CABINET

BERLIN

Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

My colleagues will shortly be considering various aspects of the Berlin problem. This has become desirable and possible now that President Kennedy has completed his review of his own policy on the subject. As a result a memorandum setting out the views of the United States Government was handed to H.M. Ambassador in Washington on 22nd July.

2. I circulate the text of this memorandum and its first attachment (dealing with the military programme proposed by the United States Government), the other two attachments not being immediately relevant to our discussion.

H.

Foreign Office, S.W. 1.

26th July, 1961
MEMORANDUM ON MEASURES FOR DEALING WITH THE BERLIN SITUATION

1. The United States Government has given urgent and intensive consideration to the manner in which the Soviet threat to the Western position in Berlin should be met. In this process, searching analysis has been undertaken of Soviet objectives and tactics, and of the resources, and the alternative means of employing them, available to the Western Alliance for dealing with the situation they present. The United States has now reached certain conclusions as to the courses of action which it believes should be followed. This memorandum is intended to describe briefly these conclusions and in so doing to serve as a basis for initial consultations among the four Western Powers on the subject.

2. The Soviet threat to the Western position in Berlin has existed in the same general form since 1958. The United States believes, however, that the West must assume for purposes of arriving at its own policy that the USSR is in earnest in its stated intention to sign a separate peace treaty this year with East Germany which will, in the Soviet view, bring to an end Allied rights in Berlin.

3. The United States believes that in addition to the objectives in Central Europe which have led the USSR to pursue this course of action, a key factor in Soviet policy formulation is the belief that, in the end, the West will not fight to defend its position in Berlin.

4. In the view of the United States, therefore, Western policy should consist of two principal elements: 1) a clear demonstration of Western determination to defend the Allied position in Berlin, at the risk of war if necessary; and 2) an active diplomatic program, including negotiations with the Soviet Union, designed to provide the Soviet leadership an alternative course of action which does not endanger vital Western interests in Berlin.

5. With respect of the first element, which might be characterized as the establishment of a more effective deterrent and capability for military action, the United States proposes to begin immediately a series of measures to increase its armed strength. These steps will be taken with due regard to the dangers of a spreading arms race. We continue to stand ready to negotiate on the reduction and control of armaments. However, if this time, the greatest danger to peace is the failure to take the measures outlined in this memorandum.

6. The United States, for these reasons, proposes to take as its first steps measures which will initiate a long-run build-up of military strength and which will not be of such a dramatic and emergency nature as to exacerbate the crisis. It intends, more specifically, to undertake:

a. A request to the Congress, to be made on Wednesday, July 26, for a supplementary defense budget of three and two thirds billion dollars to add to the approximately three billion dollar supplementary request already made. This would provide the United States with progressively stronger forces in the months ahead, giving it a capability of moving and additional six
divisions to Europe at the end of the year or at any time thereafter if our allied decision is that the situation warrants this. The United States would also have available supplementary units of tactical and transport aircraft and increased naval strength especially in the field of anti-submarine warfare. Further, the United States is acting to increase immediately by fifty per cent the number of its bomber aircraft on ground alert status. Attached to this memorandum is a paper setting forth this program in more detail, together with our thoughts on NATO-wide measures in this field.

b. Substantial measures in the field of civil defense (shelter construction, recruitment and training of personnel, etc.).

7. In addition, the United States believes that the following precautionary and planning efforts should be undertaken within the next few weeks:

a. Strengthen the position of West Berlin to sustain an interruption of access by reviewing and improving airlift procedures and the stockpile as necessary;

b. Review our Berlin contingency planning in the light of the present situation;

c. Complete Allied plans for use of a wide range of non-military countermeasures, including economic sanctions, upon interruption of access to Berlin or earlier as a warning and deterrent. A paper on the subject of economic sanctions is attached.

8. It will be of great importance to obtain the maximum support of world public opinion for the Western position and policies. The United States has begun, therefore, and proposes to expand in cooperation with its Allies, an active public information program on a world-wide scale to this end. A preliminary quadripartite paper based on propaganda themes suggested by the British Government has already been agreed, and the attached paper is intended as a further step in the development of such a program.

9. The United States regards it as of the utmost importance that the response to the Soviet threat be a joint undertaking on the part of the NATO Alliance. The unity of the West in the face of Soviet aggrandizement in Central Europe will in and of itself be a most powerful factor in deterring the USSR from its present course of action. The United States hopes, therefore, that in all aspects of this endeavor it will be joined by its Allies. In the military field particularly the United States believes that all NATO members should make an effort comparable to that which it is making. The United States realizes that cost and sacrifice will be involved, but believes that the Alliance must act vigorously to meet the present challenge. A clear willingness to bear increased burdens on the part of all our countries will be essential to convey to the Kremlin the needed impression of allied determination. We are prepared to join our allies urgently in working out a joint military program of this end. A joint endeavor of this nature will require the closest consultation at every step of the way, and suggestions will be made later in this memorandum for pursuing the initial stages of this consultation.

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10. With respect to the second element of Western policy, an active diplomatic program, the United States foresees several possible courses of action. They shall be the subject of further intensive discussion among us, but it might be well at this stage to indicate in general terms what the United States may wish to propose in more detail later:

a. It might be well at an early date for us to have informal and quiet talks with the Soviet leadership, for example through our Ambassadors in Moscow, to probe the Soviet position, to warn of possible consequences of that position in terms of Allied military build-up, and to take advantage of any opportunities which might appear to move towards subsequent understanding on an arrangement which might be acceptable.

b. Thereafter we might wish to explore opportunities for Western political initiatives at an appropriate time. The timing of such initiatives would depend on a number of factors, among them the likelihood at any particular time that the Soviet leadership may have been sufficiently impressed by the Western deterrent efforts to be willing to settle for solutions acceptable to us.

11. The United States suggests that consultation begin at once, commencing with the Ambassadorial Steering Group. This Group would presumably wish to consider directives to guide the activity of Allied working groups in Washington on general aspects of the question, non-military countermeasures and psychological and propaganda problems; the quadripartite group on economic countermeasures; and the Live Oak group.

12. Following the initial consultations of the Steering Group, the United States proposes consultations at a senior official level to take place in Paris for a week beginning July 28. This session would have the purpose of surveying and coordinating so far as possible the entire range of military, political, economic and psychological measures.

13. There would then follow meetings of the Western Foreign Ministers in Paris to review the state of preparations, settle outstanding problems and issue directives for further work.

14. After the Foreign Ministers meeting, it is proposed that one or all of the Foreign Ministers make an interim report to NATO and seek other member countries' views on the state of preparations.

15. If necessary, the senior level group could presumably remain for a few days in Paris to carry out the instructions of the Foreign Ministers.

Attachments:

1. The Military Program.
2. The Use of Economic Countermeasures in the Berlin Crisis.
3. Information Program in Support of Berlin Policy.
THE MILITARY PROGRAM

The U.S. intends to increase promptly the military strength which could be applied in event of blocked access to Berlin. The purpose is twofold: to deter Khrushchev from pressing a Berlin crisis to the point of conflict, and to become better able to deal with a conflict if it nevertheless occurs. We expect that the Allies will wish to make corresponding increases in their own strength, so that our united efforts can have fullest effect. The benefits we expect from developing this added power are described below, followed by statements of the U.S. program and suggested comparable Allied programs.
A. Improved Position Anticipated from U.S. and Allied Military Build-Up

What deterrent and related political effects and what opportunities for action not available from present strengths can be anticipated as a consequence of a prompt though orderly build-up of the Alliance's military power?

The only military action which present deployed strengths make possible is a gradual series of probes culminating in a reinforced battalion-sized effort. In the meantime the NATO front remains vulnerable to sudden penetration by Soviet forces such as might present us with a fait accompli.

The proposed U.S. and Allied build-up would have important deterrent effects upon the Soviet Union and would contribute substantially to the security of the North Atlantic area.

Although our common efforts have actually produced a substantial degree of all forms of military strength, there are many among us who do not recognize the degree of strength these efforts have already brought. Through an uncritical acceptance of reported Soviet division and aircraft numbers and a keen awareness of NATO's own military deficiencies, it is easy to mislead oneself into attributing to the Soviet Union a capability rapidly to overwhelm NATO in non-nuclear action regardless of what we may do. This leads to the false conclusion that the only effective military action available to NATO is immediate nuclear action and that there is little or nothing that can be done to improve our position.

The proposed program of U.S. and allied build-up would open wider options for NATO military action, and would thereby create a basis for a reversal of the misconceptions about NATO weakness and for a substantial increase in the credibility of Western capacity to take actions which would render the situation uncontrollable by the Soviet Union and, therefore, dangerous to its basic interests.

Carried to completion, the U.S. and allied program would make possible the deployment along the crucial central front of 40 allied divisions -- about one and a half million men -- including a substantial force in strategic reserve, prior to the sending of a probe along the autobahn. These divisions would be supported by substantial allied air power and by nuclear power generally superior to that of the Soviet Union. Even if the Soviet Union were to mobilize and deploy the maximum number of divisions which it is believed the terrain and Soviet logistics could support on the central front, 50 to 55 Soviet divisions (1,500,000 men), the Soviet Union would not have the margins necessary for assurance of rapid offensive success with non-nuclear weapons.

From such a posture a large number of options are opened to the West. A probe launched from such a position carries conviction of serious intent. If the Soviets were to throw it back, they could not be certain of our response. We might initiate expanded ground action with the assurance that allied forces could not quickly be driven back.
The significant point, however, is that the West would have the option of initiating large scale ground action which the Soviets could not throw back rapidly with conventional means. They could hardly believe that they could overwhelm NATO forces in large scale and continued ground action without certain escalation to nuclear war.

The most important results of a U.S. and allied build-up are, however, to be sought in the phase prior to a ground probe. In view of the fact that military actions after an initial ground probe could tend, as the forces engaged became more numerous and varied, to pass beyond the positive control of either side short of ultimate escalation into general nuclear war, a ground probe should be delayed until all other reasonable alternative courses have failed. These other courses will not in themselves necessarily be conclusive and a number of them cannot be indefinitely sustained. It therefore makes a great deal of difference to their probable effectiveness whether they are undertaken against a background of continued non-nuclear military weakness or against a background of growing military strength.

Economic counter-measures gain added weight when they presage military action should they, in themselves, not accomplish the desired results.

An airlift becomes more meaningful and enemy counter-measures less likely against a background of increasing military strength. Furthermore, the contemplated build-up would give us substantially increased fighter cover for such an airlift and an increased bomber attack threat against counter-measures.

Naval harassment and even naval blockading actions are more likely to be suffered without major retaliation in a situation of growing power than against a background of unchanged strength.

In view of the stockpiled supplies in Berlin, there may be time to consider what military response should be made to harassment or blockade of the access routes, and to complete any needed build-up. This element of time will allow us to relate any decision about the actual deployment of U.S. divisions to Europe to the development of the crisis. In the meantime there would be a continuous improvement in the training, filling up, and equipping of the NATO forces in being, an improvement in their deployment and in their air support. All such U.S. and allied actions would contribute to a long-run improvement of allied forces as well as to increased readiness for the current crisis.
B. The U.S. Military Program

The United States Government plans, subject to approval by the Congress of necessary increases in the Defense budget, to undertake immediately a program designed to improve and augment the forces we can contribute to common defense of the NATO area, and specifically to any military actions which the Alliance may find necessary in connection with a possible Berlin crisis.

The purpose of this military program will be twofold: First, to give clear evidence of our determination, and of the fact that we will conduct any negotiations, political, or economic actions against a background of strength, in order to persuade the Soviet Union that its present course is not only dangerous but also fruitless. Second, to increase the range of military alternatives available to the Alliance should the Soviet leaders nevertheless precipitate a crisis, in order to allow time for them to correct the miscalculation which led to the crisis and divert the course of events away from nuclear war in a manner which preserves our interests.

Details concerning major actions contemplated in the program are indicated in Section C.

To finance the program, the Congress will be asked to authorize about $3.2 billion now, with additional expenditures to be authorized if and when additional mobilization is indicated.

Of the funds involved, in excess of $1.75 billion will be devoted to procurement, and the remainder to additional personnel and operating costs.

This program will give us the capability, by the end of this calendar year, to deploy six additional division forces and up to thirty additional tactical air squadrons to Europe. This represents a deployment in excess of our planned contributions to NATO through M 30 of a general war. These forces would not actually be deployed unless and until the situation, agreed plans, and corresponding programs on the part of our European allies warranted such action. Nevertheless, their very readiness and availability should exert considerable influence on the situation long before actual deployment became a consideration.

In addition,
In addition, our program will provide for such vital collateral military capabilities as:

-- Increased readiness of our long-range nuclear strike capability, including an accelerated alert status in our Strategic Air Command.

-- Greatly improved capabilities to conduct anti-submarine warfare and other necessary naval operations.

-- Retention of the capability to cope with possible acts of limited aggression outside the European area, and a strengthened general war posture.

The United States Government considers that this program, particularly if associated with corresponding programs on the part of our allies, will substantially enhance the credibility of our policy, which is to deter the Soviet Union from carrying out its threats with respect to Berlin, and to provide us with the necessary military posture to achieve our common political objectives in a Berlin crisis should one develop.
Major Actions in the U.S. Program

1. Personnel, Units, and Operations
   a. Increases in selective service call-ups, and extensions in terms of service of personnel now on active duty.
   b. Bringing combat units in Europe to full wartime manning levels and adding support units.
   c. Bringing four active division forces in the U.S. to combat readiness, so that they can be deployed within 30 days. (2 infantry divisions, 1 armored division, and 1 Marine division are involved, in addition to the 2 airborne divisions, 1 infantry division and 2 Marine divisions now ready for early deployment.)
   d. Expanding training and logistical base capacities.
   e. Preparing transport and facilities for deployments to Europe.
   f. Stand-by preparations to mobilize five additional divisions (2 infantry, 2 armored and 1 Marine).
   g. Increasing amphibious and administrative sea lift by retention and reactivation of ships not previously planned for the active fleet.
   h. Activation of additional naval units for anti-submarine and other missions.
   i. Stand-by preparations to increase active fleet personnel strength levels.
   j. Retention of twelve tactical air squadrons and six strategic tanker wings not previously planned for the active force. (Tactical squadrons include 8 fighter-bomber-reconnaissance, and 4 transport.)
   k. Preparing to call up twenty-nine reserve fighter-reconnaissance squadrons and eleven reserve transport squadrons.
   l. Diversion of Civil Reserve Air Fleet aircraft to military use.
   m. Preparation to arrange for bases and facilities to support deployment of air units to Europe.
   n. Acceleration of ground alert in strategic bomber units.

2. Material and Supplies
   a. Accelerated procurement of material and supplies which will be required to support the foregoing units in possible operations, and which can be delivered in time to have most direct bearing on the prospective Berlin crisis.
   b. Tank rebuild, aircraft reworks, and the like will also be involved.
   c. Accelerated production of ammunition and appropriate expansion of the munitions production base.
D. Other NATO Strengthening. It lies within the capability of the NATO powers to bring about a large increase in our collective non-nuclear military strength. Some increase in strength could be managed within several weeks; within six months a major improvement in the basic military situation in Europe could take place. The key to the potential change lies in our ground forces.

While the number of men in active NATO units in the Central Region is quite comparable to the Soviets', many NATO divisions are below proper levels in trained manpower, are poorly equipped, and have inadequate stocks. Most importantly, the Soviet ability to mobilize additional forces and move reinforcements into Central Europe well exceeds that of NATO forces. In thirty days, the Soviets can more than double their well-equipped forces, while NATO can add only a little over half to its M-Day strength, and the added units will mostly be poorly equipped. In any case, the NATO stock levels of equipment and supplies would probably not be adequate for much more than 3 or 4 weeks of intensive combat. This posture may not deter Soviet action endangering our common interests.

Being convinced that our objectives are best attained through improving rapidly our real and visible capacity for non-nuclear air-ground action in Central Europe, while further strengthening our already substantial nuclear strength, the U.S. has decided upon the program described in the preceding section. It involves U.S. readiness to make force contributions on a scale in excess of our MC-70 commitments.

The U.S. expects its allies will wish to strengthen their contributions to NATO concurrently.

A suitable program might be in two phases. In the first, from now until the end of 1961, M-Day forces agreed in MC-70 would be brought up to the levels and standards agreed in MC-70. At the same time, advance preparations of reserve forces would be intensified in anticipation of the second phase, to be undertaken when and if it becomes clear that despite our first phase actions the crisis continues. The second phase would entail bringing generally the remainder of the First Echelon forces of the Central Region to an active state and deploying them as ready forces.

To carry out this program, the NATO allies would act during the first phase so that as rapidly as possible they can have deployed in the Central Area the numbers of combat ready divisions shown in Column A below. Suitable preparations having been made in the first phase for further strengthening, the NATO allies would be ready to deploy additional combat ready divisions into the Central Area to create the totals shown in Column B below.

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<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Column A</th>
<th>Column B</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Belgium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
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<td>France</td>
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<td>FRG</td>
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<td>Netherlands</td>
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<td>U.K.</td>
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(During)
During the first phase, Italy would also prepare two divisions for deployment in the second phase. Countries on Northern and Southern flanks would increase their ready strength also.

Besides these ground force reinforcements, some additional air and naval strengthening would be needed and feasible during the time available.

The following measures would apply to all members generally:

a. Increase to MC-70 standards the manning and equipment levels of existing active units.

b. Maintain a minimum of an 18 month term of service.

c. Establish war reserve stocks at 90-day operational level.

d. Assume heightened state of readiness and accelerate the combat readiness training of active units.

e. Prepare during the first phase to bring second phase units rapidly to full combat readiness.

f. Accelerate the preparation of additional reserve forces through speeded production, intensified training, and mobilization exercises.

g. At an appropriate time transfer operational command of selected forces to NATO commanders.

The U.S. has set forth in the preceding section those specific measures which it intends to take in addition to the more generally applicable ones. Other NATO governments will no doubt likewise wish to set out the comparable specific measures which would contribute toward our common aims. A number of impressions which the U.S. has concerning some of these will be communicated to each government.

The program as a whole would make evident our united determination to carry out our commitments to defend the freedom of the people of West Berlin and to act together in the common defense. Soviet leadership would be faced with new, compelling evidence that the allies were indeed prepared to deal with whatever situation grew out of a Soviet aggression over Berlin. In addition, the real NATO military capability and range of alternatives would be improved.