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Secretary's Meeting with European Ambassadors

Paris, August 9, 1961

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Memorandum of Conversation

Date: August 9, 1961  
Time: 10 a. m.  
Place: American Embassy

Participants:

- The Secretary
- Chiefs of Mission
- Senior Advisers USDEL
- Advisers USDEL
- Senior US officials, Paris

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See last page.

The Secretary opened the meeting by stating that Berlin would be the primary topic for discussion but that he also wished to consider very briefly the implications of the British decision to join the Common Market. He wished also to say a word about administration and trade promotion.

The Secretary said that the Department was making every effort to simplify administration (for example, by combining many required reports) and to insure greater promptitude in supporting the field posts and responding to their requests.

1. Trade Promotion: With regard to trade promotion, he emphasized that the revival of the European and Japanese economies as well as the increase of Soviet bloc activity in the commercial field made it necessary for the United States to make much greater efforts to increase our foreign trade than in the past. The Secretary said that he was organizing a meeting with American business leaders in the fall during which both the Government and the business community would be able to talk very frankly regarding more efficient ways of promoting American trade and improving the American competitive position abroad, notably in the field of shipping, air transport, salesmanship and the supplying of spare parts. The Secretary

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asked the Chiefs of Mission to consult with their commercial officers and send him any suggestions for this meeting.

2. Berlin: Turning to Berlin and the German question, the Secretary said that we were in for weeks and months of confusion, tension and danger and that there were several ways in which the various missions in the field could be of help during this critical period. The first thing was for the missions to think about the problem, to read the reports of the Working Group and the Foreign Ministers Conference, and to convey their own views thereon. Khrushchev's moves with respect to the various countries represented at this meeting would, of course, influence the Department's estimate of how to reach a settlement. It was, therefore, important for all the posts to report on this subject, even though what they said might seem obvious from their own vantage points.

The Secretary said he wished to explain that US policy would attempt to draw a line between what was vital to our interests and what was important but not worth risking the precipitation of armed conflict. We must all remember that we have two great blocs opposing one another and that war was now much more possible than it had been in the past. One could no longer take comfort in the easy use of the term "deterrent" since events could take over the situation and we ran a grave risk of nuclear war. It was, therefore, imperative to separate what was vital from what was not.

Our really vital interests, the Secretary said, were (1) the Western presence in West Berlin and (2) our physical access to the city with a view to sustaining not only our military forces but also the life and liberty of the civilian population of the city. In everything that Khrushchev has said so far, one can find a certain vagueness which still justifies us in believing that he may not intend directly to attack the vital interests of the West. It is not too late to assume that he is still open to negotiation on many points which affect those interests. In the nuclear age, war, though it may well occur, can no longer be a deliberate instrument of national policy, and peaceful settlement of issues such as Berlin is now essential.

3. Negotiations on Berlin: The Secretary explained that we had reached the conclusion that negotiations would probably take place during a time span running from early October through early November, with probable soundings being taken before October. We estimated that formal negotiations would probably best be conducted after the German elections, and the likelihood was that these negotiations would be at the Foreign Minister level rather than at the Summit or in a general peace conference or in the framework of the UN. However, the moves of the other side may, of course, push us in these latter directions and especially toward the UN. Nehru had indicated that he was thinking of raising the Berlin question in the UN and if the crisis really heats up, the UN will inevitably be seized of it at some stage.

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The United States was therefore now trying to define our negotiating positions, i. e., the point at which we would start and the position to which we might come before the windup. In this connection, advice would be welcomed from all of the posts represented.

4. Organizing For Crisis: Mr. Kohler then explained the measures which were being taken to organize the Department to cope with the Berlin problem. He himself would head an interdepartmental team, supported by the "operations center" on this problem, and including Mr. Nitze and representatives of the Treasury, the CIA and the USIA. Mr. Tyler has been named Acting Assistant Secretary for European Affairs with Mr. Richard Davis as Deputy and Mr. Burdett as his Acting Deputy. The British, the Germans and the French were also reinforcing their Embassies in Washington to provide adequate personnel for the Quadripartite Ambassadorial Steering Group. Mr. Kohler said that the reports of the Working Group which had met here in Paris as well as the USIA report on information activities would be sent to the Ambassadors. Fuller information would be given to all the posts as operations proceeded in Washington.

Mr. Kohler suggested certain lines which should be emphasized in our various missions. For example, in the NATO countries and in Spain it would be well to concentrate on the measures which the US and other Western powers were taking to strengthen their position, while in the Iron Curtain countries it would be well to bring home the consequences to those countries of any armed conflict which might be precipitated by Mr. Khrushchev.

5. Policy Shifts: After discussions, first within the US Government, then the Working Group in Paris and finally the Foreign Ministers, it appeared that the present situation calls for certain changes in our policy reflecting the change in our military plans so as to give us more latitude for action short of nuclear conflict. There would be some duration to this military action, in which we could better probe the intentions of the Soviet Union, and this would naturally affect our political moves. We were now in substantial agreement with our allies that we should maintain our legal position with respect to our rights in Berlin but that we could afford to be less concerned over the question of who actually was responsible for executing the procedures relating to our access rights. For example, the mere turning over of the access procedures to the East Germans was not in itself a casus belli. This posture would give us, we hoped, more time for political maneuver and for the disposition of our military forces. The Allies were also in agreement that air lift should be used as much as possible in the initial stages so as to put the adversary in the position of being the first to commit aggression. Our military plans would have to be changed, and we wanted to leave a wider choice of diplomatic moves and perhaps wider options as to the theater of military operations involving, for example, operations in the Skagerrak or the Dardanelles or even more distant places.

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Later in the meeting Ambassador Parsons reported that the Swedes would be extremely sensitive to any operations in the Skagerrak and would probably feel that their neutrality would require them to keep a Baltic channel open through Swedish territorial waters. Ambassador Hare said that the Turks preferred to sublimate their problems with the Soviet Union through NATO and would not welcome a bilateral conflict with the Soviet Union over the Dardanelles. Ambassador Matthews pointed out that the Austrians would object if we were to undertake overflights of Austria in connection with any operations, and he presumed that the Swedes and the Swiss would feel the same way.

The Secretary pointed out that for purposes of contingency planning the degree of escalation which we might expect would vary with our assumption as to the likelihood or unlikelihood of nuclear warfare. The Secretary pointed out that to plan on going from a minor, small-scale military probe directly to all-out nuclear war is a satisfactory policy only if one is sure of never actually reaching that point. We were trying to create a situation where we could gain time through economic and other measures before any shooting actually started. The US no longer anticipated a situation in which interruption of our access rights would be immediately followed by "the big bang" of nuclear warfare, and all the Ambassadors could assure their clients that the United States was not disposed to be rash in this matter. In sum, we have not abandoned hopes for a peaceful settlement.

6. Military Problems: Mr. Nitze then outlined some of the military problems which had arisen from this change of pace. In March and April overall reviews of our military capabilities had led the Administration to take all the measures which seemed sensible to improve and protect the strategic nuclear deterrent. For example, we had accelerated our programs for Polaris, the Minuteman and the early warning systems. When the Berlin crisis arose, these measures were already under way, and the need therefore was to build up our intermediate capabilities. The possibility of calling up National Guard divisions was at once considered, but decided against, since the measures taken had to be ones we could sustain for a long time. Therefore, the United States had decided (1) to strengthen its forces in Europe; (2) to increase our combat ready strength so that by the end of the year we could be capable of deploying six more divisions to Europe; (3) to improve our airlift and sea-lift ties; (4) to cancel several scheduled reductions of our air strength and our aircraft carriers; (5) to expand production of supplies and equipment for non-nuclear warfare; and (6) to build up our anti-submarine capabilities and naval capability for harassment and even blockade. It was important that the Allies should embark on a comparable concurrent buildup, but they also should avoid crash operations which would put them at a peak they could not sustain. They should prepare now for later expansions, if needed.

Mr. Nitze pointed out that each Ally had its own problems in this field. The British were concerned by their balance of payments and by the political repercussions of conscription. The Germans had to keep an eye on their elections and to avoid drawing any accusations of seeking war-like

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solutions. Nevertheless, it was hoped that the Germans would increase to nine divisions by the end of 1961 and eleven during 1962. The French, of course, had serious domestic problems, principally in connection with Algeria, but they seemed disposed to take very serious risks in Algeria if the crisis got bad enough, in order to bring back their troops. They also contemplated calling up their reserves. The Dutch and others were also taking measures to strengthen their capabilities.

The primary area where military strength was needed seemed to run across the middle of Europe, but, of course, Greece and Turkey were also important and here we had a problem of stretching available money and equipment to help them over the short term. Before any military assistance could be worked out, it would be necessary for EUCOM and the Pentagon to work out plans and in this the help of the various country teams would be important.

Up to now the Ambassadorial group in Washington has been instructing the Tripartite Military Group doing Berlin contingency planning. But if any military action is taken, all NATO should be ready. We are therefore working out a closer relationship for that group with the NATO mechanisms. Good progress is being made in revising the actual plans. The success of the meetings was most encouraging.

The Secretary explained that there had been a real change in American strategic thinking. We were now emphasizing the buildup of conventional forces not because we preferred land war in Europe to hydrogen bombs over the US, but because we were trying to force political decisions before we took military action. We had given up the concept of a "bigger bang for a buck" because it involves too great a danger for all states that their own as well as enemy territory would be subject to complete devastation. Governments were charged during wars not just with inflicting injury on others but with protecting their own populations. Notwithstanding Khrushchev's threats we wanted also to increase his range of choice by not limiting our own choice to the two grim alternatives of nuclear war or complete surrender.

7. Information Activities: Mr. Murrow then explained some of the measures being taken in the field of information. We would shortly be getting out a paper on themes which could be exploited in the propaganda field, and we intended to make maximum use of broadcast time on facilities abroad which were owned or supported by the US. There would also be an interchange among the four Allies in seeking public opinion and conducting information activities in other Allied countries. The themes to be used were simple and subject to repetition. For example, there was the theme that the Berlin crisis is Khrushchev's crisis; there is no need for a Berlin crisis. It is of Soviet manufacture. We would also be emphasizing the question of how many people Khrushchev was willing to kill, in order to have his way with regard to Berlin. Finally, the theme of self-determination could be exploited.

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8. Consultations: The Secretary then discussed some of the problems we had with our Allies regarding consultation. In setting up the four-power meeting, for example, the French had insisted that this be preceded by tripartite discussions and these, in turn, had had to be prefaced by a bilateral breakfast with Lord Home. It was important to remember that consultation involves more than just sitting around and waiting to be told what the US plans to do. Those who expect to be consulted should themselves be actively working on the various problems involved and should be ready to put forward ideas of their own, as had been done by only a few of the NATO powers outside the Four. In general, it was much better for the Allies to get their licks in early and to put forward their ideas before the administrative machinery within the US Government had already functioned and had reached decisions which were difficult to modify. Consultation, in short, was a two-way operation.

9. Yugoslavs and the Non-Aligned Countries: Following the coffee break the Secretary called on Ambassador Kennan to discuss the situation from the vantage point of Belgrade. Ambassador Kennan stressed the importance of the forthcoming conference in Belgrade of some 20 to 30 "non-aligned" countries. The Yugoslavs would be the sole European representatives at this conference and, therefore, their views on Berlin would be most crucial in shaping the resolution which would be adopted by the conference and which would in large measure govern the actions of all the governments who attended the conference. This would mean that the attitudes of as much as one-third of the members of the UN would be greatly affected. The Ambassador said that he had been talking to Mr. Kardelj, who is drafting the resolution on Berlin, and with Marshal Tito and the Foreign Minister. The Yugoslavs were not particularly warm toward the American point of view. They had always thought we had made a grave mistake in rearming Western Germany and in rejecting out of hand the Rapacki plan. They were naturally inclined toward Germanophobia and in private were opposed to German reunification. While the Yugoslavs recognized in private that Mr. Khrushchev was largely responsible for having painted himself into a corner, still they felt that the US should take the initiative in getting him out of a situation with such frightful implications. The other Governments at the non-aligned conference, with the exception of India, would probably be more extreme than the Yugoslavs. In general, they cared little about the Berlin problem as such, but a positive and conciliatory note in our own position might affect them favorably.

The Yugoslav Foreign Minister had come back from Moscow convinced that the Soviets are now seriously worried about the situation, but that they want to bail out Ulbricht. They do not see Khrushchev as on the crest of power wanting simply to humiliate the US. Tito had entered a strong plea with us to stop emphasizing our strength and to do something positive; he and the Yugoslavs believe the US should talk with the Soviets.

10. British Attitudes: Ambassador Bruce then reported on the British position. He said that Lord Home probably reflected British Government attitudes very well. Although the British would accept our

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various political positions on Berlin, they would prefer to recognize East Germany at some stage and were unlikely to take kindly to increased military measures. Conscription over Berlin was impossible for the present Government unless a real crisis developed. The Labor Party was unanimously opposed to conscription at present. The British might strengthen their Rhine Army but they frankly want the Germans to pay for it and to purchase more military equipment from Great Britain and less from the US.

11. Common Market: The British Government had approached the problem of the Common Market most cautiously and even so it was surprised by the depth of opposition to its joining which had appeared in the Commonwealth, especially in Australia, New Zealand and Canada. The present British Government realized that to join the Common Market on satisfactory terms would require all the power and prestige at their command. It would, therefore, be well for them to move more rapidly than planned in order to iron out their troubles with the Commonwealth and engage in serious negotiations with the Six. The British tended to overestimate French opposition to their joining the Six and there were other considerations that would affect British progress in this matter. The important political considerations were the British feeling that their special relationship with the US is fading and their nostalgic desire to regain power and prestige.

In response to a question from the Secretary, Ambassador Bruce estimated that during the Common Market negotiations the British would be inclined to deal gently with the French on other issues.

Ambassador Butterworth explained that the British were prepared to notify Erhardt of the EEC of their intent to join after which Mr. Erhardt would consult with the Governments of the Six as to how the negotiations should be conducted. It was likely that all of the Six would want to take part in the opening phases of the negotiations. While the British tended to be somewhat over-optimistic on the possibility of amending the home Treaty so as to take care of their special problems, Ambassador Butterworth felt that the necessary derogations from the Rome Treaty to accommodate the British would probably have to be accepted by the French if the other five members approved them. However, if the US supported the French position because of our own commercial interests, the derogations might be more difficult to engineer.

The Secretary remarked that there were limits to the derogations we could swallow if they injured our own commercial interests, and he then asked for reports on the attitudes of the leading neutrals with respect to the Common Market. Ambassador Parsons said that the Swedes had not been unduly surprised by the British move but that they would prefer to wait a while before they decided whether to join EEC fully or merely to associate themselves with it. Ambassador Matthews said that the Austrians of course

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had trade interests in the EEC area but were nervous about compromising their neutrality and would prefer to wait for a move from the Swiss, whom the Russians considered as model neutrals. Ambassador McKinney said that the Swiss also were nervous about their neutrality but their position was still quite flexible.

12. The Khrushchev Speech: Ambassador Thompson then made a few remarks about the Khrushchev speech of August 7. He felt that Khrushchev had gone farther than before in spelling out his intentions, but he could not find any fundamental innovations in the speech. The passage which tried to reassure the West as to their access rights was counter-balanced by a noticeable buildup of Ulbricht's position. Khrushchev had spoken of the East German right to recognition, to the stabilization of their frontiers and to membership in the UN. He had not mentioned the refugee problem, and he seemed to have steered a middle course between threats and willingness to negotiate rather than taking the extremely militant stand that one might have expected. It was important to remember that Khrushchev also has domestic problems. For one thing, the Party Congress is coming up in October and he does not want to create a state of mind among the Russian people which would lead to hoarding and economic dislocation.

Ambassador Thompson also pointed out that M. Khrushchev had told the neutrals that they should help to put a strait jacket on the "aggressors" and that in case of conflict the minor Allies of the West would be destroyed. We may therefore anticipate that he will campaign in the neutral countries and will try to frighten the European countries. Would it not, therefore, be a good idea for our missions to forewarn the various governments about these pressures and advise them to resist before Khrushchev actually goes to work on them?

13. Non-Aligned Countries: Returning to the non-aligned conference, the Secretary asked Ambassador Kennan whether we could perhaps expect at least a resolution which would take a neutral position and would endorse the principle of negotiation. Ambassador Kennan thought it likely that the resolution would contain such language but said that it might also endorse the recognition of East Germany. He thought it unlikely that the resolution would refer to self-determination in the Berlin context, since self-determination in the eyes of the Africans and the Asians seemed to be a commodity for consumption only outside of Europe.

14. Geneva Conference on Laos: The Secretary asked Ambassador Harriman to report on the Geneva Conference. Ambassador Harriman replied that so far the Russians seemed to be under instructions to be fairly responsive to Western positions and to try to reach an agreement. The British co-chairman was inclined to be rather soft with the Russians in handling problems that arose at the Conference and the Indian performance was frankly lamentable. It was to be hoped that Ambassador Galbraith, after making a short visit to Geneva, could help in persuading Nehru that Laos should be really neutral rather than a pawn of the Soviet bloc.

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Ambassador Harriman pointed out the importance of negotiations which were going on among political leaders in Laos itself, and said that we were heavily dependent on our French colleagues to help us out in this respect. The Thais and the Vietnamese had been getting stronger in their support for the Western positions. The Ambassador also had the impression that the Russians were able to dictate to the Poles and the other European satellites regarding Laos but not to the Chinese or the Vietminh. While he felt that the seating of the Pathet Lao had constituted a reverse for us at the conference, chances for negotiated neutrality rather than military action in Laos still seemed reasonably good. Of course one could never tell until the final clinches.

Ambassador Harriman put in a word with regard to Tito, recalling that in 1951 when he was worried about attack from the satellites, Tito had sought a defensive alliance with the US and had said he would support us in defending our rights in Berlin, if we in turn would be willing to come to his aid if Yugoslavia were attacked.

With regard to the Common Market, Ambassador Harriman observed that we should not encourage American investments in this area at the expense of American manufacture, drawing a parallel to the flight of industry from New York and New England to the South, and American investments in the under-developed areas of the world.

15. Attitudes on Germany: Ambassador Dowling took up the theme of the wider implications of the Berlin crisis and said that it would be well to demonstrate to the neutral countries how deeply they were involved in the whole matter.

The Secretary agreed and said we should try to discount the impression that we are at the beck and call of the Germans. He admitted that judging from his contacts with the German representatives here, we need not anticipate any fundamental trouble with the Germans if we made certain concessions in order to reach a settlement.

16. Canada: Ambassador Merchant then outlined the problems which British entry into the Common Market would create with respect to Canada. The Canadians opposed British entry because they attached importance to the Empire preferences and because they thought British absorption in the Common Market would increase the probability of Canadian domination by the United States. Rather than seeking realistic accommodations for Canadian interests, they simply opposed the British entry into the Common Market en bloc. Canada is our chief client in foreign trade and a highly important piece of strategic real estate. Therefore, if the United States supported British entry into the Common Market too strongly, the Canadians might react against us in a nationalist fervor and could take very unpleasant measures against us. Ambassador Merchant referred to Mr. Pearson's scheme for a Common Market which would embrace the Atlantic Community, including Canada and the United States.

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Later in the meeting Ambassador Thompson said that the Soviet Union was probably quite concerned over the British move to enter the Common Market. He thought, however, that the Russians would not be too upset if the Swiss and the Austrians joined; they would, of course, make noises but would probably not undertake concrete reprisals for fear of driving the neutrals into the Western camp. He agreed with Ambassador Gufler, however, that they would not hesitate to put the squeeze on Finland.

17. Greece and Turkey: The Secretary then mentioned the importance of the situation on the flanks of NATO and called for a report on Greece and Turkey. Ambassador Hare said that the Turks had reacted favorably to our stand on Berlin and had even made some suggestions. They were inclined to be impatient with people who wavered in their attitude toward the Soviet Union and, while they naturally wanted more military hardware from us, this was not to be considered as a blackmail tactic.

Ambassador Briggs said that the Greeks were quite solidly with us, although they tended to be somewhat obsessed by their relationships with Albania and especially Bulgaria. They were cultivating better relations with the Yugoslavs but continued to be nervous with respect to the Turks. The Greeks were also aware of the possibilities for obtaining hardware and economic aid in the current crisis, but they were proud of their NATO association and inclined to stand with us. He pointed out, however, that the situation in Cyprus was not good and that there was danger of a rift between the Greeks and the Turks on this. The Greeks were happy to be associated with the Common Market at long last and felt themselves less vulnerable to Soviet offers in the field of trade. They appreciated the immense help of the US through our Embassies in the six capitals. They were also somewhat embarrassed by the problem which they had with the United States over the tobacco question.

18. Norway: Ambassador Wharton then reported on Norwegian attitudes which, he said, were affected not only by the vacation period but also by the coming elections. While military circles in Norway sympathized with the American position, the Government was not inclined to increase the armed forces or their weapons and continued to favor peaceful negotiations in line with Norway's special relationship to NATO. Among other things, Norway's prosperity is heavily dependent on the unhampered conduct of shipping. The Norwegians needed our assistance, and any interruption of our military aid was bound to cause trouble.

19. Bizerte: The Secretary said he wished to speak briefly on the subject of the Bizerte crisis. Neither the French nor the Tunisians had consulted us with regard to the Bizerte problem and the matter had suddenly got out of hand. A special General Assembly was likely within ten days, and it looked as though France and the West would take a propaganda beating from the Africans and Asians. We have informed the Secretary-General

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that we prefer bilateral settlement to a special General Assembly, and we have been pushing hard on both sides to get bilateral talks going. Thus far, despite tantalizing feelers on both sides, we had not had much success with this.

On the whole, the French were in a poor legal and political position so far as the General Assembly was concerned. They had no treaty rights to Bizerte; this was a perfect "colonialist" issue; and it was felt that the French retaliation for Tunisian moves against the base had been excessive. This was a most unhappy coincidence since it would weaken our stands with respect to Berlin. The language which the Afro-Asians would use against France would probably be more or less what we would like to use with respect to the Russians on Berlin.

20. French Attitudes: Ambassador Gavin said he would like to discuss Bizerte in the general context of the French situation. General de Gaulle had taken an extremely strong stand on Berlin and the French were anxious to contribute whatever they could to the Western position. On the other hand, General de Gaulle continued to believe that France should be responsible for its own defense rather than delegating it to NATO, because he felt that the Soviets would be able to overrun Western Europe before the US or the Allies could really help. France must therefore be ready to defend itself. General de Gaulle planned to pull troops out of Algeria as a contribution to NATO and he looked upon a settlement of the Bizerte and the Algerian issues as a tidying up on the flanks. He considered that Bizerte was an important installation not to be abandoned in time of crisis or left at the disposition of others, and he considered that the UN could contribute nothing to settling a problem which would have to be solved bilaterally.

Ambassador Gavin thought that General de Gaulle was determined to get out of Algeria in order to consolidate his continental position. However, no government existed which was capable of taking over in Algeria and sudden abandonment would mean a vacuum which would be filled by hostile forces. The French felt that they needed time to retire in a way that would stabilize their flank rather than reduce it to chaos.

The Bizerte issue also reflected domestic pressures, and Ambassador Gavin felt that the sudden withdrawal of Army elements -- for example, the paratroops who were filled with resentment over past French retreats -- would cause serious trouble with the military and the Right. The Challe putsch had revealed serious weaknesses in France, and the aftermath had indicated the possibility of a further move by the Army and the Right. However, Metropolitan support was needed to make any revolt from the Right successful. General de Gaulle could probably handle any such revolt, but if he were eliminated, then the situation might become extremely dangerous. Many Frenchmen were asking how it was that France could remain so divided and so much at the mercy of dissident elements at a time of serious international crisis. Such a crisis might work in the direction of greater solidarity, but it was not unlikely that we would see some trouble in France in the fall.

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21. Maintenance of Relations with Eastern Europe: At this point the Secretary left the meeting and Mr. Kohler took over. He raised the question of our relations with the Eastern European countries, including the Soviet Union, in a moment of developing crisis. We had many outstanding problems, such as the licensing of exports to the Soviet Union, our negotiation of a civil aviation agreement and our aid to Poland. The President had decided that we should not become panicky and resort to spectacular measures. In keeping with this posture, we had decided to make it known that, while we were keeping our relations with Eastern Europe under review, we did not intend to disrupt them for the time being. In response to a question from Ambassador Thompson, Mr. Kohler explained that the President's decision in this matter was designed to take care of Congressional preoccupations with Soviet and satellite relations. With regard to the civil aviation agreement with the Soviet Union, he anticipated that settlement of technical questions would probably delay actual operations until spring.

Ambassador Beam agreed that so far as Poland was concerned, it was better to conduct business as usual for the time being. He had long felt that we should taper off our assistance to the Poles for reasons not related to Berlin, and the Poles knew this. Threatening the Poles with regard to Berlin would have little effect and it was better to confine ourselves to a dispassionate discussion of our rights in the matter.

Ambassador Page said that the Bulgarians, of course, followed the Moscow line and we were letting the war claims issue pursue its normal course and awaiting Bulgarian initiatives on this question. Mr. Merrill said that the Rumanians also followed the strict Soviet line, but Rumania did have important commercial relations with Western Europe and was seeking certain chemical products in the United States. He felt that warnings to the Rumanians regarding the consequences of Khrushchev's actions might be effective.

Ambassador Kennan raised the subject of Bulgaria and the Balkan situation in the event of fighting over Berlin and felt that we should have a definite understanding with the Greeks and Turks as to how the Bulgarian problem would be handled. Ambassador Hare felt that the Turks were primarily interested in defense and not disposed to take on Balkan operations.

Ambassador Reinhardt indicated that the Italians were much less interested in the Albanian question than they had been in the past. Ambassador Thompson noted that the Italian Ambassador in Moscow told him the Italians preferred to have Chinese Communist influence in Albania rather than Soviet.

In reply to Ambassador Wharton's query, Mr. Kohler confirmed that the satellite countries of Eastern Europe seemed disposed to carry on business as usual, and had not as yet stiffened their attitudes because of Khrushchev's threats on Germany and Berlin. Ambassador Thompson

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pointed out in this connection that economic sanctions and diplomatic ruptures at this stage would only convince Khrushchev that he had been right in feeling that we would merely resort to half-way measures in responding to the challenge on Berlin.

22. Materials for Use of Missions: In response to queries as to what material could be used by the various missions with their respective governments, Mr. Kohler said that the agreed papers of the Working Group and the Foreign Ministers meeting could be used with discretion and that these would be followed up by a series of circulars from the Department as operations progressed. Mr. Lyon pointed up the problem of convincing French opinion of our real seriousness with respect to Berlin, and Ambassador MacArthur mentioned the need for succinct and simplified material explaining our position on disarmament.

23. Differences on Timing: Mr. Kohler, in response to a question from Ambassador Bruce, said that there would be no communique from the Foreign Ministers meeting except the statement issued after the meeting of the North Atlantic Council on August 8. There might also be a departure statement by the Secretary on his return to Paris. He explained that the reason was that there was a disagreement with the French with regard to the timing of any overtures for negotiation. The French wanted to delay longer than we did. We thought that the Allies should make a move in the direction of the negotiations as soon as our planning is clarified. There would, therefore, be no immediate statement which referred to any specific proposal to negotiate. The Ministers had agreed that it would be desirable that there be negotiations before the Soviets took unilateral action with respect to East Germany, but the question of a Western initiative was still at issue with France.

24. Berlin Attitudes: Mr. Lightner said that while we probably could handle the Berliners so long as negotiations did not mean abandoning their vital interests, still the interim period while our position was being developed would create a serious problem in dealing with Berlin sensitivities on such issues as our troop strength and Western activities in Berlin, particularly if it appeared in the press that these matters were being reviewed. Mr. Kohler agreed that this was a serious problem. He said that Senator Kline from Berlin had already been briefed by Mr. Carstens during the Working Group sessions and seemed satisfied with our position.

25. Reunification of Germany: Mr. Torbert said that the problem of recognizing East Germany was a particularly tough one to handle in Eastern European countries, and Mr. Kohler replied that we had already decided to talk less from now on about unification and to bear down harder on the issue of self-determination in Germany, on which Khrushchev was highly sensitive. We should also stress that Berlin was perfectly peaceful until Khrushchev stirred the issue up.

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Ambassador Kennan suggested that we could turn Khrushchev's own words on "peaceful competition" against him in the neutral and Eastern European countries, because the Soviets have demonstrated with respect to Berlin that when they lose out in "peaceful competition", they immediately resort to war-like tactics. Ambassador Thompson pointed out that we could also talk more about our previous peace proposals and keep hammering away at this in order to dispel the illusion created by Khrushchev, who maintains that we never made any proposals. Thus far Khrushchev has proposed negotiations only on the basis of the arrangements which he wants to conclude with East Germany and has done nothing with respect to our own proposals. Finally, Mr. Kohler suggested that while we could recognize anti-German feelings arising from the past, we should point out that if Germany is not reunified peacefully, we may have an explosive situation in which reunification can only be achieved through violence and without our control over the situation.

JABovey, jr/rmc

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BERLINSuggested Major Publicity Themes1. "Khrushchev's crisis"

The 1961 crisis is no more a "Berlin crisis" than that of 1938 was a "Czech" crisis or that of 1939 a "Polish" crisis. This is Khrushchev's crisis as the others were Hitler's crises. Berlin is only the pretext. The fundamental issue is that clash between the World of Free Choice and the World of Coercion. There is no need for a Berlin crisis: it is of Soviet manufacture.

2. The "Free City"

Soviet propaganda makes great play with words such as "peace" and "freedom". The plan for a "Free City" of Berlin ignores the fact that West Berlin is already free and that the Soviet aim is to usurp Western rights which are essential if the freedom of two and a quarter million people is to be maintained.

3. East Berlin

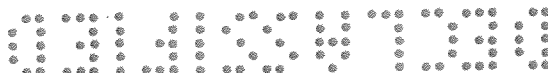
Soviet propaganda concentrates on West Berlin. East Berlin is never mentioned, as though its fate - as part of East Germany was already decided. Yet there is no legal basis for this. Khrushchev's attitude throughout is "What's mine is mine. What's yours is negotiable".

4. Will Khrushchev Kill for Berlin?

Soviet propaganda, playing on the natural hatred that all sane people feel for war, seeks somehow to depict the allies, who are on the defensive over Berlin, as the aggressors. The slogan Why die for Berlin? should be reversed to "Will Khrushchev Kill for Berlin?" - i.e., to shut the gateway to freedom and to assert Communist control over the West Berliners?

5. Why not recognise East Germany?

The Soviet argument is that East Germany exists and should at least be recognised de facto. But East Germany does not exist as a state. Its population are held down by 22 Soviet divisions. Soviet tanks crushed their 1953 bid for freedom. A thousand refugees flee "East Germany" every day, thus demonstrating their hatred of the regime imposed and held down upon them by the Russians. The proportion of military personnel to civilians is higher in East Germany than anywhere in Europe.



6. "East Germans angels: West Germans devils"

Soviet propaganda seeks to show that since 1945 the East Germans have become fine, peace-loving citizens, while the West Germans are "Nazi revanchists". How do they explain this? West Germany is open to inspection, it is odd that so many intelligent people should flee the peace-loving East German regime. In fact it is this regime that perpetuates totalitarian practices.

7. Why reunify Germany?

The Germans have as much right to national unity as any other people. Why should the Russians, who press for self-determination for all peoples outside the Soviet bloc deny it to Germany?

8. "Peace"

Soviet abuse of the word "peace" is well-known. Aggressive Soviet imperialism is "peaceful": Western attempts at self-defence are "warmongering". It is the Russians who are frustrating agreement on the abolition of Nuclear Tests and on disarmament and seeking to paralyse the United Nations.

9. "Peace treaty"

To quote President Kennedy:-

"The Soviet aide memoire is a document which speaks of peace, but threatens to disturb it. It speaks of "ending the abnormal situation" in Germany but insists on making permanent its abnormal division... Today there is peace in Berlin, in Germany, in Europe. If that peace is destroyed by the unilateral action of the Soviet Union, its leaders will have a heavy responsibility before world opinion and history... It (the Soviet Union) is moreover misusing the words "freedom" and "peace" for, as our reply indicates, freedom and peace are not merely words, nor can they be achieved by words or promises alone..."

10. Why not hand the problem over to U.N.O.?

The primary responsibility for defending Allied rights in Berlin and the freedom of the West Berliners rests with the Allies. We must bear in mind current Soviet attempts to destroy the effectiveness of the United Nations.

11. Themes for the uncommitted nations.

In dealing with the uncommitted nations, particular emphasis should be placed on the 'colonialist' aspect of Soviet policy in denying Germans and



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satellites self-determination. We should also ply on the fear of war, making it clear that if Khrushchev persists in his present tactics a war might ensue which would hit all the world and which would be his responsibility. The uncommitted should therefore address their exhortations to Khrushchev. The West want to settle all disputes peacefully if they are allowed to do so. Finally, we should use the argument that uncommitted countries that subscribe to a "peace treaty" with East Germany thereby become committed.

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Secretary's Meeting with EUR Chiefs of Mission  
Paris, August 9, 1961

Attendance:

The Secretary of State  
Mr. Foy D. Kohler, Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs

Visiting Chiefs of Mission:

Ambassador Matthews  
Ambassador MacArthur  
Minister Page  
Ambassador Merchant  
Ambassador Wailes  
Ambassador Blair  
Ambassador Gufler  
Ambassador Gavin  
Ambassador Dowling  
Mr. Lightner  
Ambassador Bruce  
Ambassador Briggs  
Mr. Torbert  
Ambassador Penfield  
Ambassador Stockdale  
Ambassador Reinhardt  
Ambassador Wine  
Ambassador Rice  
Ambassador Wharton  
Ambassador Beam  
Ambassador Elbrick  
Mr. Merrill  
Ambassador Biddle  
Ambassador Parsons  
Ambassador McKinney  
Ambassador Hare  
Ambassador Martin  
Ambassador Butterworth  
Ambassador Finletter  
Ambassador Tuthill  
Ambassador Thompson  
Ambassador Kennan

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Senior Advisers USDEL:

Ambassador Harriman  
Ambassador Bohlen  
Mr. Murrow  
Mr. Nitze  
Mr. Tubby  
Mr. Chayes

Advisers USDEL:

Mr. Hillenbrand  
Mr. Cash  
Mr. Lewis  
Mr. Swank  
Mr. Winship  
General Gray  
Colonel Armstrong  
Mr. Brown

Minister Lyon  
Minister Durbrow  
Minister Reinstein  
Mr. Kidder  
Mr. Wolf  
Mr. Stuessel  
Mr. Levy  
Mr. Cody  
Minister Morrow  
Mr. Sprouse  
Mr. Bovey, Rapporteur

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