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ORGANISATION DU TRAITE DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD
NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANISATION

Bureau du Representant
du Groupe Permanent

Office of the Standing Group
Representative

Place du Marechal de Lattre de Tassigny
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LOM 180/62

POL 1	
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FILE	<i>[initials]</i>

*Repro copy
x/04 page 1*

13 October 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR : Secretary, Standing Group
SUBJECT : Berlin Contingency Planning
Reference : LOSTAN 4541

In accordance with reference, attached is SGREP's detailed report of the Council discussion on Berlin Contingency Planning which took place at Private meeting of Council on 10 October 1962 at which the Deputy Secretary General acted as Chairman. This should be given Limited distribution consistent with Berlin contingency plans and papers thereon.

[Signature]
J. M. GUERIN
Lieutenant General
STANDING GROUP REPRESENTATIVE

Enclosure : Private Council Discussion on Berlin Contingency Planning, 10 October 1962

Copies to : SACEUR (with Encl)
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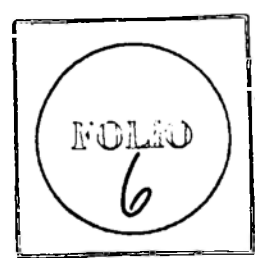
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Per Authority *PDN (2009)0001*

27. 01. 09

By Mr CHRISTIAENS R. BECM
ALTERNATE CONTROL OFFICER



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*This document
consists of
4 pages (2 NC)
(2 CTS)*

BERLIN CONTINGENCY PLANNING

- References :
- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| (a) PO/62/641 | (e) MC/ 67/1 |
| (b) PO/62/593 | (f) PO/62/637 |
| (c) SGM 479-62 | (g) SHAPE 70-A/62 |
| (d) CM(61)104 | |

1. Opening the Private Council discussion on 10 October, 1962, the Deputy Secretary General said that the object of ref.(a) was quite simply to try to tidy up a debate which had inevitably ranged over a wide field, and to lay the foundations for the orderly conduct of future discussion of a subject which was both complex and urgent. He understood that the NATO military authorities were already prepared to answer the questions addressed to them, and he thought it was mainly for the Three or Four Powers to comment on the others. He suggested that the Council try as far as possible to run through the points to be settled in the order in which they were presented in the paper.

2. The French Representative stated that the 4-Power paper, ref.(b) made clear the Western intention to preserve Western rights and the freedom of Berlin and at the same time allowed for flexibility in response to different situations. The military contingency plans - ref.(c) represented a catalogue from which choice would be made at a later date depending on circumstances. He thought that the studies so far worked out and contained in the papers before the Council represented a good balance between firm determination to defend Western interests and a thought-out retaliation to any Soviet move. Recent events in the Berlin air corridors and in connection with the Soviet war monument showed that Western firmness had produced results and that the Western firmness had put the allies in a very much better position than in 1914 or 1933, since the determination of the allies was clear and should prevent any Soviet miscalculation of the situation.

3. The Italian Representative said that he agreed with the SGN's evaluation of plans in ref.(c) and therefore with Item 8 of ref.(a). This, however, did not mean his military authorities will withdraw automatically their reservation on the alert system shown in Annex 2 of ref.(c). He added that other questions should be studied, for example, when transfer of the Three Powers responsibilities to NATO would take place. He agreed that Para. 10 and 11 of ref.(a) needed further clarification and thought it most useful that political plans (para. 14 of ref.(a) be discussed in the Council.

4. The Canadian Representative stated that in ref. (a) the Council specifically asked that the commanders include plans for the possible use of nuclear weapons on a selective basis. Canadian doubts about the advisability of including such a provision in the catalogue of Berlin contingency plans had been previously expressed. He added that since the Council ordered the military commanders to prepare plans including provision for the selective use of nuclear weapons, it was equally within the authority of the Council to eliminate this element in contingency planning on the basis of SACEUR's comments. He stressed that the use of nuclear weapons in the Berlin context could not be justified on the same arguments as justify a nuclear strategy for the purpose of a general war.

5. The Canadian Representative continued that the Council was considering the possibility of a first use of nuclear weapons by the Alliance, not in response to a massive Soviet conventional attack, nor in response to the first use by the other side - as envisaged in the guide lines - but in the context of a catalogue of probing operations supposedly related directly to the problem of restoring access to Berlin. In this context, he asked was it not possible that the use of a demonstration nuclear burst unrelated to any Soviet target might fail to convey any clear message to the Soviet authorities? In whatever way the weapons were used, the real risk involved would lie in the high degree of uncertainty as to what the Soviet reaction might be. For these reasons, he believed that a closer examination of this particular feature of Berlin contingency planning should be made and questioned as to whether it appropriately belonged in the catalogue of plans

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6. The DepSecGen asked whether as a first step Canada would agree that the contingency plans were responsive to the Council instructions to ref.(d), and the Canadian Representative replied that he thought that it was the duty of the Council, not to rubber-stamp plans which the military authorities had produced in response to Council instructions, but to say whether these plans would fit into political responsibility of governments in a mounting Berlin crisis.

7. The Belgian Representative thought that the Council must note the Standing Group comment in para. 15 of ref.(c) to the effect that the selective use of nuclear weapons for demonstration of the will to use them would be primarily political and psychological and, that these demonstration plans were not currently designed to have significant military value.

8. The Standing Group Representative confirmed the interpretation of the Belgian Representative on Standing Group comments, but emphasized that any use of nuclear weapons for political or psychological effect would be subject to a political decision at the time, in the same way as for any BERCON or MARCON plan.

9. The DepSecGen recalled that in ref. (d) commanders had been instructed to make plans for the selective use of nuclear weapons to demonstrate the will to use them, that therefore the commanders had not gone beyond their instructions. He asked whether the Belgian comment did not mean that the Council instructions should now be re-considered.

10. The Belgian Representative thought that this was not the case, and that what the Council should now do was to consider its instructions in the light of the Standing Group comment that this particular use of nuclear weapons would have little military value. The Council should apply different criteria to purely military plans and to psychological and political plans.

11. The U.K. Representative stated the aim of the instructions in ref.(d) was to put the Council in the position to meet the political requirements of any situation. The plans were necessary as a military weapon to be at the disposal of governments faced with certain decisions. Unless those military plans, laid out as a catalogue in advance, were ready before Phases III and IV (ref.(b)) were entered upon, it would be impossible for the allies to ensure that Phase II would never be overstepped.

12. The DepSecGen asked whether the Standing Group had any reply to the request by Canada for more information about plans for the selective use of nuclear weapons.

13. The Standing Group Representative said that he had informed both the Standing Group and Supreme Commanders of the Council discussion on 27th September 1962 and of the questions raised by the Belgian and Canadian Representatives. Since it had been agreed that all delegations should forward any questions they had, he thought that the Standing Group would await a final list of questions before replying. The S.G. was, however, already studying these two questions, and he hoped that he could, if necessary, obtain an early reply.

14. The Norwegian Representative said that the Council was being asked to approve a catalogue, and asked what exactly was the meaning of this phrase. He emphasized that his authorities were entirely in favour of this type of emergency planning, and welcomed the possibility of knowing at any time what civil and military staffs were doing. What was not clear was what was meant by "approving" such planning. Some of these measures, as pointed out in ref.(f), were contrary to international law. On certain other measures he thought it unreasonable to ask a country such as, for example, Norway, to say whether in certain circumstances military action should be undertaken at a certain point beyond the iron curtain with a certain level of forces. Again, it was understood that any amendments to the catalogue would have to be approved by the Council. This was odd, since planning should be a continuing process in order to permit adaptability to an evolving situation. He thought that the Council should ask the NATO Commanders to report to it as planning continued, but that governments should not be forced to approve such planning. The appraisals of specific plans, i.e. the assessed advantages and disadvantages were, after all, anybody's guess.

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15. Regarding the "preferred sequence" of actions, he suggested that at this stage the Council should only note the plans and that planning should go on as a continuous process. As regards the selective use of nuclear weapons, he thought that the demonstration of the will to use them was not a question of firmness, but that it could be taken for granted that at the stage at which the West would be demonstrating its firmness the Soviets would be doing the same, only more harmfully. He thought that the only use of nuclear weapons could be as a final last measure before a nuclear holocaust. The object of the present exercise was to align the fifteen allies on policy with regard to Berlin. Firmness implied the will to initiate force when necessary. The allies were united on this point, and should therefore be cautious regarding measures which were not 100% related to restoring access.

16. The DepSecGen thought that the choice now before the Council was either to approve the catalogue as being responsive to the Council instructions, or to tell the Standing Group that the catalogue was not approvable; or to go back on its original instructions.

17. The Norwegian Representative quoted ref.(g) in which it was stated that operation BRAVO I would achieve no military advantage. The Council's instructions should be examined in the light of this military comment.

18. The DepSecGen said this was not the time for any Permanent Representative to say whether any particular part of the plans was objectionable.

19. The Canadian Representative said that this was what he was doing as he thought that the Council would be ill-advised to approve this particular part of the plans, given the comments by the Standing Group and SACHUR.

20. The U.K. Representative urged that the Council should now at least agree at this meeting that the catalogue was responsive to the Council instructions.

21. The Danish Representative replied that he was authorized to approve the plans in principle, but not in detail, and that this was how he understood the word "approve" in this case. For example, the Council could not be invited to approve in detail flagrant violations of international law.

22. The U.K. Representative repeated that the Council was not asked now to approve the plans, but simply to approve the catalogue as a list of plans from which a choice would be made, subject to a political decision at the time.

23. The DepSecGen suggested that the Council's first goal should be that set out in para. 8 of ref. (a), i.e. to agree that the plans were responsive to the Council instructions. He thought that not all governments could do so until the questions they had raised, or were going to raise, were answered by the military authorities. He suggested that the NATO military authorities be invited to give a reply at an early date, to the questions by the Belgian and Canadian Representatives. The problem was a complex one, involving, as it did, legal and political aspects, and also the question of alerts. He, therefore, suggested that the Council should approach it step by step.

24. The Norwegian Representative said that he thought it dangerous to go into too much military detail, and said that he would oppose a procedure whereby the Council was invited to approve texts subject to brackets. The object of the exercise was to impress on the Soviets Western determination to defend vital Western interests. It was not possible for governments to say that plans which would mean the violation of international law were "responsive" to Council instructions. Any leakage of such a decision would provoke a flood of questions in parliaments. He emphasized nevertheless that all governments desired the military to go ahead with this type of planning with their full backing, and that they wished the Soviets to be aware of this.

25. It was agreed to continue discussion on Friday, 12th October 1962 at 10.15.

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