of fall-out shelters. The world-wide readiness of US armed forces would need to be increased in a variety of ways.

In carrying out these preparations, we should try to avoid actions which are not needed for sound military purposes and which would be considered provocative. Such actions would have a contra-productive effect on the Soviets in two respects - first, in suggesting that the whole operation was for "muscle flexing" and thus degrading the deterrent effect of our other preparations, and second in creating an atmosphere of challenge and counter-challenge which might make it harder for the Soviets to back down, if they should wish to. Such actions would tend to split the alliance, furthermore, by antagonizing our allies.

Allied attitudes also suggest that preparations for a Berlin crisis should not include steps, which would run contrary to Presidentially-approved US policy toward Europe, looking to sharing nuclear weapons capabilities with France or to deployment of land-based MRBM's in Europe. Nuclear sharing with France would trigger German interest in developing a national nuclear capability; preparations for deployment of land-based MRBM's to European (including German) forces would be taken in some quarters to foreshadow de facto creation of such a capability. The British have opposed deployment of land-based MRBM's to Europe, in part, because of their reluctance to see strategic missiles containing powerful warheads placed in German hands. A Berlin crisis would not be

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the time to take steps that would thus, in the view of some Europeans, raise the prospect of a German nuclear capability; this would excite the very fears of Germany which we will need to dampen down if Western firmness and unity over Berlin is to be preserved. For the same reason, stepping up the arming of German forces with nuclear weapons would not be useful preparation for a Berlin crisis from the political standpoint.

D. Other Preparations

Preparations for non-military pressure on the Soviets are of vital importance. They will probably be more credible than preparations for military action; they may well have a substantial effect on Soviet intentions.

1. Political. The President will need to seek funds and authority from the Congress to carry out the military preparations suggested above. The President might relate these preparations to the rising world-wide Communist threat, of which Berlin is one element, and make clear, therefore, that we have in mind two quite separate programs:

(a) Short-term steps to meet the immediate threat to Berlin.

(b) Long-range steps to increase the size of the US defense establishment which will be needed, if a full-blown Berlin crisis develops, to meet the prolonged period of stepped up Bloc pressures which such a crisis presumably portends. These steps should not be launched now, but should be clearly foreshadowed: The President could direct the Secretary of Defense to prepare plans

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for a major increase in US force levels; funds for this increase would be requested of the Congress in the event the international situation deteriorated further. The matter might now be discussed with Congressional leaders. The deterrent effect on the Soviets of such planning would probably be substantial. They must even now bitterly regret the lasting jump in US defense expenditures brought on by the Korean war. It would be useful to convince them that a similar increase might result from a Berlin crisis. But they will only be convinced if we have, in fact, decided to mount these increased expenditures in the event a crisis materializes.
As a nation, we have little capacity for deceiving others. At best, we can hope to convince the Soviets that we will undertake dangerous or expensive actions if that is our real intention.

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2. Economic. Preparations for economic counter-measures should also have considerable deterrent effect. Such measures proved surprisingly effective in response to recent East German pressures on civil access to Berlin.

Again, the crux of the matter is a clear allied decision that the measures will be adopted. If such a decision is taken at the highest level of the governments concerned, it would be incongruous not to make specific and detailed preparations to give it effect. Failing the decision, however, the preparations will not carry conviction.

These economic counter-measures would be designed for execution at the time that East Germany blocked ground access to Berlin. They might include some or all of the following:

(a) Cutting off trade between NATO countries and the Bloc.

(b) Denying Bloc ships the right to stop in NATO ports.

(c) Denying Bloc aircraft the right to touch down in NATO countries.

(d) Denying Bloc nationals and goods the right to transit NATO countries or to be transported aboard carriers of NATO countries.

The US should lay specific plans for carrying out such measures, insofar as US territory and facilities are concerned. It should inform its allies of its intention and propose that they make similar plans. Firm agreement should be sought this summer.

3. Eastern Europe. The Soviets might be deterred from a Berlin crisis if they believed that it would result in greater instability -- rather than stability -- in Eastern Europe. The US should try to convince the USSR that it would and could, in event of a Berlin crisis, stir up dissidence in East Germany and Eastern Europe.

The steps to be taken to instill this conviction are matters of expert judgment, which lies beyond the competence of this report. There are two points to be emphasized:

(a) We can only convince the Soviets that this is our intention if that is, in fact, the case. As in the military field, bogus preparations will be of little value.

(b) The scale of civil disorder which we set out to stimulate should correspond, progressively, to the intensity of the crisis. Full-scale revolt should only be triggered, if at all, when the crisis reaches a stage which is but a hair's breath from general war, since such a revolt could well lead directly to such a war.

4. World Opinion

4. World Opinion. Khrushchev has been trying to present his demands regarding Berlin in such a way as to maintain his peace posture with the neutrals and convince them that his object is to eliminate "hotbeds of war." It is important to frustrate this effort; the Soviets are much more dangerous when they believe that their propaganda has put world opinion upon their side: They are apt to believe that they can take greater risks because we will be inhibited by adverse opinion from taking effective counter-action.

Beginning soon, therefore, a well thought-out, intensive, and continuous campaign should be conducted, both domestically and internationally, to bring out the fact that at the present time there is no threat of any sort to the peace in either Eastern or Western Germany; that peace is a condition and does not depend upon formal documents announcing or proclaiming it; and that Khrushchev is engaged in an operation unique in its cynicism: In the very name of peace, and through the instrumentality of negotiating and putting into effect what he calls a peace treaty, he is taking an action of calculated and far-reaching aggression.

This theme should be developed over and over again and with the most homely and understandable analogies. Speeches by the President, the Secretary of State, other members of the Administration, popular pamphlets (along the lines of one recently put out by the State Department entitled "Berlin: A City Between Two Worlds)", messages to Congress, and all the instrumentalities of the U.S.I.A. should drive home this lesson - adapting it to the conditions and understanding of various countries, both allied and neutral.

As suggested above, all of this should be done at the outset in low key, stressing reason and determination, rather than crisis and alarm. As the crisis deepens, a greater note of urgency can be added. As these statements

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accompany and explain preparatory actions of increasing seriousness, they will make clear that these Western actions are intended to preserve the peace against those who use the name of peace and the worldwide desire for peace for their own aggressive purposes.

III. The

III. The Role of Negotiations

As suggested in the Foreword, Khrushchev now appears to view the balance of power as inclining in his favor; in this climate, negotiations would fail or lead to agreement unacceptable to the West. While this situation continues negotiation should be regarded purely from the propaganda point of view.

Primary emphasis should be placed, in our public posture during this period, on the all-German rather than the Berlin issue. The Western position on this issue is better than that of the Soviets and this fact should be vigorously exploited. We should review the Western Peace Plan to see if it can be made still more forthcoming and attractive to world opinion. The basic principle on which our position is based--self-determination--should have great appeal to most non-Communist countries.

If the preparations proposed in the preceding section should change Khrushchev's view of Western firmness, genuine negotiations will be useful. They would be designed to build a bridge on which Khrushchev could retreat to safety. If he wishes to retreat it will be easier for him to do so by means of negotiations launched after our military preparations and before the crisis has advanced very far, i.e., before the signing of a peace treaty. Some proposals suggested for this purpose do not seem promising.

One would be an agreement which united Germany and thus caused Khrushchev to abandon his project of a peace treaty with East Germany. We could not agree to a form of German unification which left East Germany in Communist hands. And there is no evidence to suggest that Khrushchev would agree to any form of German unification which would assure the people of East Germany free choice by a specified date - however distant. The mere signing of such an agreement (whether it was viewed seriously by the Soviets or not) might tend to demoralize the East German regime and undermine its hold on the East German people.

Ambassador Thompson's suggestion of stretching out, e.g., to seven years, the period for agreement between the two German Governments upon a constitution may not be subject to this infirmity, since there would be no commitment to hold elections at the end of this period unless the parties concerned could agree on that constitution. This stretch-out would, however, be highly objectionable to the West Germans; it seems unlikely that we could gain their consent.

Negotiations restricted to Berlin do not seem to be any more promising, unless Khrushchev should mellow considerably under American preparations. The agreements previously suggested have been:

(a) An "interim" agreement which would temporarily defer a peace treaty, or -

(b) An agreement without any time limit, which would define what the consequences of a peace treaty should be for Berlin.

An "interim" agreement could be either:

(a) An agreement such as Khrushchev suggested in his aide-memoire: The two Germanies to talk to each other, and the Berlin status quo to be maintained while they do. Or -

(b) An agreement such as was discussed at Geneva in 1959 - preserving the present situation in Berlin with some limitations on Western forces and subversive-propaganda activities thrown in.

Neither type of agreement would be acceptable to the West Germans, but they would prefer the second to the first since the last thing they want is to have any political dealings with the GDR. The basic trouble with either of these "interim" agreements, however, is that their temporary nature would imply a term on our presence in Berlin. The offsetting advantage, it can be argued, is that they would buy time. This advantage would only be meaningful, however, if the West should decide, at the same time as a temporary agreement was concluded, to mount a crash program to improve its power position. Failing such a decision, a temporary agreement would not seem useful.

This leaves what seems to be the most promising possibility: an agreement whose purpose would be not to defer a peace treaty, but to preserve the Berlin status quo despite a peace treaty. This purpose might be served by what has come to be known as Solution "C." This would not be a formal agreement but an exchange of Western, Soviet, and East German declarations prior to the signing of a treaty:

(a) The Western

(a) The Western powers would declare that their rights and Soviet obligations remained unchanged, that they intended to keep their forces in West Berlin, and that they would deal with East German personnel regarding ground and air access on the same terms as they had previously dealt with Soviet personnel.

(b) The East Germans would declare their intention to respect existing access procedures, except that these would henceforth be performed by German personnel. The Soviets would associate themselves with this East German declaration.

There would not be much in this for the Soviets: Solution "C" would merely give them what they could get anyway by telling the East Germans not to alter existing access procedures after a treaty - plus the slightly heightened status involved in the GDR being permitted to make a declaration. This is probably not enough to make a bare-bones Solution "C" negotiable - even with a chastened Khrushchev.

It may be necessary, therefore, to add on some additional face-saving elements:

(a) A Western declaration that espionage and subversive activities would not be permitted in West Berlin - in return for a comparable East German statement regarding East Berlin. These activities in West Berlin are an irritant and potential liability in terms of world opinion; the damage they do in these respects probably exceeds any direct benefit. If restraints on these activities were stated in a unilateral Western declaration, this would give the Communists less of a pretext for interfering in the internal life of West Berlin than if the restraints were stated in a formal agreement.

(b) A Western declaration that no nuclear weapons would be introduced into West Berlin. (This would be harmless, since the Western powers have no intention of introducing such weapons.)

(c) A Western declaration that Western forces in Berlin would not exceed a level approximating their current combat strength.

(d) Stationing UN observers in Berlin and along the access routes to inspect and report on fulfillment of the reciprocal

declarations

declarations by the Western powers, the GDR, and the USSR indicated above.

An agreement along these lines would still be a major defeat for the Soviets. For it would leave the West Berlin status quo untouched - either physically or conceptually. To call it "face-saving" for the USSR is to use the term loosely.

If our bargaining position is strong enough to save Berlin, but not strong enough to avoid more concessions to save Khrushchev's face, there is one further addition to Solution "C" which might be considered: A declaration by the Western powers recognizing the Oder-Neisse boundary. Such recognition would probably be in the West's interest in any event, as a potential means of eventually weakening Soviet-Polish ties.

This kind of Berlin arrangement would, of course, leave a continuing possibility of trouble, since the access routes would remain in Communist hands. It is sometimes asked whether a more drastic solution is not possible, which would remove these routes from Communist control and thus settle the dispute once and for all.

(a) An all-Berlin non-Communist "Free City" has been proposed. This may have considerable propaganda advantage, but the Soviets would almost not give up Communist control over East Berlin. And any form of Berlin unification which preserved that control would be unacceptable to the West. This proposal thus does not seem negotiable, - let alone a means of prying the access routes loose from Communist control.

(b) A special status for West Berlin, alone, has also been suggested: The city to be guarded by UN or other international contingents, and the access routes to come under the city's or the UN's jurisdiction. An international regime for Berlin which would not only deprive the allies of their occupation rights, but also deprive the city of Western forces would be disastrous: No international forces could substitute for the Western forces now in Berlin - in maintaining internal order, in deterring Bloc attack, and in convincing the West Berliners that they remain under Western protection.

This chapter must therefore conclude, as it began, by stressing the limited role which negotiations can play in averting a crisis. If other measures have deterred Khrushchev, negotiations can offer

him

him an "out" in the form of optical change in Berlin and thus somewhat increase the chances of peace. If Khrushchev remains as confident and determined as he seems now, however, negotiations cannot solve the problem; the US will have to face up to his physical challenge. The question of how and when to do this is treated in the following chapter.

IV. THE USE OF FORCE

A. The Casus Belli

If negotiations fail and the Soviets announce their intention of proceeding with a separate peace treaty, we should make clear that we would view the treaty as an exercise in diplomatic ventriloquism - an act without meaning or validity. We should urge non-Communist states not to grace the occasion with their presence and thus seem to ratify the permanent denial to East Germany of the right of self-determination.

At the same time, the Western powers should make clear the post-treaty posture that they would propose to adopt toward East Germans, when they appear along the access routes and claim the right to "control" Western military traffic. (Civil access to and from Berlin is already subject to East German control.) The chances of a physical collision may be minimized if our position regarding East German functions relative to military traffic have been thoroughly defined before they show up.

Present contingency planning contemplates that the Western powers will identify their military traffic to the East Germans, if they take over access functions from the Soviets, but not allow the East Germans to stamp Western papers, as the Soviets now do.

The arguments for thus trying to limit the East Germans' role are impressive:

(a) If the East Germans insist on paper-stamping, the crisis will be brought to a head at a time when the Western powers are fully prepared--physically and psychologically--for counter-action.

(b) If the Germans back away from paper-stamping, the Western position will have been strengthened. For the debate between ourselves and the Soviets as to

whether

whether present procedures constitute merely identification of Western military traffic or "control" of that traffic will have been resolved in our favor.

The argument against this course of action is that it may be politically infeasible.

The British have only agreed to present contingency planning under great duress; in an emergency, they would almost certainly propose that the East Germans be allowed to perform the functions which the Soviets now discharge. There would probably be considerable European press and popular support for the British position; there would be a disinclination for seeming to make paper stamping a casus belli, no matter how much we explained the underlying issue.

The alliance would thus be divided over an essentially procedural question, at the very time when maximum allied unity was needed as a basis for possible armed action in defense of Berlin. The situation would be the more difficult since there might be some questioning in the US press, public and Congress as to whether we had really chosen the most suitable issue on which to fight. There would also be grave difficulty in making our position plausible to the uncommitted countries.

All this would be apparent to the Soviets, and they would be encouraged to press ahead to exploit the Western disarray. In the face of Bloc pressures and allied disunity, it seems likely that the allies would eventually accept the same paper-stamping from the East Germans that they now accept from the Soviets. To avoid such a last minute change in our position under fire, it would be better to straighten out this issue beforehand.

This report suggests, therefore, that the Western powers should announce, before a peace treaty is concluded, that they would allow East German personnel to perform the same functions as the Soviets -- no more. This would mean holding the same line against a variety of ostensibly minor changes in these functions which we have held for many years.

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The difference would be that it would be the East Germans, rather than the Soviets, who would be trying to make the changes. Allied unity could probably be more readily secured on defending this existing line than on trying to improve it at the time of a GDR take-over. And parity of treatment for the GDR would be easier for the USSR to accept as an outcome of the crisis, if it had been deterred and wanted a face-saving "out".

The East Germans' initial reaction to a pre-treaty announcement by the Western powers along the lines suggested above (assuming that negotiations with the USSR had already failed) is predictable: They would say that the procedures to be followed could only be determined in post-treaty negotiations between the Western powers and the sovereign East German regime.

The West could not, of course, allow itself to be placed in the position of negotiating to secure rights which it already possessed -- least of all with a regime which it does not recognize or hold responsible for those rights' fulfillment. At the same time, the West would not want it to appear that it was breaking with the Communists over the issue of dealings with the GDR, rather than over the issue of Berlin's freedom. This would be falling into a Communist propaganda trap.

The Western powers might, therefore, indicate that they remained willing to negotiate with the USSR about post-treaty Berlin and were willing to inform the GDR of the procedures which they would follow if negotiations did not succeed. The manner of this "informing" could be determined at the time -- the main object being to choose a manner which would generate a minimum of divisive doubts and disputes among the Western powers. The proposal for reciprocal declarations contemplated in Solution "C" might be revived for this purpose.

But now suppose that the East Germans reject being "informed" about procedures, and insist that post-treaty procedures be determined through direct inter-governmental negotiation with the GDR. They might announce that, failing such negotiation, they would unilaterally specify the new procedures to be followed, and only allow Western military traffic to pass which conformed to these procedures.

Should

Should these "new" procedures be identical to those hitherto followed by the Soviets, the traffic would continue to move under the policy proposed in this report. Should these procedures differ from present procedures in any respect, however minor, the Western powers could not accede. If these powers should allow the GDR to perform functions which they have hitherto successfully denied to the Soviets, they would be hard put to find a peg on which to arrest their subsequent descent down the slippery slope.

B. Initial Blockage

at same time as move by ground -

If the Western powers refused to abide by new procedures which the GDR has proposed, their ground military traffic would be turned back. In this circumstance, we should continue the daily presentation of ground military traffic for movement and, upon refusal, move it by air. At the same time, we should begin to apply some of the economic counter-measures discussed in Chapter III. We should also move toward the further build-up of the permanent US defense establishment projected in that Chapter.

While these pressures were being mounted, the relatively small amount of military traffic now going to Berlin could be taken care of by a slight increase in the number of military flights to Berlin. The Communists would, at this point, have to choose between four courses of action:

(a) Negotiating for resumption of access.

(b) Letting the garrison airlift go on indefinitely. This would not permit them to achieve their basic purpose; West Berlin would remain free and under guard of Western forces.

(c) Shooting down the Western aircraft, since passive interference alone would not prevent the small number of flights required to supply the garrison. In this event, we should fight back in the air, with a scale of non-nuclear violence corresponding to that of the Communists.

the Communists. The onus for initial use of force would have been clearly placed on them. If they fired on our aircraft, we would fire on theirs. If their ground batteries tried to interdict our airlift, we would attack those batteries from the air. Such an air war would almost certainly end in Western defeat if the Soviets threw in their full strength. If it became clear that this was the Soviet intention, the Western powers should abandon the air effort and prepare for a large scale use of ground force.

(d) The GDR might cut off civil ground access. In this case, we could move the civil traffic initially by aircraft. There would probably be little political support in Europe for large scale use of force to move goods and persons on the ground, until the option of air movement had been exhausted. The French have recently voiced this view, which has probably always been the British position.

In starting the civil airlift, we should also move to the all-out application of economic counter-measures: cutting off trade with the Bloc, and forbidding Bloc ships and planes from using NATO ports or airfields. The full scale US defense build-up discussed in Chapter III would come into action: X billion would be added to the US defense budget, and US force ceilings would be raised appreciably. Our naval vessels would begin shadowing, delaying, and otherwise harassing Bloc shipping, preparatory to a full-scale blockade. All these pressures would be applied in mounting intensity, if the Communists continued to block civil ground access.

A civil airlift could move enough goods to keep the Berlin economy functioning at full blast, unless the Soviets resorted to passive counter-measures. In this event allied naval forces would immediately begin to blockade the Baltic, the Black Sea, and the Soviet Pacific coast. They would require all Soviet vessels

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seeking to depart those areas to return to port. Our purpose would be to show Western determination and to apply immediate military pressure on the USSR, even before the substantial use of ground force could be mounted, in order to influence basic Soviet political decisions.

If the Soviets nonetheless continued passive interference, the airlift could be hobbled. For passive measures could restrict us to visual flight; and visual flight would not be sufficient to move the needed goods and supplies to Berlin in the long run, as the stockpiles there became depleted. If passive interference were continued, therefore, we should then resort to substantial ground force to restore our access.

C. The Use of Force

The use of force to restore access should begin with a sizable probe - say a battalion - to establish the fact that access to Berlin is physically blocked. Then resort should be had to an operation involving substantial non-nuclear force. Whether this operation takes place at once or not would depend on the state of preparations.

The purpose of the operation would not be the military one of defeating all the Soviet forces which might oppose our forces; this would not be feasible.

It would be the political purpose of moving the Soviets to negotiate a resumption of access by giving the most convincing demonstration of which the West was capable that the Western Allies were not prepared to submit to Soviet demands and would use whatever force was necessary, up to an including general war, in resisting them.

The Western force should thus be large enough so that the Soviets would appreciate the great risk that conflict involving this force would, if not terminated by early negotiations, get out of control and escalate into nuclear war. This means, among other things, that:

(a) The force should not be susceptible of being stopped by the GDR. The JCS believe that 7 divisions and 4 air wings would achieve this end.

(b) The force, together with the other ground forces available for the battle, should be able to defend itself with non-nuclear weapons until it was plain that the political purpose would not be achieved and that nuclear weapons must be used. An opinion of the JCS leads to the belief that such a force is well within US and allied capability.

The way in which such a ground operation might best serve its political purpose requires much further elaboration by the Defense Department.

The initial force to be deployed across the zonal boundary might, for example, be one division - with one in reserve.

This was the course discussed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in their April 28 memorandum to the Secretary of Defense, which indicated that "the use of substantial non-nuclear ground forces, in the magnitude of two divisions, could facilitate negotiations to restore ground access to Berlin and compel the Soviets to face the imminent possibility of a broadening of the conflict as well as the possibility of general war, should they persist in obstructing access to Berlin." The annex to the JCS April 28 memorandum said: "A division could fight well for several days, long enough to accept reinforcement by another US or Allied division... If an enemy force of not more than 3-4 divisions opposes the allied force...it is quite likely that we could support a two division force indefinitely in East Germany."

The Soviets might conclude, at this point, that the danger of escalation was getting out of hand and move toward a negotiated settlement. Indeed, they might be impelled to this conclusion by preparations for use of this two division force, which could not fail to be evident to them well in advance.

If, on the contrary, the Soviets threw in more force, the allied operation would need to be reinforced. The seven division force mentioned by the JCS might then come into play.

This force could continue the non-nuclear combat in the face of Soviet/GDR reinforcements and thus provide more

time

time for the Soviets to appreciate the risks of the course on which they were embarked and to seek an acceptable negotiated settlement.

After a period of about 1-2 weeks this allied force would need further reinforcement - depending on the Communist strength thrown against it. At some point, either at the end of this 1-2 weeks or later if the seven division force were to be reinforced, a judgment would have to be reached that we had done all that was feasible to convince Khrushchev that the United States would and, indeed, must - in order to preserve its army, its allies and itself - use nuclear weapons. Thus the last stage of deterrence would have been reached, if previous preparations and uses of force had not produced an acceptable settlement of the issue.

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V. THE POSSIBILITIES AND CONSEQUENCES OF FAILURE

It is essential to consider, not only the possibility of success and the risks and danger involved in any proposal, but also the possibilities and consequences of failure. Failure in the course proposed could arise from at least three sources.

First. Even with the most careful handling, our allies, or important ones of them, might become frightened along the way, decide that the risks and dangers exceeded the advantages, and indicate that they were no longer associated with our position.

This could happen, not only because their people might be less stalwart or because their governments came to a different appraisal of the dangers and advantages but also because, to some extent, their interest may be different from ours in one respect: None of them has the prestige or world position which we do; and, therefore, none of them can have that position and prestige at stake.

It is impracticable for the United States to undertake unilateral action in the Berlin area, if for no other reason than that this action would take off from the territory of the Federal Republic and might require, to some extent, air bases, staging areas, assembly areas, and so forth in both France and Great Britain. If these allies, especially the Federal Republic, were to weaken, the plan here developed would fail: While the United States could still launch nuclear warfare, there is very grave doubt that our own Congress and people would support initiation of a general war which arose over Berlin and was disapproved by the Germans themselves.

What could be done to mitigate the danger to our position and to the alliance which this division among the allies would have caused?

The Soviets

The Soviets' reaction to the division among the Western powers would depend, at least in part, on the point at which it had occurred.

If our allies' negative attitude had become manifest when the course of action outlined in this report was first proposed to them, present military contingency planning would presumably not be changed. The Soviets' view of Western intentions would thus remain a skeptical one. They would not expect our allies to go from the planned battalion-or-larger probe (of which they are probably well aware) to general nuclear war. And they would be right.

In this circumstance, there would probably be little chance of reaching agreement with the Soviets on the kind of Berlin Solution "C" discussed in Chapter III. It would be necessary to move toward an agreement more favorable to the Soviets, if a show-down was to be avoided which would result in a humiliating Western retreat:

(a) The West Germans might have to be persuaded to accept the seven year stretch-out proposed by Ambassador Thompson, if this should prove to hold any interest for the Soviets. Or

(b) An "interim" agreement might be sought, even though it might be taken to imply a term on the Western powers' presence in Berlin and to set the stage for greater Soviet pressure at the expiration of that term. Or

(c) A permanent agreement for Berlin might be sought which would create a new juridical status for the city - perhaps placing it under UN or some other form of international protection. The extent of the resulting damage would depend, in part, on whether Western forces could remain in Berlin as part of the UN or international force.

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In the wake of such a settlement, at least one asset would have been preserved: the US posture of firm intent. For it would be clear that this US intent had been hobbled only by allied restraint.

If allied unwillingness to permit the course of action proposed in this report were first masked behind generalized consent, and only unveiled at the height of the crisis, the result would be more disastrous. The terms that could then be negotiated with the Soviets concerning Berlin would be very bad indeed; the alliance would be prey to divisive bitter recriminations about responsibility for this outcome.

The Soviets

The Soviets would have, of course, achieved one of their highest objectives for the Berlin operation: They would have split the alliance. They would not yet, however, have driven the United States out of Europe.

It might be possible in this moment of extreme disaster and Russian triumph to propose and have accepted a very large measure of North Atlantic political unity, but the chances would be heavily against it. The Europeans might believe that we had brought them to the verge of annihilation and be unwilling to trust the United States with the even greater powers which it would gain by Atlantic union. The people of this country might feel that our allies had weakened at the vital moment and that they had no fight in them. Our world position would suffer heavily.

It should, however, be noted on the other side that the loss of our prestige and position of leadership would be much less if our allies showed an unwillingness to fight than if we, as a government and people, led them in that submissive direction.

Second. Failure might come from the precipitation of general war before it was necessary, thus losing the important deterrent effect of the non-nuclear military measures which had been planned to precede it.

Nuclear war could occur from mischance. In a broader sense, this is a risk inherent in human nature, in any period of great tension and crisis. In a more specific sense this risk is intensified by the possibility, which has already been mentioned, of premature and unauthorized local use of nuclear weapons in Europe; this possibility can be diminished by tightening up custody and control.

Nuclear war could also occur from miscalculation as to the imminence of the other side's attack. Understandably, the pressure from those responsible for SAC and its Russian equivalent will be very great to have the first strike, and the tendency will be to resolve all doubts in favor

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of earlier rather than later action. Steady nerves and firm decision at the highest levels will be required to give the preliminary use of non-nuclear force a full opportunity to have its effect before proceeding to nuclear violence.

Third. We must end this report, as we began it, by stating that there can be no assurance that Moscow may not refuse to be deterred and that its actions may not, therefore, make nuclear war unavoidable. This plan represents an effort to increase the deterrent to the greatest extent we can devise. This, we believe, offers the best hope of avoiding war short of submitting to Moscow's demands.