

# Germany and Berlin, 1969–1972

## 1. Memorandum Prepared by the Ambassador to Germany (Lodge)<sup>1</sup>

October 31, 1968.

### GERMANY

1. Even though divided, modern Germany is much the strongest country in Europe (excluding the Soviet Union) as regards population, gross national product, steel production, organizing ability, vitality, general dynamism and military potential. It must thus be the core of the defense of Europe.

2. The political leadership of Germany is, however, not as strong. The Chancellor<sup>2</sup> seems to have a hard time thinking his way through his relationship with France on the one hand and with the United States on the other. He appears torn between being firm on the one hand and following Willy Brandt's policy of "détente" on the other. (The difficulty of practicing "détente" unilaterally without any cooperation from the other fellow must make his task even harder!) When the access routes to Berlin were being harassed at the time of my arrival in May, I was never pressed by the Chancellor to take strong steps of the kind which many were then urging.<sup>3</sup> It was always easy to keep abreast of

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 681, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. I. Top Secret. Lodge signed and dated the memorandum by hand. Richard Nixon, then Republican candidate for President, was in New York on October 31 for a nationally televised campaign rally at Madison Square Garden. Lodge may have given Nixon the memorandum before attending the rally. (Nixon, *RN: The Memoirs of Richard Nixon*, p. 322) On November 9, "while returning to his post in Bonn," Lodge stopped in Key Biscayne to "brief the President-elect on the situation in Europe." (*The New York Times*, November 10, p. 73) No evidence has been found to indicate whether the two men discussed this memorandum at that or any other time.

<sup>2</sup> Kurt Georg Kiesinger (CDU).

<sup>3</sup> On March 10 the East German Government announced the first in a series of travel restrictions to Berlin as a means to protest the failure of the West German Government to outlaw the neo-Nazi National Democratic Party (NPD). Kiesinger was still debating how to respond to this campaign when Lodge presented his credentials on May 27. After meeting Kiesinger on June 21, Lodge commented: "The Chancellor's failure to be concrete on what he wanted us to be 'firm' about leads me to the view that he was 'making a record'—putting himself in a position to say that he had 'told' us." (*Foreign Relations, 1964–1968*, vol. XV, Document 276)

the Chancellor whose words were very carefully hedged. Indeed I have not yet had a strong or deeply felt demand made on me following upon the invasion of Czechoslovakia.<sup>4</sup> (None of the above means that the Chancellor should make more clear cut declarations in public. Every German Chancellor, no matter how decisive he may be, must be highly discreet in public.)

3. Contributing to the Chancellor's indecision is the chill in the American attitude towards Germany which began in 1961 and which has now produced the current lack of German confidence in our commitment to help defend them against aggression. The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, as well as intensifying their desire for American reassurance, also dealt a severe blow to German self confidence. This—and their weak leadership—may explain their half-hearted reactions mentioned in paragraph 2 and their neglect of their own military strength. At the Washington end is the clamor to pull out our troops and the frequently expressed doubts about Germany's importance to our security. The net of it all is a downward spiral as regards German-American relations with all that they mean to our entire Atlantic posture and to our survival.

4. I think it is only prudent to assume that a broad Soviet aim is to take over Germany gradually and make of it another Finland. This would of course be done without an actual invasion: the mere proximity of huge Soviet armies can get results here as they have elsewhere. If they are successful in bringing Germany into the Soviet orbit, neither the United Kingdom, as an offshore archipelago, or France, as part of a coastal strip, would count for much. The Soviet Union, for the first time, would in this event be stronger than the United States. We would then await their decision concerning our fate.

5. There is also no doubt that the Soviet Union has some very strong cards to play. Emotions here about East Germany and Berlin understandably run deep. A Soviet offer, therefore, to unify East and West Germany and to locate the capital of the newly unified state in Berlin would be very difficult for any German government to resist, even if the price were to be the neutralization of Germany. I hasten to say that there is no sign whatever of such an offer being made and that this statement is made for illustrative purposes only. Indeed the Soviets may never have to pay so high a price: if the Germans truly believe that we no longer consider them vital to our security, a tacit appease-

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<sup>4</sup> For a memorandum of conversation between Lodge and Kiesinger on September 5, including discussion of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia the previous month, see *ibid.*, Document 285.

ment of the Russians will surely take place. Twice in our lifetime Germans and Russians have reached agreement.<sup>5</sup>

6. If, as I believe, it is a vital American interest to keep West Germany from going into the Soviet orbit, then it is a vital American interest not only to keep NATO going, but also to energize and vitalize it. Under these circumstances there are a number of concrete measures which the President Elect should consider, as follows:

- a) A trip to Berlin.
- b) A statement that he favors extending NATO after 1969 and will ask the Senate to pass a resolution to this effect.
- c) A commitment to send to Germany on permanent duty two brigades of the 24th Division and to maintain existing troop levels for a three to five year period. This would be part of a "package deal" in which the Germans agree to make a three to five year "offset" commitment to pay for our expenses in Germany which hurt us so much because of their effect on our international balance of payments. The present administration has never been willing to make such a "package deal" and the haggling which we have had to do about the so-called "offset" question has been a cancer eating away at our relations. It was, I believe, the factor which resulted in the overthrow of Chancellor Erhard.<sup>6</sup>

7. If the concrete measures suggested in paragraph 6 were effectuated, an upward spiral would ensue which would be of great benefit to our security.

8. I have checked the above estimate of the situation with regard to Germany with eminent men who cannot be suspected of German "localitis" and they concur.

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<sup>5</sup> Reference is to the Rapallo Treaty of April 16, 1922, and the "Hitler-Stalin Pact" of August 23, 1939.

<sup>6</sup> On November 30, 1966, 2 months after President Johnson refused to soften the terms of the "offset" agreement and 1 month after the Free Democratic Ministers left his Cabinet, Ludwig Erhard resigned as West German Chancellor.

2. **Telegram From the Mission in Berlin to the Department of State**<sup>1</sup>

Berlin, January 8, 1969, 1520Z.

20. Subject: Meeting With Ambassador Abrasimov. From Ambassador Lodge.

1. At meeting today in East Berlin with Ambassador Abrasimov, discussion focussed on Germany, Berlin, and US-Soviet relations. Despite our differences, particularly over holding the forthcoming Bundesversammlung in West Berlin, we talked for nearly two hours in a cordial atmosphere. Even on the Bundesversammlung, Abrasimov's statements seemed to show a certain amount of restraint.

2. I raised the subject of Berlin by saying I hoped that nothing would happen here which would prejudice general relations between Washington and Moscow.

3. Replying that this depended entirely upon "you," Abrasimov launched an attack on the decision to hold the Bundesversammlung in West Berlin, including the role of US "permission" in the decision. He said that this represented a provocation against the USSR and the GDR, and that it could not be excluded that they would react strongly to the provocation. Abrasimov said that their patience in the past with regard to illegal FRG activities in West Berlin should not be taken as acquiescence but rather as a reflection of the Soviet desire to promote peace and quiet in Europe. Abrasimov returned to this theme repeatedly during the discussions but at no time did he imply that the Soviets would do more than they did at the time of the CDU conference.<sup>2</sup>

4. In reply I reviewed our position on the Bundesversammlung and again stressed my hope that nothing would be done here to jeopardize US-Soviet relations. I recalled that frequently GDR activities occurred in East Berlin which could be adversely criticized, and as illustration I cited enlisting East Berlin youths into the East German army. There were obviously many matters on which we disagreed but which we should always keep in perspective.

5. When asked why holding the Bundesversammlung in West Berlin could be considered a provocation against the Soviet Union, Abrasimov replied as follows: although the GDR is a sovereign, inde-

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967-69, POL US-USSR. Secret; Priority. Repeated to Bonn, London, Moscow, Paris for Harriman, USNATO, Warsaw, Prague, Budapest, Bucharest, Belgrade, Sofia, Munich, Saigon, and for POLADs at CINCUSAREUR (Heidelberg), CINCEUR (Vaihingen), and CINCUSAFE (Wiesbaden).

<sup>2</sup> The CDU held its national party congress in Berlin November 3-7, 1968.

pendent state with its capital in East Berlin, the USSR, with the agreement of the GDR, has retained responsibility for access to West Berlin. Therefore when officials of the Federal Republic travel to West Berlin to engage in illegal activities such as the Bundesversammlung, they “bring into doubt the security of access” for which the Soviet Union is responsible.

6. Abrasimov said that the West Germans for their own reasons wanted to aggravate relations between Moscow and Washington. He asserted that such FRG activities as the Bundesversammlung had as a major purpose sowing discord between Moscow and Washington and increasing tensions in Central Europe. Abrasimov could not understand why the US permitted Bonn to do this.

7. I challenged his assertion by saying that on the basis of my first-hand knowledge in Bonn, this was not the intention of the FRG Government. I also said that the Soviet Union should not let the East Germans provoke a deterioration in US-Soviet relations. Abrasimov quickly assured me that as far as the East Germans were concerned, he could absolutely assure me that they would do nothing to prejudice US-Soviet relations nor would they “do anything against the US.”

8. At one point Abrasimov asserted that in addition to the provocative character of the Bundesversammlung being held in Berlin, other factors which displeased the Soviets were the planned participation of NPD and West Berlin delegates.

9. Abrasimov attacked the recent West Berlin court decision on the NPD by comparing the whole affair to a three act comic opera.<sup>3</sup> He said Mayor Schuetz’s statement against the NPD was the first act, Allied approval of the Mayor’s position was the second, and the third act was the court decision reversing the outcome of the first two acts. I said that this court decision was in all likelihood not final and that we did not know how the NPD play would turn out because there would assuredly be a fourth act.

10. At one point in discussing the current status of Berlin, Abrasimov said that East Berlin’s incorporation into the GDR as its capital was a “fact” which the Western powers had to respect. For their part the Soviets respected the fact that West Berlin was a city occupied by US, UK, and French military forces.

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<sup>3</sup> On October 3, 1968, Schütz asked the Western Commandants to consider banning the National Democratic Party (NPD) in West Berlin. Before the Commandants could take action, the NPD in West Berlin decided to disband voluntarily, thereby avoiding any legal limitations. For discussion of measures to prevent the NPD from participating in the Bundesversammlung (Federal Assembly), see *Foreign Relations, 1964–1968*, vol. XV, Documents 259, 262, 294, 296, 300, and 301.

11. I referred to Abrasimov's reference to the new administration and said that I was confident that President-elect Nixon gave the highest importance to US relations with the Soviet Union. I said that relations between our two countries had evolved considerably since around 1950 and I hoped for further improvement in the future. He implied that a first step which the new administration might take "as a good-will gesture" would be US intervention to prevent the Bundesversammlung meeting being held in Berlin.<sup>4</sup>

12. *Comment.* For reasons which I have set forth in previous telegrams, I do not think holding the Bundesversammlung meeting in Berlin is worth the risk. I believe that the matter is chancy enough to justify our intervening. The FRG, while privately unhappy about it, lacks the political will to grasp the nettle.

13. At the end of the visit, Abrasimov raised his glass in a toast to an ending of the war in Vietnam and wished me success.<sup>5</sup> I thanked him and said that Soviet influence in support of a negotiated settlement would be appreciated.

**Morris**

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<sup>4</sup> In mid-December 1968 reports in the German press alleged that Kissinger, recently named the President-elect's Assistant for National Security Affairs, had intervened to prevent holding the Bundesversammlung in Berlin. (See Kroegel, *Einen Anfang finden!*, pp. 286–287) According to Ulrich Sahn, Kissinger demanded, in a conversation with an emissary from Bundestag President Gerstenmaier, that the German Government change the location of the Bundesversammlung but declined to put his position in writing. (Sahn, *"Diplomaten taugen nichts"*, pp. 220–221) No record has been found to substantiate or contradict these allegations. On December 14, however, Kissinger drafted a brief press statement supporting the official denial of American intervention issued the previous day by the Department of State. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Kissinger Office Files, Box 4, HAK Administrative & Staff Files, Memoranda to Ronald Ziegler) The text of the Department's statement reads: "US position has been and remains that the decision as to location of the Federal Assembly should be left to German authorities; any report alleging that US has intervened against Berlin is false." (Telegram 287238 to Bonn, December 14; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 15–1 GER W)

<sup>5</sup> On January 5 President-elect Nixon announced that Lodge would be his Personal Representative to the Paris Peace Talks on Vietnam. Lodge, who left his post in Bonn on January 14, assumed his new responsibilities on January 20.

3. **Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Germany<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, January 10, 1969, 2349Z.

4936. Subject: US Position on Bundesversammlung. Ref: Berlin 0020.<sup>2</sup> For Ambassador Lodge from Secretary.

1. Appreciate interesting report of your talk with Abrasimov.

2. With respect to your comment to Dept (para 12 reftel) that you believe we should intervene to prevent use of Berlin as site for Bundesversammlung, we have given this matter most serious consideration and have concluded that we cannot now intervene without serious damage to our interests in Berlin and Germany. My reasons for this conclusion are:

a. At the November Quadripartite Dinner, my British and French colleagues joined me in telling Brandt that we regarded this question as one that the Germans would have to decide themselves.<sup>3</sup> Since then we have publicly reaffirmed our position.<sup>4</sup> Brandt has thanked me for the US stand on the problem.<sup>5</sup> The German public and others would interpret our backing away from this position as a sign of US unreliability and weakness. It would be a severe psychological blow to the people of Berlin and the FRG. This would be a heavy price to pay.

b. Even if we were willing to pay this price, it is extremely doubtful that it would buy us a significantly greater margin of security in Berlin. Once we have given up the Bundesversammlung in Berlin, the Soviets would move to put pressure on some other aspect of FRG support and activity in the city which they could allege was provocative. There is nothing inherently provocative or damaging to legitimate Soviet rights in the Bundesversammlung. The Soviets claim it is provocative; they can readily turn the same claim against any other FRG activity.

c. I am aware of the divided counsels which have existed in the FRG Government on this question. But we can only deal with the

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL US–USSR. Secret. Drafted by Johnpoll on January 9; cleared by Leddy, Puhan, Dubs, and Brown; and approved by Rusk. Repeated to London, Paris, Moscow, Berlin, and USNATO.

<sup>2</sup> Document 2.

<sup>3</sup> As reported in telegram 5803 from USNATO, November 15. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 38–6)

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 4, Document 2.

<sup>5</sup> Brandt's letter of December 20 and Rusk's reply the next day are both in telegram 291061 to Bonn, December 21. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 15–2 GER W)

position taken by the German Government as a whole, which has been to hold the meeting in Berlin. I agree with you that holding the Bundesversammlung in Berlin is not without some risk. But there are even greater risks in the US (and Allies) reversing position on this matter, forcing the Germans to reverse their own position and giving up a legitimate Allied position in Berlin with every prospect that new Soviet demands against us and the Germans in Berlin would be made thereafter. In short, having made the decision, which I continue to believe was the right one, we must stay with it.

Rusk

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#### 4. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Washington, January 24, 1969.

##### SUBJECT

Memorandum by the Secretary of State Regarding Reply to Soviet Oral Protest on the Holding of the German Federal Assembly in Berlin

The attached memorandum from the Secretary<sup>2</sup> recommends approval of the text of a reply by the US, UK and France to a recent Soviet oral protest against the holding of the Bundesversammlung (Federal Assembly) in Berlin on March 5.<sup>3</sup> This body elects the President of the Federal Republic.

We consider Berlin, including all four sectors, as occupied territory. For the three Western sectors we view the three Western powers as protecting powers holding legal sovereignty. Bonn does not challenge this legal concept but also regards West Berlin as an organic part of the Federal Republic. To demonstrate this and to help maintain the city's viability, the FRG, with the concurrence of the three Western al-

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 681, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. I. Confidential. Sent for action. According to another copy, Sonnenfeldt drafted the memorandum. (Ibid.) For Kissinger's account of the decision-making process, see *White House Years*, p. 406.

<sup>2</sup> Dated January 22; attached but not printed. Another copy is in the National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 15–2 GER W.

<sup>3</sup> For text of the Soviet oral statement, see *Foreign Relations, 1964–1968*, vol. XV, Document 301.

lies, conducts certain governmental activities in West Berlin from time to time. Among these has been the holding of the Bundesversammlung three out of the four times that it has met since the founding of the FRG in 1949.

The Soviets take the position that West Berlin is not in any juridical sense a part of the FRG (although they have permitted the East German regime to make East Berlin its capital).<sup>4</sup> After their abortive attempts beginning in 1958 to get us to agree to make West Berlin a “free city,” they now purport to view it as an autonomous political entity and they regularly protest and threaten retaliation against any FRG governmental activities in the city. In some instances they have in fact used such activities as pretexts for harassing actions. The Soviets would obviously like to use their theory that West Berlin is an autonomous entity to strangle the city. For this very reason we have backed the Germans in conducting various activities without at the same time conceding our overriding sovereign rights and responsibilities there.

There is a real possibility that the Soviets will use the March 5 meeting as a pretext for harassment; but we have to face the fact that given the city’s vulnerabilities, the Soviets can manufacture pretexts for harassment whenever they choose.

The Secretary’s Memorandum gives the reasons for our letting the Germans proceed with the meeting and I agree with them.<sup>5</sup> I also agree with the text of the reply to the Soviet protest.

I believe, however, that there may be advantage to delaying the actual delivery of the reply to the Soviets until a time considerably closer to the date of the meeting in order to minimize the likelihood of further exchanges.<sup>6</sup> The argument in favor of an early reply is that the FRG would like to get the new Administration on record promptly with

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<sup>4</sup> The President underlined this parenthetical statement.

<sup>5</sup> In the memorandum, Rogers argued that failure to hold the Bundesversammlung in Berlin would undermine German confidence in the Allies, undercut the morale of the people in Berlin, and encourage the Soviet Union “to proceed further on the course of trying to sever the vital ties between the FRG and Berlin.”

<sup>6</sup> In a January 14 memorandum to Kissinger, Sonnenfeldt maintained that, due to Soviet indecision on tactics, the Allies should delay their response: “we are on record as approving the meeting if the Germans want to hold it. Consequently we should avoid extensive argument with the Soviets before the meeting date and we should delay a rejection of the Soviet démarche until shortly before March 5. Since our response will presumably be the first policy statement to the Soviets on German issues by the new Administration we should use the occasion not only to rebut the specific Soviet complaint but to set forth a more general affirmation of the legitimacy of the FRG’s role in safeguarding West-Berlin’s viability and of the responsibility of the Western allies for ensuring that that role conforms to four power agreements as we interpret them.” (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 834, Name Files, Sonnenfeldt, Helmut)

the traditional American position so as not to raise false expectations in Moscow and East Berlin or unnecessary nervousness in West Berlin and the FRG.

*Recommendation*

1. That you accept the Secretary's recommendation to approve the draft text of the reply to the Soviets.

2. That you ask the Secretary to instruct our representative on the US-UK-French group in Bonn (the body that is charged with dealing with this subject) to put to the group the suggestion that actual delivery be delayed for some three weeks to minimize the likelihood of a further exchange with the Soviets; but that if the Germans prefer early delivery we abide by their wish on this matter.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The President approved both recommendations. Eagleburger wrote an instruction for Moose on the memorandum: "As the message now stands, this is not cranked into the cable. It will take an additional [paragraph] (which H. Sonnenfeldt can do)." In a January 28 memorandum to Rogers, Kissinger wrote: "The President has approved the draft text of a reply from the Protective Powers to the oral Soviet protest. However, he wishes to have our representative on the Bonn Group instructed to suggest that actual delivery of the note be delayed for some three weeks to minimize the likelihood of further exchange with the Soviets. If the Germans have a strong preference for early delivery, we are prepared to abide by their wish on the matter." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 15–2 GER W) The text of the draft reply, as well as the instruction to delay delivery until the week of February 17, is in telegram 14966 to Bonn, January 30. (Ibid.)

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## 5. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, January 31, 1969, 4 p.m.

SUBJECT

U.S.-German Relations

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 681, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. I. Confidential. Drafted by Puhan. The meeting was held at the White House. The State Department Executive Secretariat sent the memorandum to Kissinger on February 1 for approval. Upon receiving the memorandum, Sonnenfeldt noted: "As far as I know this has long since been distributed. But, in any case I have no objection to contents (since I wasn't there + trust Puhan) or distribution." (Ibid.) According to a handwritten notation, the White House informed the Secretariat on March 10 that the memorandum had been cleared. (Ibid.) For Pauls' report on the meeting, see *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1969*, Vol. 1, pp. 138–139.

## PARTICIPANTS

The President

Emil Mosbacher, Chief of Protocol

Alfred Puhon, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for European Affairs

His Excellency Rolf Friedemann Pauls, Ambassador, Federal Republic of Germany

After the Ambassador had presented his credentials and an exchange of amenities, the President emphasized the good relations which existed between the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany. He said we intended to continue to have good relations with Germany. They must be conducted in candor in order to cut any misunderstandings that may arise to a minimum.

The President spoke of his intentions to revitalize NATO. He said he had given this subject top priority. This process involved a dialogue both in NATO and bilaterally on a more regular basis.

The President said that he was aware of the difficult year that was ahead for the Germans in that they faced an election. He mentioned the great respect he had for the leaders of the Ambassador's government, Chancellor Kiesinger, Foreign Minister Brandt, Defense Minister Schroeder, Finance Minister Strauss and the others.

The Ambassador thanked the President for his kind and cordial remarks. He said it was exactly what he had expected from the President. He was gratified to hear the President's views on NATO. As an expression of the great confidence the German people have in President Nixon, the Ambassador mentioned a recent German television program in which 84% of all Germans voiced their satisfaction at President Nixon's election. The Ambassador said that the President personally was very popular in Germany.

The Ambassador said that he was here to intensify the relations of his government with ours and to anticipate difficulties before they were magnified. He said that in this connection, he might in the future have to ask to see the President personally for a few minutes. The President responded that if the problems were of that magnitude, he would like to be informed.<sup>2</sup> He said he had the greatest confidence in the State Department. He said also that Dr. Kissinger of his staff was right on top of all these problems. He said it was important that we consult each other. He was not critical of the past, but when he looked at NATO,

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<sup>2</sup> Nixon addressed the suggestion of personal contact in a memorandum to Kissinger on February 1: "I received the new German Ambassador and he seems to be personally friendly as we might expect, but beyond that you might check his background and see if he might be a pretty good one to keep in contact here in Washington. I knew him when he was the second man in the Embassy from 1956 to 1960, and I considered him to be reliable at that time." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 341, Subject Files, HAK/President Memorandums 1969–1970)

he sometimes had the feeling that some problems could have been avoided by a little more dialogue.

The Ambassador mentioned the problems we may face over the holding of the Federal Assembly in Berlin on March 5.

The President said that since we had already held three out of four of the Federal Assemblies in Berlin, he could only conclude that if a crisis comes, the elections would not be a cause but a pretext. The President said our position was not to be belligerent but firm.<sup>3</sup>

The Ambassador thanked the President for his remarks.

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<sup>3</sup> In a January 31 memorandum to Rogers, Kissinger reported his own discussion on this issue with Pauls: "When the new German Ambassador called on me after presenting his credentials, I made it unmistakably clear to him that reports to the effect that I oppose the holding of the Bundesversammlung in Berlin were wholly inaccurate. I told him that there was full agreement within the U.S. Government about what representatives of the Department had told the Germans regarding our attitude on this question." (Ibid., Box 681, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. I)

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## 6. Editorial Note

On February 4, 1969, the National Security Council met in the Cabinet Room at the White House from 10:07 to 11:45 a.m. to discuss several issues, including the crisis over holding the Bundesversammlung in Berlin. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Central Files, President's Daily Diary) In a January 30 memorandum Assistant to the President Kissinger notified Vice President Agnew, Secretary of State Rogers, Secretary of Defense Laird, and George Lincoln, Director of the Office of Emergency Preparedness, that President Nixon wanted a briefing at an NSC meeting on contingency plans for the Middle East, Berlin, and Korea. "The briefing should focus on the provisions of current military plans for U.S. contingency action in these areas," Kissinger explained. "Although the principal emphasis should be on military contingency operations and related decisions, they should be addressed in their overall politico-military context and include a background overview of current intelligence pertaining to each area." (National Security Council, NSC Meetings File, NSC Meeting 2/4/69)

Kissinger met Laird and General Earle G. Wheeler, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, at the Pentagon on January 30 to prepare for the NSC meeting. According to a memorandum of conversation:

"Dr. Kissinger suggested that we have Mr. Helms provide some intelligence on both Berlin and Korea and that the JCS briefings on

Berlin and Korea should be brief. Mr. Laird then discussed his forthcoming meetings with Gerhard Schroeder, Minister of Defense, Federal Republic of Germany, and the treatment of the NPT issue at the meeting. It was agreed that he should take the line that this Administration recognizes your problem and that it will not move out bilaterally in the future without clearing with the FRG first." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 220, Agency Files, Department of Defense, Vol. I)

Laird met Schröder in New York on February 1; a memorandum of conversation is in the Washington National Records Center, Department of Defense, OSD Files: FRC 330 74 0045, Box 1, Signer's Copies, February.

Nixon chaired the NSC meeting on February 4; Kissinger, Rogers, Laird, Lincoln, Helms, and General John P. McConnell, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, also participated. Colonels Elmer R. Daniels, Jr. and Joseph C. McDonough from the Joint Chiefs of Staff gave a briefing on Berlin. No formal minutes of the meeting have been found. Alexander M. Haig, Jr., Kissinger's senior military assistant, took handwritten notes of the discussion. The notes on Berlin, as transcribed by the editor, read:

"Pres[ident]: You know plans are useless but planning essential—like broken play in football—it works because we've thought about it. It's essential. Never comes up—not the way we planned—but we benefit from this—tell your people.

"Laird introduced Daniels. Interdepartmental + combined planning + central org[anization]. [At this point, Daniels apparently briefed the participants on Berlin.]

"K[issinger]: Does this apply to civilian or military access?

"McC[onnell]: We've only had this w[ith] military. I've seen two—no military plan. Berlin org[anization]—plans for means to reopen.

"P[resident]: Questions?

"H[elms]: My problem is it deals w[ith] Allied access—What about civilian access? This is more complex—Shouldn't we look at this?

"McConnell: I think Rhine set [?] would work. We've just never done it. For example, we had UK civilian aircraft [unclear].

"P: What was last Berlin huff + puff?

"Helms: 1965.

"P: No indication that elections won't make trouble?

"Helms: See none.

"P: Has our psn [position] been made stronger to Soviets?

"Rogers: Yes. I told them yesterday this could finish NPT.

"Pres: This is useful. Soviets asked if this is a condition." (National Security Council, Minutes File, NSC Minutes, 1969 Originals)

7. **Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon**<sup>1</sup>

Washington, February 11, 1969.

SUBJECT

East German Travel Ban and Berlin Contingency Planning

At least for the moment the limited East German (GDR) ban on Bundesversammlung-related travel to West Berlin appears to be a minimal GDR response.<sup>2</sup> This analysis has been supported by field reporting and consultation with State and CIA analysts.<sup>3</sup> There are several intriguing aspects of the Berlin situation which are discussed below. In addition, you will find at Tab A a quick survey of applicable Berlin contingency planning; at Tab B the proposed text of our Tripartite reply to the Soviet protest of December 23 on Berlin;<sup>4</sup> and at Tab C a long—but very good—background memo on Berlin.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 689, Country Files, Europe, Germany (Berlin), Vol. I. Secret. Sent for information. Kissinger forwarded the memorandum to the President on February 11 under a note that reads: "In view of the information about Berlin, I thought you might like to take a look at the attached." (Ibid.) The memorandum is based on one Sonnenfeldt sent Kissinger on February 10. (Ibid.) According to another copy, Lesh drafted this memorandum to the President. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 285, Memoranda to the President, 1969–1974, Jan.–May 1969)

<sup>2</sup> On February 9 the official SED newspaper *Neues Deutschland* published a decree issued the previous day by the East German Minister of Interior banning travel to West Berlin for the Bundesversammlung starting February 15. (Telegram 178 from Berlin, February 9; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 38–10) For text of the decree, see *Documents on Germany, 1944–1985*, pp. 1027–1028.

<sup>3</sup> At a meeting on February 9 of the Bonn Group, the standing body of British, French, U.S., and West German representatives for consultation on Berlin, van Well reported that Duckwitz and von Hassel "both agreed that GDR measures would not impede actual Bundesversammlung convocation in Berlin. Initial FRG reaction therefore was to play down significance of East German announcement, and keep fingers crossed there would be no further measures." (Telegram 1768 from Bonn, February 9; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1969–76, POL 38–10) In a memorandum to the President on February 9, Kissinger explained that the West German Government was apparently waiting to determine whether the decree was "the beginning of a new East German propaganda offensive, or an isolated communication connected in some way with Tsarapkin's recent presentation to Willy Brandt." (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 2, President's Daily Briefs, February 9–14, 1969)

<sup>4</sup> Tabs B and C are attached but not printed. The text of Tab B is in telegram 21914 to Bonn, February 11. (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 28 GER B)

<sup>5</sup> Tab C is an undated 24-page paper, evidently drafted by the Department of State, on the postwar role of the Allies and West Germany in Berlin.

### 1. Degree of Soviet Support for GDR

While the timing of the February 4 Semenov/Tsarapkin<sup>6</sup> visit to East Berlin to meet with Stoph and Honecker<sup>7</sup> would seem to indicate that there was last-minute Soviet approval of the travel restriction, it is likely that the East Germans and Soviets have fairly basic differences over how far to press the propaganda and harassment directed against the forthcoming Bundesversammlung.

For the East Germans the issue is one of critical importance, very much bound up in questions of prestige and national pride. For the Soviets the Bundesversammlung must be seen as presenting a much wider range of options. If Moscow wanted to flex its muscles against the Western Allies, the Bundesversammlung could provide a target of opportunity. It could scarcely be more than that, since the Soviets have acquiesced in the past three Federal Assembly meetings in Berlin without making trouble.

But the best indications are that the Soviets themselves are looking forward to an “era of negotiations”<sup>8</sup> not only with the US on limitation of strategic weapons systems, but with the West Germans (FRG) on civil air rights and possible broadening of commercial, cultural, and scientific ties. Furthermore, the note that Soviet Ambassador Tsarapkin recently handed to Willy Brandt contained a strong Soviet pitch for West German signature of the NPT, including a suggestion of Soviet retreat on the alleged right of intervention under UN Articles 53 and 107.<sup>9</sup>

In short, this does not look like a time when the Soviets would want to provoke a major confrontation with the West over Berlin

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<sup>6</sup> Soviet diplomats. [Footnote in the original.]

<sup>7</sup> East German leaders. [Footnote in the original.]

<sup>8</sup> Reference is to the President’s inaugural address, in which Nixon declared that the superpowers should move from an era of confrontation to an era of negotiation. (*Public Papers: Nixon, 1969*, pp. 1–4)

<sup>9</sup> In a meeting on January 10 Tsarapkin gave Brandt a Soviet note addressing the connection between German signature of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and Soviet abandonment of its “right” to intervene in Germany under Articles 53 and 107 of the UN Charter. (Memorandum from Kissinger to Nixon, February 8, as transmitted in telegram WH1055, February 8, to Key Biscayne; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 1, President’s Daily Briefs, February 1–8, 1969) For a German record of the meeting, see *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1969*, Vol. 1, pp. 31–37. Article 107 of the UN Charter reads: “Nothing in the present Charter shall invalidate or preclude action, in relation to any state which during the Second World War has been an enemy of any signatory to the present Charter, taken or authorized as a result of that war by the Governments having responsibility for such action.” Article 53 cited this provision as an exception to the requirement of authorization from the Security Council for enforcement action by regional organizations. For full text of the Charter, see *A Decade of American Foreign Policy: Basic Documents, 1941–1949*, pp. 117–140.

access rights, especially on the rather contrived issue of the Bundesversammlung.<sup>10</sup> Our best guess is that the Soviets have agreed to the travel restriction as a concession to East German sensibilities, but will seek to avoid any serious escalation in Berlin during the weeks remaining before the March 5 Federal Assembly meeting.

The arrival in East Berlin on February 10 of Soviet Marshal Yakubovsky, Commander of Warsaw Pact Forces, was widely portrayed in the press today as evidence of Soviet saber-rattling in support of the GDR position in Berlin. There is no doubt that the East Germans would like to maintain that impression, but the best available intelligence indicates that Yakubovsky is in Berlin in connection with a joint GDR–USSR training exercise or demonstration, probably scheduled for this week.

## 2. *New Element of Voting Rights*

In the flurry of comment about the travel ban, it was generally overlooked that the East Germans had introduced a new element by challenging West Berlin voting rights at the Bundesversammlung as well. The GDR has charged that participation by West Berlin delegates in the election of a new Federal Republic president would be “illegal” as well as “provocative.”

In doing so, the East Germans are doubtless aware that they are playing on a longstanding difference between Bonn and the Western Allies. Only last year there was an FRG–Allied controversy over West German efforts to grant Bundestag voting rights to West Berliners.<sup>11</sup> The Allied position, for the record, has been very clear: we specifically deny West Berlin voting rights in the two federal legislative organs, the Bundestag and Bundesrat, but sanction participation of West Berlin delegates in the election of a new president at the Bundesversammlung because we do not consider this a legislative act.

## 3. *GDR Not Necessarily Acting from Strength*

The vehemence of the East German propaganda campaign against the Bundesversammlung and their apparent insistence on imposing the

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<sup>10</sup> In a January 30 memorandum, Kissinger briefed the President on recent Soviet efforts to arrange a deal with the West Germans, thereby avoiding a “major confrontation” over Berlin. According to Egon Bahr, Kissinger reported, the Soviets were offering “improvements” in bilateral relations in exchange for a decision to move the Bundesversammlung out of Berlin. Kissinger, however, added a caveat: “My experience with Bahr confirms that he is totally unreliable and never really wanted to hold the meeting in West Berlin in the first place.” (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 2, President’s Daily Briefs, Jan 28–31, 1969)

<sup>11</sup> The reference is apparently in error. West German political leaders debated the issue of Berlin voting rights amongst themselves, as well as with Allied representatives, during the negotiations to form a new government in November 1966. See *Foreign Relations, 1964–1968*, vol. XV, Documents 186–189.

limited travel ban (certain elements of which, such as the singling out of West German military officers and staff, are obviously only for public show, since the GDR knows very well that Allied regulations already prohibit FRG military travel into Berlin) may be interpreted as an index of East German uneasiness and defensiveness about their own position in Berlin. They are keenly aware that the Western Allies, and especially the FRG, have recently been emphasizing to the Soviets that Four-Power agreements on Berlin apply to the entire city, not just to the Western Sector. The East Germans, fearing more serious future challenges to their own claims in East Berlin, may have concluded that offense is the best defense. Still, the situation is inherently unpredictable, and we cannot ignore the possibility of further East German or Soviet actions. Tab A is germane to the more likely of these.

## Tab A

### Paper Prepared by the National Security Council Staff

#### CONTINGENCY PLANNING ON BERLIN

Berlin contingency planning is a highly specialized subject with a long and complex history. The texts of agreed Allied responses to various contingencies can, and do, fill volumes. Most attention, however, has been devoted to contingencies involving interference with various Allied rights in Berlin. The following is only a brief summary of possible next steps related to the new restrictions on FRG travel to Berlin, which so far pose no threat to Allied access to the city.

In effect we already have implemented our first contingency plan by agreeing to the February 10 Tripartite public statement (which had Bonn approval) on the Berlin situation.<sup>12</sup> The next steps may be divided into actions to be taken before February 15, and those that may be required after that date, when we begin to get an idea of exactly how the East Germans intend to enforce their ban. At each step, of course, there would be Allied consultation on further action, and plans would require approval at the highest level.

#### 1. Before February 15

Our next step will be to follow up the Tripartite statement with a reinforced protest direct to the Soviet Union. The Bonn Group has recommended, and we concur, that the still-pending Allied reply to the

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<sup>12</sup> For text of the statement, see *Documents on Germany, 1944–1985*, pp. 1028–1029.

Soviet démarche of December 23 be used for this purpose. The basic text of the reply (see Tab B) already has received Tripartite approval; it has now been somewhat sharpened, focused on the new GDR travel ban, and will be delivered to the Soviets (in Moscow by all three Allies) earlier than originally planned, preferably on February 13, the day preceding Prime Minister Wilson's arrival in Berlin. In addition, the FRG will protest this week to the GDR through Inter-Zonal Trade channels, dropping a hint of possible reprisals against the flow of goods to the GDR, and will consider means of imposing a reciprocal ban on the entry of East German SED members into the FRG after February 15.

## *2. After February 15*

On the basis of past experience, it appears possible that the GDR might choose to enforce its travel ban loosely, knowing full well that most movement of people and materials from West Germany into Berlin for the Bundesversammlung would be by air anyway. In that event, the ban would be revealed as basically a propaganda exercise with little practical effect, and no further coordinated Allied actions would be required or contemplated.

The earliest reports on February 10 from Berlin indicated that East German border guards had begun making a close check of the contents and documents of every fifth vehicle on the autobahn, approximately doubling normal checkpoint clearance time from a half-hour to an hour. This we regard basically as a threat of possible future action; so far there is no major interference with normal movement by road, and freight is moving normally.

There also is the possibility, however, that the GDR will apply the travel ban in the strictest possible terms, using stop-and-search techniques to cause severe rail tieups and massive traffic jams at the autobahn checkpoints. In that event, our contingency planning would call for a second and much sharper Tripartite protest to the Soviets. This would be coordinated with a more severe FRG warning to the GDR about Inter-Zonal Trade.

If the GDR were to continue severe harassment of surface travel after these protests, the next level of response would be actual imposition by the West Germans of selected Inter-Zonal Trade reductions, accompanied by parallel selective reductions in Allied trade with East Germany.

If there were complete blockage of FRG road, rail, and barge traffic into Berlin—through protracted and intentionally disruptive searches of carriers for West German officials or work materials related to the Bundesversammlung—contingency plans would call for an expanded Allied airlift into Berlin. This airlift, utilizing the three existing air corridors, would be mounted from Hannover, Frankfurt, and Munich. We are assured that the men and equipment needed for such an

airlift are in place and ready to move on order. This action could be back-stopped by a complete stoppage of Inter-Zonal Trade by the West Germans, a complete Tripartite break in trade relations with East Germany, and diplomatic representations to all NATO members to induce them to suspend trade with the GDR.

If surface access to Berlin were to remain blocked for an extended period, presumably more than one week, an even more serious range of Allied actions would be contemplated. These would include augmentation of Allied military contingents in Berlin as well as a highly-publicized build-up in the emergency stockpiles maintained in the city. At present these stockpiles are adequate to meet military needs for up to six months, and civilian needs (basically food and fuel) for up to one year. Simultaneously, the Allies would ensure a substantial increase in Allied military traffic to and from Berlin over all routes.

You will note that this summary stops short of discussing the contingency of interruption of Allied air access to Berlin, since such a development would change the character of the entire confrontation. It would constitute *prima facie* evidence of a Soviet decision to challenge Western rights in Berlin, and as such would be regarded by the Allies as bordering on a *casus belli*. The range of contingency responses planned for such a crisis situation are beyond the scope of this paper. At this point, however, such a potentially catastrophic denouement in Berlin seems outside the realm of probability.

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## 8. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, February 13, 1969, 2:45–3:40 p.m.

SUBJECT

Berlin

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 14 GER W. Confidential. Drafted by Dubs and approved in S on February 18. The memorandum is part III of V. The time of the meeting is from Rogers' Appointment Book. (Personal Papers of William P. Rogers) Rogers summarized his conversation with Dobrynin for the President's Evening Reading on February 13. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 2, President's Daily Briefs, February 9–14, 1969) In a February 14 memorandum forwarding this summary to the President, Kissinger commented: "The conversations appeared to be exceptionally forthcoming although his [Dobrynin's] comments on Berlin might suggest some fairly severe actions by the East Germans were in the wind." (Ibid.)

PARTICIPANTS

Anatoly F. Dobrynin, Soviet Ambassador  
The Secretary  
Adolph Dubs, Acting Country Director, SOV

During Ambassador Dobrynin's call to discuss other matters, the Secretary took the initiative on the question of Berlin. He said we were concerned by East German actions there and hoped that there would be no trouble. The creation of difficulties on Berlin would no doubt be played up by the press as a confrontation between Moscow and Washington. This would be a most unfortunate start for the development of relations between the new Administration and the Soviet Union. The new Administration looks forward to the existence of a good climate which could facilitate discussions on outstanding issues. It is, therefore, hoped that the Soviet Union understands that East German actions would present serious problems and that the Soviet Government could help matters by advising the East Germans to keep matters in a low key.

Ambassador Dobrynin said that, frankly, the West Germans knew that certain reactions would follow if the Bundesversammlung were held in Berlin. The Soviet Government had told the previous U.S. Administration that the Soviet Union and its friends had decided not to do anything to jeopardize relations between the U.S. and the USSR. Certain people, however, want to undermine these relations. Thus, an exercise which will be confined only to one day could harm relations between Moscow and Washington for weeks and perhaps even longer. He wished to assure the Secretary that the Soviet Union does not want West Berlin and that it is not asking that West Berlin belong to East Germany. At the same time, the USSR is not prepared to give West Berlin to the Federal Republic of Germany. The Soviet Union is interested in maintaining things as they are, i.e., the status quo. The reactions that are now taking place on the side of the East Germans would not have taken place if certain events had not preceded them. In the present situation, it should be clear that the Soviet Union had only two alternatives. The first was to swallow what the FRG was doing. This would only mean that in another year the Soviet Union would be told that they had permitted certain things in the past and that no objections should be raised to a continuation of certain activities. The second alternative was to react. In this connection, there is no intention on the part of the Soviet Union to aggravate relations with the new Administration. It should be understood that nothing is being done against the U.S., Britain or France. Therefore, the Ambassador saw no real reason for complaint.

The Secretary interjected that the situation could deteriorate if some moves were made to close access routes. Ambassador Dobrynin replied that he was sure that the East Germans had no plans to ha-

ness other countries. Therefore, the United States should not consider present activities surrounding Berlin as a provocation—this could only worsen East-West relations. It is important for the U.S. to understand that if no elections were to take place in Berlin all actions would be dropped.

The Secretary said that this was not a very realistic assumption. We view seriously what is taking place and think the timing most unfortunate since the new Administration had no part in the decisions surrounding current events. Any attempt to prevent free and open passage to and from Berlin would make the situation most difficult.

Ambassador Dobrynin said that he understands that nothing would be done to affect the free passage of U.S. military forces. This should be clearly understood. When asked what further measures might be in store, Ambassador Dobrynin replied that no final decisions had been taken and none would until it was ascertained how the situation develops. He underlined again that it was most important to understand that the USSR was not the initiator of actions regarding Berlin. It was simply reacting to a decision by the FRG and nothing else. There is no intention whatsoever to affect adversely U.S.-Soviet relations.

The Secretary said that if matters relating to both Vietnam and Berlin do not develop in an adverse fashion, relations could get off to a good start. This was not to set any conditions respecting the future course of our relations but merely to point up the unfortunate consequences of having a bad climate at the outset. Anything the Soviet Union could do to be helpful would be welcome, particularly since President Nixon will be visiting Berlin. Ambassador Dobrynin replied that whatever actions are taken should not be misread as being directed against the President but rather against West Germany. The visit was only recently decided upon. He did not feel that the Soviets could permit the West Germans to hide behind the President's visit. The Ambassador said he recognized that the President will make his decisions on the basis of what he considers best for his policies. Dobrynin expressed the personal thought that he would have preferred other timing for the President's visit.

Secretary Rogers said that problems surrounding Berlin could have an effect on public attitudes and make it difficult for the Administration to proceed on some issues. Ambassador Dobrynin said it was important for governments to give leadership to the press at times rather than merely reacting to what it says. The Secretary said that the Ambassador should understand that the President is a realist and that he would not be overly impressed by press reactions. Nevertheless, the international climate does have an effect on decision-making. We are reacting in a low-key way on Berlin, and it is hoped the Soviet Government would advise the East Germans to react similarly.

Ambassador Dobrynin said that the President's visit to Berlin had been discussed in Moscow. It was recognized that the announcement of the visit was now made and that nothing was likely to be changed. He said that U.S.-Soviet relations have a peculiar way of developing. History shows that after the inauguration of a new Administration relations somehow have always deteriorated. After a while the situation generally improves. At the end of the Administrations, everybody is talking about meetings at the highest level. The Secretary said that perhaps we should forget about the beginning and start in the middle.

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**9. Memorandum From Helmut Sonnenfeldt of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, February 14, 1969.

SUBJECT

The Berlin Crisis

I commend to you the attached comment on the state of play on the Berlin Bundesversammlung, prepared last night by the State Department (INR).<sup>2</sup> The analysis seems to me balanced and thorough, and I support the basic conclusions that (1) the GDR may be embarking on a campaign of increasing harassment directed against the FRG, which will reach a crescendo on or about March 5; (2) that in this endeavor they will enjoy the support of the Soviet Union; but (3) the Soviets will, however, steer clear of any act which implies interference with Allied rights in Berlin or suggests a danger of clear confrontation with the United States; and (4) Moscow will rein in Pankow if the latter grows overly-aggressive in its campaign of dirty tricks. On the last point, however, I would enter the caution that the momentum of the situa-

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 689, Country Files, Europe, Germany (Berlin), Vol. I. Secret; Noform. Urgent; sent for action. Drafted by Lesh. A checkmark indicates that Kissinger saw the memorandum. With minor revisions and deletions, Kissinger transmitted the text of the memorandum in his written intelligence brief for the President on February 15. (Ibid., Box 2, President's Daily Briefs, February 15–18, 1969) Several of the President's markings on the text of the brief are noted below.

<sup>2</sup> Attached but not printed is Intelligence Note 87 from Hughes to Rogers, February 13. Another copy is in the National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 14 GER W.

tion might become such that even if it is the Soviet intention to “rein in” the East Germans, they may have trouble doing so and hence find themselves with no option but to go into a full-fledged crisis.

The INR report was written prior to Dobrynin’s call on Secretary Rogers last evening, but the content of their conversation,<sup>3</sup> I feel, tends to support the view that the Soviets will seek to avoid getting drawn into a major Berlin crisis at the very time they are seeking ways to get us into SALT talks. To that extent, at least, they understand the “negative” part of the interrelation that we have sought to establish between SALT and politics.

(At the same time, we must recognize that the last Administration bequeathed to us a tricky problem by its unwise insistence that<sup>4</sup> the Bundesversammlung was a purely German matter;<sup>5</sup> now the Soviets<sup>6</sup> are playing this back to us by insisting that the pressure tactics being put in train against the FRG are in no way directed at us. I think it is important to correct this error lest, at worst, we leave the Soviets under a potentially fateful misapprehension or, at best, we give them a convenient tool to play us off against the Germans.<sup>7</sup> I wish to discuss this problem with you *before* any decision is reached on the Soviet Ambassador’s request to see the President and on what line the President should take on that occasion.)

In view of the special indications of possible forthcoming military maneuvers in the GDR, and the scare interpretations in some press reports to the effect that the USSR was prepared to use her military force to assist the East Germans in a blockade of Berlin, I call your attention to the discussion on page 5 of the attachment covering varying interpretations of Marshal Yakubovsky’s travel to East Berlin on February 10 (he returned to Moscow about midday today).<sup>8</sup> Both a TASS report

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<sup>3</sup> See Document 8.

<sup>4</sup> On Kissinger’s intelligence brief, the President underlined the words “by its unwise insistence that.”

<sup>5</sup> See Document 3.

<sup>6</sup> The President underlined the words “purely German matter; now the Soviets.”

<sup>7</sup> The President underlined this sentence on Kissinger’s intelligence brief.

<sup>8</sup> On page 5 of the Intelligence Note, Hughes reported: “Soviet sources in East Berlin pointedly implied to the Western press that [Yakubovsky’s] visit was connected with the present campaign. We have no evidence one way or the other. There have been preparations under way for some kind of military maneuvers in the GDR, possibly along the Helmstedt autobahn route, and we have received other reports about exercises involving artillery demonstrations and/or parachute drops, perhaps in the corridors. Such exercises have taken place before, routinely on some occasions, although in other instances they were exploited to create a bit of tension when it suited Soviet purposes. It is conceivable that, weather permitting, some such military exercises will take place around the time of the Bundesversammlung session.” If Yakubovsky’s presence in Berlin was merely connected with “more general Warsaw Pact matters,” Hughes noted, it would “lose much of its ominous tone.”

yesterday and Moscow Radio in its announcement of Yakubovsky's return today stated that he had been in Berlin for a meeting of "representatives of the armed forces of all Warsaw Pact countries," with no special reference to the Berlin situation.<sup>9</sup> This bland description should, of course, be read against the noise of rumors and reports stemming from East Berlin and other Eastern European capitals that specifically link Yakubovsky's presence in Berlin to the Bundesversammlung issue.

On balance I suspect the visit may have been planned for some time in connection with pending Warsaw Pact matters, as suggested in the INR study. (Inter alia, Romanians rarely go to Warsaw Pact meetings these days without protracted prior haggling.) But the Soviets have now seen fit to allow the East Germans and others to make as much psychological hay out of the Marshal's visit as possible.

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<sup>9</sup> This sentence is based on an attached set of INR briefing notes and a FBIS report on Yakubovsky's return to Moscow; none printed.

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## 10. Telegram From the Embassy in the Soviet Union to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Moscow, February 14, 1969, 1205Z.

640. Subject: Delivery of Tripartite Reply on Bundesversammlung. Ref: Moscow 0634.<sup>2</sup>

1. On being informed Deputy Minister Vinogradov still "absent" from Ministry, I requested appointment with Kornienko (Chief US Section) and delivered to him this morning tripartite reply on Bundesversammlung. Wilson was received by Acting Chief Second European Section V.M. Vasev a half hour later and Seydoux is scheduled to be received by Deputy Minister Firyubin at 1700 hours this afternoon.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 28 GER B. Confidential; Immediate. Repeated to Bonn, Berlin, USNATO, London, Paris, CINCUSAREUR, CINCEUR, and USELMLO. Kissinger forwarded the text of the telegram in a February 15 memorandum to the President. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 2, President's Daily Briefs, February 15–18, 1969)

<sup>2</sup> In telegram 634 from Moscow, February 13, Chargé d'Affaires Swank reported that the Soviet Foreign Ministry declined the initial tripartite request for a meeting, claiming that "neither Vinogradov nor any other official could receive us today." (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 28 GER B)

Any comment to press in Bonn or other capitals should therefore be deferred pending receipt of telegram from French Embassy confirming delivery. At regular weekly backgrounder with US press representatives this afternoon we will refrain from comment on this subject.

2. I left with Kornienko English text of tripartitely agreed reply (State 021914)<sup>3</sup> and made additional oral remarks contained para 2D of same telegram. I also gave Kornienko, as locally agreed, a copy of the tripartite statement of February 10 on the new measures of harassment announced by East Germany February 8.

3. Kornienko said that he would convey text of statement and my oral observations to higher authority but wished to make certain preliminary comments. While he noted professed position of US Government that the situation in Berlin should not be aggravated, US support of provocative FRG action was leading precisely to just such an exacerbation of the situation. Nor could he accept "excuse" that previous meetings of Bundesversammlung had been held in Berlin; carrying out an illegal action three times did not make that action legal. West Berlin does not and will not belong to FRG, and US Government has itself agreed that West Berlin is not a part of FRG. How can unprecedented action of holding elections on someone else's territory be justified? Quadripartite agreements on access pertain exclusively to occupation forces and not to citizens of FRG. Finally, Kornienko said he wished stress that Soviet Government had not wanted to engage in public polemic and exacerbate tensions over Berlin. It had been refusal of FRG, with support of three powers, to abandon its provocative action which had led to new tensions.

4. I replied that I saw little utility in restating US Government position on Berlin and Bundesversammlung since those positions were well known to him and had been fully set forth in my earlier remarks. I said I nevertheless wished to stress importance US Government attributes to avoiding needless tension over Berlin at time when new US administration has just taken office and when other pressing bilateral and international problems deserve our mutual attention.

5. Kornienko asserted that Soviet Government certainly not interested in creating tensions either in Berlin or elsewhere, "especially now," but that Soviet Government can hardly ignore fact that "certain circles" are interested in causing tensions. US Government must take cognizance of this fact. At this point he retrieved some documents from a nearby desk and handed me official note from Soviet Government to US Government (text in septel)<sup>4</sup> to which was appended a copy of

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<sup>3</sup> Dated February 11. (Ibid.)

<sup>4</sup> Telegram 646 from Moscow, February 14. (Ibid.)

Soviet Government statement which Tsarapkin handed Kiesinger February 13 (Bonn 2054).<sup>5</sup> Covering note makes point that USSR “fully supports” measures being taken by East Germans to prevent “misuse and violation” of established order and regulations pertaining to access to West Berlin.

6. I told Kornienko I would transmit note to US Government but wished inform him in advance that fact of Soviet support for East German measures would be seriously regretted in Washington and could not help but lead to further tensions in Berlin, a situation which all powers should seek to avoid.

7. *Comment.* It is of course evident that 24-hour delay in according US appointments to deliver tripartite reply was deliberately engineered by Soviets to permit Tsarapkin to deliver Soviet Government statement to Kiesinger. Kornienko was fairly amiable during meeting, and neither his demeanor nor language of covering note would necessarily indicate that serious new moves against FRG (much less against Allied access) are contemplated. I expect see Wilson and Seydoux this evening and will report further if any points of interest arose in their meetings.<sup>6</sup>

**Swank**

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<sup>5</sup> Dated February 14. (Ibid., POL 14 GER W) Also printed in *Documents on Germany, 1944–1985*, pp. 1029–1030.

<sup>6</sup> In telegram 659 from Moscow, February 15, Swank reported: “It is risky to read too much into Soviet atmospherics, but all of us are agreed for what it is worth that demeanor and behavior of our Soviet interlocutors in these sessions were not such as to suggest an intention to exacerbate this issue into a major crisis over Berlin.” (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 28 GER B)

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## 11. Editorial Note

On February 17, 1969, President Nixon received Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin at the White House for an initial review of international affairs, including the Middle East, Strategic Arms Limitation, Vietnam, and Berlin. In a briefing memorandum 2 days earlier, Assistant to the President Kissinger suggested that the President adopt a “polite, but aloof” approach to the Ambassador, making clear that “we believe progress depends on specific settlements, not personal diplomacy.” Kissinger specifically recommended that Nixon convey that “a Berlin crisis could throw a shadow over our relations.” An attached set

of talking points, with passages underlined by the President (italicized below), addressed the “Berlin crisis” as follows:

“1. Any crisis there now would be artificial; we see no justification for it and have no interest in confrontation.

“2. *We do have a vital interest in the integrity and viability of the city.*

“3. We know of no infringement on Soviet interests by any actions in the Western sectors of the city on the part of any of our allies.

“4. You are going to Berlin to affirm our interests and our responsibilities.

“5. (OPTIONAL If CONVERSATION WARRANTS) *A crisis now would place a heavy burden on our relations.*” (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 340, Subject Files, USSR Memcons, Dobrynin/President 2/17/69)

Before Dobrynin arrived, Kissinger also personally briefed Nixon on “the situation in Berlin and the need to cover our view with the Soviets.” (Memorandum from Haig to Kissinger, February 17; *ibid.*, Box 2, President’s Daily Briefs, February 15–18, 1969)

According to the President’s Daily Diary, Nixon met Dobrynin briefly in the Fish Room before moving to the Oval Office at 11:51 a.m.; Kissinger and Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary Toon then joined the discussion at 12:02 p.m. (*Ibid.*, White House Central Files) The memorandum of conversation records the following exchange on Berlin:

“The President said that he wished to make clear that it was not his view that agreement on one issue must be conditioned by settlement of other issues. The President wished to express his conviction, however, that progress in one area is bound to have an influence on progress in all other areas. The current situation in Berlin is a case in point. If the Berlin situation should deteriorate, Senate approval of the Non-Proliferation Treaty would be much more difficult. The President wished to make clear that he favored early ratification of the treaty and he is optimistic that the Senate will act favorably in the near future. We should bear in mind, however, that just as the situation in Czechoslovakia had influenced the outlook for the treaty last fall, so would the situation in Berlin now have an important bearing on the Senate’s attitude. Ambassador Dobrynin had mentioned the desirability of making progress on some issues, even if settlement of other issues should not be feasible. The Non-Proliferation Treaty is just such an issue. If we can move ahead on this it would be helpful in our efforts on other issues. The only cloud on the horizon is Berlin and the President hoped that the Soviets would make every effort to avoid trouble there.

“Dobrynin said that the situation in Berlin did not stem from any action taken by the Soviets. The President would recall that a meeting was scheduled in Berlin last fall and the Secretary of State had discussed the problem with the Ambassador, urging him to persuade his

government to avoid any action in connection with this meeting which might possibly result in unpleasantness in and around Berlin. The Ambassador said he would not wish his remarks to be recorded but he felt the President should know that his Government had used its influence to insure that the situation remained calm. There was no confrontation then, and Ambassador Dobrynin saw no need for a confrontation between us in the present situation.

“The President hoped that there would be no trouble in Berlin and he welcomed Ambassador Dobrynin’s assurances on this point. The Soviets should understand that we are solidly behind the integrity of West Berlin, and we will do whatever is necessary to protect it. He had noted in the press references to the ‘provocative nature’ of his visit to Berlin. The President wished to assure Ambassador Dobrynin that these stories were totally without foundation and that his visit to Berlin was a perfectly normal action for any United States President to take in connection with a visit to Europe.” (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL US–USSR)

During the meeting, Dobrynin gave Nixon a personal message from the Soviet leadership. After declaring a commitment to “pursue the policy of peace,” the message addressed six “big international problems,” including issues relating to Germany and European security:

“We are strongly convinced that the following premise has a first-rate importance for the character and prospects of the relations between the USSR and the USA: that is, whether both our countries are ready to proceed in their practical policies from the respect for the foundations of the post-war structure in Europe, formed as a result of the Second World War and the post-war development, and for the basic provisions, formulated by the Allied powers in the well-known Potsdam Agreements. There is no other way to peace in Europe but to take the reality into consideration and to prompt the others to do the same. It’s impossible to regard the attempts to undermine the post-war structure in Europe otherwise than an encroachment on the vital interests of our country, or its friends and allies—the socialist countries.

“At one time, and in particular in 1959–1963, when the Soviet and U.S. Governments were discussing the complex of German affairs, we were not far apart in understanding of that with regard to some important problems.

“The Soviet Union regards with particular watchfulness certain aspects of the development of the F.R.G. and its policy not only because the past German invasion cost us many millions of human lives. President Nixon also understands very well that revanchism begins not when the frontier marks start falling down. That’s the finale, the way to which is leading through the attempts to gain an access to the nuclear weapons, through the rehabilitation of the past, through the

provocations similar to those which the F.R.G. commits from time to time with regard to West Berlin.

“It became almost a rule that the F.R.G. stirs up outbursts of tensions around West Berlin, which didn’t and doesn’t belong to it, involving the Soviet Union, the USA and other countries into complications. It’s hardly in anyone’s interests to give the F.R.G. such a possibility. Anyhow the Soviet Union can’t let the F.R.G. make such provocations.

“We would like the President to have complete clearness and confidence that the Soviet Union has no goals in Europe other than the establishment of the solid foundations of security in this part of the world, of the relations of *détente* between the states of East and West.” (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 340, Subject Files, USSR Memcons Dobrynin/President 2/17/69)

At Kissinger’s request, Toon, who did not see the message but drafted the memorandum of conversation, offered his analysis of the meeting with Dobrynin. Toon argued that the Soviets were clearly intrigued at the prospect of negotiations, but were “uneasy as to the real meaning of linkage between arms control talks and political issues,” perhaps suspecting that Nixon might, as Eisenhower had done, “condition progress in arms control on the German issue.”

“On Berlin, I think the President’s remarks were useful in that they conveyed to Dobrynin our concern lest tough action by the East Germans result in a nasty situation and a confrontation with us. I am not sure, however, that Dobrynin understands clearly that a blow-up in Berlin would seriously affect the outcome of NPT as well as our own decision to proceed with missile talks. Perhaps we should follow this up with a further meeting in the Department, probably toward the end of the President’s tour when we may have a clear understanding as to the action contemplated by the other side. My own view is that there will not be serious problems around Berlin until the President departs that city but that we can probably expect unpleasantness immediately after his departure.” (Memorandum from Toon to Kissinger, undated; *ibid.*, President’s Trip Files, Box 489, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1969 [Part 2])

In a memorandum forwarding this analysis to the President on February 18, Kissinger noted that the Soviet message itself was “extraordinarily forthcoming,” presenting their position “strictly in terms of national interests and mutually perceived threats, without even the usual ritual obeisance to Marxist-Leninist jargon.” “The gist of the paper,” he concluded, “is that the Soviets are prepared to move forward on a whole range of topics: Middle East, Central Europe, Vietnam, Arms control (strategic arms talks), cultural exchange. In other words, we have the ‘linkage.’ Our problem is how to play it.” After summarizing two “schools of thought” on Soviet policy, Kissinger suggested the

following game plan: “My own view is that we should seek to utilize this Soviet interest, stemming as I think it does from anxiety, to induce them to come to grips with the real sources of tension, notably in the Middle East, but also in Vietnam. This approach also would require continued firmness on our part in Berlin.” (Ibid.)

For complete text of memorandum excerpted above, see *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XII, Document 17. For the participants’ respective accounts of the meeting, see Nixon, *RN: The Memoirs of Richard Nixon*, pages 369–370; Kissinger, *White House Years*, pages 28, 140–145; and Dobrynin, *In Confidence*, pages 198–199.

In a telephone conversation with Kissinger at 2:45 p.m. on February 22, Dobrynin “more or less” dictated the following message from the Soviet leadership:

“These days some officials in Bonn have been putting forward an idea in conversations with representatives of the Soviet Embassy there that if the United States expressed to Mr. Kiesinger’s government an opinion that it would be desirable to refrain from having called the Federal Assembly in West Berlin, then this advice would be gladly followed. It is of course difficult for us to judge with what aim in view and how seriously such ideas are being expressed to us by West German officials. If in Bonn they are really in favor of a solution which would eliminate the presentation, then as it was stated on a number of occasions, the Soviet side would positively evaluate a corresponding step on the part of the Federal Republic of Germany. This would allow [us] to avoid unnecessary complications and cut short a tendency towards mounting of tension.”

Dobrynin further commented that “in Moscow, they share fully the opinion of President Nixon that West Berlin should not throw a shadow on the American relations.” (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 402, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File) According to his later account, Kissinger “rejected the proposition” of U.S. intervention on the Bundesversammlung meeting. “[W]e would make no such request of Kiesinger,” he recalled. “I warned Dobrynin sternly against unilateral acts; to underline my warning, the President, on my recommendation, ordered a step-up in US military traffic over the access routes to Berlin.” (*White House Years*, page 406)

12. **Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to Secretary of State Rogers, Secretary of Defense Laird, and Director of Central Intelligence Helms**<sup>1</sup>

Washington, February 22, 1969.

SUBJECT

Increased Flow of Military Traffic over the Autobahn To and From West Berlin

The President has asked that the U.S. Government consider measures to increase the flow of military traffic over the Autobahn to and from West Berlin. The increase in military traffic would follow normal convoy procedures and should not include extraordinary military measures which might raise procedural issues.

It is requested that a plan be developed within the regular interdepartmental framework responsible for Berlin plans and operations. The plan should include: (a) recommendations for specific measures designed to increase the flow of military traffic to and from Berlin; (b) proposed public statements which might be used in the event this action creates public interest; and (c) any additional measures which might be readied to manifest U.S. intent to maintain access rights to and from Berlin. In conjunction with (a) above, your analysis of the desirability of such action is desired, together with your views on how the proposed action should be handled with Allied Governments.

It is requested that the above plan be submitted to the President through the Assistant for National Security Affairs by the close of business March 3, 1969.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 689, Country Files, Europe, Germany (Berlin), Vol. I. Top Secret; Sensitive. A copy was sent to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Printed from a copy that indicates that Kissinger signed the original. According to Kissinger, "the President, on my recommendation, ordered a step-up in US military traffic over the access routes to Berlin" to underscore his warning to Dobrynin on February 22 against "unilateral acts." (Kissinger, *White House Years*, p. 406)

<sup>2</sup> In a February 26 memorandum to Haig, Donald Lesh of the NSC staff reported attending a meeting of the Berlin Task Force that afternoon during which the participants decided that an increase in military traffic on the Autobahn was "desirable." In an attached draft memorandum to Kissinger, George Springsteen, Acting Chairman of the NSC Interdepartmental Group for Europe, outlined a plan to increase the frequency of Allied convoys to and from Berlin, including contingency press guidance. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 689, Country Files, Europe, Germany (Berlin), Vol. I) Deputy Secretary of Defense Packard noted in a memorandum to Kissinger on March 7 that the plan developed by the Berlin Task Force was "implemented at the direction of the President on 1 March." (*Ibid.*)

### 13. Editorial Note

On February 22, 1969, West German Chancellor Kiesinger met Soviet Ambassador Tsarapkin in Bonn to discuss a proposal on the Bundesversammlung from Walter Ulbricht, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the East German Socialist Unity Party. In a letter to West German Foreign Minister Brandt (as SPD Chairman) the previous day, Ulbricht had suggested that his government would “react positively,” specifically offering Easter passes for West Berliners, if the Bundesversammlung was moved to another city. (Memorandum from Lesh to Kissinger, February 22; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 681, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. I) Although he thought the offer was insufficient, Kiesinger told Tsarapkin that a “substantial and worthwhile concession” might be enough to change his mind. (Telegram 2547 from Bonn, February 24; *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 38–6)

At his urgent request, Tsarapkin visited Kiesinger in Stuttgart the next day to deliver a message confirming that a decision to move the Bundesversammlung not only would diminish tensions but also might improve relations between the Soviet Union and West Germany. When Kiesinger reiterated that the proposal did not suffice, Tsarapkin replied that “an improvement in Soviet-German relations, not wall passes, was the key element.” (*Ibid.*) Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin later gave Secretary of State Rogers an oral statement presenting the Soviet version of events described above. (Memorandum of conversation, March 17; *ibid.*, POL GER W) For records of the meetings between Kiesinger and Tsarapkin, see *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1969*, Vol. 1, pages 252–263.

On February 23 President Nixon began his European trip amid reports that the West German Government was reconsidering its decision to hold the Bundesversammlung in Berlin. Before he arrived in Bonn, the Embassy warned that the issue might dominate Nixon’s meetings with Kiesinger, possibly associating him with “responsibility for the final decision, whatever it may be.” In the Embassy’s view, Kiesinger had allowed a “protracted, damaging display of German indecision,” fearing that the controversy might adversely affect his popularity with either German public opinion or the U.S. Government as it considered the feasibility of negotiations with the Soviet Union. By offering “small concessions paid in actuality by the East Germans,” the Soviets could now claim credit for avoiding a crisis over Berlin, thereby “reestablishing a détente atmosphere which wipes out much of the damage from the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia.” Since “important American interests” were at stake, the United States could press the West Germans to: 1) reaffirm the decision to hold the Bundesver-

sammlung in Berlin; 2) negotiate a more equitable settlement, i.e., beyond a limited agreement on Easter passes; or 3) make the best of a bad situation. The Embassy suggested that there were “strong arguments” for the first course of action: “If we are going to have difficulties with the Soviets on Berlin, it may be that the present overall situation contains effective limitations on what the Soviets can do in countermeasures around March 5. These may not be so strongly present at a later stage to keep down the level of the dispute and bring the issue to a favorable outcome.” (Telegram 2548 from Bonn, February 24; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 14 GER W) In its reply, the Department repeated that West Germany should decide where to hold the Bundesversammlung; the United States would then support the decision. (Telegram 29542 to Bonn, February 25; *ibid.*)

On February 25 Assistant to the President Kissinger received an urgent appeal from Fritz Kraemer, his former mentor and currently a senior adviser in the Pentagon. In a memorandum forwarded to Kissinger in London, Kraemer argued that acceptance of the East German offer would have “tragic consequences.” Although some thought the proposed deal indicated a Soviet desire to avoid confrontation, Kraemer believed that the “shoe is on other foot.” He wrote:

“West Germans—especially Social Democrats Wehner, Brandt, Schuetz, but also Chancellor Kiesinger and other non-Social Democrats—have been wavering, ambiguous and publicly agonizing over issue of holding Federal Assembly in Berlin from outset. It is they, rather than Moscow-Pankow, who grasp at straws to be taken off the hook. To renounce established custom of electing Federal President in Berlin in return for Easter Passes would constitute, in harsh world of realities, retreat from a long held *permanent* position in exchange for purely *temporary*, transitory advantage. Regardless of how such actual retreat would be justified and prettified by official Western propaganda, friend and foe would conclude that, once again, West has given in to naked Communist threats when moment of truth arrived.”

Kiesinger had reportedly deferred a final decision pending consultation with the President; Kraemer insisted that Nixon should use this opportunity to intervene since Washington, not Bonn, was ultimately responsible for the security of Berlin. “Under circumstances,” he explained, “US President in own self-interest cannot simply let uncertain and advice-seeking Chancellor follow line of least resistance and yield out of weakness. Bonn, on contrary, needs to be assured of US feeling that, at this late date, change of venue of Federal Assembly site would be fateful mistake of gravest consequences.” (*Ibid.*, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 448, President’s Trip Files, Wires Sent to Dr. K While on Presidential Trip—23 Feb thru 2 March 69)

#### 14. Draft Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Bonn, February 26, 1969, 11:05 a.m.

##### DRAFT MEMO OF PRIVATE CONVERSATION BETWEEN CHANCELLOR KIESINGER AND PRESIDENT NIXON

Chancellor: (The Chancellor started by saying he did not have enough English practice; that he has visited the States in 1954 for the first time; that he has a daughter in Washington with two granddaughters.) After this introduction, he mentioned that the President was aware that there was now a “little war” between France and the United Kingdom on two topics. One, the talk that leaked from the conversation between General de Gaulle and the British Ambassador in Paris, Soames, and the other concerning the Western European Union (WEU).<sup>2</sup>

Nixon: We want to get your advice as to our best action. I feel that I should have communication lines open to the French and to de Gaulle. My views are in support of the European Alliance and I also believe that Britain belongs in Europe. On the other hand, I don’t think it is useful to possibly try to score points when there is no give in the French position. There are other areas where we should work together. It is vital for Germany to have ties with France, you are the key here. I assure you I want to have the closest consultations with your government. You are the heart of the alliance. We don’t want to do anything to weaken this—such as in Berlin—while you are tightrope walking between allegiance to and alliance with the United Kingdom and France. We are on the outside. We don’t want to get involved in inter-

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 834, Name Files, Sonnenfeldt, Helmut. Secret. No drafting information appears on the memorandum, which is marked “Uncleared—For Embassy Use Only.” The time of the meeting is from the President’s Daily Diary. (Ibid., White House Central Files) In a March 10 letter forwarding the memorandum to Sonnenfeldt, Fessenden explained: “Attached are the draft records of the three meetings we discussed on the phone. The record of the private session between the President and the Chancellor was done by Hans Holzapfel, our interpreter. The other two were prepared by me. We prepared them during the night you were here, and I then gave them to Marty [Hillenbrand] the next morning on our way to Berlin.” (Ibid., NSC Files, Box 834, Name Files, Sonnenfeldt, Helmut) An earlier draft, including handwritten corrections, is *ibid.*, RG 59, Conference Files: Lot 70 D 387, Box 484, CF 338, President Nixon’s Trip to Europe, 2/23–3/2/69, Chronology; Memcons—Vol. I of VIII) For a German record of the meeting, see *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1969*, Vol. 1, pp. 273–278.

<sup>2</sup> Reference is to the controversy surrounding two meetings in February between de Gaulle and Soames, in which the future of European integration and security, including British membership in the Common Market, was reportedly discussed. For discussion of the “Soames Affair,” see Kissinger, *White House Years*, pp. 86–89.

nal battles. We want communications with all the parties. Our devotion bilaterally and multilaterally to your nation is firm. How can the United States best play its role?

Chancellor: The best thing would be to show your true interest in European affairs. Many people share the conviction that Europe must be united and become a stabilizing factor in world affairs. This is the main aim here, namely such a united Europe in some form, but this is our own affair. I am sorry that we have not so far succeeded, and it is not only de Gaulle's fault. He has his own ideas about a united Europe which are not accepted by us. For example, he wanted special connections with us but we don't have the same views about many things. We share the views of other Europeans on NATO and on relations with the United States. Even on the Near East conflict, our views are different. In talking with de Gaulle we were quite frank. De Gaulle once told me a story about the two treasure hunters who shared many dangers and hardships. However, they found no treasure—they only found friendship. De Gaulle wants Europe without U.S. partnership and with the exclusion of Britain. There are more differences between Germany and France than between any other Western government; yet we have a treaty with the French and we meet on the highest level twice a year. Precisely because our views differ, I feel we must meet. The General has now become disappointed. I tried to strengthen our ties, but I can't change our views only to agree with the French. Up to now I have avoided a split. I have tried to build bridges—for example, in the last WEU dispute. On the whole our relationship with France is not as good as it used to be. If you constantly disagree on problems it becomes tiresome. We have asked the French why they are so anti-United States. Our relations with the United States have first rank in our own political aims. De Gaulle is a strong man with a feeling of a historic mission because France has declined as a nation. I am very firm in trying not to let us (Germany and France) drift apart. The miracle after the war was that our two people did not want to drift apart either, and yet I am often being blamed for not being able to make up my mind and make decisions in this relationship.

Nixon: You have got to stay on this tightrope. We understand and we don't want to embarrass this delicate relationship. I will have a very good talk with de Gaulle so that he does not get the feeling that he is being isolated.<sup>3</sup> We will have communications, but I also have no illusions.

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<sup>3</sup> Nixon was in Paris on February 28 and March 1 for meetings with de Gaulle. Documentation on the visit, including a memorandum of conversation on the latter date, is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XLI. See also Nixon, *RN: The Memoirs of Richard Nixon*, pp. 370–375; and Kissinger, *White House Years*, pp. 104–111.

Chancellor: It is always a pleasure to talk with de Gaulle. What he says we listen to.

Nixon: (Interjects) And he says it so well.

Chancellor: We are not sailing in the wake of France. It is disappointing to him that we don't share all his views, but we will have to be patient over the next decade with France. De Gaulle should not get the feeling of isolation. I told Wilson that two years ago when he wanted to be harsh, but we cannot force de Gaulle to do anything. Our public opinion is very much for Britain's participation in Europe and so is the opinion of our national leaders. There really is no barrier for the United Kingdom and we told Wilson last time that we cannot conceive of a united Europe without the United Kingdom or France. In the past few years new European institutions were talked about, forming a unit within WEU and excluding France, but no one can really think that this will work.

Nixon: That is a mistake. We must look at history's sweep. Man changes and leaders change. France is a part of Europe just as the United Kingdom should be. We should not engage in vindictive rhetoric or react emotionally rashly. We should have a steady firm line. There is another analogy—our relationship with the Soviets. These are not belligerent, not provocative, but firm, direct and uncompromising on principles. I understand that in dealing with the Soviets, we are not dealing with a friend. De Gaulle is a friend. The Soviets may some day be a friend, but not now.

Chancellor: In talking with President Johnson on French problems and mentioning that we were often irritated, he also said that they are still our friends and we should never forget what de Gaulle did during the Cuban crisis.<sup>4</sup> I feel that de Gaulle will do that in any crisis affecting the alliance.

Nixon: We must look at the long sweep of history, and isolating any one is a great mistake. That will be my policy—to make clear that I want the closest communications with your people. We have talked it over. We have established a "line of credit [*communication?*]" . The line of communication must be very clear and direct.

Chancellor: When the NPT issue was raised soon after I came into office, I was given a very hard time. I remember an article by Foster in

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<sup>4</sup> Reference is to de Gaulle's public support for President Kennedy during the Cuban missile crisis in October 1962. Kiesinger met with Johnson several times during his visit to Washington, August 15–16, 1967. For memoranda of conversation, including discussion of de Gaulle, see *Foreign Relations, 1964–1968*, vol. XV, Documents 226 and 228; and *ibid.*, vol. XIII, Document 263.

which he said that if you want the treaty you have to risk an erosion in our alliance.<sup>5</sup> I think that would be a terrible mistake.

Nixon: I couldn't agree more. What I feel and reiterate because of our future relations—and as you know, I have suggested that the Congress ratify the treaty and eventually it will be passed—or on any problem you face, arms limitation or anything that we may talk about with the Soviets, the alliance is, as we say in the United States, the Blue Chip, the heart of the defense of Europe and of the free world. As far as the Soviets are concerned, all their actions are designed to break up that alliance. We shall not fall into that trap. We will talk but we won't get trapped. Let us not weaken the alliance. We have to think about what they want and then look at our alliance and particularly at Germany. We know their aim and they are keenly aware that we "play the same game." I think therefore they appreciate us more.

Chancellor: We must be firm but not hostile, open to discussion. We are prepared to maintain our rights but we and our people are realistic. The people are firm and will not waiver, but they are not emotional. They know very well whether our friends are with us or are not interested in us; but the people don't want the impossible. The fact that you are going to Berlin is of the greatest value to us. The NPT situation is still difficult; there is division in my country and in my party, but we now should be discussing it on a higher level. There are the two UN resolutions that the Soviets want to utilize against us<sup>6</sup> and there is the problem of control. We (Chancellor and President) should not deal with that now, but if that could be treated satisfactorily, also for public opinion, that would be a step in the right direction.

Nixon: Do you need some reassurances from the Soviet Union on those two UN resolutions?

Chancellor: Our public opinion would not understand why we signed the treaty if the Soviet Union claims the right of military intervention at their pleasure. On control, for example, we have a common work plan with the Dutch on a centrifuge. So the Soviet Union says we cannot do that after the treaty is signed. Therefore the control question has to be cleared up. I am sure we can satisfy the Offset question satisfactorily and would like to do it over the longer haul.

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<sup>5</sup> Reference is apparently to William C. Foster, "Risks of Nuclear Proliferation: New Directions in Arms Control and Disarmament," *Foreign Affairs*, 43 (1964/65), pp. 587–601. Foster was Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency under President Johnson.

<sup>6</sup> Reference is to Articles 53 and 107 of the UN Charter; see footnote 9, Document 7. Strauss and others insisted that West Germany should not sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty until the Soviet Union renounced its "legal right" to intervene in internal German affairs under the articles. See *Foreign Relations, 1964–1968*, vol. XI, Document 259.

Nixon: There is need here to get our experts to talk to each other. We have a common objective—international monetary stability. We are not rigid, however, I know your government has some objections to our suggestion about compensation for our troops stationed here. We don't want any embarrassing situations. I have talked to our financial people and we will have to work out a satisfactory arrangement.

Chancellor: That was a real problem in 1966 and led to Erhard's resignation.

Nixon: I know there is a German financial group coming to the United States in March. They might talk about this problem with our financial people.

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## 15. Draft Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Bonn, February 26, 1969, noon.

### DRAFT RECORD OF 12 O'CLOCK SESSION, CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

#### PRESENT

The Chancellor	The President
Brandt	The Secretary
Carstens	Kissinger
Duckwitz	Hillenbrand
Diehl	Fessenden
Ahlers	Pedersen
Pauls	Ziegler
Ruete	Sonnenfeldt
Osterheld	Holzapfel
Weber	

After the welcome by the Chancellor, the President opened the discussion by saying that he was in Europe to establish a "line of communication" between the new U.S. administration and the German

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 834, Name Files, Sonnenfeldt, Helmut. Secret. No drafting information appears on the memorandum, which is marked "Uncleared: For Embassy Use Only." For an explanation, see footnote 1, Document 14. Another, nearly identical, draft is in the National Archives, RG 59, Conference Files: Lot 70 D 387, Box 484, CF 338, President Nixon's Trip to Europe, 2/23–3/2/69, Chronology; Memcons—Vol. I of VIII. Pedersen also took notes of the conversation. (Department of State, S/S Files: Lot 75 D 229, Pres. Trip to Europe, Feb.–Mar. 1969) For a German record of the meeting, see *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1969*, Vol. 1, pp. 278–283.

Government, both the present one and the government which will follow after the German elections. The President said he wanted to reiterate what he had already told the Chancellor in the car coming in: The U.S. relationship with the FRG is at the heart of our foreign policy; therefore, we want the closest communication and cooperation. As we look to those who might oppose us (the Soviets), we realize that they regard the great NATO Alliance as the key issue for them. If they can weaken the NATO Alliance, it will be a great accomplishment for them. Because of this Soviet objective, it is therefore necessary to do all possible to strengthen our alliance. There are very few differences between German and U.S. foreign policy objectives. We agree on fundamentals. We both want a united Europe, we both want British entry in the Common Market, we both believe it is necessary to maintain and strengthen the military commitments to NATO. We realize that the FRG has a special problem in dealing with its friends within the Alliance. We know the FRG wants good relations with the United Kingdom, with France, and with the U.S. There are occasions when there are sharp differences; last week's events brought these clearly to the fore.<sup>2</sup>

The President said he regarded his Berlin trip, not as a provocative action, but as something which he was required to do because to do otherwise would have been a sign of weakness. The U.S. feels it must maintain a firm, though not a belligerent or a provocative posture. There will be at some time bilateral U.S.-Soviet discussions covering such subjects as the Middle East and possibly SALT. The President emphasized very strongly, however, that there will be no discussions with the Soviets which will weaken the Alliance or the Federal Republic. The President said he intends to maintain the closest communication through the respective foreign ministries and the German Embassy.

On other matters, like offset, the President said he thought these were better discussed at the technical level. The President added that he was glad to hear during the private talk that a group was going to Washington in March. He was sure that they would be welcomed by Secretary Kennedy. It was most important to work out satisfactory solutions and maintain monetary stability. The President then called upon Secretary Rogers to speak.

The Secretary said that in his talks with Foreign Minister Brandt, he had explained that the U.S. recognizes the political problems with which the FRG is faced.<sup>3</sup> He recognized also that the difficulties

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<sup>2</sup> Reference is presumably to the "Soames Affair"; see footnote 2, Document 14.

<sup>3</sup> A brief account of Rogers' meeting with Brandt, as well as a summary of the discussion between Nixon and Kiesinger, is in telegram 3003 from Paris (Secto 19), February 28. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 7 US)

between the United Kingdom and France posed problems for the FRG. These differences, the Secretary felt, are considerably exaggerated in the press. He added that there will also always be differences between friends. The Secretary said that he had explained these to both the British Government and press.

The Chancellor said that the President's trip to Europe has great symbolic importance and added that he hoped the present seemingly confused situation in Europe would not mislead the President. He agreed with Secretary Rogers that the press considerably exaggerated the Franco-British affair and urged that all keep a cool head. The Federal Republic will do its best to help solve these difficulties. He added that the FRG is sometimes accused of being hesitant and indecisive. This is wrong; the contrary is the case. The FRG remains steadfast in pursuing its goals. He said that he wanted to emphasize very strongly that the most important goal of German foreign policy was European unity and this goal is supported by the entire cabinet, the German Government, and the vast majority of the people.

The Chancellor then said that a recent public opinion poll showed that 76% of the German people stand for closest cooperation with the U.S. This is the highest favorable response ever recorded for a view on a political question and shows clearly that the German people realize what is important and know what they owe to the Alliance. The FRG, like other European countries, does not want to be completely dependent on "big brother," but they also know that none of the individual European countries today has the ability to defend itself alone. The FRG is prepared to do its part to strengthen the Alliance, and since Czechoslovakia, steps have been taken to strengthen German defenses.

As for national problems, the Chancellor said German unity remains a fundamental goal but the government is realistic about this as well. They know the difficulties and that the way is long and hard. The FRG also understands that the U.S. and Soviets must have certain contacts on matters which affect freedom and peace in the world today. But, as the President himself said so clearly, these contacts will be undertaken in closest consultation with the Allies. Furthermore, the Allies are fully confident that there will in fact be such full consultations.

The President said he would like to reaffirm that we assume, until we have evidence to the contrary, that a major Soviet objective is to weaken the Alliance and especially the FRG. The President said he wanted to assure again that, this being the case, we intend to do nothing which will weaken the Alliance or the FRG. In other words, the President said, we know what the game is about. The Alliance, which has kept the peace for the last 20 years, is absolutely crucial.

The Chancellor said that, on Berlin, we must keep the city free and viable. These are the objectives which determine FRG policy toward

Berlin today. We must also not allow the vital arteries between Berlin and West Germany to be severed. There is a crisis regarding Berlin over the holding of the Bundesversammlung. There are differing opinions within the FRG on the wisdom of holding the Bundesversammlung in Berlin. There is no question, however, regarding the right of the FRG to hold the meeting there, but the Soviets are disputing this right. The more the Soviets pressure and threaten us on this, the more firm we have had to become. In the last week, the FRG has received hints of Soviet willingness to reach an understanding on this, which has been the subject of some talks between the Chancellor and the Soviet Ambassador. The Chancellor said he has told the Soviet Ambassador that if the Soviets are prepared to make some convincing contribution to removing the obstacles to German viability and freedom erected by the East Germans, then perhaps something can be worked out. The Chancellor said he did not know what would come out of these talks, adding that the subject is being discussed in Berlin today. The Chancellor said he wants on the one hand a genuine offer for an understanding; but on the other hand any decision to move the location of the Bundesversammlung must be on the basis of a real contribution by the Soviets. If there is no such real contribution by the Soviets, the Bundesversammlung will in fact be held in Berlin. The Chancellor added that the people of Berlin were very courageous and that it was a great thing that the President was going to visit there.

The President replied that he wanted to assure the Chancellor of full American support for Berlin. As he had told Ambassador Pauls in Washington, he had explained to the Soviet Ambassador in Washington that the Berlin trip was not a provocation but was a reaffirmation that Berlin and its freedom have the support of the U.S.<sup>4</sup> He had also told the Soviet Ambassador that, in case of any Soviet actions affecting Berlin, these could be very detrimental to any bilateral talks between the U.S. and the Soviet Union which might take place.<sup>5</sup> Our posture is one of firmness but not belligerence. This policy had been the policy of several American Presidents and was one which he would continue.

On the Bundesversammlung decision, the President said this should be taken by the FRG in the light of its own interests. If the FRG gains concessions from the Soviets which are very significant and lead to a change in the locale of the Bundesversammlung, we will respect and support that position. If on the other hand the FRG decides to go ahead with the Bundesversammlung in Berlin, we will respect and support that position.

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<sup>4</sup> See Document 5.

<sup>5</sup> See Document 11.

16. Draft Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Bonn, February 26, 1969, 4:15 p.m.

DRAFT RECORD OF 4:15 P.M. SESSION,  
CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

PRESENT

The Chancellor	The President
Brandt	Secretary
Carstens	Kissinger
Duckwitz	Hillenbrand
Diehl	Fessenden
Ahlers	Pedersen
Pauls	Ziegler
Ruete	Sonnenfeldt
Osterheld	Holzapfel
Weber	

*Middle East*—The President opened the discussion by saying that we were undertaking exploratory talks on the Middle East, at the present stage in the UN on a bilateral basis. Our general concept is that Four-Power discussions later might produce some recommendation for settlement. “Recommendation” is the key word; there is no thought of imposing a settlement, especially on the Israelis. The President explained that he had already had useful bilateral talks in the UK and would be having them in Paris.<sup>2</sup> The problem is not easy. The Israelis insist on the recognition of Israel as a state; their Arab neighbors insist that Israel withdraw from the occupied territories. The Israelis also insist that there be a credible guarantee of no further military threat. They want to retain a few territories, such as the Golan Heights and certain other areas. One possibility is a UN guarantee, but this is not credible to the Israelis because of their previous experiences. Another possibility would be a guarantee by the United States and the Soviet Union, with perhaps other major powers. This would be more credible to the Israelis.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 834, Name Files, Sonnenfeldt, Helmut. Secret. No drafting information appears on the memorandum, which is marked “Uncleared—For Embassy Use Only.” For an explanation, see footnote 1, Document 14. Another, nearly identical, draft is in the National Archives, RG 59, Conference Files: Lot 70 D 387, Box 484, CF 338, President Nixon’s Trip to Europe, 2/23–3/2/79, Chronology; Memcons—Vol. I of VIII. For a German record of the meeting, see *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1969*, Vol. 1, pp. 283–291.

<sup>2</sup> Memoranda of conversations in London and Paris are scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XLI.

The President said a Middle East settlement is very important because it is one of the key areas in the world where a military confrontation could drag the two major powers into a conflict which neither side wants. The problem was a most difficult one; no “instant solution” was at hand. He asked Secretary Rogers for his appraisal.

The Secretary said he felt there was some slight hope for progress. Certainly the talk in the UK had been constructive. He added that one thing is clear: It is essential that the starting point for a solution must be assurance to Israel of its continued existence. The Secretary said they would hold further bilateral talks with the French and then again with the Soviet Ambassador after their return to Washington.<sup>3</sup> They will discuss the matter with the Soviet Ambassador orally because the Soviets have told them they will not respond yet in writing to our request for clarification of their proposal.

*East-West Relations*—The President opened the discussion by saying that the Soviets have already shown great interest in SALT discussions. He said he had earlier stated, before the election, that there must be progress on political questions, such as the Middle East and Vietnam, before SALT talks. This statement had been interpreted in many quarters as a precondition to the opening of SALT talks. The President speculated on why the Soviets were so anxious for SALT talks. Two reasons seem plausible: (a) They wanted to avoid the excessive budget expenditures. This, the President commented, would not be sufficient reason for us to engage in SALT discussions; security, not budget and financial considerations, were the dominant factor for the US. (b) A second reason for wanting SALT discussions was to head off the danger of an arms race, which allegedly increases the danger of war. However, this is a questionable thesis. History shows that political difficulties lead more often to war than the mere fact of an arms race. Therefore, we have told the Soviets that the best way to move ahead on SALT talks is to make simultaneous progress on several political fronts: i.e., the Middle East, Vietnam, and the division of Europe.

The President said that in discussions so far with the Soviet Ambassador in Washington he has made clear that any agreement on SALT talks would involve full consultation with our NATO allies and no impairment of NATO's strength and credibility. Specifically, the President said, nuclear arms available to NATO forces would not be part of a SALT agreement.

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<sup>3</sup> Rogers met Dobrynin on the morning of March 8 for a discussion of several issues. (Personal Papers of William P. Rogers, Appointment Books) A memorandum of their conversation on Berlin is in the National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 38.

The President then pointed to a potential danger for the alliance in SALT talks. Experience has shown that any bilateral disarmament discussions with the Soviets (test ban, NPT) tend to increase the sense of euphoria and sap the determination in NATO to maintain our own defense capability. This is a real dilemma because it is only a strong NATO which makes possible disarmament talks with the Soviets. Therefore, it is most important, even while talks may be going on with the Soviets, to continue to hammer home the necessity of maintaining our own defensive strength. It is not easy for a politician to get across to the people in a democracy that we should simultaneously maintain our military strength and negotiate with the Soviets.

The President then said there had been a disturbing development in recent years. In 1962, at the time of the Cuban missile crisis, the US lead in strategic missiles had been so massive that no rational decision makers on the Soviet side would have risked war. Unfortunately, the US lead today has been sharply cut because of a very major Soviet effort to increase its own missile capability. Accompanying this has been an equally significant improvement in the quality of Soviet conventional strength.

The President then pointed to a serious political problem in the US. There is a very strong move to bring home US troops from Europe.<sup>4</sup> Before Czechoslovakia a majority of congressmen would have favored this. The President stressed that he personally does not share this view. He believes we should maintain our commitments for European defense and that this is especially important whenever we undertake negotiations. The President said that the other side of the coin is that it is very difficult politically for us to carry our share of the load if the Europeans are not prepared to carry theirs. There are two basic theories regarding our force posture in Europe: (a) There is the "trip-wire" theory which says we need a bare minimum of forces because any military attack against Western Europe is enough to set off the full US deterrent. Under this theory, conventional forces don't matter, and we can "go nuclear" immediately. (b) The second theory holds that there would be a substantial amount of time for holding and that, therefore, conventional forces should be kept at a credibly high level. The President said that he believed we need to maintain substantial conventional forces and that the present level of our forces in Europe should be maintained. In addition to the purely military reasons for this is the need to have adequate conventional forces to resist political pressures short of open military attack.

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<sup>4</sup> Reference is presumably to the continuing effort of Senate Majority Leader Mansfield (D-Montana) to pass a resolution calling for substantial reductions of U.S. forces in Europe.

The Chancellor thanked the President for his appraisal of the East-West political and strategic situation. He agreed completely that there is an inseparable connection between military strength and successful negotiations with the Soviets. He also fully understood that the American military contribution to NATO defense is closely tied with Europe's own willingness to contribute to its defense. He stressed that the presence of US troops in Europe is of the greatest importance to the FRG. The events in Czechoslovakia had heightened an awareness of the central fact that the American military presence in Europe was the best guarantee for European peace.

*Mediterranean*—The Chancellor said a new element is the rapidly increasing Soviet presence in the Mediterranean. This makes Europe very uneasy; the Soviets already control the Baltic and the northern Scandinavian waters. Now they are carrying out a kind of pincers in the Mediterranean. Some Europeans argue that the Mediterranean should be “neutralized,” with the Sixth Fleet pulled out. The Chancellor said he was very much opposed to such proposals.

The President replied that the idea of neutralizing the Mediterranean bordered on the ridiculous. Neutralization only works where it is guaranteed by the major powers who might otherwise have a conflict. The presence of the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean is essential.

Secretary Rogers agreed that neutralization requires much mutual trust and good faith, and we are a long way from this in the Mediterranean.

*East-West Relations*—The Secretary then said the problem with the SALT topics is whether the Soviets may be using discussions in this field to overcome the stigma of Czechoslovakia. We think there should be progress towards political solutions in all fields, not just in SALT. The steps seem to be clear: find out what the Soviets really have in mind, consult fully with the allies, and maintain our military strength. The Secretary added that we do not like the word “détente.” It lulls people in the West into reducing their military strength. We should certainly undertake concrete steps to improve relations with the Soviets, but avoid creating euphoria. In sum, we are willing to enter talks with the Soviets, but are somewhat wary regarding their motives for these talks.

The Chancellor said that he felt the German position on East-West relations has not always been understood in the American press. It has never been the German intention in pursuing a more flexible Eastern policy to abandon in any way their attachment to a strong NATO. There has also been criticism of German Eastern policy in Europe, particularly in France. There has even been a charge that the FRG induced the events in Czechoslovakia by its Eastern policy. It has never been the German policy to drive a wedge between the Soviet Union and its

so-called satellites. Germany has always been quite aware of the limits of its policy. Its only objective has been to open contacts with Eastern Europe and improve the political climate.

The President said that he had never given any credence to the idea that the Soviets moved into Czechoslovakia because of German expansionism. That was a pretext and not a cause. He felt that it was difficult to read the situation in Eastern Europe at this time. He expressed his own feeling that trade and other contacts in this area, like tourism, should be pursued, but he also believed that the recent Soviet declaration of a “socialist Commonwealth” may deter that.<sup>5</sup>

Brandt said he wanted to make two comments. First, on consultation, he realized that real consultation, in substance rather than mere form, greatly increased the burdens of the US. Second, he expressed the hope that in settling political problems with the Soviet Union, such as the Middle East and Vietnam, attention would also be given to European problems, on which there had been no progress in recent years. For example, some real progress towards a stable settlement in Berlin would be highly desirable.

Brandt added that the Eastern European countries, despite Czechoslovakia, still seem to be interested in contacts. For example, they had had interesting talks with the Poles in November. The Rumanians and Yugoslavs were obviously interested. Even the Czechs say they now have the green light from the Soviets for economic cooperation with the West. Economic contacts, even tourism, seem to be going up.

The Chancellor said that the new “Socialist Commonwealth” doctrine would be strongly pushed by the Soviets, but the Soviets will not be able to stop the process of liberalization. The events in Czechoslovakia were very different from those in East Germany in 1953 and in Hungary in 1956. The fact is that the young people particularly simply refuse to accept the Communist system. As a result, however, a difficult and dangerous situation may be created because the Soviets will be tempted to do rash things to stop the clock.

The President, apologizing for putting the subject forward, asked whether frustration regarding early attainment of German reunification does not increase the possibility of Germany’s trying to reach an accommodation with the Soviets.

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<sup>5</sup> Reference is apparently to the so-called Brezhnev Doctrine. On November 12, 1968, in a speech at the Fifth Congress of the Polish Communist Party in Warsaw, Brezhnev justified Soviet military intervention in Czechoslovakia the previous August as a necessary step to prevent capitalist interference in the socialist camp.

The Chancellor replied that people in the FRG are sober-minded and realistic about reunification and there is no real tendency for seeking a deal with the East. In response to the President's question, he said this applies even to young people.

The President then raised the question of why the Soviets were so interested in SALT discussions. The Chancellor replied that he thought the Soviets had arrived at a stage in their strategic arms development where they think they can now stop further progress with advantage to themselves. Brandt said the Soviet interest in SALT might result from two causes. First, the Soviets have very heavy domestic demands which must be met. Second, the key question of China, which the Yugoslavs, for example, believe is a major factor. As a result, the Russians are more interested in lessening tensions with the West. The Chancellor agreed and added that in addition the Soviets must in particular maintain larger conventional forces to deal with China.

The President thanked Chancellor and Brandt for these comments, adding that they were valuable in our own consideration of the problems involved. He said that we have not made final decisions yet on the SALT talks. Commenting on the two points raised, the President said China must indeed be a major concern for the Soviets. Perhaps they will need not only reductions of tensions with the West; they may feel compelled to go even further. Regarding Soviet internal demands as a motive for their interest in SALT talks, the President pointed out that a less comforting thesis could also be developed. Sometimes serious internal problems lead a country like the Soviet Union to a harsher line rather than a softer line.

Regarding Foreign Minister Brandt's point about the added burdens of consultation, the President said one could also argue the opposite. As an example, before his trip, he had called a bipartisan conference of congressional leadership.<sup>6</sup> Some of the congressional leadership do not agree with him on his basic European policies. Still, it was better to have this conference now rather than after his European trip. It is likely that he would have had even more trouble had he consulted after the fact. The same applies in the international field.

On Eastern Europe, the President made a special appeal for German contribution, saying that Germany has more knowledge, experience and contacts than any other country in this field.

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<sup>6</sup> Nixon met with Congressional leaders on February 19 to discuss his upcoming European trip and other issues. Notes on the meeting, written by Patrick J. Buchanan, are in the National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Special Files, President's Office Files, Memoranda for the President, Beginning February 16, 1969.

*Monetary Matters*—The President said that monetary matters will be of great importance in the period ahead. He felt the best approach for the present would be a very quiet and inconspicuous bilateral discussion between the leading countries, not an international conference. He had suggested this in the UK, where the response had been favorable. Treasury Secretary Kennedy, who is much preoccupied now with tax reform is not in a position to travel at the present time, although Under Secretary Volcker is more available for this purpose. On the other hand, we welcome the visits to Washington of responsible monetary officials, where Secretary Kennedy will be only too glad to talk with them. This kind of inconspicuous bilateral consultation is the best way to get together in this delicate field.

*Trade Policy*—The President said that Commerce Secretary Stans is planning a European trip next month and would welcome the opportunity for talks on trade policy. The President said that American and German views are very similar on trade policy questions, but we are constantly faced with protectionist pressures at home. Maximum consultation in this field is highly desirable.

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## 17. Editorial Note

On February 27, 1969, 1 week before the Bundesversammlung meeting, President Nixon arrived in West Berlin to demonstrate U.S. support for the freedom and viability of the city. In an address at the Siemens factory that afternoon, the President delivered a warning to the Soviet Union and East Germany: “No unilateral move, no illegal act, no form of pressure from any source,” he declared, “will shake the resolve of the Western nations to defend their rightful status as protectors of the people of free Berlin.” Nixon, however, also offered an olive branch:

“The question before the world is not whether we shall rise to the challenge of defending Berlin—we have already demonstrated that we shall. The question is how best to end the challenge and clear the way for a peaceful solution to the problem of a divided Germany. When we say that we reject any unilateral alteration of the status quo in Berlin, we do not mean that we consider the status quo to be satisfactory. Nobody benefits from a stalemate, least of all the people of Berlin. Let us set behind us the stereotype of Berlin as a ‘provocation.’ Let us, all of us, view the situation in Berlin as an invocation, a call to end the tension of the past age here and everywhere.” (*Public Papers: Nixon, 1969*, pages 156–158)

In his memoirs, Willy Brandt claims that “we had persuaded President Nixon that he ought to give a sign” during his visit for negotiations on Berlin. “This he did in a constructively worded speech at the Siemens works in Berlin.” (*People and Politics*, pages 194, 388) For memoir accounts of Nixon’s visit to Berlin, see Kissinger, *White House Years*, pages 100, 407; Hillenbrand, *Fragments of Our Time*, pages 269–270; and Walters, *Silent Missions*, pages 562–563.

On March 3 Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin mentioned Nixon’s speech on Berlin during a luncheon with Kissinger. According to the memorandum of conversation, Dobrynin opened the discussion by noting that the Soviet Union had closely followed news of the President’s trip:

“Except for some phrases in Berlin, it [Soviet Union] had found nothing objectionable. He [Dobrynin] asked whether these phrases indicated any new commitment to German unification. I [Kissinger] replied that the purpose of the Berlin speech was to emphasize existing American commitments, not to undertake new ones. I also told him that we viewed any harassment of Berlin with the utmost gravity. Dobrynin replied that the only concern of the Soviet Union was to prevent a change in the status quo in Berlin and elsewhere in Europe. The Bonn government had deliberately created a provocation. I replied that a clear precedent existed so that one could hardly talk of provocation.”

After reporting a readiness to use the Kissinger channel for a “strictly confidential exchange on delicate and important matters,” Dobrynin raised matters relating to Europe, particularly Germany and Berlin. Since Kissinger had previously foresworn any “interest in undermining the Soviet position in Eastern Europe,” Dobrynin had been authorized to deny any “intention of undermining the status quo in Western Europe.”

“The Soviet Union was interested that the United States acted on the basis of the actual conditions in Europe. I [Kissinger] asked whether that meant that the Soviet Union did not care about formal recognition of Eastern Germany. Dobrynin replied that this was correct. I added that for us it was essential to get the access procedures to Berlin regularized. Dobrynin suggested that there had been many positive developments in the negotiations of 1963 to 1969 crisis that might be re-examined. He refused to specify what those were but said he would go over the record and give me some indication later. He urged me to do the same, indicating that Moscow’s attitude was ‘positive.’”

At the end of the meeting, Dobrynin asked whether “Soviet reassurance was enough to get German ratification” of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Kissinger replied that if the Soviets could meet German concerns on specific provisions in the treaty, “either through us or directly, it would ease the problem of signature considerably.” (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 489, President’s Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1969 [Part 2])

Kissinger regularly briefed the President on developments before the Bundesversammlung convened on March 5. On March 3 he reported that the autobahn to Berlin “was not closed today as it has been the past two days.” As a result, five American convoys had tested access to the city with minimal interference. Kissinger also cited reports of “an 11th-hour move to avert a looming Berlin crisis,” including a “new offer” from Walter Ulbricht. (Ibid., Box 3, President’s Daily Briefs, March 1–10, 1969) The following day, Kissinger noted that, although the situation was “relatively quiet,” intelligence sources indicated that East Germany might impose “an almost total blockade of ground access routes from 3 to 7 March.” (Ibid.) On March 5, as delegates to the Bundesversammlung met to elect a new president, Kissinger reported that “Soviet and East German forces around and to the west of Berlin are on alert status, and have the capacity to isolate the city by land and air.” He doubted, however, that “the Soviets would risk such a challenge to Allied rights of access.” (Ibid.) In a memorandum to the President on March 6, Kissinger described the outcome as follows:

“Almost as an anticlimax the West German Federal Assembly met yesterday in Berlin and elected Minister of Justice Gustav Heinemann to succeed retiring President Heinrich Lübke. Heinemann led the first two ballots but failed to achieve the required majority; on the third ballot, when only a plurality was needed he was elected.

“During the day all three of the Berlin Autobahns were closed approximately four hours for the first time during the recent tension. There was no attempt to interfere with traffic in the air corridors, and the rumors of a complete sealing of all Berlin checkpoints proved false. Generally, the election proceeded in an atmosphere of unexpected calm.” (Ibid.)

In his memoranda to the President, Kissinger did not link developments in Berlin with events along the Ussuri River, where Soviet and Chinese forces clashed on March 2 in a dispute over Damansky or Chenpao Island. The combatants, however, did make the connection. In a report to East German leaders on March 8, the Soviets claimed that Chinese action revealed an intention to engage in “opportunistic political flirtation” with the United States and West Germany. “It is no accident,” they concluded, “that the ambush on the Soviet border unit was staged by the Chinese agencies at a time when Bonn started its provocation of holding the election of the Federal President in West Berlin.” (Christian F. Ostermann, “East German Documents on the Sino-Soviet Border Conflict,” *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, Winter 1995/1996 (Issues 6/7), pages 188–190)

During his secret trip to Beijing in July 1971, Kissinger heard the other side of the story from Chinese Foreign Minister Zhou Enlai. “At that time,” Chou recalled, “there was high tension over the Berlin question because the Federal Republic of Germany wanted to have elections for its Parliament in West Berlin. The Soviet authorities created

the Chenpao incident so that all the Parliamentarians from West Germany could go to West Berlin to have the elections there, and so undo the crisis." When Kissinger questioned his interpretation, Chou replied: "Of course, because Ulbricht found himself in a very difficult situation the Soviets made it appear that we created trouble. However, it was they who deliberately created the incident to escape responsibilities over Berlin." See *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, vol. XVII, Document 141. For his published account, see Kissinger, *White House Years*, pages 145–146, 173.

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## 18. Paper Prepared by the National Security Council Staff<sup>1</sup>

Washington, March 11, 1969.

### SUBJECT

Soviet Negotiating Interest on Berlin

### *Background*

In the voluminous exchanges over the past decade Moscow's proposals for Berlin have featured three central objectives: (1) to change the legal-political status of the Western sectors, (2) to maintain a sharp distinction between West and East Berlin, and (3) to advance the sovereignty of East Germany either by transferring access controls or by substituting Ulbricht's regime for the USSR as the principal negotiating partner. Accordingly, Western counterproposals, designed to insure the status quo or improve on it have evoked little Soviet interest. More ambitious plans, such as unifying Berlin have been completely rejected

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 1320, NSC Secretariat, NSC Unfiled Material, 1969 [9 of 19]. Secret; Nodis. No drafting information appears on the paper. Sonnenfeldt forwarded it to Kissinger on March 11 as an attachment to a memorandum drafted by Hyland. Haig noted on the memorandum: "HAK has seen + says fine job." Kissinger presumably requested the paper after his meeting with Dobrynin on March 3 (see Document 17). As Hyland explains in his memoirs: "One of the early surprises for the Nixon administration had been Soviet interest in talking about Berlin. Dobrynin had said as much to Kissinger in early 1969. This was one of my first assignments on the NSC staff: to assemble some background on the history of the long, tedious negotiations over Berlin that had taken place at various times since 1945." According to Hyland: "The idea of new talks about Berlin appealed to Kissinger. Berlin was a concrete issue on which progress could be clearly measured. In other words, it did not involve a vague, abstract improvement in atmosphere. And given the long history of Berlin, almost any progress would be a significant signal that super-power relations were improving." (Hyland, *Mortal Rivals*, pp. 29–30)

and made virtually impossible for the Soviet side by the erection of the wall. Other approaches, such as agreement on “principles” or interim arrangements were kept alive for a time. Generally, however, these were tied to some agreement in principle to change the status of the city after some given period.

As for negotiations limited to the question of access the Soviets in the past have been willing to explore alternatives, but mainly to determine how far the Western powers would go in the direction of granting new authority to East Germany. Thus, whatever new control organs might be created, they would then be responsible to East Germany for the practical details and day to day enforcement of access.

#### *Signs of Soviet Interest*

Within this general context, the Soviets have shown some interest in the following features of plans discussed by the West:

a. An all-German commission of some sort with at least some authority for Berlin Affairs, perhaps including settlement of access problems; the commission might be associated with a Four Power group; alternatively a Four Power group might be constituted with German technical advisors.

b. A UN presence of some kind located in West Berlin, with no real authority, or to perform limited tasks, such as investigating complaints of “subversive” activity.

c. Continuing Four Power consultations, at the “deputy” foreign ministers level, with the aim of reaching a new general agreement for Berlin. This would be largely a device for putting off real negotiations.

d. Creation of a new entity to supervise civilian access (the International Access Authority—the four powers in another guise) or an Authority of Neutral powers with or without the UN for the same purpose.

#### *Berlin and the German Question*

In view of the limited leverage which they can exert in negotiations limited to Berlin, the Western powers may enjoy a stronger bargaining position if they link Berlin to broader issues. The Soviets have not adamantly opposed such linkages, though they have generally tried to tie Berlin to a German peace treaty, either with the two Germanys or a separate treaty with East Germany à la Khrushchev. The farthest the Soviets have gone in the Western direction of an overall peace plan is the creation of an all-German commission to deal with unification and Berlin issues. Over the past few years this has been pressed pro forma.

#### *Berlin-Bonn Relations*

A more lively issue has been the relationship of Berlin to the FRG. The Soviet stand is well known: under none of its various proposals or concepts has the USSR been willing to admit a formal or legal link

between Bonn and Berlin. But in numerous private exchanges over the years, the Soviets have indicated a willingness to facilitate the improvement of economic and cultural ties between Bonn and Berlin (this was reiterated in Dobrynin's remarks to Secretary Rogers on 8 March).<sup>2</sup> In practice also, while they have frequently protested German activities or waged various harassments in connection with them, the Soviets have lived with a substantial FRG presence in Berlin. It is doubtful, however, that the Soviets would go very far with a deal on this issue without some change in Berlin's status or Bonn's renunciation of any political rights in Berlin.

Soviet and East German behavior in the recent "crisis," however, does suggest they are willing to bargain on this general issue. The offer of Easter passes provides some opening for further discussions should Bonn desire to proceed. Some permanent arrangements on Berlin passes could probably be negotiated, but the price would be high. Bonn would have to forego most of its activities in Berlin. Agreement not to hold another Bundesversammlung (the next one isn't due till 1974) would obviously be insufficient. In any case, now that the issue has been raised, it could provide a means of discovering whether the Soviets or East Germans are interested in enlarging the area of negotiations to include West German access to the city as well as within it.

### *Berlin and European Security*

The Soviets have shown some interest in attaching Berlin to wider issues other than German unification. In general, the Soviets have indicated that "normalization" of the Berlin situation could be one of several measures included in a European security package. The most recent formal position on this is the Declaration of European Communists at Karlovy Vary in 1967,<sup>3</sup> which mentions a European treaty renouncing the use of force, guaranteeing peaceful solution of disputes, as well as normalization of relations with the GDR and between the GDR and Berlin. This general line was echoed during the recent ructions, and could indicate that the Soviets are raising Berlin as a means for opening broader issues for negotiation.

Thus, one approach that might prompt some Soviet interest would be to revert to the idea of an agreement, or exploration of "principles" under the rubric of non-aggression, as a follow-on to ratification of the

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<sup>2</sup> A memorandum of the conversation between Rogers and Dobrynin on Berlin is in the National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 38.

<sup>3</sup> A conference of European Communist Parties was held in Karlovy Vary April 24–27, 1967. For text of the declaration approved at the conference, see *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, Vol. XVI (1967/1968), p. 22501.

NPT. Though this was overtaken in the 1962 exchanges and not fully examined by the Soviets (Tab A),<sup>4</sup> it may be what they might have in mind in reviving the Berlin issue. Under this approach no new agreements would be made on Berlin, which would be set aside for “study,” while negotiations proceeded on mutual renunciations of force, including disputes over European borders.

This approach, of course, does nothing to improve Berlin’s access or viability, but it might prevent further eruptions and might forestall what is now reported as long term East German effort to restrict the flow of goods and force East-West German negotiations under favorable circumstances for Ulbricht.

#### *Soviet and US Interests*

If the Soviets are actually now interested in taking up the Berlin issue once again, probably they still have the same general objectives as in earlier phases: to exchange some stabilization of access procedures or of the city’s viability for a modification of West Berlin’s juridical or political status and a strengthening of East Germany’s claim to recognition and sovereignty over the land and air corridors. The issue has probably not arisen merely because of the Bundesversammlung, but also because Moscow feels compelled to make a more active defense of its interests in Central and East Europe since the Czech invasion. Thus, the Soviets will want to shore up Ulbricht’s regime and discredit Bonn’s Eastern policy.

At the same time, the Soviets may have a current interest in stabilizing the Berlin situation, or at least beginning negotiations, in order to fend off pressures from Ulbricht for new disruptive actions. While the USSR may agree in principle with Ulbricht’s various harassment schemes, Moscow is also interested in controlling the timing and degree so as not to interfere with larger moves on East-West issues.

In almost any discussions on Berlin, the Western Powers and Bonn suffer from certain negotiating weaknesses. To protect against new encroachments or harassments the US must insist on a rigid respect for existing agreements as the basis for discussion. The Soviets and East Germans, on the other hand, can affect the urgency and atmosphere surrounding talks by applying pressures against West Berlin and the access routes. Moreover, the Soviets can play off Western military access against German civilian access. Finally, since the USSR and East Germany have no positive interest in improving the Western position,

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<sup>4</sup> Tab A, attached but not printed, is a March 6 memorandum from Sonnenfeldt to Kissinger, including an attached set of documents detailing American proposals on Berlin given to the Soviets between 1959 and 1963.

any conceivable agreement would almost certainly have to include some concessions tending toward the recognition of East Germany or confirming the special political status of West Berlin.

In short, there has never existed a common basis for negotiations on Berlin, and those few occasions when there was some actual bargaining were limited to peripheral issues, i.e., troop levels, subversive activity, non-stationing of certain weapons, etc. Thus, if Soviet-American contacts are to be resumed on Berlin it would be well to draw out the Soviets first, rather than offering old US negotiating proposals, or fashioning new ones. The safest US position, at least at the outset, is that the current situation, inadequate and imperfect as it may be, is still satisfactory, provided the USSR lives up to its obligations. If the Soviets have changes in mind they will inevitably spell them out, and should be invited to do so. Indeed, it is possible that the USSR intends to move on several fronts simultaneously; they may continue Tsarapkin's discussions with Brandt on the NPT and a mutual renunciation of force, continue GDR exchanges in Berlin with the Senate, while exploring the US attitude.

#### *American Interests*

Without examining all of the details of the various negotiating formulas, American interests may be defined as: (1) *the preservation of West Berlin's viability*, and consequently (2) *a substantial economic role and corresponding freedom of access for the FRG*; (3) *the maintenance of US-UK-French presence in the city and their access thereto*. Discussions with the Soviets should proceed on the basis of their acceptance of these interests, at least tacitly. Further regulation of Bonn's political activity in the city could be discussed, provided there is some compensation for Western interests. Within this definition of Western interests, there can also be room for negotiation over the modalities of *civilian* access. However, just as the ultimate sanctions for the protection of US interests in Berlin are external to the situation there, so the prospects for improving the situation through negotiations with the USSR probably will depend on the inclusion of elements not immediately related to Berlin as such.

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## 19. Editorial Note

On March 26, 1969, President Nixon sent a letter to Soviet Chairman Kosygin outlining his personal "thoughts on the future of relations between our two countries." In addition to addressing such issues as the Middle East, Vietnam, and arms control, Nixon suggested

the possibility of a settlement on Berlin, particularly in light of the recent controversy over the Bundesversammlung. He wrote:

“I believe, Mr. Chairman, that our responsibilities also require the avoidance of crises and removal of threats to peace in Europe. I was disturbed by the recent flare-up of tensions in Berlin. As I pointed out to your Ambassador, my country is committed to the integrity of West Berlin; it is committed also to fulfilling the obligations and exercising the rights stemming from four-power agreements. Here as elsewhere, unilateral attempts to change the existing situation to the advantage of one side would place obstacles on the road to peace. I believe that any change must be the result of agreement and should improve on the unsatisfactory aspects of the existing situation. If you have suggestions that would make the situation in Berlin mutually more satisfactory, I would, of course, be interested in hearing them.” (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 709, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. II)

On April 22, 4 days after presenting his credentials to Soviet President Podgorny, Ambassador Beam met Kosygin in Moscow to deliver Nixon’s letter. In order to facilitate the discussion, Beam had forwarded to the Foreign Ministry a copy not only of the letter but also of his oral statement, which contained the following passage:

“As regards Berlin and Germany, we would welcome any improvement in Soviet-German relations. We think German signature of the Non-Proliferation Treaty will assist this and we hope that the Soviets will be able to give Chancellor Kiesinger any help you may consider feasible to enable him to get the treaty adopted. Meanwhile as we have told Ambassador Dobrynin and Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov in Washington, we believe early completion of the ratification process by the major nuclear powers, including simultaneous deposit of instruments of ratification, would be helpful in bringing about the widest possible endorsement of the treaty which we both seek. On Berlin, we are prepared to examine any way to improve the present unsatisfactory situation, and the President believes from his recent talks with the Germans that they are prepared to do so too. But this cannot be done under pressure. Perhaps some quiet exchanges would show the way.” (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL US–USSR)

When the two met, Kosygin, although claiming that he had not read the letter due to “preoccupation with current CEMA meeting,” conceded that he was “probably acquainted with its contents since translations were on his desk.” After an exchange on the importance of improving relations, the Soviet leader recommended that the two sides find “constructive solutions” for outstanding problems, such as the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Middle East, Vietnam, and Europe. Kosygin insisted that the Kremlin sought to avoid tension, citing the “recent diminution of tensions in Berlin,” but would tolerate no revision of the “results of World War II.” The Soviet position on the status quo in Europe, he declared, was “sacred.” Beam declined to debate European questions, replying that, in his view, the “President’s letter

covered subject adequately.” (Telegram 1693 from Moscow, April 22; *ibid.*)

Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko met Beam on May 27 to deliver Kosygin’s reply. (Telegram 2408 from Moscow, May 27; *ibid.*) The letter, dated May 24, included the following passage on Berlin, West Germany, and European security:

“We fully share the view on the necessity of averting crises and of eliminating threats to peace in Europe. In this connection we attach special importance to the understanding with the Soviet Government, expressed earlier by you Mr. President, that the foundations of the post-war system in Europe should not be changed, inasmuch as this could cause great upheavals and the danger of a clash among great powers.

“For our part, we are not interested in the creation of tension in Europe, including West Berlin. If such tension emerges from time to time, then the responsibility for it is borne by those forces in Western Germany which oppose the foundations of the post-war system in Europe, which attempt to undermine these foundations, and in particular which come out with totally unjustified claims with respect to West Berlin. There are no objections from our side to an exchange of opinions proposed by you concerning ways of improving the present unsatisfactory situation with West Berlin.

“We, Mr. President, are not at all against an improvement also of Soviet-West German relations. And the practical steps which have been undertaken by us in this direction are obviously known to you. Unfortunately, however, in the FRG the understanding still has not apparently matured that its relations with other countries, including those with the USSR, cannot be developed apart from the general foreign policy course of Bonn. And the fact that this course still is based on these which are contrary to the goals of strengthening European security and world peace is confirmed in particular by the attitude of the FRG toward the treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. After all, it is precisely the stubborn refusal of Western Germany to accede to the treaty—with whatever contrived pretext it fortifies itself—which greatly impedes its entry into force. We hope that the United States is using its influence in order to secure the most rapid accession to the treaty by the FRG and by a number of other countries allied with the USA. As regards the ratification of the treaty by the Soviet Union, the matter is not up to us.” (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 765, Presidential Correspondence File, USSR, Premier Alexei Kosygin)

For complete text of the documentation excerpted above, see *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XII, Documents 28, 39, 40, and 51. For memoir accounts of the exchange, see Beam, *Multiple Exposure*, pages 214–221; and Kissinger, *White House Years*, pages 144, 146, 173, 407.

## 20. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, April 9, 1969, 10:30 a.m.

### SUBJECT

Secretary's Bilateral with Brandt  
Transitional Arrangements for Berlin

### PARTICIPANTS

#### FRG

Willy Brandt, Foreign Minister  
Rolf Pauls, FRG Ambassador  
Hans Ruete, Assistant Secretary, FRG Foreign Office

#### U.S.

The Secretary  
Martin J. Hillenbrand, Assistant Secretary (EUR)  
Alexander C. Johnpoll, Acting Country Director (EUR/GER)

Brandt thought that at the Quadripartite Dinner tonight the Foreign Ministers should take up the proposal that the Soviets be probed on whether they would be interested in helping to stabilize Berlin access, and the situation of communications between the two parts of Germany.<sup>2</sup> Brandt said that what he had in mind was that the Three Western Powers should advise the FRG, and the Soviets advise the

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 38. Secret. Drafted by Johnpoll and approved in S on April 15. The meeting was held in the Secretary's office. Brandt was in Washington for the biannual meeting of NATO Ministers. The memorandum is part III of V. The other parts are: I, Brandt's Visit to Canada (*ibid.*, POL 7 GER W); II, Non-Proliferation Treaty (*ibid.*, DEF 18–6); IV, The Budapest Appeal (*ibid.*, DEF 1 EUR); and V, Four Power Talks on the Middle East (*ibid.*, POL 27–14 ARAB–ISR). For a German record of the meeting, see *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1969*, Vol. 1, pp. 459–461.

<sup>2</sup> At the traditional quadripartite dinner of Foreign Ministers that evening, Brandt proposed a "transitional arrangement" on Berlin, as detailed in a talking paper circulated to the Bonn Group on April 2. The text of the talking paper is in telegram 4429 from Bonn, April 2. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 38–6) Brandt led off the discussion of Berlin by outlining the conclusions he had drawn from the recent Bundesversammlung crisis: 1) the Soviet Union was impressed by Allied unity; 2) the Soviet Union was more interested in "the broad range of international relations" than merely Berlin itself; and 3) East Germany evidently did not share the Soviet "willingness to compromise." Brandt, therefore, proposed that the Allies should "see what the Soviets were willing to do on Berlin and other aspects of relations between the two parts of Germany." In the ensuing debate, Stewart questioned whether the Soviets and their East German allies were prepared for "meaningful talks." French Foreign Minister Michel Debré maintained that nothing should be done to endanger quadripartite rights in Berlin, arguing: "The time has not yet come when we can expect any reasonable compromise on Berlin." The Foreign Ministers, however, approved Rogers' suggestion to submit the

GDR, that they would like to see the two of them try to work out a more rational arrangement than exists now. The Three Western countries could separately, and without giving the impression of being involved in a coordinated move, suggest in a low key to the Soviets that the Soviets encourage the GDR along these lines.

Brandt said that the purpose would be to see whether the Soviets are more likely than the GDR to be interested in stabilizing the situation around Berlin. Brandt was not too optimistic that it would work, but he thought it worth trying. He added that if something like this could get started, it would help get around the Soviet argument that since the GDR is a sovereign state, the Soviets do not wish to involve themselves in these questions.

Brandt emphasized the importance of preserving the Four Power status of Berlin, and the rights of the occupying powers, in any conversations with the East that might ensue from his proposal.

The Secretary asked what the purpose of such talks with the GDR would be—to what are the talks intended to lead? Is there interference with German access to Berlin now which has to be rectified?

Brandt said that there was no significant interference at present. However, such interference could happen at any time, and steps should be taken now to see whether this kind of interference could be removed. The talks would also be designed to give Berliners a chance to visit relatives on the other side. In addition, while mail and communications between the two parts of Germany work at present after a fashion, there is no organized system for payments, so that mail and communications could be endangered at any time.

The Secretary told Brandt that he sees Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin quite frequently, and would not hesitate at all to raise this matter with him if it is decided that it is a good idea.

Brandt said that his concept was that this should not be a special subject of conversation between ourselves and the Soviets, but that we mention it to the Soviets in the course of conversations with them on a variety of other subjects.

The Secretary reminded Brandt that the Russians had complained to us that President Nixon's speeches in Berlin had been too strong and had helped prevent a compromise on the Bundesversammlung. The Secretary had replied to the Soviet Ambassador that the President,

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proposal to the Bonn Group for "urgent study." (Telegram 55485 to Bonn, April 11; *ibid.*, POL 38–6) For text of the final communiqué, in which the Ministers supported "concrete measures aimed at improving the situation in Berlin," see Department of State *Bulletin*, April 28, 1969, pp. 354–356. For Brandt's brief account of his initiative, see *People and Politics*, p. 388, and *My Life in Politics*, p. 214.

being in Berlin, certainly had to speak to the Berliners; and the President had not gone beyond well established US positions and views which we continue to hold.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Reference may be to the meeting between Rogers and Dobrynin on March 8. A memorandum of conversation is in the National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 38. Rogers, who returned from Europe on March 2, also called Dobrynin at 3:40 p.m. on March 6. (Personal Papers of William P. Rogers, Appointment Books) No substantive record of the conversation has been found.

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## 21. Editorial Note

In an address during the Sixth Session of the Seventh Supreme Soviet in Moscow on July 10, 1969, Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko offered to negotiate a settlement on Berlin with the Western Allies as well as a separate renunciation of force agreement with West Germany. Gromyko declared that the “inviolability of existing borders,” in particular the Oder-Neisse line and the boundary between East and West Germany, was the “question of questions in Europe.” “Whether there is to be peace or war,” he said, “depends on how the states, especially the large ones, answer this question.” On behalf of the Soviet Union, Gromyko stated: “The borders of states—in the East, the West, the North and the South of the continent—are inviolable, and no force can alter the situation.” After decrying recent trends in West Germany, Gromyko proposed that Bonn develop “normal relations” with Moscow:

“A turning point in our relations can occur—and we would like this—if the F.R.G. follows the path of peace. For this to happen, the plans of revenge for the lost war must give way to the realization that the future of the F.R.G., with its considerable economic and technical possibilities, lies in peaceful cooperation with all states, including the Soviet Union.

“Proceeding from this position, the Soviet government is ready to continue the exchange of opinions with the F.R.G. on renunciation of the use of force, up to and including the conclusion of an appropriate agreement, and also to exchange opinions on other questions of Soviet-West German relations and to establish the appropriate contacts. It goes without saying, that during the exchange of opinions the Soviet Union will also take fully into account the interests of our allies, the fraternal socialist countries.”

Gromyko then commented that “complications” over the status of West Berlin had always required “the close attention of Soviet foreign

policy." Although West Germany continued to complicate the issue with "illegal encroachments," the Soviet Union and East Germany advocated "a situation in which the city's population and its authorities have all the conditions for activity ensuring the normal existence of West Berlin as an autonomous political entity." Gromyko, therefore, suggested quadripartite talks on the following basis:

"If the other powers, our allies in the war, who bear a share of responsibility for the situation in Berlin, were to approach this question by taking the interests of European security into account, they would find the Soviet Union ready to exchange opinions on the subject of how to prevent complications concerning West Berlin now and in the future. Needless to say, we shall take no steps that harm the legitimate interests of the German Democratic Republic or the special status of West Berlin." (*The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol. XXI, No. 28, August 6, 1969, pages 5–6)

Before the Gromyko speech, the Western Allies had almost reached agreement on a tripartite "sounding" to the Soviet Union as suggested by West German Foreign Minister Brandt at the NATO Ministerial meeting in April. (See Sutterlin and Klein, *Berlin*, pages 86–88) In a July 21 memorandum to the President, Secretary of State Rogers recommended, however, that in light of the Soviet proposal, President Nixon approve instructions to revise the oral statement that the Allies intended to give the Soviets in Moscow. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 689, Country Files, Europe, Germany (Berlin), Vol. I)

Assistant Secretary of State Hillenbrand explained the reasoning behind this decision in a letter to Deputy Chief of Mission Fessenden on July 23. Although Gromyko had not given reason to hope for an "attractive" settlement, Hillenbrand thought the time may have come for "exploratory talks in order to prove that the Western side is prepared to move in the interest of achieving an amelioration of European problems and—if this unfortunately proves to be the case—that the Soviets have nothing constructive to offer." (*Ibid.*, RG 59, EUR/CE Files: Lot 91 D 341, POL 39, Berlin Soundings 1969, Jan–August) In an August 5 memorandum, Henry Kissinger informed Acting Secretary of State Richardson that the President had approved the instructions. (*Ibid.*, Central Files 1967–69, POL 28 GER B)

Two days later, on August 7, Ambassador Beam met Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Kozyrev in Moscow to deliver the following oral statement:

"1. The United States wishes to call attention to the desire of the FRG to remove points of friction with the GDR and to discuss with it problems concerning railroad matters, inland waterways, and post and telecommunications. We are informed that the FRG is willing, for its part, to make organizational arrangements for discussion of those subjects on a continuing basis. We see advantages in such arrangements,

as long as they are in accord with Four-Power responsibilities for Berlin and Germany as a whole. We believe that discussions of this nature should be encouraged by the Four Powers.

"2. The United States has taken note of the remarks concerning Berlin made by the Foreign Minister of the USSR in his speech of July 10. The United States has studied these remarks in conjunction with the British and French Governments who share with us and the Soviet Union special responsibilities in Berlin and Germany, and with the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, whose legitimate interest in the subject is apparent. The United States desires to see the situation with respect to Berlin improved, particularly as regards access to the city. It would welcome Soviet steps which would lead to this end and contribute to the prevention of crises. Such a development could also contribute to progress in the solution of other open questions.

"3. With regard to Mr. Gromyko's assertions that Federal activities in Berlin caused friction, we are aware of objections the USSR has raised against these activities. It is our understanding that the Federal Government might be willing to make certain compromises in the question of these activities if the USSR and the East Germans were to show a constructive attitude toward problems arising from the division of the city and from the discriminatory treatment of the economy of the Western sectors of Berlin.

"4. The United States would be interested in knowing the views of the Soviet Government on the different questions raised." (Ibid.)

After listening to Beam's presentation, Kozyrev merely replied that he would bring the statement to Gromyko's attention. (Telegram 4073 from Moscow, August 7; *ibid.*)

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## 22. Telegram From the Embassy in Germany to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Bonn, July 25, 1969, 1345Z.

9728. Subj: Ambassador Rush's Initial Call on the Chancellor.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 17 US–GER W. Confidential. Repeated to USNATO, USEC, Berlin, London, Paris, Moscow, Rome, The Hague, Luxembourg, and Brussels.

<sup>2</sup> For a German record of the meeting, which indicates that it was held from 10 to 10:45 a.m. on July 24, see *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1969*, Vol. 2, pp. 842–845.

1. The Ambassador paid his initial call on Chancellor Kiesinger today. Also present were Carstens and the DCM.

2. The Chancellor began by extending his hearty congratulations on the success of Apollo.<sup>3</sup> He said he was particularly appreciative of the President's telephone call to him, expressing thanks for the message of congratulations which the Chancellor had sent.<sup>4</sup> The Ambassador characterized the Apollo achievement as something to which all mankind had contributed. He also said he felt the expenditure on the space program would prove itself fully justified. Space and nuclear energy have great possibilities for the future of mankind.

3. After the Ambassador told the Chancellor that the President very much looked forward to their meeting in Washington, the Chancellor said that he held the President in high regard. In addition to his other qualities, he had the calmness and serenity which are essential to the head of the most powerful nation in the world. The Chancellor said, in connection with his Washington visit, he was delighted that the question of offset had been disposed of, recalling the unfortunate experience of Chancellor Erhard in his visit to President Johnson.<sup>5</sup> The Chancellor said that US-German relations were in excellent shape and that close ties with the US were the top priority of his government. Polls have shown that 80–85 percent of the German people share this view.

4. European unity is a second major objective of the German Government. There is also cause for encouragement on this front. Pompidou certainly will prove to be more flexible. The Chancellor said he

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<sup>3</sup> Reference is to the historic Apollo 11 mission, which took off on July 16 and, after the first lunar landing on July 20, returned to Earth on July 24.

<sup>4</sup> Nixon talked briefly with Kiesinger by telephone on July 21 at 2:37 p.m. (President's Daily Diary; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Central Files) No substantive record of the conversation has been found. Kiesinger's message is dated July 20. (Ibid., NSC Files, Box 753, Presidential Correspondence File, Germany, Chancellor Kiesinger)

<sup>5</sup> The new offset agreement was signed on July 9. For text of the joint statement announcing the settlement, see Department of State *Bulletin*, August 4, 1969, p. 92. In a July 15 memorandum, Kissinger briefed the President as follows: "We have concluded a two-year, \$1.5 billion offset agreement with Germany. Both sides were well satisfied with the result and the atmosphere was extremely cordial throughout the negotiations. The new agreement is far better than its two predecessors because: (a) More than half of the offset is for German military purchases in the U.S. (compared with 10–15 percent in the recent past). (b) The maturities on the German loans to us are for 8–10 years (compared with the previous maximum of 4½ years). (c) We will get concessional interest rates of 3½–4 percent on these loans (compared with market rates in the past, which would mean at least 6 percent now). The settlement should help significantly the atmosphere for the visit of Chancellor Kiesinger." Nixon marked this paragraph and wrote "great job" in the margin. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 9, President's Daily Brief, 10–17 Jul 69) Regarding the negotiations that preceded the agreement, see *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, vol. III, Document 24.

approved the French proposal for a European summit. He felt also that European unity was very much in the interest of the US Government.

5. On East-West relations, the Chancellor said that he had no illusions. He felt Soviet attitudes were basically unchanged. Such activities as negotiating for a natural gas pipeline from the Soviet Union to Germany and other bilateral cooperation projects will not change the basic problem. Some German political leaders visiting Moscow (an obvious reference to Scheel and Genscher) may have illusions, but he did not share them. The best the German Government can do in its dealing with the Soviet Union is to go on being as friendly as possible and try to lessen Soviet antagonism toward Germany. The Chancellor expressed his great interest in the SALT talks and hoped the President would tell him something about his plans in this regard.

6. The Chancellor also said that a recent American journalist visitor (Alsop) had asked him "When is Germany going to start throwing its weight around?" Others in the American press have referred to "strong man Strauss" and characterized the Chancellor as being weak. The Chancellor said he trusted the American Government understood that he was not "weak" but would take a firm line in those areas where he could and had no illusions in particular on East-West relations.

7. In conclusion, the Chancellor reiterated that the main tasks of his government were in order of importance: (A) the maintaining of strong ties with the US, (B) building a united Western Europe, and (C) at least weakening the antagonism of the Soviet Union. The main aims, therefore, of German policy coincide very closely with those of the US. Anti-Americanism was certainly non-existent in Germany. The Chancellor said he had once told de Gaulle that his strong anti-American comments had contributed greatly to the decline of de Gaulle's popularity in Germany. De Gaulle had replied that he was not personally anti-American, but that he had to make such comments in order to bolster the national identity feeling of the French people, who otherwise would have been swallowed up in any amorphous Atlantic community.

8. The Ambassador replied that the goals and objectives of the German Government as described by the Chancellor did indeed coincide very closely with those of the US. The President attached the highest importance to Germany in its general relations with the outside world. The Ambassador also welcomed the offset agreement, referring to its timeliness in meeting the criticism of the inward-looking minority in the US who want to cut back our overseas commitment. These people think that the US should concentrate its efforts on solving domestic problems, ignoring the fact that they can only be dealt with in a world setting.

9. The Chancellor replied that Germany of course had a great interest in US efforts to solve its domestic problems. US success in do-

ing so was important to the whole world and particularly to America's friends and allies. In this context, the Chancellor said, he was very much interested in the President's proposals for coping with the problems of a modern society, particularly the problems of youth and the impact of modern technology. He said he was not a "cultural pessimist" and did not share the views of those who held that the more modern technology progresses, the less the possibility for the individual human being to realize his potential. He said he thought it was very important for political leaders to concentrate their attention on problems like youth and the impact of modern technology. Such problems should not be left to a few "excited sociologists."

10. The Ambassador agreed and said that it is most important that political leaders concern themselves with what has gone wrong with our society and has led to such things as the alienation of students at the universities. The Ambassador also agreed that the more modern technology expands, the greater the opportunities for the individual, but there are also dangers. The technical possibilities of mass media can lead to mass reactions.

11. As for European unity, the Ambassador confirmed the support of the US, but pointed out that it will of course require time. American history itself demonstrates this. What is required is steadfastness of purpose. On East-West relations, the Ambassador agreed that we are, whether we like it or not, engaged in a power struggle with the Soviet Union, but at the same time we should miss no opportunity to broaden our understanding of what it is that divides us and seek solutions. The Chancellor said he agreed wholeheartedly with this sentiment.

12. *Comment:* The atmosphere of the conversation, like that with Brandt yesterday,<sup>6</sup> was warm, friendly, and relaxed.

**Rush**

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<sup>6</sup> An account of the discussion between Rush and Brandt is in telegram 9618 from Bonn, July 23. (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 17 US–GER W)

## 23. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, August 7, 1969, 10:50 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

### MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION BETWEEN PRESIDENT NIXON AND CHANCELLOR KIESINGER

#### OTHER PARTICIPANTS

Prof. Henry Kissinger  
Harry Obst (US Interpreter)  
Hermann Kusterer (FRG Interpreter)

#### SUBJECTS DISCUSSED

Europe and the EEC  
Southeast Asia  
Vietnam  
China  
Rumania  
Brezhnev Doctrine and East-West Relations  
European Security Conference  
SALT Talks  
FRG-Soviet Relations  
US Policy toward Soviet Union  
US Troops in Europe  
Oder-Neisse Line  
FRG Elections  
Bonn "Hot Line"

#### *Europe and the EEC*

The President asked the Chancellor to comment on the developments in Western Europe.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 278, Memoranda of Conversations, Feb. 1969–Sept. 1971. Top Secret; Sensitive; Eyes Only; Nodis. Drafted by Obst. The meeting was held in the White House. Kissinger revised the memorandum by hand and wrote the following instructions: "Send to Rogers with note that circulating to be confined to him & Elliott. Bracketed part to be omitted from copy for State." A copy of the version sent to Rogers is in the National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 1023, Presidential/HAK Memcons. Substantive revisions to the memorandum and excisions from the State version are noted in footnotes below. Nixon and Kiesinger also met at the White House the next day from 10:45 to 11:30 a.m. A memorandum of conversation, including discussion of the National Democratic Party in Germany, problems of the young generation, space cooperation, and the future of Europe, is *ibid.* For German records of both meetings, see *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1969*, Vol. 2, pp. 887–898, 906–909. For text of the joint statement issued at the conclusion of the visit, see *Public Papers: Nixon, 1969*, pp. 632–634.

<sup>2</sup> In a telephone conversation at 2:45 p.m. on August 6, Kissinger briefed the President for his meeting with the German Chancellor. According to a transcript, the conversation included the following exchange: "K[issinger] suggested that P[resident] give Kiesinger report on the trip, a little bit about P's VN[Vietnam] thinking, then East-West

The Chancellor spoke of his constant efforts, beginning in Rome in 1967, to have a summit conference of the Six convened. This had not succeeded as long as de Gaulle was in office. Mr. Pompidou, however, had now agreed, and such a conference would now take place at the end of this year. The Foreign Ministers of the Six would probably convene, with Britain's entry into the Common Market to be the chief topic.<sup>3</sup>

The President mentioned that Mr. Kissinger had just returned from a meeting with Pompidou and it might interest the Chancellor to hear a comment from him.

Prof. Kissinger stated that his meeting with Mr. Pompidou had dealt mainly with President Nixon's trip. Little was said on European matters. Mr. Pompidou had indicated, however, that he had an open mind on the big problems of Europe.<sup>4</sup>

The Chancellor said he believed that Mr. Pompidou was a different man than De Gaulle, a more pragmatic man who would make his own decisions on these matters. And he was not a weak man.

The President agreed with that evaluation and added that the good majority which Mr. Pompidou had received in the elections had strengthened his hand.<sup>5</sup>

Did the Chancellor believe that Britain would eventually be admitted?

The Chancellor replied, Yes, Britain would be admitted, in his opinion.

He would be very interested to hear about the President's trip to Asia and Rumania.<sup>6</sup>

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relations. K said they have internal struggle and will want to get some idea from P what his real convictions are. K said P should say he is perfectly willing to talk as long as issues are concrete and precise—they should understand issues will focus on Germany so they should not be the ones to press it. K said Kissinger will probably raise with P the size of our forces in Europe and something about SALT. K said the major thing here is for P to say he has been meticulous about consulting and will continue to consult—recognize this is blue chip. P said main thing is to give him reassurance, and K said right." (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 360, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

<sup>3</sup> Reference is to the summit conference of European Community members which opened at The Hague on December 1.

<sup>4</sup> Kissinger met Pompidou in Paris on August 4. A memorandum of conversation is in the National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 1023, Presidential/HAK Memcons, Memcon—Dr. Kissinger and President Pompidou, August 4, 1969.

<sup>5</sup> The French elections were held in two stages on June 1 and June 15.

<sup>6</sup> After witnessing the splashdown of the Apollo 11 astronauts on July 24, Nixon stopped in Guam, Manila, Jakarta, Saigon, New Delhi, Lahore, Bucharest, and Mildenhall Air Force Base in England, before returning to the United States on August 3.

*Southeast Asia*

The President said, there were two points he had been trying to get across while in Asia:

- 1) The frustrations over Vietnam would not result in a US withdrawal from the Asian scene.
- 2) The role the US would play in Asia from now on would be a different one.

While in the past the US had rushed to the aid of any Asian country in trouble to bail it out, this help in the future would be clearly defined:

- a) If a major power, like China, should make a move, a US reaction was probable. No nuclear power could move without another nuclear power becoming involved.<sup>7</sup>
- b) In case there would not be a frontal move across a border, as in the case of internal subversion, he had outlined the US policy as follows to the Asian leaders: The US would help any Asian nation politically, economically and militarily—but not by supplying US manpower.<sup>8</sup>

The Asian nations would have to work more closely with each other. One day, Japan would have to assume a larger role. Already now, Japan's production was equal to that of Communist China. The Japanese people could not be content forever being just business people. This could not happen this year or next, however, as they were still encumbered with the inheritance of WW II.

*Vietnam*

The President said that he made clear in Saigon that the US would stand firm by the side of South Vietnam, despite the pullout of some US troops. This had been symbolized strongly by his standing side by side with President Thieu on one platform. It had been similar to Berlin. His going to Berlin as such had had more weight than all the speeches he had made there.<sup>9</sup> Did Mr. Kissinger agree with that?

Prof. Kissinger emphatically agreed. He said that Mr. Nixon's going to Saigon had had a much stronger effect than Mr. Johnson's stop in Cam Ranh Bay.<sup>10</sup> Hanoi would like to see the Thieu government

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<sup>7</sup> Before Kissinger revised it, this paragraph read: "If a major power, like China, should make a move, the US would come in. No nuclear power could move without another nuclear power coming in."

<sup>8</sup> Reference is to the so-called Nixon Doctrine, which the President first made public at an informal news conference in Guam on July 25. For text of his remarks, see *Public Papers: Nixon, 1969*, pp. 544–556. See also *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, vol. I, Document 29.

<sup>9</sup> See Document 17.

<sup>10</sup> Reference is to President Johnson's brief stop at Cam Ranh Bay in South Vietnam on December 23, 1967.

overthrown.<sup>11</sup> Not all the South Vietnamese politicians were very responsible people.

(The President interjected laughing, he considered this remark to be an understatement.)

It has been necessary to demonstrate to all concerned that the US would remain committed to the Thieu government and was not interested to participate in anything which might tend to undermine it. President Thieu had shown to be the ablest and most conciliatory of the South Vietnamese leaders.

At one time Tran Van Dong and Big Minh [Doung Van Minh] had been considered the liberal elements, now both of them were actually standing right of Thieu, who is now too liberal for them.

The President continued, he believed the Thieu government was stronger than ever. Forthcoming reforms would cement its position further. He was planning to pull out a larger contingent of US troops later, as it seemed that the South Vietnamese can take over more of the military burden. Casualties had shown a downward trend for a while.

It could be possible, of course, that the North Vietnamese would continue to try to keep US casualties just high enough, to keep alive the discontent of Americans about loss of life in Vietnam, as one pressure tool to get the US to withdraw. He would continue to try to de-escalate the war and come to an acceptable peaceful solution. But there was a point beyond which he could not go, if the other side should remain intransigent. He would be patient until after November 1. If nothing had happened by then, he would have to do something about it. He did not mean by that that he would hit the North. But there were other things he would do.<sup>12</sup>

He would keep the Chancellor informed on any changes on Vietnam, probably through Mr. Kissinger over the new "Hot Line" telephone to be installed between Washington and Bonn.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> This sentence originally read: "Not only the people in Hanoi but also a number of people in Saigon would love to see the Thieu government out of power."

<sup>12</sup> Kissinger bracketed the last four sentences of the paragraph for omission from the version sent to the Department of State.

<sup>13</sup> In a May 21 memorandum to Kissinger, Acting Secretary of State Richardson forwarded the joint recommendation of the Departments of State and Defense to implement "the President's proposal for a secure teletype communications link between his office and that of Chancellor Kiesinger." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Kissinger Office Files, Box 10, HAK Administrative and Staff Files, Germany, Bonn–Washington Phone Link) Kissinger approved this approach for negotiations with Germany on May 28. (Memorandum from Kissinger to Richardson; *ibid.*) On August 7 Eliot informed Kissinger that the negotiations had resulted in a draft exchange of letters with an attached memorandum of understanding. (Memorandum from Eliot to Kissinger; *ibid.*) Kissinger expressed his agreement with the result on August 13. (Memorandum from Kissinger to Eliot; *ibid.*)

Even India did not want the US to get out of Vietnam.

The Chancellor remarked that Indira Gandhi had indicated the same feeling to him.

Prof. Kissinger added that all Asian leaders he had talked to believed the US was too conciliatory, if anything.

The President continued. If he pulled out of Vietnam without an acceptable settlement, it would give the US a brief respite but the long-range consequences would be terrible. For one, it would lead to a withdrawal from Europe as well. A strong isolationist trend would then sweep the United States. Therefore he had to achieve a satisfactory settlement. He would continue the peace talks and efforts but was preparing at the same time for what he might have to do later in case of no success.

The Chancellor voiced his agreement with the President's views and said he would probably do the same if in the President's place.

### *China*

The President stressed that he was not going to entertain Mr. Brezhnev's suggestion for a collective security pact for S.E.A., though some Asian leaders welcomed this idea for internal policy reasons (containment of communist parties).<sup>14</sup>

Any US-Soviet condominium for the containment of China would in the long run make a permanent isolated enemy of China. This was very dangerous in view of the future military might of China, ICBMs, etc.

His view was: the Soviets have a big problem with China; the US has no major problems with China. Therefore, it would be in the long-range interest of the West that the US not join in a cabale with the Soviet Union—white against yellow—but keep its options open in both directions.

What did the Chancellor think on this subject?

The Chancellor agreed that it would be dangerous to isolate China. It would develop into a major power anyhow, isolation or no isolation. Those who advocated isolation in the past had been wrong. He agreed with Mr. Nixon's course. The FRG had not yet drawn up a firm policy on China. It was, of course, possible, though in his opinion not at all likely that the Soviet Union and China could join forces again. The Chinese seemed nationalists first and communists second.

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<sup>14</sup> In an address before the international conference of Communist Parties in Moscow on June 8, Brezhnev advocated the establishment of "a system of collective security in Asia," a move clearly aimed at the People's Republic of China.

The President added that another factor spoke against a reunion of the Soviets with the Chinese. In any totalitarian system somebody must occupy first place. It was not conceivable that China would be content with playing second fiddle to the Soviet Union or vice versa.

### *Rumania*

The President commented briefly on his trip to Rumania. The reaction of the people here, just as during other visits of Western leaders in East European countries, had again very clearly demonstrated that the pull of the West in these countries is stronger than the pull of the East. It had been risky for Mr. Ceausescu, who is a tough, Stalinist type communist, to go through with this visit. He could not quote Mr. Ceausescu, as he had agreed not to, but he could generally say that Mr. C. wanted to continue an independent policy with regard to Western Europe and the US and particularly with regard to China. He had mentioned the political and trade ties with the FRG during his talk with the President. It had been very interesting to talk to a man who has direct contacts to Hanoi, Peking and Moscow.

Prof. Kissinger added that there had been a marked contrast between the warm emotional reception and the unemotional talks. The crowd had not been in a carnival mood but rather shown a solemn joyfulness. The people would not leave the streets after the motorcade had passed but would stand for hours, more than three hours in the rain, some even until midnight. The talks, by contrast, had been devoid of any emotion, precise and covering much substantive ground.

### *Brezhnev Doctrine and East-West Relations*

The President stressed that he would not go into any of the countries covered by the so-called Brezhnev Doctrine by force,<sup>15</sup> but he favored any possible improvement of existing contacts, as in the fields of trade, culture, etc., and the enlargement of such contacts, as he considered it important not to isolate those countries from the West. He would never accept any conditions in this regard at the expense of any other country.

The Chancellor recounted German efforts to improve East-West relations. After initial successes the Czech invasion had stopped the momentum. One had to be careful now not to drive a wedge between any of those countries and the Soviet Union. But the hope for the Eastern countries must be kept alive. History had not yet offered the FRG an opportunity for a successful policy towards the East.

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<sup>15</sup> See footnote 5, Document 16.

*European Security Conference*

The Chancellor stated that even Willy Brandt had never believed that there would really be a European Security Conference. Yet he would talk about it all the time. This helped to demonstrate a German initiative in this area to the other countries. Not to do that would be a political mistake.

The President agreed with that view. He said that he had to talk about it at times and his government might do so at times but nobody expected anything to come from it. It was just talk.

Prof. Kissinger added that it might interest the Chancellor to know that the European Security Conference had not come up as a subject with Mr. Ceausescu, nor had any European issues been raised.

*SALT Talks*

The President stressed that he would move very cautiously on SALT and would consult with his allies. "Blue chips" were at stake here.

He would be guided by the principles that the US must never fall behind the Soviet Union into second place and that the US deterrent must remain credible, which was of equal importance to its allies. He had kept some items, like IRBMs, out of the SALT talks on purpose, as these had to be talked over together with the allies. Other weapons, like ABMs, MIRVs, Polaris subs and long-range bombers would be reviewed case by case, taking the East-West balance and the interests of the allies carefully into account. While he was interested in cutting the arms burden if possible, he would make sure that the US would continue to speak with "a strong voice." That is also why he had fought so hard to get the ABM approved in the Senate.<sup>16</sup>

Would Mr. Kissinger like to add more on the subject?

Prof. Kissinger underlined that the US had kept its allies closely informed on SALT, in conformity with the President's promise on closer consultation during his European trip. Of course, there were still some people in Washington who believed one should deal with the Soviets first and then inform the allies later. We will not do that (the President affirms, "absolutely not").<sup>17</sup>

A cutoff of MIRV or ABM would be very complicated. Here the security of the entire West was at stake. It was difficult to determine how far the Soviets had gone in their testing. Some say one thing, others another. Any mistake here could be fatal.

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<sup>16</sup> On August 6 the Senate narrowly defeated an amendment to block funding for "Safeguard" anti-ballistic missile system.

<sup>17</sup> Kissinger bracketed this paragraph for omission from the version sent to the Department of State.

The President remarked that the problem with ABM was the radar. Missiles were easy to produce but the radar takes a long time. The question was whether or not it was possible to recognize the adaptation of Soviet radar for ABMs. A secret study was under way on this matter. If the Soviets had the capability to adapt existing radars for ABMs, then they could not be included in SALT.<sup>18</sup>

#### *FRG-Soviet Relations*

The President remarked he had read a lot in the Press about the possibility of the FRG changing its policy towards the Soviet Union. With the Soviets holding East Germany and Berlin hostage, the reunification efforts having gone unrewarded and the new generation calling for fresh flexible policies there might be German sentiment in that direction. Could the Chancellor address himself to the subject.

The Chancellor replied that, notwithstanding the Press reports, the majority of the German people, though unhappy about the country's continuing division, would not relinquish the right of self-determination. The majority does not want recognition of East Germany and knowing this, the government had continued the application of the Hallstein Doctrine.<sup>19</sup> A number of young people and intellectuals, of course, thought otherwise as well as many in the SPD.

He had not seen any indications from the Soviet Union that they would be ready for any change in policy. They want better economic relations now, as illustrated by the gas and pipeline talks<sup>20</sup> and maybe China is in the back of their mind.

No indication of real change had been forthcoming, though, nor did he believe that the July 10 speech of Gromyko pointed up anything new of significance. This week's sounding by the three Powers may shed more light on this.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> The previous three sentences originally read: "The question was whether or not the Soviet radar could recognize ABMs. A secret study was under way on this matter. If the Soviets had the capability to distinguish ABMs, then they could not be included in SALT."

<sup>19</sup> Reference is to the policy by which West Germany refused to maintain diplomatic relations with any country other than the Soviet Union that maintained diplomatic relations with East Germany. Although associated with State Secretary Walter Hallstein, the doctrine was formulated by Wilhelm Grewe, Director of the Political Division in the West German Foreign Office. See Grewe, *Rückblenden*, pp. 251–262.

<sup>20</sup> Reference is to a contract signed in April 1969 to exchange Soviet natural gas for a West German pipeline; a second, far more extensive, contract was signed in February 1970.

<sup>21</sup> Regarding the Gromyko speech and the tripartite sounding on Berlin, see Document 21.

*US Policy toward Soviet Union*

The President asked the Chancellor his opinion of US Soviet policy. Should it be harder, softer or what?

The Chancellor praised the President's Soviet policy and called it "just right." The German people, too, hoped that the Soviets would one day be more flexible and reasonable, but meanwhile one would have to stand on the realities. From time to time Soviet intentions would have to be probed. The German people trusted in the US and its military superiority over the Soviet Union.

He had been very happy with the President's remarks on Asia and other subjects.

He thought the trip to Rumania had been a good thing. It had been a blow against the Brezhnev Doctrine, had shown it was not being silently accepted.

*US Troops in Europe*

The President cited continued Congressional sentiment for troop reductions in Europe. He said that he did not agree with it and expected to be able to defeat any Congressional move for reduction. This was another reason why he had fought so hard for the ABM vote, as a defeat there would have whetted appetites on other matters. The six divisions were a good bargaining point and for that reason alone should not be relinquished without any counter-concessions.

Prof. Kissinger remarked that the President had excluded the NATO area from his recent order for a 10% troop reduction. However, it might be advisable to have confidential talks with the FRG on a long-range policy on this matter, as the situation could change.

The President said it might be good to have such talks after the elections. Not for 69 or 70 but for the period after that, it may be advisable to agree on a fall-back line, as it was possible that US sentiment would not forever support a six division level.

The Chancellor agreed that such talks would be useful. It was better to talk these matters over in advance rather than to stumble into them later.

*Oder-Neisse Line*

The President asked whether the Chancellor would care to comment on the Oder-Neisse Line question. Was this a political issue in Bonn these days?

The Chancellor replied, this was still a political issue because of the many refugees from that area living in the FRG who did not want the government to give up that region. He had stated "in his government" that a solution would have to be found which is acceptable to *both* countries.

The President asked, "You really said that?"

The Chancellor replied, "Yes, in my government." He may have more to say on that and go even further than that in his address to the National Press Club tomorrow (August 8). He wished he could read as much flexibility into Mr. Gomulka's speech of May 17<sup>22</sup> as some other people. However, he believed the Poles would continue to stick to their rigid position, so that nothing would come of the matter, even if it was discussed or negotiated.

#### *FRG Elections*

The Chancellor, in response to a question from the President, remarked that the outcome of the election could not be predicted at this stage. Most Social Democrats were resigned to losing and most Christian Democrats convinced of winning. History had shown, however, that such an advance attitude can bring surprises. A coalition of either CDU–FDP or the continuation of the CDU–SPD coalition seemed probable. The FDP contained many left-wing young members including Neo-Marxists, with most of its older members standing on the right. Many of its foreign policy concepts like on recognition of the GDR were very "muddled." A government including the FDP may, therefore, be more difficult to run than a continuation of the Grand Coalition.

#### *Bonn "Hot Line"*

The President asked the Chancellor if he thought it was good to proceed with a telephone "Hot Line" between the White House and the Chancellor's Office. Mr. Kissinger, for instance, might use the line to inform the Chancellor if there should be any sudden changes in US policy towards Vietnam.

The Chancellor agreed to the proposal.

(The meeting, which lasted about one hour and forty minutes, was held in a cordial atmosphere. It was interrupted briefly twice for picture-taking of the Press. The Chancellor appeared a little tired. The President seemed rested and relaxed.)

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<sup>22</sup> In a May 17 speech at Warsaw, Gomulka proposed that West Germany conclude a separate treaty with Poland recognizing the Oder-Neisse line. For excerpts from the speech, see *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, Vol. XVII (1969–1970), p. 23722.

24. **Telegram From the Embassy in the Soviet Union to the Department of State**<sup>1</sup>

Moscow, September 12, 1969, 1330Z.

4927. Subject: Soviet Reply to Berlin Probe. Ref: Moscow 4916.<sup>2</sup>

1. Following is Embassy unofficial translation of oral statement (copy of which was handed to us) made to me today by Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Semyenov on Berlin.<sup>3</sup>

2. *Begin Text:* In connection with the considerations set forth by the US Ambassador on the instruction of his government in the oral statement of August 7 of this year,<sup>4</sup> I have been instructed to state the following.

3. The Soviet Government regards with understanding the desire expressed by the American Government concerning an improvement of the situation in West Berlin and the elimination of incidents which cause friction in this region. As has already been stated, the Soviet side would be ready for an exchange of opinions on averting complications now and in the future around West Berlin, if the powers allied with the USSR in the last war which bear their share of responsibility for the situation in West Berlin would proceed from the necessity of an approach toward this question which takes into account the interests of European security. In this connection, of course, the sovereign rights and the legitimate interests of the German Democratic Republic should be properly taken into account. It is impossible not to take into account in this connection also that the external ties of West Berlin are carried out along the lines of communication of the GDR.

4. As follows from the oral statement of the American Ambassador in Moscow, the American side assumes, to the degree in which this conforms with the known responsibility of the Four Powers, that it is also possible to facilitate a discussion between the GDR and FRG of various questions, having in mind the easing of tension in their mutual relations.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 28 GER B. Secret; Immediate; Limdis. Repeated to Bonn, London, Paris, USNATO, and Berlin.

<sup>2</sup> In telegram 4916 from Moscow, September 12, the Embassy reported: "French received Soviet reply to August 7 tripartite Berlin probe this morning. Semyenov has asked us to call at 1415 local today. British have 1445 appointment. We will meet with British and French at 1700 to compare texts." (Ibid.)

<sup>3</sup> For a rough German translation of the Russian note, as received by the French Ambassador in Moscow on the same day, see *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1969*, Vol. 2, pp. 999–1001.

<sup>4</sup> See Document 21.

5. The constructive position, one of principle, of the Governments of the Soviet Union, the German Democratic Republic and of the other states allied with them on questions of détente and of a normalization of the situation in the center of Europe and on the continent as a whole, including the normalization of relations between the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany on the basis of principles of international law, is well known. It found its expression, in particular, in the Bucharest declaration on the strengthening of peace and security in Europe and in the Budapest appeal of European socialist states.<sup>5</sup> In these documents the views of the Soviet Government were set forth on the questions broached as well as its aspiration to facilitate the solving of unsettled problems for purposes of improving the situation in Europe, or consolidating peace and European security. The Soviet Government proceeded and will proceed from this in examining the questions posed by the US Government in its statement mentioned above. *End Text.*

6. After handing over the text, Semyenov said that it was necessary to draw attention to the fact that the USSR did not want the FRG to use the Soviet statement for purposes of political profit. When asked if he wished to elaborate on this point, Semyenov said that the Soviet approach was businesslike and that they had found on many occasions such serious matters had been exploited by the FRG.

7. I told Semyenov we would transmit the Soviet statement to Washington.

**Klosson**

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<sup>5</sup> Reference is to the declaration on European security issued on July 5, 1966, at a meeting of Warsaw Pact leaders in Bucharest, and the appeal issued at a similar meeting in Budapest on March 17, 1969. For text of the former, see *Documents on Disarmament, 1966*, pp. 407–420; for text of the latter, see *ibid.*, 1969, pp. 106–109.

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## 25. Editorial Note

On September 22, 1969, during the 24th Session of the UN General Assembly, Secretary of State Rogers and Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko met in New York to discuss several issues, including recent proposals for talks on Berlin. The Department of State reported that, while the “discussions were amiable and non-polemical, they reflected little if any advance over previous Soviet positions on principal topics and issues.” The Department also noted that throughout the meeting

Gromyko “spoke in English except during discussion of Berlin when he spoke in Russian and asked that Secretary be interpreted into Russian.” (Telegram 3165 (Secto 26) from USUN, September 23; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL US–USSR) The following is an excerpt on Berlin from the memorandum of conversation:

“Foreign Minister Gromyko said that some time ago the United States Government had proposed an exchange of views with the Soviet Government on ways of improving the situation relating to West Berlin. He also thought the present situation there was not normal as a result of certain steps taken by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany. There was no need at this time to delve deeply into the history of this problem, since this would merely prolong discussion needlessly. In principle he agreed that it would be useful to conduct an exchange of views on this problem between the Governments of the United States and the Soviet Union, but wanted to inquire as to what the U.S. Government had in mind with respect to the results of such an exchange of views. Did the United States intend to have these results reflected in a formal document, as was customary in international practice, or did we merely want to improve the situation *de facto* on the basis of mutual example; in other words, what did we conceive as possible ways of reflecting the results of the future exchange of views. He suggested that if the Secretary was not ready to reply at the present moment, he might give the problem some thought and return to it at the time of their next meeting on Friday. If this was acceptable, he did want to take this opportunity to suggest Moscow as the place for holding this exchange of opinions.

“The Secretary said that he understood that East Germany and West Germany had already entered into discussions on possible ways of improving relations between them, especially with respect to transportation, communications and similar matters. We would be glad if these discussions resulted in better relations between East Germany and West Germany. As for the questions of Berlin, both East Berlin and West Berlin, the Secretary believed this to be of concern to the Four Powers and thought that any discussions for improving the situation there should include all four.

“Mr. Gromyko emphasized that his remarks were intended to deal with the situation in West Berlin and not with the situation in Germany in general. This did indeed touch upon the interests of the other allies. Some time ago, however, the United States had raised the question of conducting an exchange of views between the Governments of the Soviet Union and the United States; today the Secretary talked about Berlin in terms of the Four Powers. Did this mean that we were withdrawing our suggestion for bilateral discussions? He was simply asking this question in an attempt to understand the Secretary’s thinking on the subject and not in order to raise any objections.

"The Secretary replied that he thought any discussion concerning the future of Berlin would have to include the other two powers. He would be happy to talk about how this could be brought about. In this connection, however, he was not quite sure what Mr. Gromyko had in mind as to the objectives that might be achieved in talks. The Soviet reply had not been entirely clear to us and we wondered what their ideas were.

"Mr. Gromyko said that this was precisely the question he was addressing to the Secretary as representative of the Government which had proposed these discussions. It was he who was asking for clarification. What did the Secretary consider to be the best way of reflecting the results of such an exchange of views? He repeated his earlier suggestion that if the Secretary needed time to consult on this problem, they could return to it at their next meeting. If the Secretary's thinking was in terms of Four Power talks, he did not object in principle and would consider it useful to discuss ways of putting the machinery for such an exchange in motion. He thought this was something both sides should have a chance to consider and return to it later.

"The Secretary agreed that this was a good suggestion and said he would be willing to discuss it further next Friday.

"Assistant Secretary Hillenbrand remarked that the specific form of any possible agreement, that is, whether it should be a written document or a de facto improvement, would, no doubt, depend upon the course of the discussions and could be considered as we went along.

"Mr. Gromyko said that whether the talks were held on a bilateral or on a Four Power basis, inasmuch as communications to and from West Berlin passed through the territory of the German Democratic Republic, his Government would, of course, have to be in consultation with the Government of the GDR. He was just mentioning this 'by the way,' as it were.

"The Secretary agreed to return to this question next Friday." (Ibid.)

Assistant to the President Kissinger summarized the conversation between Rogers and Gromyko in a memorandum to the President on September 26. Kissinger agreed with the Department's assessment, i.e., that no "important new ground was broken" during the meeting:

"Gromyko showed some interest in bilateral talks with us. You had hinted at this possibility in your letter to Kosygin last April. The Soviets undoubtedly sense a good deal of Western interest in talking about Berlin, especially in the SPD and FDP in Germany which may form the next government in Bonn. In fact, even if one could make a case that the Soviets might be interested in a *modus vivendi*, there are no signs that they will be prepared to buck the GDR's continued interest in keeping the situation unsettled. Negotiations, whether bilateral US-Soviet

or four power are therefore likely to encounter a rigid Soviet-GDR position, while we, especially if Brandt becomes Chancellor, would be under pressure from our allies to come up with 'constructive' proposals. And in Berlin our negotiating position is weak; the other side holds all the cards. We thus have no interest in pushing Berlin negotiations at this time, although we will undoubtedly come under pressure to do so and may in the end have to go along." (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 280, Agency Files, Department of State, Vol. III)

Rogers and Gromyko met in New York for dinner the evening of September 26 to continue their previous discussion. Although no record of the conversation on Berlin has been found, Deputy Assistant Secretary Swank forwarded the following brief account in a letter to Ambassador Beam on September 30: "On Berlin and the possibility of quadripartite talks, the Secretary sought to elicit some clarification of the opaque Soviet response to the recent tripartite démarche. As in the earlier discussion of Berlin on September 22, Gromyko dealt in generalities rather than specifics and contributed nothing new." (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL US-USSR)

Kissinger also discussed the possibility of talks on Berlin in an afternoon meeting on September 27 with Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin. According to the memorandum of conversation, Dobrynin raised the issue:

"Dobrynin then remarked that his Minister had asked him to inquire whether in negotiating the Berlin issue we had any preference as to forum. Specifically, did we care whether it was discussed in a four-power or two-power forum? While the Soviet Union was willing to speak in a four-power forum, it was also prepared to have two-power discussions. I told him that four-power discussions seemed to be quite acceptable. If there was any different inclination on the part of the President, I would let him know." (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1969 [Part 1])

In a telephone conversation with the President after the meeting, Kissinger briefly reported that one of "two stupid questions" Dobrynin raised was "whether we want to have the Berlin talks to be quadripartite or bilateral." According to the transcript, Nixon did not express an opinion on the matter. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 360, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

## 26. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Washington, September 26, 1969.

### SUBJECT

The Soviet Position on Berlin

The Soviet answer to the three-power sounding of August 7 on Berlin problems contained virtually no substantive advance. It was little more than an elaboration of the Gromyko speech of July 10, when he indicated Soviet interest in discussions over Berlin.<sup>2</sup> While the Soviets have more or less accepted the idea of talks, their note does not suggest a time or place.

The main points of the note are:

—talks would be limited to the four powers and would concern West Berlin;

—the question must be approached from the standpoint of European security, and the sovereignty and legitimate interests of East Germany;

—it is impossible not to take into account that West Berlin's lines of communication are "along the lines of communication of the GDR";

—a normalization of relations between the GDR and Bonn proceed from the basis of "international law," and the principles of the Bucharest and Budapest declarations of the Warsaw Pact (i.e., recognition of East Germany, inviolability of borders, etc.).<sup>3</sup>

The note ignored the one new item of interest in our presentations, i.e., the willingness of the Federal Republic to make "concessions" on the question of their activities in Berlin, and to give their discussion with East Germany an "organizational" aspect. Presumably, the Soviet references to European security, and the Budapest appeal are meant to convey the theme that FRG–GDR talks fall outside the responsibilities of the four powers.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 689, Country Files, Europe, Germany (Berlin), Vol. I. Secret. Sent for information. According to a handwritten notation, the memorandum was returned from the President on October 1. The memorandum is based on another, dated September 12, from Sonnenfeldt to Kissinger, who, upon reading it, left the following handwritten instruction: "Turn into memo for Pres but strengthen danger of pushing negotiation which may force Soviets to back GDR." (Ibid.) According to another copy, Hyland redrafted the memorandum, including several minor corrections as well as one substantive addition noted in footnote 4 below, on September 23. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 286, Memoranda to the President, 1969–74, June–Sept. 1969)

<sup>2</sup> See Document 21.

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 5, Document 24.

The note also suggested that Soviets are not interested in pursuing access problems in the four-power context, but will focus any talks on the responsibility of three Western powers to curb Bonn's presence and activity in West Berlin.

At the same time, there is no allusion to a new status for West Berlin or any hint that the Soviets have a specific proposal in mind in this regard.

In sum, not a very helpful response.

Further steps may evolve from the Gromyko conversations in New York. The Soviets obviously have given just enough to keep the issue alive. But they are seeking all the atmospheric advantages surrounding the opening of negotiations on another major issue without any indication that they are prepared for substantive progress. More important they seek these gains without indicating responsiveness on the other major issues—Vietnam, the Middle East, and SALT.

Thus, I feel we should not appear at all anxious to move on Berlin; nor should we probe very hard for clarifications on the Soviet position. They are obviously in no hurry, and I see no reason for us to be, especially since pushing the negotiations runs some danger of forcing the Soviets simply to repeat their rigid support for East German "sovereignty."<sup>4</sup>

Text of the Soviet reply is at Tab A.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> This phrase was added in accordance with Kissinger's instructions.

<sup>5</sup> Printed as Document 24.

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## 27. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Washington, September 29, 1969.

### SUBJECT

Significance of West German Election

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 682, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. III. Confidential. Sent for information. No drafting information appears on the memorandum. According to a handwritten notation, it was returned from the President on October 1.

Yesterday's West German election does not appear to have significantly altered the make-up of the Bundestag.<sup>2</sup> Neither of the prominent political parties—Kiesinger's Christian Democratic Party and Brandt's Social Democratic Party—gained a clear-cut majority in the Bundestag. The Christian Democrats will hold 242 of the 496 seats.<sup>3</sup> The Social Democratic Party announced that it will attempt to form a governing coalition with the liberal Free Democratic Party.

The breakdown of yesterday's election results, with the 1965 figures in parentheses, follows:

	<i>Results</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Seats</i>
Christian Democratic Party	15,203,457	46.1 (47.6)	242 (245)
Social Democratic Party	14,074,455	42.7 (39.3)	224 (202)
Free Democratic Party	1,904,387	5.8 (9.5)	30 (49)
National Democratic Party	1,422,106	4.3 (2.0)	none

According to these projected results, the CDU would be a few seats short of an absolute majority (249 seats). Consequently a government by coalition must be arranged. Theoretically, all three possibilities—a continuation of the CDU–SPD coalition, a CDU–FDP coalition and an

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<sup>2</sup> In telegram 12748 from Bonn, September 29, the Embassy summarized the political consequences of the election as follows: "The most important immediate result of the Sept 28 German Bundestag elections was rejection of political extremes, especially the right-radical NPD. The second major consequence of the election was a move towards the two-party system. The latter might be considered a constructive contribution to German political stability in the long run, but these positive consequences are balanced and may be outweighed by the negative ones. The Free Democratic Party (FDP) has received what may be a mortal wound, but it promises to take a long time dying, with adverse effects on the short-term stability of the German political system." (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 14 GER W)

<sup>3</sup> On September 28 the President called the West German Chancellor at 5:45 p.m. to offer his congratulations. Nixon had called Kissinger immediately beforehand, presumably to discuss the election returns. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Central Files, President's Daily Diary) No substantive record of either telephone call has been found. According to Julie Nixon Eisenhower, her father placed the call "when David [Eisenhower] told him that he heard that Willy Brandt had been defeated." "David felt terrible for giving Daddy the wrong information, especially since he [Nixon] just picked up the phone and called—he's impulsive that way." (Safire, *Before the Fall*, pp. 624–625) In a memorandum to Kissinger on September 29, Sonnenfeldt suggested that Ziegler issue the following statement during the afternoon press briefing. "The President's call to Kiesinger was a personal gesture since he had seen him so recently. Naturally, the question of forming a government is entirely one for the Germans to work out. The President has the highest regard for the leaders of all three German parties, all of whom he has personally met at various times. He looks forward to continued close cooperation with the German government, regardless of party composition." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 682, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. III) For memoir accounts of the incident, see also Kissinger, *White House Years*, p. 408; Hillenbrand, *Fragments of Our Time*, p. 279; Bahr, *Zu meiner Zeit*, pp. 269–270; and Brandt, *My Life In Politics*, pp. 170–171.

SPD–FDP coalition—are possible. Negotiations between the three parties will now begin in order to reach agreement on a coalition.

During the election campaign, SPD Chairman Brandt expressed a strong preference for a coalition with the FDP. He can be expected to attempt to form such a coalition if for no other reason than to demonstrate to the SPD that he has tried. Such a coalition would have only a narrow majority and a few defections from the FDP would make this combination impossible. Its foreign policy orientation would attempt to be much more flexible toward the East. Given the limits of German maneuverability this may not in practice get very far.

A CDU–FDP coalition would have a broader majority. In fact, a few individual defections from the FDP to the CDU could give that party an absolute majority. Such a coalition would mark a return to the traditional governing pattern in the Federal Republic during the Adenauer period, but in present circumstances it would be far less stable.

A continuation of the CDU–SPD coalition which was generally regarded as the most likely outcome remains a quite feasible possibility despite bitter personality conflicts which were sharpened during the campaign. If this is the outcome, we would expect coalition negotiations to be difficult and protracted.

A development which might present an immediate problem for the United States would be a conflict over the eligibility of the 22 Berlin representatives to vote in the election of the Chancellor. The Three Western Powers have made clear that because of the special status of Berlin, the Allied prohibition of such participation remains in effect. There is a bare possibility that Brandt, tempted by the prospect of becoming Chancellor in an SPD–FDP coalition, might seek to utilize the Berlin votes which would provide him a more solid majority. (The 22 Berlin votes are divided as follows: 13 SPD, 8 CDU and 1 FDP.)

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## 28. Editorial Note

On October 1, 1969, West German Ministerial Director Bahr called Henry Kissinger to discuss several issues, including the possibility of an informal visit to Washington. In an October 5 memorandum, Kissinger briefed the President on his conversation with Bahr and the resulting controversy with the Secretary of State:

“Egon Bahr, a close confidant of Willy Brandt, called me last week to say that there was no bad feeling in the SPD about our call to Kiesinger and that the SPD hoped to work closely with us. He indi-

cated that he wanted to come over and talk with us; I told him not before the German Government was decided on and he indicated he would call back today (Monday) to discuss this further.

"I informed Elliot Richardson of the conversation. On Friday, Secretary Rogers called me to oppose any mission here by Bahr. (An erroneous report that Bahr was coming today (Monday) had been circulating in Bonn and here.) I agreed to make no arrangement for a visit, but also asked State not to insult Bahr, and through him Brandt, by telling him before he calls me back that he should not come. Obviously, if Brandt wants to use Bahr to open personal contact with you, you should have the option of considering it." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 280, Agency Files, Department of State, Vol. IV)

Although no record of his conversation with Rogers has been found, a transcript of the telephone call between Kissinger and Richardson is in the Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 360, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File.

On October 7 Kissinger called Richardson to bring him "up to date on the Bahr situation," particularly in light of a recent telegram (Document 30) reporting that Bahr intended to raise the issue of voting rights for the Berlin delegates in the Bundestag. Although he thought Bahr a "slippery fellow," Kissinger argued that it would be difficult to refuse his request, now reiterated in a second phone call, to establish contact with the White House. When Richardson expressed concern that Bahr might attempt to negotiate on Berlin voting rights, Kissinger insisted that the issue was "not for the White House to discuss." (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 360, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File) Shortly thereafter, Kissinger and Rogers continued to debate by telephone the pros and cons of the proposed Bahr visit. The transcript of the conversation reads:

"K[issinger] said he had another call from Bahr. When K talked to Rogers before, he didn't know what Rogers was talking about but now he has read the cable. K said the issue of voting rights had never been discussed at all. When Rogers asked, K gave his personal view which he would have given anyone. Rogers indicated that Bahr said he was coming over here to talk to K. K said he saw the cable which it was based on and it was factually wrong. He (Bahr) claims that Brandt wants Bahr to come to say he talked to somebody. K said he was worried that if we turn him down, particularly if it is understood there will be no negotiation on voting rights . . . if we refuse to let him come in the light of what's already happened . . . [British Prime Minister] Wilson sends [Foreign Office Private Secretary] Youde over from time to time and we see him. K would like to recommend that we let him come and that Marty [Hillenbrand] and Rogers' people be kept fully abreast and nothing be discussed about Berlin.

“Rogers felt that if you start that practice, they will all bypass the State Department. K said he wouldn’t let that happen—we didn’t do it on Kiesinger. This is just a case where they feel like being able to say they have the same sort of relationship. It is not something on which K would make an issue. K asked if Rogers would discuss this with Marty and then get back to him. K’s own judgment is that it would be better to let him come and make sure when he is here that there is a united front and that we don’t do any negotiating over here that would involve concrete issues and then put him over to Marty. Rogers said he would talk to Marty. He had a problem on the timing of it—before the government is installed. He thought we may be running a risk especially if it doesn’t work out the way Brandt expects. K didn’t think there was any possibility of that. Rogers asked if we should assume that Brandt is Chancellor. K said not formally, but they have only a 1% chance that something will happen the other way. K added that is why the Bahr visit should come before, after we may have more problems. Bahr just wants to tell us what Brandt’s thinking is on policy direction. He wants the President to know. It is basically clear that no decisions will be made. Rogers indicated that Brandt told him exactly what he wants to do. K said this is not something that is worth the two of them disagreeing on, but if the President has strong feelings, he would carry his wishes out, but he didn’t think this would happen.” (Ibid.)

Later that afternoon, Kissinger called Nixon to review the problems that Bahr posed for the bureaucracy. A transcript of the conversation records the following exchange:

“P[resident]—I have no concern on the German proposal.

“K[issinger]—Bill is afraid that they will get into the habit of end running him. Every German Chancellor has had a direct line with the White House. It is pressure for them because [Brandt] will be of a different party than [Kiesinger]. I have no personal view except that it has been standard. I have no objection if State Department wants to sit in on the conversation.

“P—All this business about end running is ridiculous.

“K—It is absurd. This guy is in no position. Brandt is trying to show good will toward you and probably get a little publicity for himself.

“P—The situation is all decided as far as Brandt then.

“K—There may be a ½% chance, if they can bribe votes. It is decided for all practical purposes.

“P—Why don’t you let them come over and let State sit in? We don’t care who sits in. I suggest Hillenbrand.

“K—It is simply to let this guy say he has had the meeting. He isn’t at your level.

“P—I didn’t know, he didn’t want to see me.

“K—It is something that Wilson does all the time when there is a meeting coming up between Wilson and yourself. He will send his man. I regret that the issue ever came up.

“P—Hillenbrand can sit in.” (Ibid.)

After his conversation with the President, Kissinger explained the decision to Rogers: “Bahr said he just wanted to explain his philosophy and K felt Bahr just wanted to talk to someone for an hour. Rogers asked if Brandt said he wanted Bahr to come. K said yes, and he had no reason to doubt that this was true. K said Marty could sit in on the meeting, in fact, it would be helpful.” (Ibid.) For memoir accounts of the above, see Bahr, *Zu meiner Zeit*, pages 269–270; Kissinger, *White House Years*, pages 410–411; and Hillenbrand, *Fragments of Our Time*, pages 286–287.

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**29. Memorandum From Helmut Sonnenfeldt of the National Security Council Staff to the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, October 1, 1969.

SUBJECT

The Vote of the Berlin Deputies in the Bundestag: Nasty Decision  
May Be Facing US

As I have previously mentioned to you, we may soon be confronted with handling the delicate question of the voting rights of the 22 Berlin deputies in the Bundestag. The matter can come up either as a *fait accompli* by the Germans or as a German request to the Allies to reverse past Allied decisions. Assuming successful SPD/FDP coalition negotiations (the matter would probably not arise if they fail), it could come up either before the new Bundestag convenes October 20 because Brandt wants to pad the coalition’s majority in the vote on the Chancellor; or it could come up later because Brandt wants a larger working majority. No operational decision is required until the Germans

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 682, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. III. Confidential. Sent for action. According to another copy, Downey drafted the memorandum on October 1. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 2, Chronological File, 1969–75, 1 July–31 Oct. 1969)

move; but I want to flag the problem for you now because our choice, whenever it has to be made, is complicated by problems of inter-allied relations, our relations with the German political parties and relations with the Soviets.

At Tab B is a paper with background and a brief discussion of some of the elements, pro and con, in a US decision on this matter.

At Tab A is a memo to State telling them that any decision on this subject should be cleared in the White House.

*Recommendation:*

That you urgently sign the memorandum at Tab A.<sup>2</sup>

### **Tab B**

#### THE VOTE OF THE BERLIN DEPUTIES IN THE BUNDESTAG

##### *Present Situation*

In accordance with a twenty-year old Allied position, the Berlin deputies in the Bundestag have never voted on substantive matters. An SPD/FDP coalition may bring great pressure on the Allies to change this traditional position, since the addition of the Berlin votes would provide the coalition with a more workable and stable majority. The coalition has a paper deputy strength of 254 (249 is an absolute majority); if the 22 Berlin votes were included, the coalition would have 268, and the absolute majority would be 259.

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<sup>2</sup> Tab A, a memorandum to Acting Secretary of State Richardson, is attached but not printed. In an undated note to Haig regarding the memorandum, Sonnenfeldt wrote: "This ought to have prompt attention. Maybe Tab A can stay here & HAK can phone in approval from Florida. The matter may precipitate rapidly." Sonnenfeldt also attached an intelligence report he had just received on "the SPD's intention to press this issue." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 682, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. III) Haig agreed to send the memorandum while holding the background paper (Tab B) "so that Dr. K can take with him on trip to Key Biscayne." (Undated handwritten note from Haig; *ibid.*) Before leaving for Key Biscayne on October 2, Kissinger signed the memorandum (Tab A) which reads in part: "In the event that we should have to make a decision on the question of the voting rights of Berlin deputies in the new Bundestag, the President would like to have an opportunity to review the proposed US position." (*Ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 15–2 GER W) Richardson, however, received the memorandum after approving instructions to Bonn on the issue. (Note from Eliot to Rogers, October 6; *ibid.*, POL 14 GER W) Regarding these instructions, see Document 31.

*History*

In order to preserve Berlin's special status and the Allied rights and obligations in Berlin, the Three Powers in 1949 approved the formation of the FRG with the express reservation that "Berlin may not be accorded voting membership in the Bundestag . . . nor be governed by the Federation." Berlin was permitted to designate representatives (not directly elected) to the Bundestag.<sup>3</sup> A similar reservation was added to the Berlin Constitution.<sup>4</sup> This position was affirmed in 1955 at the end of the Occupation Regime. Over the years the Allied injunction has been interpreted in the Bundestag so as to permit the Berlin deputies to vote on procedural matters, in committees and on draft legislation but not on final readings.

*Recent Activity*

On September 16, the three Ambassadors in Bonn informed the Foreign Office that the Allied position remained unchanged.<sup>5</sup> Just after the election, the Chancellor's office (Osterheld) asked whether the SPD had approached the Allies regarding the use of the Berlin votes in the formation of a new government.<sup>6</sup> Reporting we have received no such approach, we again affirmed our position. Osterheld said that, quite aside from the Allied views, Kiesinger considered voting by Berlin deputies a violation of the Basic Law. Yesterday, the SPD party manager (Wischniewski) told the British that the election of the Chancellor without Berlin votes would pose no problem, although for subsequent stability Berlin votes would be needed for legislation. On an if-asked basis, our press guidance is that the Allied position is known; there has been no change.

*Possible Future Actions*

Notwithstanding Wischniewski's comment, the President of the Bundestag might present the Allies with a *fait accompli* by counting

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<sup>3</sup> The Allied refusal to allow Berlin deputies to vote in the Bundestag was first made on March 2, 1949, in a communication to the Bonn Parliamentary Council as it was drafting the Basic Law. On May 12, 1949, the Allies reaffirmed this decision while approving the Basic Law with certain other reservations. (*Documents on Germany, 1944–1985*, pp. 204–206, 260–262)

<sup>4</sup> The Allies informed the German authorities in West Berlin of this decision on August 29, 1950. (*Ibid.*, pp. 340–341)

<sup>5</sup> As reported in telegram 12233 from Bonn, September 17. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 38–6)

<sup>6</sup> Sonnenfeldt mentioned the conversation between Osterheld and Fessenden in a September 29 memorandum to Kissinger. (*Ibid.*, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 682, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. III) Osterheld, however, had raised the issue in early September; Fessenden reported on the meeting only after the election. (Telegram 12788 from Bonn, September 29; *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 14 GER W)

the Berlin votes in the investiture vote for Chancellor. More likely, the new government might ask the Allies to change their position so that Berlin votes could be counted for subsequent legislation. The request may come at any time.

#### *Allied Views*

The *British* will hold fast to the view that there can be no change during the life of the present government, but would be willing to reconsider any proposal of the new government. They will probably be inclined to assist Brandt in strengthening his government in any way that will not seriously undermine the Allied position in Berlin. The *French* are apt to be tough. They have always strongly resisted any action which might weaken them in Berlin, and they may not want Brandt (whom they may consider a rival in the East) to be too strong.

#### *Communist Views*

The *Soviets* may be in an awkward position. They will want to help a Brandt/Scheel government, but cannot accept a strengthening of the Bonn–Berlin ties. Ironically, the Soviets have continued to ensure that the East Berlin representatives in the Volkskammer have a status different from the other deputies, and GDR legislation still does not automatically apply to East Berlin (as FRG laws do not automatically apply to West Berlin). The GDR will certainly bring pressure to remove these last vestiges of a special Berlin status. The Soviets, more importantly, may have difficulty understanding an Allied change in long-standing Berlin voting rights policy in the context of the Tripartite Soundings on Berlin. Privately, the Allies have raised for the Soviets the possibility of reducing Federal presence in West Berlin, yet publicly the Allies would be permitting a fuller incorporation of West Berlin into the FRG.

#### *US Choices*

We do not have to make any operational decisions at this time. It is important, however, to begin thinking about it. While it is impossible now to play out the various contingencies (e.g., request now or later, being faced with a *fait accompli*), the arguments with respect to a change in the Allied position seem to be about balanced:

##### *Pro*

—Particularly if the new government insists on having the Berlin votes, a change in our position would be a favorable gesture to Brandt, thus putting us in a better position to have a positive influence on the course of our future relations.

—A change might give us a better bargaining position with the Soviets in any negotiations over Berlin.

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*Con*

—A change in the US policy would weaken the integrity of our long-held view of the special status of Berlin, and might present the risk that the Soviets would retaliate by causing some harassment in Berlin and on the access routes (especially for German traffic).

—To change our policy might cause us difficulties with the French, and to a lesser degree, with the British.

—It might lay us open to charges that we are intervening in German domestic politics, and seriously offend the CDU.

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### 30. Telegram From the Embassy in Germany to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Bonn, October 4, 1969, 1720Z.

13055. Subj: Voting Rights for Berlin Deputies—Bahr Trip.

1. FonOff Planning Chief Egon Bahr, a close Brandt adviser, informed us Oct 3 that he was flying to Washington this weekend to confer with administration officials on the possibility of a change in the US position on voting rights for Berlin Deputies in the Bundestag. The trip is obviously planned as a counterpart of Helmut Schmidt's trip to London on the same mission.

2. As far as can be determined, the issue in these SPD efforts is not the vote for Chancellor but the subsequent legislative majority for an SPD–FDP coalition. The pending SPD–FDP coalition would have only a slim majority, and a fragile one at best. Giving Berlin Deputies the vote would bring a net increment of six additional votes to the new coalition. This would not add much to parliamentary stability even though the small gain involved could be vital for a workable government, as Schmidt and Bahr will doubtless argue, in painting a depressingly accurate picture of the disadvantages of an unstable Germany with a weak government. We are preparing an overall assessment of implications but the following are major ones:

3. As we are all aware, this issue is an intensely partisan one. It is still not yet definitely established that an SPD–FDP government will actually be formed; defection of some FDP Deputies in the vote for

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 14 GER W. Secret; Immediate; Limdis. Repeated to Berlin, London, and Paris.

Chancellor is still possible before Oct 21. It is clear that if formed, such a government would be unstable and could fall and be replaced by a CDU dominated government within a short time. In such a situation, we would wish to the extent possible to maintain an even handed approach to both major parties even though we will, of course, enter on an effective working relationship with any government formed and will wish to make clear to Brandt that we are fully as willing to work with him as with CDU govts of the past.<sup>2</sup>

4. The voting status of Berlin Bundestag Deputies is linked intimately with the status of Berlin in the Bundesrat where the CDU has a majority of one vote. (Details in septel.)<sup>3</sup> A change in the voting status of the Berlin Deputies in the Bundestag might well entail subsequent SPD pressure for a change in status of Berlin representation in the Bundesrat. In effect this would pose the issue of the status of Berlin as an eleventh Land of the FedRep and raise central issues related to the four-power status of Berlin and to US-Soviet relations.

5. Aside from these aspects, voting status for Berlin Deputies is a probable violation of Article 38 of the Federal Basic Law which provides that Deputies of the Bundestag shall be elected in universal, direct, free and secret election, and could readily be contested as manipulation of the entire German election system. This means that even if the Allies should after reelection agree to a change in status for Berlin Deputies if this were done without CDU agreement, the outcome might be nullified after a messy and divisive constitutional court suit.

6. It is vitally important that we remain in closest step with the British and French on this issue. Schmidt talks in London and the planned Bahr trip to Washington make it appear that there may be a deliberate effort to pick off the Allies singly, and it is essential to preserve Allied unity.

7. Believe these considerations indicate we should be very reserved during discussions with Bahr or other SPD leaders and to the extent possible limit ourselves to listening to his position. There is considerable possibility that given the present high temperature here, Bahr would misrepresent remarks made to him in a partisan way.

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<sup>2</sup> In telegram 13156 from Bonn, October 7, Rush elaborated on this point: "Although Brandt himself knows better through personal experience, the SPD as a party suffers from a complex, inflated by a liberal dose of imagination, that the US has one-sidedly favored the CDU through the 20 years of its power. This makes the problem the more difficult. We should therefore seek a solution to the Berlin deputy issue which will achieve the objectives of: (a) showing the SPD that we are prepared to be flexible and reasonable; (b) avoiding any action which will weaken the status of Berlin, and (c) avoiding any overtly partisan position which would stand between us and the CDU for the future; the prospective coalition has such a narrow base that the CDU could shortly return to power." (Ibid.)

<sup>3</sup> Not further identified.

8. We will submit our recommendations on the overall subject of Berlin representation in the Bundestag in the near future.<sup>4</sup>

**Rush**

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<sup>4</sup> In telegram 13156 from Bonn, Rush proposed the following: "If the Allies are actually approached by Brandt after his govt is established, we would tell him that we would be prepared to go along with voting rights for Berlin Deputies (a) if the three Allies first obtained from the Soviets a written statement that they have no objection to the change and that the change would in no way affect existing agreements with regard to Berlin, and (b) if constitutional and other legal objections to the Berlin Deputies' voting either are not raised within a reasonable time or, if raised, are favorably resolved." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 14 GER W) No response to this proposal has been found. When Rush subsequently raised the issue with Brandt, Brandt clarified that "he was in fact interested in increasing the voting rights of Berlin Deputies, but wanted any changes approached dispassionately and deliberately." After restating the U.S. position, Rush explained that "our sole concern is the security of Berlin and our rights on which this is founded. We have no other concerns about how the matter goes. Brandt did not disagree with this statement." (Telegram 14208 from Bonn, October 29; *ibid.*)

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### 31. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Washington, October 6, 1969.

#### SUBJECT

The Vote of the West Berlin Deputies in the FRG Parliament: Nasty Decision May Be Facing US

#### *The Problem*

We may soon be confronted with the delicate question of whether the Allies should alter their 20-year-old principle of not permitting the 22 West Berlin deputies to vote in the West German Bundestag. There is a strong possibility that the new SPD/FDP coalition government will pressure for this change, since the additional Berlin votes would offer the coalition a more stable and workable majority. The pressure could come at any time: more probably after the October 20th investiture of the Chancellor; but we may even be faced with a *fait accompli* if the

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 682, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. III. Secret. Sent for information. Although no drafting information appears on the memorandum, an attached memorandum from Sonnenfeldt, October 3, states: "In accordance with our conversation today, I have prepared a brief memorandum for your signature." A note indicates that Kissinger's memorandum was returned from the President on October 10.

Speaker of the Bundestag decides to count the Berlin votes on October 20. (If they were counted, Brandt would have a majority of 18 instead of the slim 12-vote margin he would have without the Berlin votes.)

*Current Position*

In order to preserve Berlin's special status and Allied rights and obligations, the Three Powers have since 1949 taken the position (in the form of a reservation to the FRG Constitution) that Berlin deputies may not vote in the Bundestag. Accordingly, State has just issued an instruction<sup>2</sup> that, in the event the SPD/FDP requests that Berlin deputies be permitted to participate in the vote for the Chancellor, Allied opposition must be reaffirmed, since a change now would constitute Allied interference in the formation of the new government. If faced with a *fait accompli* on October 20, State believes the Allies should not challenge the election, but should publicly state that the Allied position in Berlin itself has not been affected. At my request, State is now exploring the possible options in the most likely event that we are faced with a request from Brandt *after* his election to permit the Berlin deputies to vote on the enactment of legislation.

I feel that by the time the current sensitive period of the formation of the new government has passed and Brandt is in the saddle, we should at least have examined whether there is advantage in changing our twenty-year-old position. The issues are complex since they involve not only our relations with the FRG and the German political parties, but relations with the Allies (the French are strongly opposed to any change), and with the Soviets who of course have long made an issue over West Berlin's ties to Bonn, but might not be averse to lending Brandt a helping hand.

State is to submit a memorandum for your consideration.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Telegram 167314 to Bonn, October 2. (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 14 GER W)

<sup>3</sup> In December the Department drafted a memorandum for the President recommending that the Allies "withdraw their prohibitions against voting by the Berlin deputies in the West German Bundestag." (Letter from Hillenbrand to Rush, February 18, 1970; National Archives, RG 59, EUR Files: Lot 74 D 430, Department of State—Hillenbrand) Hillenbrand explained in a letter to Rush on January 27, 1970, that Rogers, although inclined to be supportive, did not "believe that this is the correct time for us to take an initiative and he therefore decided not to send the memorandum to the President which we had prepared." (Ibid.) On February 3 Rush replied that he accepted this decision, especially since Brandt recently confided that he was considering "legislation which would itemize the issues on which the Berlin Deputies would not be entitled to vote in the Bundestag." "If the Chancellor decides to take this step," Rush argued, "it would seem to be a very satisfactory way of meeting the problem. On its face it seems to be in accord with the way Henry Kissinger is thinking, since as you know, he told me that his view was that we should take no affirmative steps to grant voting rights but that if the Berlin Deputies were allowed by the German Government to vote on issues in the Bundestag we should not protest." (Ibid.) For further discussion of the issue, see Sutterlin and Klein, *Berlin*, pp. 99–101.

### 32. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Germany<sup>1</sup>

Washington, October 15, 1969, 1715Z.

174682. Subject: Quadripartite Negotiations on Berlin.

1. Since Gromyko conversations with Western Foreign Ministers in New York failed to clarify Soviet position toward Allied sounding on Berlin, we essentially remain where we were when Allied approach was made two months ago. Soviets nevertheless have kept door open to further discussions.

2. Department considers that next move with Soviets should be effort to gain their agreement to discuss specific problems which the Three Powers consider present or potential sources of tension. List should not be so ambitious (i.e. elimination of Wall) as to suggest purely propaganda exercise but should be broad enough so that successful negotiations would provide tangible benefits for Berlin. We believe Three Powers should at such time also indicate willingness to discuss topics which Sovs might wish to raise thus affording them opportunity to follow up on FRG offer of possible modification of FRG presence in West Berlin. This offer, together with presumed Sov interest in European Security Conference and in achieving more favorable public image in Western Europe, will probably be main bargaining factors available to Western side in any negotiations.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 38–6. Secret. Drafted by Sutterlin and Skoug on October 9; cleared by Hillenbrand, Dubs, Nelson, and Eliot; and approved by Rogers. Repeated to London, Moscow, Paris, USNATO, and Berlin. In an October 16 memorandum to Kissinger, Sonnenfeldt complained that the Department failed to clear this telegram with the White House. According to Sonnenfeldt, there was “no hint in the telegram what problems are or where State thinks this whole exercise should come out. I suppose the idea is to make policy as we go, by telegram.” He continued: “I am afraid our Berlin diplomacy has been badly and confusingly handled ever since the President’s Berlin speech.” Sonnenfeldt concluded: “Except for your brief involvement in the drafting of the ‘Berlin probe’ last August, when the French raised it with you, the White House has been unable to exercise any control or even influence on our diplomacy.” In a handwritten note on the memorandum, Kissinger agreed to raise the issue at his weekly meeting with Richardson on October 23. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 689, Country Files, Europe, Germany (Berlin), Vol. I) Two days before the meeting, Sonnenfeldt briefed Kissinger on the current status of the Berlin “sounding.” (Memorandum from Sonnenfeldt to Kissinger, October 21; *ibid.*, Box 337, Subject Files, HAK/Richardson Meeting, May 1969–December 1969) In an October 27 memorandum to Kissinger, Haig described the outcome: “Despite continued efforts by the NSC staff, State adamantly refused to accept White House guidance until the issue was finally resolved between Dr. Kissinger and the Under Secretary of State.” (Ibid., Kissinger Office Files, Box 148, US Domestic Agency Files, State/WH Relationship, Vol. 1)

3. Before deciding on further démarche with Sovs it will be necessary, in Department's view, to await formation of new German Government. If, as expected, Brandt becomes Chancellor, he will certainly push this initiative and, as he indicated to Secretary, will wish it to be coordinated with FRG/Sov bilateral talks on renunciation of force. Under such circumstances we should, in order to show responsiveness, be prepared to resume consultations expeditiously in the Bonn Group.

4. In our view such consultations should aim at developing draft of text which could be handed Sovs later in autumn in response to their September 12 oral statement.<sup>2</sup> Draft could address itself to specific improvements we would like to discuss with Soviets, such as facilitation of intra-Berlin travel and communications, and more orderly and secure procedure for German access to Berlin. (Subject of German access might be matter for discussion between West and East German representatives, who would then submit their recommendations to Four Powers responsible for Greater Berlin, but this need not be spelled out in note.) Reply could indicate willingness of three Western powers to meet with USSR in order to discuss these matters and others which Soviet side might wish to suggest.

5. We agree with Brandt that eventual tripartite reply and any subsequent negotiation should be coordinated with FRG's bilateral contacts with USSR on renunciation of force. We will welcome continuing quadripartite consultation in Bonn. Department sees some disadvantages in Moscow as locus for Four-Power talks on Berlin, mainly because of security problems involved in carrying out the extensive US/UK/France/FRG consultation which would be required. We therefore would not wish to commit ourselves on Brandt's suggestion that both FRG and tripartite negotiations be held in Moscow. When discussions resume we would prefer merely to point to possible security problem and solicit British and French views.

6. This guidance is being provided well in advance in the event the Embassy has comments to submit.<sup>3</sup>

**Rogers**

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<sup>2</sup> See Document 24.

<sup>3</sup> No comments from the Embassy have been found. The U.S. representative outlined the Department's views at a tripartite meeting in Bonn on October 28. (Telegram 14368 from Bonn, November 1; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 38–6)

**33. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, October 15, 1969.

## SUBJECT

Possible Difficulties with the Soviets on Berlin Access

Yesterday afternoon at the new Soviet checkpoint (Babelsberg) on the Autobahn just outside West Berlin, the Soviets explained to Allied commanders new arrangements which will go into effect today at 8:00 a.m. (Washington time). A new barrier pass (Laufzettel) has "DDR" printed at the top and the East German national symbol in the middle. There apparently will be no change in the procedures for using the pass: the Soviets give the pass to the Allied traveler who in turn hands it to the East German guard at the barrier.

Last evening the Allied commanders advised the Soviet checkpoint officer that we had reservations about the new arrangements. The Soviet said he would pass the information to his superiors who might wish to meet with Allied representatives. The US and British Missions feel that Allied Protocol Officers should jointly call on the Soviet Embassy in East Berlin early today requesting that checkpoint commanders discuss the matter before the new arrangements are put into effect. US Mission Berlin considers the new barrier pass format is unacceptable.

Embassy Bonn has coordinated with the British on the initial actions to be taken but has thus far not been able to establish contact with the French (this is probably because Schumann is in Moscow and the French are consciously remaining incommunicado). US Embassy Bonn<sup>2</sup> and the British proposed the following course of action, which was approved by State and cleared by me in your behalf last night:<sup>3</sup>

—Allied checkpoint commanders will seek out Soviet counterparts early on October 15 and register Allied objections to the proposed new barrier pass procedures.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 689, Country Files, Europe, Germany (Berlin), Vol. I. Confidential. Sent for information. No drafting information appears on the memorandum. A note indicates that it was returned from the President on October 17.

<sup>2</sup> The Mission in Berlin (not the Embassy in Bonn) forwarded these recommendations, as reported in telegrams 1797, 1798, and 1799, October 14. (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 38–10)

<sup>3</sup> In telegrams 174573 and 174574 to Bonn and Berlin, October 15. (Ibid.)

—Concurrently, Allied Protocol Officers will call upon the Soviet Embassy Protocol Officer in East Berlin and register similar objections indicating that the Allies regard the proposed change as unacceptable.

—If the preceding steps have been unsuccessful, a single US vehicle will test the new procedure and if the Soviets insist at the checkpoint on acceptance of the new pass, the vehicle would turn back to West Berlin.

—Concurrently, a British military police vehicle will also probe the Helmstedt checkpoint to ascertain if the new procedures have been established at the western end. No other Allied traffic will enter the Autobahn after 1:00 p.m. local at the eastern end and after 10:45 a.m. local at the western end if it has been determined that the single vehicle tests did not succeed.

Should the above procedures result in continued Soviet intransigence, protests will again be registered at the Soviet Embassy in East Berlin. Consideration will then be given to escalating the diplomatic scenario to include possibly summoning Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin to State or the White House to register a protest in the strongest terms in concert with similar British and hopefully French diplomatic approaches.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> In an October 16 memorandum to the President, Kissinger reported on the outcome of the incident: "Following a *démarche* by the Allied checkpoint commanders yesterday morning, the Soviet commander stated that the new barrier pass would not be used for Allied travelers, and that the old form would be retained. Two procedural changes would be made, however: the barrier pass would be used for individual Allied travelers both entering and departing Berlin (until now the pass was used only for out-bound travelers), and Allied convoys would not be given a barrier pass when leaving Berlin as they had in the past. The Allied representatives informed the Soviets that the old pass form would be acceptable, and shortly thereafter the US probing vehicle passed through the checkpoint without difficulty. No Allied traffic on the Autobahn has been resumed. There has been no press inquiry." (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 12, President's Daily Briefs, October 11–21, 1969)

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### 34. Editorial Note

On October 16, 1969, Helmut Sonnenfeldt of the National Security Council staff prepared a memorandum, at the request of Assistant to the President Kissinger, reviewing the status of contingency planning for Berlin in light of the incident the previous day at the new Soviet checkpoint in Babelsberg. The Soviet action was, he noted, "the first real threat" to Allied access since the so-called "tailgate controversy" in the fall of 1963, when Soviet forces repeatedly delayed Allied convoys on the Autobahn outside the city. According to Sonnenfeldt, all

Berlin contingency plans assumed that the Allies would refuse to “observe Soviet unilateral departures from standard procedures.” The Allies would test Soviet intentions first by low-level diplomatic protest and then by a limited “physical probe” of the access routes to the city. If this action clearly revealed an impasse, the situation would then enter a third phase “where neither the response format nor the individual steps are automatic.” As Sonnenfeldt further explained:

“From this point, the course of Allied action (US, tripartite, quadripartite, or NATO-wide) and the direction (against the GDR, the Soviets or the Bloc) are wide open to negotiation and governmental decision. The range of possible activity increases in severity and scope. On the diplomacy front it includes protests in capitals and in Moscow. The economic and administrative countermeasures include, for example, withdrawal from or cancellation of scientific and cultural conferences and exhibits involving the Soviets (or Bloc countries), harassment of Bloc inland waterway traffic, restraint on the movement of Soviet trade missions in NATO countries, tightening frontier controls over Bloc personnel, prevention of overflights of Bloc aircraft and closure of ports to Bloc shipping. The military countermeasures include non-combatant actions such as the assembly of tripartite probe forces of increasing size (company to battalion) and lead ultimately to the employment of military forces.”

Kissinger marked this passage of the memorandum and wrote in the margin: “Let’s get WSAG on this.” (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 689, Country Files, Europe, Germany (Berlin), Vol. I)

On October 21 the Washington Special Actions Group, chaired by Kissinger, met in the White House Situation Room from 3:28 to 5:12 p.m. to discuss Berlin, Sino-Soviet hostilities, and the Middle East. The minutes of the meeting record the discussion on Berlin as follows:

“Secretary Johnson asked the chair to take up Berlin as the first agenda item. He stated that there is a need to brief the President, Secretary Rogers, and Secretary Laird on the subject of Berlin contingency planning. The subject is enormously complex. The problem is not, however, one of substance but one of methodology. How should Berlin be presented?

“Kissinger, while disclaiming extensive familiarity with Berlin planning, reported his understanding that the plans, in the phases beyond diplomatic measures, were merely a collection of possible responses without evaluation as to priority of implementation. He inquired whether the plans have been reviewed in the light of the existing political climate in Europe and adjacent areas.

“Hillenbrand then reviewed the status of Berlin planning. Because of the complexity of the problem, the Berlin files are being computerized to deal with the mass of data. The overall quadripartite planning

effort has been synthesized in a document known as BQDCC-1—a cap-  
sulated form of all major contingency plans, and some minor ones. It  
has been reviewed this year and is backed up by individual plans  
drawn in considerably more detail. There are various groups that are—  
or could be—involved in Berlin planning. These are the basic quadri-  
partite group in Bonn, the Washington Ambassadorial Group, the  
Berlin Task Force, and Live Oak, a military headquarters (with staff  
and excellent communications) commanded by General Goodpaster  
(SACEUR/USCINCEUR) as the third of his responsibilities. During the  
recent check-point flurry Live Oak was alerted. Jack Pine is a backup  
headquarters (on standby status) located in Wiesbaden under CINC-  
USAFE. There are U.S. unilateral plans which backup the quadripar-  
tite plans, but it is doubtful that a U.S. President would ever want to  
use them. Perhaps the major inhibition to unilateral action is that forces  
would have to transit the British zone to reach Berlin.

“The quadripartite plans have been leaked to the Soviet Union by  
a French agent. This leakage may have had a good effect in keeping  
the lid on Berlin because the NATO plans—above division strength—  
look quite horrendous. One should assume that all quadripartite plans  
have been compromised. This assumption should not, however, be in-  
terpreted as requiring a change in any of the plans inasmuch as their  
deterrent value is considered to be meaningful.

“All of the quadripartite plans embody U.S. concepts regarding  
desirable courses of action. NSAM 109, which has been reviewed and  
reaffirmed, represents the military rationale behind the plans. The doc-  
ument probably remains secure. One important fact which relates to  
all of the Berlin plans is that neither the U.S. Government nor any other  
government is committed to specific action.

“Secretary Johnson said the type of information presented by Hil-  
lenbrand is what should be given to Mr. Nixon and that State would  
prepare a briefing. Kissinger agreed with the recommended course of  
action, saying that he would discuss the matter with the President, hav-  
ing Wednesday, 29 October as a target date for the briefing. He turned  
to Sonnenfeldt for comment. Sonnenfeldt urged that any WSAG plan-  
ning for Berlin should deal with counter-measures (beyond probes and  
protests) to be taken after the fact of a major provocation such as a  
blockade. Kissinger outlined the three elements he considered essen-  
tial for the briefing: (1) a summary of the organization aspects of Berlin  
planning, (2) how the planning is done, and (3) a range of possible  
situations.

“Hillenbrand cautioned against doing much in the way of revised  
planning because of the deterrent effect of existing plans, the com-  
plexity of quadripartite negotiations, and the possibly destabilizing  
consequences should the Soviets be made aware of allied efforts to-

ward revised crisis planning for Berlin. Kissinger replied that the interest of the President is not toward major revisions, but only to ascertain that the plans we have are still good.

“All agreed on the need for the briefing. Kissinger then inquired about what should be done following the briefing. How can we get at the plans on the basis of their merits? Do we have suitable alternatives, in today’s world, should we need to act in Berlin? First of all, he suggested, we should look at all of the unilateral plans and then the key quadripartite plans to see if we still find them acceptable. Hyland opined that we should develop a statement of priorities, which Hillenbrand agreed is possible, but only on a unilateral basis. Hyland acknowledged this is true, but the fact in no way diminished the need for the exercise. Sonnenfeldt reiterated his concern that we plan beyond an impasse, considering what courses the U.S. would choose and what we should try to get our allies to do.

“Secretary Johnson said we should develop scenarios covering what and how we should seek to implement in a Berlin crisis. If we are blockaded—in earnest—tomorrow, what course would we recommend to the President so that he in turn could persuade our allies? Can this sort of thing be drawn from existing plans? Hillenbrand said it could. Kissinger said the style of the President is to weigh various courses of action. The briefing, therefore, would be the first step, followed by a WSAG review of the plans in an attempt to establish priorities. He asked the Group to think about how the WSAG review should be conducted.”

According to the summary of decisions for the meeting, the participants agreed that: (1) a briefing on Berlin contingency planning would be prepared for the President; and (2) both unilateral and quadripartite contingency planning for Berlin would be reviewed “with special emphasis on establishing priorities among alternative courses of action.” (National Security Council, Minutes Files, Box 120, WSAG Minutes, 1969 and 1970 (Originals)) No evidence has been found that the President received the proposed briefing on Berlin contingency planning. For text of NSAM 109, “U.S. Policy on Military Actions in a Berlin Conflict,” see *Foreign Relations, 1961–1963*, volume XIV, Document 185.

**35. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, October 17, 1969.

SUBJECT

State Department Analysis of New German Coalition Policies

Secretary Rogers wanted your attention called to the attached analysis of the possible foreign and defense policies of the new coalition of Social Democrats (SPD) and Free Democrats under Brandt's leadership.<sup>2</sup>

The analysis makes the following points:

—that any German government's freedom of action will be constrained by the obvious factors of its existence as a divided country; by its geographical position; by the security concerns of the USSR; and, in the case of the new coalition, by the fragile base of its parliamentary majority;

—policy toward the East will nevertheless be of primary concern; it will focus on signature of the NPT, evolution of a formula for renouncing the Munich agreement, some form of acceptance of the Oder-Neisse line with Poland, and greater flexibility in dealing with East Germany, though short of formal recognition;

—to prevent a widening of the gap between the two Germanies and hopefully to close it, the SPD will increase contacts with the East, seek diplomatic relations with East European governments and continue talks with the USSR on the mutual renunciation of force;

—in the West, Brandt will press for British entry into the Common Market, but will not be in a position to put great pressures on France;

—as for relations with the US there is no reason to expect wide divergencies to develop; the SPD, however, is somewhat suspicious that we are biased in favor of the Christian Democrats.

The memorandum from State recommends a visit by Brandt fairly soon, and I will be sending you a separate memorandum on this.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 682, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. III. Confidential. Sent for information. According to another copy of this memorandum, Hyland drafted it on October 14. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 287, Memoranda to the President, 1969–1974, Oct.–Dec. 1969) Sonnenfeldt forwarded a draft to Kissinger on October 7; in his cover memorandum, Sonnenfeldt commented that the State paper was “workman-like but somewhat superficial” and probably did not contain “anything the President has not already heard.” (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 682, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. III) In accordance with Kissinger's handwritten instructions, Sonnenfeldt revised the draft on October 14 to include a summary of the State paper. (Ibid.) A note indicates that the memorandum was returned from the President on October 21. Kissinger later wrote that State had submitted a “thoughtful paper” and that he agreed with its conclusion that “under an SPD–FDP coalition an active all-German and Eastern policy will have the first priority.” (*White House Years*, p. 408)

<sup>2</sup> Attached is an October 6 memorandum from Eliot to Kissinger, noting that Rogers had requested that the enclosed paper be brought to the President's attention. (Also in National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 15 GER W)

### 36. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Washington, October 20, 1969.

#### SUBJECT

Visit by Willy Brandt's Emissary, Egon Bahr

I had a two-hour session with Bahr on Monday, October 13.<sup>2</sup> The trip was his suggestion and I agreed, after discussion with Secretary Rogers on the understanding that there would be no negotiation of specific matters.<sup>3</sup>

Bahr said he wanted to assure us, in Brandt's name, of the basic continuity in German foreign policy and of Brandt's desire to have close relations. He indicated there was no difficulty with Brandt over your election night phone call to Kiesinger. I assured him of your desire to maintain close and confidential relations with Brandt. We agreed on a confidential channel of communications which, together with the direct line from you to the Chancellor, can be used for strictly private exchanges or contact in moments of crisis. I stressed the need for absolute secrecy when such communications are made and Bahr agreed.<sup>4</sup> (He has unfortunately not had a reputation for discretion and we will have to test the privacy of this channel in practice, now that Bahr is to become Brandt's foreign and security policy advisor in the Chancellor's office.)

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 682, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. III. Secret; Nodis. Sent for information. Sonnenfeldt redrafted the memorandum on October 15 to incorporate Kissinger's handwritten corrections; two substantive revisions are noted in footnotes below. A note on the memorandum indicates it was returned from the President on October 22.

<sup>2</sup> Bahr also prepared a memorandum of the conversation on October 14; see *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1969*, Vol. 2, pp. 1114–1118. For memoir accounts, see Kissinger, *White House Years*, pp. 410–412; Bahr, *Zu meiner Zeit*, pp. 270–283; and Hillenbrand, *Fragments of Our Time*, pp. 286–287.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 28.

<sup>4</sup> As Kissinger later recalled: "Bahr, after leaving the White House by the front door, reentered it through the basement for a private talk with me, primarily to establish a channel by which we could stay in touch outside formal procedures." (*White House Years*, p. 411) According to Bahr, the two men agreed that only Nixon, Sonnenfeldt, Brandt, and Ehmke would also know about this backchannel. (*Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1969*, Vol. 2, p. 1114, fn. 2) After the meeting, Kissinger arranged to set up a line of communication to Brandt that "would be just a transmittal to Brandt and then back to us." (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 360, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

In a discussion of the policy intentions of the new coalition in which Assistant Secretary of State Hillenbrand participated,<sup>5</sup> Bahr made the following points:

1. After Brandt's election by the Bundestag, the Germans intend to approach the allies with a proposal to enhance the voting rights of the 22 Berlin deputies in the Bundestag. The matter is controversial in Germany on constitutional grounds and also because it is clearly intended to boost the SPD's slender majority in the Bundestag. We made no commitments to Bahr but will pursue our internal examination of our options which will also have to take into account problems that might arise with the French (who oppose any change in the existing limitation on Berlin voting rights) and with the Soviets. The Secretary of State is to submit a study for your review.<sup>6</sup>

2. Bahr outlined a fast-paced timetable for German signature of the NPT. It includes a *démarche* to us concerning interpretations of certain clauses in the NPT. Such a *démarche* was already in train under the outgoing German government and should not pose problems for us. Once the Germans sign, we can expect early Soviet willingness to jointly complete ratification with us, as we have proposed.<sup>7</sup>

3. Bahr outlined a series of German moves toward the USSR, Poland and East Germany. In themselves they pose no major problems for us (e.g., a German-Soviet understanding on renunciation of force, a new German offer to the Poles amounting to *de facto* acceptance of the Oder-Neisse line); but they could become troublesome if they engender euphoria, affect Germany's contribution to NATO and give ammunition to our own *détente*-minded people here at home. The Germans may also become so engaged in their Eastern policy that their commitment to West European unity may decline. The Soviets—and, with some apparent prodding by Moscow, Ulbricht—seem willing

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<sup>5</sup> Hillenbrand drafted a memorandum of the conversation in which he commented: "This was a typical Bahr performance. He did most of the talking and did not always distinguish between his own views and those of Brandt. Judging from information from other sources, the line of thinking which he outlined generally reflects the putative new Chancellor's own approach." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 682, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. III)

<sup>6</sup> See footnote 3, Document 31.

<sup>7</sup> On October 30 Ambassador Roth, the German Disarmament Commissioner, met Secretary of State Rogers in Washington to discuss German signature of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. (Memorandum from Rogers to the President, October 30; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 12, President's Daily Briefs, October 29–31, 1969) Rogers subsequently agreed, with the President's approval, to issue public assurances that the NPT did not affect the security guarantees of NATO. (Memorandum from Watts to Eliot, November 12; *ibid.*, Subject Files, Non-Proliferation Treaty, April 1969–Mar 70) The text of Rogers' statement, delivered on November 28 following German signature of the treaty, is in Department of State *Bulletin*, December 15, 1969, p. 545.

enough to receive Bonn's overtures. The Germans may wind up combining the disadvantages of each of their major policies: getting sucked into more and more concessions to "save" their new Eastern policy while causing their Western allies to question their reliability. It is questionable whether the internal strength and cohesion of the FRG is strong enough to sustain a series of frustrations and setbacks.<sup>8</sup>

4. Bahr expressed concern about unilateral US troop reductions in Germany, mostly because he felt this would reduce Western bargaining leverage in negotiations with the Russians on mutual troop cuts. I told him that we had no plans or intentions to cut our troops but that, realistically, the trend in Congress and elsewhere toward doing so could not be ignored. I said we would hope to deal with this problem in an orderly way by consulting with our allies on a viable strategic concept and on a force posture which we and the allies would abide by. We are preparing a NSSM on our NATO forces for early issuance.<sup>9</sup> But it is clear that the Germans expect substantial US cuts in the next two years or so and are themselves examining various schemes for negotiating with the Russians on major reductions on both sides. NATO also has a study underway on such mutual reductions. I believe it is essential that we have an agreed strategic concept before any negotiations with the Soviets occur.

Altogether, the points in Bahr's substantive presentation contained no surprises. He did say that we should expect less of a guilt complex in Bonn under Brandt and President Heinemann, and hence a more self-reliant and not always compliant attitude toward us. The Socialists may well seek to take on a more nationalist coloration by presenting themselves as defenders of the German national interest.<sup>10</sup> In any case, we can probably expect to see a posture of greater independence toward us in Bonn. I told Bahr that we want to deal with Germany as a partner, not a client.

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<sup>8</sup> The previous two sentences are based on Kissinger's comment in the margin of the draft: "Germans may wind up combining the disadvantage of every course of action. The cohesion of the FRG is not strong enough to sustain a very great area of maneuver." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 682, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. III)

<sup>9</sup> Kissinger issued NSSM 84, U.S. Strategies and Forces for NATO, on November 21. The text is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XLI.

<sup>10</sup> This sentence is based on Kissinger's marginalia: "It may be that the Socialists want to present themselves as defenders of the German national interest." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 682, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. III)

### 37. Editorial Note

On October 20, 1969, President Nixon and Assistant to the President Kissinger met Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin in the Oval Office to discuss several issues, including proposals to negotiate a settlement on Berlin. In a memorandum to the President, October 18, Kissinger concluded that Dobrynin, who had requested the meeting ostensibly to deliver an “affirmative message” on the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, “obviously has something more basic to convey, since protocol would have called for him to give the response to Secretary Rogers with whom Dobrynin had conducted the earlier conversations on this matter.” In reviewing specific points Dobrynin might raise, Kissinger briefed the President on Berlin:

“In your letter to Kosygin last April you suggested talks, if they could improve the situation in West Berlin. Kosygin replied in June to agree to talks but without any suggestion of readiness to deal with the issues. You decided not to pursue the matter further, at least until after the FRG election. Subsequently, the US, UK and France, with German approval, proposed four-power talks and also suggested that the FRG could talk with the GDR. The Soviets agreed to four-power talks in September, but again with no indication of flexibility on substance. Gromyko, when he was here, tried to probe whether we preferred bilateral or four-power talks. If Dobrynin raises the matter, you should tell him that we are flexible on procedure but our only interest in *any* talks is to see whether the situation in Berlin can be improved so that periodic crises will not occur. (On balance, I believe we should *not* pursue this bilaterally, except perhaps in close touch with the allies. The French especially are extremely skeptical about any prospects for success and they are undoubtedly correct. If we do too much bilaterally, we will merely arouse allied suspicions and encourage Brandt, who needs little, to strike out on his own.)”

Kissinger also addressed the recent advent of German Chancellor Willy Brandt. “If Dobrynin raises Germany, and especially if he warns about the danger of fascism and revanchism,” he advised Nixon, “you should tell him that with Brandt in power the Soviets have an historical opportunity for a genuine and equitable improvement of relations with the FRG. History will judge them harshly if they abuse this opportunity.” (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 489, President’s Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1969 [Part 1])

According to the memorandum of conversation, the meeting began at 3:30 p.m. with a discussion of a Soviet proposal to announce that the SALT talks would begin in Helsinki on November 17. Noting that Soviet President Podgorny valued direct communication, Dobrynin then read an aide-mémoire on the “present state” of Soviet-American relations, expressing dissatisfaction with such “concrete

questions” as the Middle East, Vietnam, and China. The aide-mémoire first addressed the issue of European security:

“It is known, for example, that the Soviet Government has expressed readiness to follow the path that would facilitate doing away with the existing military blocs and groupings which, without doubt, would make a most positive impact on the world situation. Unfortunately, one has to conclude that those statements have not met a positive response from the US Government. On the contrary, it is noted in Moscow that the activity of NATO is now on the increase.

“Or take, for instance, the question of drawing a line through the vestiges of the Second World War in Europe and fixating the situation that has developed there. We on our part have always expressed readiness and proposed concrete ways for a just settlement of the questions involved, with due regard to the existing realities. The American side, however, acts contrary to the obligations assumed by the United States under the Allied agreements. Why could not the US, together with the USSR as great powers and allies in the past war, make necessary efforts at last in that important field?

“The Soviet side stands prepared now to start an exchange of views with the US also on the question of West Berlin. Such an exchange of views, in our opinion, can be useful if both sides are guided by the aim of contributing to a relaxation of tension in Europe and of preventing in the future frictions and complications dangerous for the maintenance of peace and stability in Europe.” (Ibid.)

After listening to this “candid” presentation, the President expressed his own disappointment, in particular, with the apparent Soviet refusal to help end the war in Vietnam. As for European security and Berlin, Nixon said that these matters could be “dealt with later at a very high level, if we can make a breakthrough somewhere.” But when Dobrynin asked how the two sides might achieve a breakthrough, Nixon ignored the question and changed the subject. (Ibid.)

In an October 21 memorandum to the President, Kissinger assessed the outcome of the meeting. “I suspect Dobrynin’s basic mission was to test the seriousness of the threat element in our current posture,” he wrote, “and to throw out enough inducements (SALT, Berlin, direct informal contact with you) to make it politically and psychologically difficult for you to play it rough over Vietnam.” Kissinger also repeated, in somewhat stronger terms, his previous advice on the proposed Berlin negotiations:

“The Soviets again agree to talks with us but give no indication whatever that these might lead to the improvements we seek. As you know, there has also recently been an offer by ourselves, the British and French, with FRG support, to talk to the Soviets. They agreed in much the same vague terms used in Dobrynin’s text. I think we should not encourage the notion of bilateral US-Soviet talks on Berlin at this

stage. The Soviets would use them to stir up suspicions among the Allies and to play us off against each other. I believe we would do best to keep this issue in the quadripartite forum for the moment and not to press too much ourselves. Since there may be a misunderstanding of our position in Moscow (you first raised the possibility of talks in your Berlin speech and then in your letter to Kosygin last March), we should probably tell the Soviets that we are not now interested in bilateral talks." (Ibid.)

For the participants' memoir accounts of the meeting, see Nixon, *RN: The Memoirs of Richard Nixon*, pages 405–407; Kissinger, *White House Years*, pages 145–146, 305, 408; and Dobrynin, *In Confidence*, page 202.

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### 38. Editorial Note

On October 21, 1969, Willy Brandt was elected Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany by the Bundestag, the first Social Democratic head of government in nearly 40 years. Henry Kissinger announced the news in a memorandum to President Nixon that afternoon, noting that "Brandt received 251 votes, two more than the required absolute majority of 249." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 12, President's Daily Briefs, October 11–21, 1969) Shortly thereafter, Nixon sent a congratulatory message to Brandt in which he suggested direct consultation on "matters of mutual interest." (Message from Nixon to Brandt, no date; *ibid.*, Box 682, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. III) Brandt responded on October 22, promising to take full advantage of this offer of personal communication. (Ibid.) The next day, Nixon sent the first backchannel message to Brandt:

"I would like the Chancellor to know that the Soviet Ambassador has proposed that the strategic arms limitation talks begin on November 17 at Helsinki. We plan to accept this proposal. Your government will be officially informed through your Ambassador here on Friday, October 24, but I wanted you personally to know of this development as soon as possible. I wish to assure you that I plan to maintain the fullest consultations with our allies on this matter. You should feel free to pass to me any views you may have through this channel. May I ask you to keep the contents and existence of this message entirely to yourself." (Ibid., Box 753, Presidential Correspondence File, Germany, Chancellor Brandt (1969–Apr 70))

As soon as he received this message, Brandt sent the following reply: "I am grateful for your message. You will find no barriers from my side for the beginning of SALT. I never doubted your assurances. I will use this channel, if I find it necessary at a later stage." (Ibid.)

### 39. Telegram From the Embassy in Germany to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Bonn, October 29, 1969, 1140Z.

14207. Subject: Ambassador's Call on Chancellor Brandt.

1. Brandt received the Ambassador late yesterday, Oct 28, the first Ambassador to be received by the new Chancellor.<sup>2</sup> (Brandt received Soviet Ambassador Tsarapkin later yesterday, and will receive the British and French Ambassadors tomorrow.)

2. After the Ambassador had congratulated Brandt warmly on his election as Chancellor, Brandt stressed that NATO and ties with the US remain fundamental to his government. Germany plans to work for reconciliation with Eastern Europe, he said, but only from a base rooted firmly in the West. "Our basic security interests dictate that Germany cannot operate from a position in between East and West."

3. Brandt thanked the Ambassador warmly for the President's message of congratulation, adding that he had answered the President's message<sup>3</sup> before replying to messages from any other heads of government. Brandt said he hardly feels himself a stranger to the President, having seen him many times since they first met in 1954. Brandt also added that he doesn't really feel himself an opposition leader who has waited out in the cold for 20 years, pointing out that throughout the long period he was Governing Mayor of Berlin, when he had innumerable dealings with America, he had not been an opposition leader as far as Berlin was concerned, although he had been a member of the opposition party in the Federal Republic.

4. The Ambassador replied that he found nothing in the government declaration<sup>4</sup> which was inconsistent with US policies. It served to show the basic consistency of both US and German policy goals ever since the war. Like the German Government, the US gave full support to Western European integration and the entry of Britain into the Common Market. The Eastern policy of the new German Government and

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 17 US–GER W. Confidential; Immediate. Repeated to London, Paris, Moscow, Brussels, The Hague, Luxembourg, Rome, USNATO, and Berlin.

<sup>2</sup> For a German record of the conversation, see *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1969*, Vol. 2, pp. 1167–1169.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 38.

<sup>4</sup> In his government declaration on October 28, Brandt announced his intention to: negotiate renunciation-of-force agreements with the Soviet Union, Poland, and Czechoslovakia; urge the four powers to reach an agreement improving the situation of Berlin; and hold formal talks with East Germany leading to "contractually agreed cooperation."

its position on the NATO alliance were of course likewise fully consistent with US policy objectives. On defense policy, the Ambassador thanked Brandt warmly for the extraordinarily prompt and reassuring answer to Secretary Laird's message on Germany's intention to maintain its defense effort.<sup>5</sup> The Ambassador assured Brandt of the administration's intent to maintain substantial US forces in Europe, although at the same time pointing to heavy pressures in certain quarters in the US for reduction. To counter these latter pressures, it was vitally important that Germany and other European countries do everything possible to improve their own defense contribution. Finally, the Ambassador specifically thanked Brandt for including two specific items in the government's program of action in the foreign policy action program: (A) the intention to take an active part in the NATO committee on challenges to a modern society, and (B) the intention to take up the US offer to participate in limited areas of space research.

5. Brandt said he was aware of the President's interest in these two points. On the NAC committee, Brandt said the German Government planned to have Prof. Weiszacker<sup>6</sup> actively involved in the work, which would in turn facilitate the involvement of other leading people in the academic world. On defense, Brandt said that he had deliberately included a reference to personnel problems and public acceptance of the military to ensure the effectiveness of their mission. He

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In perhaps the most controversial line, Brandt declared: "Even if two states exist in Germany, they are not foreign countries to each other, their relations with each other can only be of a special nature." A translation of portions relating to foreign policy and the Embassy's preliminary assessment are in telegrams 14168 and 14174 from Bonn, October 28. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 15 GER W and POL 15–1 GER W, respectively) See also *Documents on Germany, 1944–1985*, pp. 1049–1050; Brandt, *People and Politics*, pp. 236–237, and *My Life in Politics*, p. 209. In an October 29 memorandum to Kissinger, Sonnenfeldt highlighted the following passage from the declaration: "The close ties between us and the United States exclude, as far as the Federal Government is concerned, any doubt about the validity of the commitments which the US, by treaty and conviction, has assumed in regard to Europe, the FRG and West Berlin. Our common interests require neither additional assurances nor recurrent declarations. They are capable of supporting a more independent policy and a more active partnership on the part of Germany." After reading Sonnenfeldt's memorandum on November 5, Kissinger wrote in the margin: "We will come to regret German 'flexibility'." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 682, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. III)

<sup>5</sup> In a recent conversation with Pauls, Laird had expressed some concern about the defense policy of the Brandt administration, particularly in view of Congressional opposition to maintaining American force levels in Europe. (Telegram 14122 from Bonn, October 27; *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, DEF 6 GER W) Acting on official instructions, Pauls informed Rogers on October 28 that "the German Government does not intend to reduce the quality or quantity of the German contribution to NATO." (Telegram 182823 to Bonn, October 29; *ibid.*)

<sup>6</sup> Reference is presumably to Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker, a prominent German physicist and philosopher.

felt this necessary for morale. He also spoke approvingly of Helmut Schmidt as a man who would bring both leadership and expertise to the Defense Ministry.

6. Brandt said the government declaration was very long and detailed because his government was a coalition. Many items had to be included because they were pet projects of the FDP or members of his own party. Brandt also commented that the government had set out for itself a very active work program. (*Comment:* The long list of domestic programs will impose heavy strains on the FRG budget, with consequent changes to the attainment of defense goals. Hence the new government's problem will be similar to our own, with the added handicap of being a coalition.)

7. Brandt's comments on the NPT and voting rights for Berlin Deputies will be the subjects of separate messages.<sup>7</sup>

**Rush**

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<sup>7</sup> Brandt's comments on the Non-Proliferation Treaty were reported in telegram 14209 from Bonn, October 29. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, DEF 18–6) For his comments on the voting rights of Berlin Deputies, see footnote 4, Document 30.

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#### 40. Telegram From the Embassy in Germany to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Bonn, November 5, 1969, 1040Z.

14518. Subj: Policy of New German Government on Relations With the GDR.

1. In a conversation with Sutterlin and the DCM, State Secretary Bahr (protect source) laid out what he called the "real" policy of the new German Government toward relations with the GDR. He said he felt it important to be full, clear, and explicit about this because he feared that telegrams sent to the German Embassy in Washington had not conveyed the policy adequately. He said the full extent of this policy will not be divulged at this time. In an aside, he said he personally thought Brandt's decision to refer publicly to "two German states"<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 15 GER W. Secret; Priority; Limdis. Repeated to Berlin, USNATO, London, Paris, and Moscow.

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 4, Document 39.

was a mistake at this time because it provoked too much public controversy. The full “naked” policy, Bahr said, contains the following elements:

2. Trade with the GDR: The FRG will no longer stand in the way of expanded Allied trade with the GDR. “We cannot ask the US, for example, not to do in trade with the GDR that which the French already do and which the British will soon do.”

3. GDR membership in international organizations: The FRG had already given up its position on this subject when the International Olympic Committee voted at Mexico City to allow a separate GDR team at the next Olympics and the FRG subsequently announced that it nevertheless wanted to have the next Olympics in Munich, knowing full well that this meant a separate GDR team would participate in the FRG before the whole world. Bahr did not give details as to how the FRG would proceed from here on its policy toward the GDR in international organizations; he only made the point that its earlier position of opposing membership had already been given up.

4. Renunciation of force agreements: Negotiation of these agreements in the near future will be the first major step in working out the new relationship with the GDR. The agreements will be negotiated in the following order: Soviet Union, Poland, GDR. In an important aside on the European Security Conference (ESC), Brandt [*Bahr*] said that the renunciation of force negotiations will have a determining effect on the German position toward the ESC. If the renunciation of force negotiations are blocked by the other side, the FRG will have no interest in an ESC, in which it has no intrinsic interest anyway. Furthermore, Bahr thought the Soviets had made a tactical mistake in the recent Warsaw Pact declaration on the ESC. By coming out for an ESC in early spring 1970, the Soviets publicly engaged their prestige for an early ESC, thus giving the FRG and the West a tactical advantage in insisting that conditions be met before an ESC is held.

5. All-German treaty: Negotiation of an all-German treaty (*Gesamt-Deutscher Verträge*) will be the final and culminating stage in the process, to be undertaken only if all the preceding steps have been fulfilled. Such an all-German treaty would not provide for FRG recognition of the GDR as a government which the FRG recognizes in the traditional sense, with exchange of Ambassadors, etc. Nor would it affect in any way the Allied rights in Berlin nor the four-power responsibility for Berlin; the FRG and GDR are not fully sovereign nations anyway and have no basis for affecting or altering these Allied and four-power rights. It would, however, provide for FRG acceptance of two German states. Its key point would be a *modus vivendi*. For its part, the FRG would give up its opposition to third states recognizing the GDR. The other and essential half of the bargain would be solid GDR guarantees of FRG civilian access to Berlin.

6. Pending the completion of this last step, the FRG will continue to try to prevent other states from recognizing the GDR diplomatically. Bahr said the steps described above would have to move rapidly; twelve months from now, he predicted, India will recognize the GDR.<sup>3</sup> When this happens, the FRG will no longer be able to hold the dam; there will be a flood of recognitions because the FRG, given its heavy investment in India, will be powerless to take any retaliatory action. In a recent conversation, even Birrenbach had recognized this fact of life.

7. Asked about the relation of the Allied sounding of the Soviets to all this, Bahr said it should go ahead in parallel fashion. He felt, however, that the Allied sounding would get nowhere; the Soviets will simply say that it is none of their business.

8. Asked about a separate subject, Western European integration, Bahr was very discouraging. He saw no motivations at work in Western Europe to bring about any progress. Fear played no role any longer; the Europeans were quite content to remain under the American nuclear umbrella.

9. On still another subject, completion of WEU action on building submarines for Greece, Bahr said the FRG has decided to go ahead. This issue had been hanging fire within the grand coalition for six months. Even though FRG relations with the present Greek regime were far from the best, Brandt had decided to proceed anyway because the project is important to NATO. Bahr characterized Brandt's decision to go ahead with this matter as an example of his intent to be a decisive Chancellor. "Brandt has decided to be a Chancellor who decides," he said.

10. Because German policy on this topic is the subject of intense domestic controversy, we believe the above views and those of van Well (septel)<sup>4</sup> should not be discussed with other nations at this time. For background see also A-499, May 22, 1969 (notal).<sup>5</sup>

**Rush**

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<sup>3</sup> Although establishing relations at the consular level on August 3, 1970, India did not extend full diplomatic recognition to East Germany until October 8, 1972.

<sup>4</sup> In telegram 14539 from Bonn, November 5, the Embassy reported that van Well confessed that he had been "somewhat shaken by some of the wording in Brandt's government declaration on policy toward East Germany of which he had made the original first draft, later worked over by Egon Bahr, Brandt himself, and to a lesser extent FonMin Scheel. Nevertheless, he considered the end result a worthwhile formulation." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967-69, POL GER E-GER W) The second part of the conversation with van Well on FRG policy toward the GDR was reported in telegram 14540 from Bonn, November 5. (Ibid.)

<sup>5</sup> Not printed. (Ibid.)

**41. Telegram From the Embassy in Germany to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Bonn, November 7, 1969, 1825Z.

14712. Subject: Brandt's East German Policy—Initial Comment. Refs: (A) Bonn 14372<sup>2</sup> (B) Bonn 14518 notal<sup>3</sup> (C) Bonn 14539 notal (D) Bonn 14540 notal<sup>4</sup> (E) Bonn's A-720 & A-723 notal.<sup>5</sup>

1. *Begin summary:* We have reported that Willy Brandt's recent statement of his coalition government's policy toward East Germany reflects an intention to make a determined try in coming months to achieve a modus vivendi with East Germany. The new formulation brings German policy appreciably closer to formal acceptance of the consequences of World War II. It is too early to tell what its practical impact and results will be. This message contains some preliminary observations as regards aspects of direct interest for US policy towards Germany.

2. Insofar as it is a more realistic reflection of actual facts, the Brandt policy change appears desirable and merits continuation of the support we have given this aspect of German policy for the past ten years. The aim of the new policy, to establish a durable contractual modus vivendi with the GDR short of outright recognition, appears in conformity with our interests in Central Europe and should, we believe, be supported. Success of the new policy approach is dependent on the Soviet response, which is highly uncertain. But the mere fact of its presentation entails certain gains for GDR efforts to gain international status and will confuse the FRG's friends abroad. It also carries a risk that its actual contribution toward relaxation of East-West tensions may be exaggerated in public opinion to the detriment of sup-

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL GER E–GER W. Secret; Limdis. Repeated to Rome, London, Paris, Moscow, Berlin, USNATO, USUN, Ankara, Athens, Brussels, Copenhagen, The Hague, Lisbon, Luxembourg, Ottawa, Reykjavik, Belgrade, Budapest, Bucharest, Prague, Sofia, Warsaw, Bremen, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Munich, and Stuttgart. According to another copy, the telegram was drafted by Dean on November 6, cleared by Fessenden, and approved by Rush. (Ibid., EUR/CE Files: Lot 85 D 330, Draft File—JDean (Oct–Dec) 1969)

<sup>2</sup> Dated November 1. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 32–4 GER)

<sup>3</sup> Document 40.

<sup>4</sup> Regarding telegrams 14539 and 14540 from Bonn, see footnote 4, Document 40.

<sup>5</sup> Both dated July 22. (Both in National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL GER E–GER W) In a July 31 memorandum to Kissinger, Hyland forwarded the airgrams, which he considered “perceptive, thoughtful and well written.” (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 1321, NSC Unfiled Material 1969 [14 of 19])

port for NATO defense efforts and moves toward European unity. Suggestions are made in paras 9 and 10 for a US position toward the changes. *End summary.*

3. The new policy has a refreshing realism particularly as regards its implied acceptance of the existence of two German states. In some respects, German policy should be easier for German officials to explain to some third countries, especially those of Eastern Europe. At the same time, it entails the risk for Brandt that its costs, in the form of third country recognition of the GDR or GDR membership in international organizations, may have to be paid before any gains can be registered; the outlook for such gains is limited.

4. Brandt suggested that the FRG attitude toward third country recognition of the GDR and to GDR efforts to gain international status would be dependent on the GDR response to FRG efforts to broaden and up the level of FRG–GDR negotiations. Reftel B and C indicate that Brandt is anxious to trade what might be termed partial FRG recognition of the GDR for GDR signature of a treaty regulating relations between the two parts of Germany as regards movement of persons and goods, transportation, and communications. Apparently Brandt's calculation is that this would be an enduring "interim" relationship until a distant final peace treaty and that he can in this way hold the level of the FRG–GDR relationship below that of outright final recognition. Believing that recognition of the GDR by an increasing number of third countries can scarcely be avoided, he wished to offer the GDR the half-loaf of partial FRG recognition before further third country recognitions and the further development of FRG public opinion in the direction of recognition deprive him of even this uncertain bargaining power.

5. Brandt has cast his die. The practical result depends on the Soviet and East German response. This has always been the case with regard to the future of East Germany, but now the Federal Germans would be satisfied with far less than in the past; there is no more talk of free elections and even the word "reunification" has been dropped from the SPD–FDP vocabulary. The USSR is probably in a position to bring the East Germans to make the limited counter-concessions which would make the new Brandt policy appear real and effective. It cannot be predicted whether the Soviet leaders will actually use this opportunity; considerable potential costs in terms of Soviet control over the governments and peoples of Central and Eastern Europe might arise if even a partial post-war settlement were reached in Central Europe. But the Soviet invasion of the CSSR has established new ground rules for the relations of Eastern European countries with the West. Moreover, the Soviet leaders have recently shown themselves more willing than heretofore to engage in tactical maneuver in German issues.

Examples were Soviet tactics in the Bundesversammlung fracas and during the Bundestag election campaign. (Bonn 13131, para 4)<sup>6</sup> The Soviets would doubtless desire, with a minimum of real movement on their part, to awaken and exploit the interest of German leaders in this issue for maximum possible influence over German policy, especially as regards Western Europe.

6. As regards third country attitudes, ultimate recognition of the GDR by the world community has moved closer. It seems probable that further Asian and African countries will take advantage of Brandt's looser approach in order to recognize the GDR and that CDU complaints in the Oct 29–30 Bundestag debate that the FRG in the short or long run will end up among a minority of states which do not recognize the GDR will prove valid.<sup>7</sup>

7. The prospect is that the United States and other close allies of the FRG may find themselves in this minority. This situation will create new operational problems to which attention should now be given. Although the FRG will ask us to continue to do so, we will be less able to effectively argue against East German membership in international organizations or recognition by specific third countries. Assuming Germany's closest allies remain loyal to the FRG position, they may also come under increasing criticism in their own countries for an "unrealistic" policy toward the GDR, although this pressure should not prove unendurable. The Brandt policy gives some added urgency to detailed examination of possible consequences of ultimate FRG recognition of the GDR for US interests in Central Europe (Bonn A-723), although that phase even is probably still a long time off.

8. A special problem may be created by the potential tempo of development of relationship between the FRG and the GDR and by the tempo of recognition of the GDR by third countries. If the USSR chooses for its own reasons to cooperate with Brandt at least to the extent of urging or permitting Poland, Czechoslovakia, and the GDR to intensify negotiations with the FRG, a strong impression may be created in Western opinion that a factual settlement of post-war East/West difficulties in Central Europe is in sight without much substantive change

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<sup>6</sup> In telegram 13131 from Bonn, October 6, the Embassy reported: "The election was characterized by the most intensive Soviet intervention in domestic politics which has taken place in any postwar German election. This was expressed in a series of policy decisions designed to show the feasibility of the SPD-FDP approach to Eastern policy including the Soviet replies on renunciation of force, the Berlin sounding, and East German agreement to broaden the spectrum of negotiations with the FRG. Soviet diplomats indicated their preference for an SPD-FDP coalition before and after the elections." (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1967-69, POL 14 GER W)

<sup>7</sup> An account of the Bundestag debate is in telegram 14369 from Bonn, November 1. (Ibid., POL 15-2 GER W)

necessarily having taken place. This impression in turn could have considerable effect on the willingness of Western public opinion to support defense burdens and increased cooperation among the Western European countries. Movement toward FRG recognition or even ultimate outright Federal German recognition may bring some objective diminution of the causes of East-West tension. But even in the latter case, the decrease will be far from complete and both FRG–GDR and FRG–USSR relations will continue as an important area of movement and instability in Central Europe.

9. Because our own interests are involved both in the above regard and with regard to substantive effects on the Allied position in Berlin and Germany as a whole, we have a right to expect from the FRG closest consultations on developing German policy toward East Germany. We believe our interests would be best served by an orderly, spaced-out sequence of events, in which the FRG shows greater insistence than it has initially to require benefits from the East Germans equivalent to the concessions it is prepared to make. We believe we should give more support than heretofore to Brandt's effort to engage the East Germans in negotiation at the political level, even though his course entails disadvantages in the sense described in the foregoing paragraph. If such negotiations should take place, they could demonstrate that full FRG recognition of the GDR is not a necessary precondition to practical improvements in the FRG–GDR relationship and could thus control pressures within the FRG and outside for further German concessions on recognition. If they resulted in some form of contractual agreement between the two parts of Germany short of full recognition, this outcome would cause less damage for our position in Berlin and on Germany as a whole than outright recognition at a somewhat later point, which appears the likely alternative outcome.

10. We suggest that in due course the Department may wish to privately express support for Brandt's East German policy, also making the points in the first two sentences of the preceding para, and to authorize the Embassy to take a similar line with our German contacts.

**Rush**

**42. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, November 17, 1969.

SUBJECT

Secretary Rogers' Memorandum on Berlin

The Secretary has sent you a status report on the preparations for another round of exchanges with the Soviet Union on Berlin (Tab B).<sup>2</sup> He states that since our position in Berlin is tenable, it would be a mistake to raise fundamental questions concerning the status of the city. He believes, however, that quite a number of improvements in the situation might be achieved if the USSR is favorably disposed. Accordingly, we plan to develop with the British and French, a list of topics to propose for discussion with the Soviet Union. The Secretary feels that this will serve as a test of Soviet intentions and establish the framework of discussion on our terms.

He believes that we should proceed now, lest the new German government take up Berlin matters in bilateral talks with the USSR. Moreover, Bonn is urging us to move ahead as a contribution to their own discussion with the USSR on such issues as renunciation of force.

I am somewhat concerned about this exercise, especially in light of the essentially negative Soviet reply to the substance of our first overture. If we cast doubt on the validity of present arrangements, we leave the door open for the Soviets to propose modifications of their own. Since any arrangements depend on Soviet good will—they can, after all, harass any new arrangements—access depends less on legal for-

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 682, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. III. Secret. Sent for action. According to another copy of the memorandum, Hyland drafted it on November 14. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 287, Memoranda to the President, 1969–1974, Oct.–Dec. 1969)

<sup>2</sup> Attached at Tab B is an October 31 memorandum from Rogers to Nixon. In an October 28 memorandum to Rogers, Hillenbrand explained: "I understand that this subject is of much interest in the White House and that a memorandum from you to the President summarizing where we stand and where we are going would be welcome." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 28 GER B) Sonnenfeldt, however, thought that the resulting memorandum failed to outline the issues on Berlin for the President. "Thus—although the State memo was inspired mainly by my prodding, after they sent an uncleared instruction to Bonn [Document 32] for more specifics so that the President could get a better feel for what we may get into in a new round of negotiations on Berlin—we are no further ahead than before." (Memorandum from Sonnenfeldt to Kissinger, November 5; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 682, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. III)

mulations than on Soviet fear of the consequences of upsetting access routes.

I believe you will want to review our position before we approach the USSR again. I have drafted a brief note to this effect to the Secretary.

*Recommendation:*

That you approve sending this note (Tab A).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The President approved the note from Kissinger to Rogers (Tab A) on November 19. The text reads as follows: "The President has read with interest your memorandum of October 31 outlining the background of our exchanges with the USSR over Berlin matters and the steps we now plan to take. He would like to have the opportunity to review our position when you have developed the list of topics for discussion you mentioned. He strongly concurs in your feeling that after examining the Soviet response to a list of topics we should then make a determination whether to proceed further." The original is *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 28 GER B.

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#### 43. Letter From the Ambassador to Germany (Rush) to the Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs (Hillenbrand)<sup>1</sup>

Bonn, November 17, 1969.

Dear Marty:

A number of things have happened here as regards the relationship between the FRG and American governments since the Brandt Government took office which I would like the Department to be aware of and which we will want to watch carefully. Some of these developments are more important than others, and I am not sure how to assess them, but they may add up to a pattern.

The first development was Brandt's statement in his Government Declaration on October 21<sup>2</sup> that he wished to be an active ally to the U.S., but a more independent one; he had already made the same point in a press backgrounder for American correspondents (our telegrams 13826,<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, EUR Files: Lot 74 D 430, Department of State—Hillenbrand. Secret; Official–Informal. Drafted by Dean and Fessenden. A copy was sent to Sutterlin.

<sup>2</sup> The reference is in error; Brandt, who was elected on October 21, delivered his government declaration on October 28; see footnote 4, Document 39.

<sup>3</sup> Dated October 21. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 15 GER W)

para 7, 14168<sup>4</sup> and 17174).<sup>5</sup> The second is the fact that both Brandt and Scheel received Ambassador Tsarapkin before receiving the British and French Ambassadors here. As you know from my report to you (our tel 14207)<sup>6</sup> Brandt received me before Tsarapkin. Scheel attempted to do so, but cancelled his appointment with me when he was busy in the Bundestag. The next two days I had to be out of town, so Scheel went ahead with his Tsarapkin appointment before seeing me.

Brandt and Scheel held a reception for the Diplomatic Corps on November 6. In the Federal Bulletin of November 11, as you will see from the enclosure,<sup>7</sup> Tsarapkin is featured. The Bulletin does not mention that Brandt and Scheel received the British and French Ambassadors and myself. I must add in fairness that the same page of the Bulletin plays up constructively the President's Vietnam speech.<sup>8</sup>

The second instance concerns German negotiations with the Soviets on renunciation of the use of force. As you know, the Foreign Office has told us on instructions from Brandt that he wished to coordinate closely the timing of our next Allied reply to the Soviets on the Berlin Soundings with the German reply to the Soviets on renunciation of force. In the Bonn Group meetings, as late as November 12 (our 14871)<sup>9</sup> and November 14, van Well was discussing details of this coordination with us. But despite this close consultation, Brandt and Scheel suddenly decided, without informing us in any way, to give their reply to the Soviets on November 15.<sup>10</sup> We still haven't been shown the German reply, although we probably will be getting it today. In fairness, it should be pointed out that in the past the Germans have been careful not to consult with us fully on their bilateral exchanges with the Soviets on the renunciation of force, although they always did give us texts in advance.

The third case involves East German policy. As I believe we agree, the Brandt Government's statements of FRG policy towards East Germany contain a number of important innovations, including a formula

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<sup>4</sup> Dated October 28. (Ibid.)

<sup>5</sup> Reference should be to telegram 14174 from Bonn, October 28. (Ibid., POL 15-1 GER W)

<sup>6</sup> Document 39. For memoranda of conversation between Brandt and Tsarapkin on October 28 and Scheel and Tsarapkin on October 30, see *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1969*, Vol. 2, pp. 1169–1170, 1190–1194.

<sup>7</sup> Not attached.

<sup>8</sup> Reference is to Nixon's "Silent Majority" speech of November 3 on the war in Vietnam. For text, see *Public Papers: Nixon, 1969*, pp. 901–909.

<sup>9</sup> Dated November 13. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 28 GER B)

<sup>10</sup> For text of the German reply, see *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1969*, Vol. 2, pp. 1289–1290.

which implies acceptance of the existence of East Germany as a state and renunciation of the policy of automatic break in relations with Third Countries which recognize East Germany. These shifts in policy, which are summarized in our telegrams 14372<sup>11</sup> and 14712,<sup>12</sup> have a direct bearing on Allied rights concerning Berlin as a whole and on our position in Berlin. Although there was opportunity to do so between Brandt's election as Chancellor on October 21 and the presentation of the policy statement in October 27, there was in fact no consultation between the Germans and us on these questions. At the same time, there is some indication that Bahr did consult on this question with the East Germans and perhaps with the Soviets.<sup>13</sup>

Finally, there continue to be a number of reports of a planned early Brandt–Scheel visit to Moscow. These reports are not confirmed, but their persistence is such as to make one wonder if there isn't considerable substance to them.

Cumulatively, there emerges from these points a possible interpretation of what Brandt had in mind when he said that the Federal Republic would be a more independent ally of the U.S. It might be a pattern of deliberate emphasis on Eastern policy while downplaying the Western relationship. The evidence is quite incomplete and it is at odds with Brandt's deliberate efforts to downplay foreign policy in favor of being a "Chancellor of internal reform" and his other efforts to stress that his foreign policy will be firmly rooted in Germany's ties with the U.S., NATO, and Western Europe. I need not point out that if the pattern is confirmed, it could have adverse consequences for the relationship of trust between our two governments which is so essential.

We here may be overly sensitive to our reaction to these developments. We are also at present being extremely careful not to give the impression that we are alarmed or are complaining. Our emerging relationship with the new government must be carefully nurtured. It would be very unfortunate if word got around that the United States was deeply concerned or was trying to block the Eastern Policy of the new government. I feel it right, however, to draw these items to your attention as something we will all have to watch closely, with the

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<sup>11</sup> Dated November 1. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 32–4 GER)

<sup>12</sup> Document 41.

<sup>13</sup> In a November 6 memorandum to Kissinger, David McManis of the White House Situation Room summarized a report regarding an October 26 meeting in Bonn between Bahr and Hermann von Berg, the unofficial East German emissary. According to the report, Bahr showed Berg the sections of the draft government declaration relating to inner-German relations; Berg was satisfied with the language, declining to offer any revisions. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 13, President's Daily Briefs, 01–09 Nov 69)

request that you consider before we meet in December whether any action at the present stage is advisable.

Most sincerely,

**Kenneth Rush**<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

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#### **44. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, November 19, 1969.

SUBJECT

Message from Chancellor Brandt

Chancellor Brandt has sent you a personal message through the special channel established for this purpose.<sup>2</sup> The message informs you that he has sent a letter to Kosygin expressing skepticism about an early European Security Conference, and reiterating the FRG's interest in improved relations with the USSR, Poland and East Germany. Brandt told Kosygin that he proceeds on the basis of existing alliance systems, i.e. Germany's NATO membership.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 753, Presidential Correspondence File, Germany, Chancellor Brandt (1969–Apr 70). Top Secret; Sensitive. Sent for action. No drafting information appears on the memorandum. Sonnenfeldt forwarded it to Kissinger on November 19. In a covering memorandum, Sonnenfeldt commented: "The message [from Brandt] seems to be an effort to establish, from his end, the special relationship with the President. He shrewdly uses information on a message to Kosygin to do so. The letter to Kosygin, insofar as he discloses the text to us, seems rather hard-nosed for Brandt, but he clearly keeps the door open for bilateral exchanges with Moscow. The Germans seem worried that the Soviets are trying to avoid bilateral dealings (or are being driven to do so by the GDR) by pressing hard on the European Security Conference in which the GDR would take part as a full-fledged member. (The Soviets just told Scheel again that American-Canadian participation was dependent on GDR participation.) If Brandt's letter says what he told the President, it is not likely to get a very forthcoming response from a Warsaw Pact meeting." (Ibid.)

<sup>2</sup> The message was transmitted in a telegram sent by backchannel on November 19. According to the telegram, the message was "from Egon Bahr to be passed to Mr. Henry Kissinger for President Nixon at White House on behalf of Chancellor Brandt." The telegram also notes: "Bahr stated only Brandt, Ehmke and himself know of the msg at this time." (Ibid., Box 682, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. III)

Brandt indicates he sent the letter in an effort to influence a Communist summit conference reportedly opening in Moscow today and in which Brandt thinks the East Germans will play a negative role.

Brandt's letter to Kosygin follows the general line of his earlier statements; he evidently wants to open a direct channel to Kosygin, something the latter apparently suggested to the German Ambassador in Moscow.

At the same time, Brandt is clearly interested in using the confidential channel to you and to show his readiness to reciprocate your personal messages to him and his predecessor.

I plan to send a brief acknowledgment in your behalf through the same confidential channel.

*Recommendation:*

That you approve a brief acknowledgement to Brandt.<sup>3</sup>

### **Attachment**

*Message from Chancellor Brandt to President Nixon*

I would like to let you know by this means that according to information available to me there will take place, possibly beginning tomorrow (November 20), in Moscow, a meeting of the Party and Government heads of the States of the Warsaw Pact. The main topic is to be the harmonization of the attitude toward the Federal Republic and the plan for a Security Conference for Europe. Given the special significance that may attach to such a meeting in view of the increasing stiffening of East Berlin's attitude toward Bonn, I have today sent via the Soviet Ambassador in Bonn a letter with the following contents to Chairman Kosygin:

(Note: What follows apparently is a paraphrase rather than the complete text.)<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The President approved this recommendation on November 25. The text of the message to Brandt reads: "I greatly appreciate your message and your courtesy in informing me of your letter to Kosygin. I am also deeply grateful to you for your congratulations concerning the moon landing. As regards your letter to Kosygin, I very much agree with your comments about the inadvisability of any early European security conference. I believe we are on the right track in seeking to pursue meaningful negotiations on concrete issues. I will be interested in your assessment of further developments in your relations with the Eastern countries. With best wishes, Richard Nixon." (Telegram WH93025 from the White House to Bonn, November 26; *ibid.*, Box 753, Presidential Correspondence File, Germany, Chancellor Brandt (1969–Apr 70))

<sup>4</sup> The text that follows is a paraphrase of Brandt's letter to Kosygin. For the complete text in German, see *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1969*, Vol. 2, pp. 1313–1315 and *Dokumente zur Deutschlandpolitik, 1969–1970*, pp. 65–66; for a facsimile, see Kevorkov [Keworkow], *Der geheime Kanal*, pp. 50–53; and Bahr, *Zu meiner Zeit*, pp. 277–278.

I declare myself willing to engage in an exchange of views, in accordance with Kosygin's suggestion to the German Ambassador in Moscow, in the hope of removing or preventing misunderstandings—something that is possible only through an extended process rather than from one day to the next.

As far as the reduction of the mistrust and the greater assurance of peace are concerned—both of which are the policy of the Federal Government—the Soviet Union has a weightier responsibility than the Federal Republic, which is well aware of its responsibility for security in Europe. I consider it an illusion and dangerous to proceed from anything other than the alliances and security systems that exist today.

For this reason the goals that are set for a European Security Conference could only be modest. It must be sufficiently well prepared so that when it formally meets a certain degree of accomplishment appears certain. Otherwise the hopes of the European peoples would be so disappointed that the conference had better not take place at all. The proposal that the conference should meet in a few months has aroused additional doubts whether in these circumstances serious preparatory work is remotely possible.

The improvement of bilateral relations between the Soviet Union and the Federal Republic must not take second place to preparations for such a conference. Negotiations concerning a bilateral declaration of force renunciation should begin in the near future and it should be possible to complete them satisfactorily. In this context it is Germany's intention to place the relationship of the two countries on a basis, similar to that which exists between the three Western Powers and the Federal Republic, whereby no further claim will be made under the notorious "enemy state article" and instead Article 2 of the United Nations would be implemented.

The renunciation of force with respect to Poland would recognize territorial integrity; the renunciation of force toward the GDR would contribute to normalization insofar as one can speak of normalization under conditions of the division of Germany.

In conclusion I express the hope that the Governments of the socialist countries involved will have the same constructive attitude as the Federal Republic.

(End of Brandt's message to Kosygin.)

So much for the contents of my letter, which I will not publish. I will inform you should Kosygin answer.

Hearty congratulations for the magnificent landing on the moon and all good wishes for a safe return of the astronauts.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Reference is to the Apollo 12 mission, which took off on November 14 and, after completing the second moon landing, returned to Earth on November 24.

#### 45. Editorial Note

On December 2, 1969, Secretary of State Rogers arrived in Europe for a week of consultations, including the semi-annual session of the North Atlantic Council in Brussels as well as meetings with German officials in Bonn. At the end of the second day of ministerial meetings, Rogers attended the traditional quadripartite dinner on matters relating to Germany and Berlin. In his opening remarks Foreign Minister Scheel insisted that, contrary to press reports, Germany would fully consult with the Allies as it embarked on a new policy to negotiate with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. "There will be no stage or phase of its Eastern policy," he declared, "in which there would not be the closest consultation and harmonization of views. Any other approach would be rash adventurism." Rogers assured Scheel of American support for Ostpolitik: "There had been Washington press reports about U.S. worries on this topic." He [Rogers] had discussed the matter in detail with the President before coming to Brussels. He could confirm that these press reports were baseless. "The USG wished to assure the FRG that it welcomed efforts to reduce tensions through the bilateral discussions initiated by the Germans." (Telegram 5568 from USNATO, December 4; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 38–6) After the session, the Ministers issued a joint declaration on East-West relations, stating that "concrete progress" on Berlin and Germany would affect "the prospects for negotiations looking toward improved relations and cooperation in Europe," implying a clear connection between German plans for the former and Soviet proposals for the latter. (*Documents on Germany, 1944–1985*, pages 1052–1055)

On December 6 Rogers discussed the prospects for Ostpolitik and Berlin in separate conversations with Scheel and Brandt in Bonn. Scheel emphasized the importance of Westpolitik, in particular, the intensification of "close cooperation" between Germany and the United States. After briefly reviewing the postwar history, Scheel maintained that "no element of German public opinion" currently opposed the policy of affiliation with the United States and the Western allies. In this regard, the German Government fully understood that it could pursue an Eastern policy only by maintaining and, if possible, strengthening its Western policy. Rogers strongly agreed with these remarks, noting that "the spirit motivating FRG policies was closely similar to that underlying our own policies not only as regards the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, but also as concerns China and the Far East." Rogers further stated that the United States Government was "pleased" not only with the policies but also with the personalities of the German Government. (Telegram 15626 from Bonn, December 6; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, ORG 7 S)

In his subsequent meeting with the Chancellor, the Secretary reiterated that press reports of German-American disagreement were “completely false.” The United States, he asserted, “applauded the German initiatives in Eastern Europe.” Brandt stressed the importance of Allied understanding for Ostpolitik: “He and his colleagues were not adventurers or stupid. Whatever they did, it would be based on maintenance of a strong position within the Western Alliance and Western Europe. He had emphasized that in his recent policy statement, Germany belongs to the West, but that was no reason why it should not attempt to improve its relations with Eastern Europe.” Rogers said that the Nixon administration had never doubted German intentions. “After all, we were in a sense pursuing a parallel policy in attempting bilaterally to settle certain questions with the Soviets,” he explained. “We were not going to make any agreements which were stupid or would adversely affect our allies.” (Telegram 204279 to Bonn, December 9; *ibid.*, Conference Files, Box 503, CF 415, NATO Dec. 69, Memcons & Statements, Vol. 1) For a German record of the meeting, see *Dokumente zur Deutschlandpolitik, 1969–1970*, Nr. 26, pp. 75-76. During the visit, Rogers also gave Brandt a letter of “warm personal greetings” from President Nixon. The text of the letter is *ibid.*, Central Files 1967–69, ORG 7 S.

On December 10 Rogers briefed the National Security Council on his trip to Europe. The minutes of the meeting record the discussion on Germany as follows:

“Rogers: After the Brussels sessions I went to Bonn and met with all the top people there. The Chancellor is clearly following a policy of opening lines with Poland and Hungary and the Soviet Union but will consult with us fully. Fundamental policy is based on NATO. He thinks the Soviets may make some concessions to get a European Security Conference, conceivably on Berlin and trade. He feels loan discussion with Poland may be useful.

“He thinks in dealings with East Germany there may be some movement in trade, but he does not have too much hope for a real East-West détente. Brandt has little hope for what Ulbricht can or will do.

“I have no impression of an anti-NATO movement in the government thinking, but rather hard-heading looking to the future.

“The key men around Brandt include: (1) Duckwitz. He is closer to Brandt than Scheel, (2) Ehmke, a brilliant man in the chancery, and (3) Bahr, a reptilian. I wouldn’t trust him as far as I could throw him.

“Brandt seems to be thinking far down the road and wants to solidify his position with the young people and the opposition.”

After consideration of France and other European matters, the participants continued their discussion of Germany and Ostpolitik:

“Nixon: Was there any consensus on German moves towards Moscow?”

“Rogers: Pompidou did seem to have some questions on this.”

“Nixon: What about the forthcoming Soviet-West German discussions and talks?”

“Rogers: Brandt seems to believe that the Soviets are very eager, and feels that he can take advantage of the situation.”

“Nixon: What about the people around him and he himself? Are they tough enough, or are they too anxious?”

“Rogers: No, they are tough. Maybe Scheel is not as strong as the others, but then neither is he that strong a figure in the government.”

“Laird: But I still have the feeling several of the leaders there are awfully optimistic. They seem to think that the Soviets are changing more than I can see in the winds.”

“Nixon: Well, it sounds as if you did a good job on the communiqué. But the winds of détente are certainly strong.”

“Rogers: Brandt doesn’t really expect too much, I believe.”

“Nixon: What about consultation? Is he prepared to consult with us about what he is doing?”

“Rogers: Absolutely. I should add that Ambassador Rush is doing a good job and has gained the confidence of the Germans quickly.” (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-109, NSC Meeting Minutes, Originals)

On December 15 Kissinger also forwarded to the President the official report of the Secretary of State on his European trip. Rogers noted that he had dispelled rumors of American suspicions on Ostpolitik at the quadripartite meeting, and that Brandt had promised not only to consult but also to avoid “adventurism.” (Ibid., Box 281, Agency Files, Dept of State, Vol. V) In his covering memorandum, Kissinger recommended that the President approve a brief reply acknowledging Rogers’ report and citing an upcoming NSC meeting on European policy. According to his handwritten note, Nixon instead called Rogers on December 29 to discuss the issue; he then instructed Kissinger to “set up NSC meeting as planned to cover NATO generally—with particular emphasis on Germany—Italy—France—(in that order) also a look at Greece.” (Ibid.)

46. Memorandum for the Record<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 5, 1969.

SUBJECT

Conversation with German Minister on Newspaper Article About Alleged White House Views

After the German Minister had finished discussing another matter during his call on me today, he raised the article by David Binder in today's *New York Times* (Tab A).<sup>2</sup> I said I had wanted to raise the same matter. I said that the reported American *démarche* to Bonn concerning lack of German consultation was, of course, a complete fabrication, as the Germans themselves know. However, I wanted to make clear, and was doing so specifically in Dr. Kissinger's behalf as well, that it was extremely difficult for us to talk with German visitors if shortly thereafter we saw newspaper articles attributing certain views to the White House. This was particularly serious when these views were patently fabricated and attempted to set the White House against the Department of State.

I continued that the Binder story was evidently based on back-grounding by German officials and seemed to have its origin in a discussion in the Bonn Group on November 18 in which the matter of inadequate German consultation on the German note to the Soviet Union of November 15 had come up.<sup>3</sup> In conclusion, I repeated that it would

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 683, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. IV. Secret; Nodis. Sent for information. Drafted by Sonnenfeldt. A note on the memorandum indicates that Kissinger saw it on December 15.

<sup>2</sup> Attached but not printed. Binder wrote that Fessenden had filed a formal complaint on the German failure to consult on Ostpolitik. According to Binder, the "*démarche*" originated not with the State Department, as reported in the German press, but with "people in the White House" close to Kissinger. Although no *démarche* has been found, Fessenden did express concern about the lack of consultation during talks with Ruete on November 26 and Bahr on November 28; see *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1969*, Vol. 2, pp. 1338–1341, 1347–1348. In a December 11 letter to Dean, Sutterlin reported that Ahlers, possibly basing his account on a memorandum of conversation between Fessenden and a German official, was the "direct source" of the Binder story. "Whether Ahlers willfully confused an internal German memorandum with a non-existing American memorandum or whether he did this in ignorance is unclear." (Department of State, EUR/CE Files: Lot 85 D 330, Chron (1969)—Letters (Incoming))

<sup>3</sup> In a November 25 memorandum to Kissinger, Sonnenfeldt noted that the Germans had apologized for failing to consult but "made some rather lame excuse." "This may be an embarrassment for the Germans," he explained, "since Brandt's letter of November 19 to the President [Document 44] was probably regarded as part of the coordination process. In that letter Brandt gave the President some long excerpts from his letter to Kosygin. State is not aware of this letter, and there is no indication from the reporting telegrams whether the Bonn Foreign Office is aware of it. (Bahr's message said

be extremely difficult to talk confidentially with Germans in the future if stories of this sort continued appearing.

Mr. Oncken said that he assumed that the Binder story was an outgrowth of the recent article in *Die Welt*, in which Bundestag member Erik Blumenfeld was quoted about alleged White House views.<sup>4</sup> Mr. Oncken went on to say that there were many people in Bonn, especially in the CDU, who wanted to embarrass the new Government and create dissension between it and Washington. He speculated that a story such as Binder's could have originated in the Federal Press Office, whose officials were not as sensitive as the professionals in the Foreign Ministry to the trouble such a story might make.

I said that I realized that one could not control what newsmen wrote, but that it ought to be possible for governments to exercise control over what its officials said. Oncken said that any such control would be difficult to establish over members of the Bundestag. I concluded by reiterating that if confidential exchanges with the White House staff were to be continued in the future, it was essential to prevent leaks or distorted reports of them. Mr. Oncken said he would report our conversation to Bonn.<sup>5</sup>

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that only Brandt, Ehmke and he knew about it.) But judging from their rather vague excuses some in the West German Foreign Ministry may in fact know of the letter's existence, and may, if pressed by State, mention it." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 682, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. III)

<sup>4</sup> On December 2 Blumenfeld told an Embassy officer he had sensed some "apprehension" within the Nixon administration on Ostpolitik during a recent trip to Washington. Blumenfeld based his claim on conversations he had not only at the State Department but also at the White House, including Kissinger "with whom he spent at least an hour." (Memorandum from Wolfson to Dean, December 2; Department of State, EUR/CE Files: Lot 85 D 330, Chron (1969)—Letters (Outgoing)) In a December 9 letter to Dean, Sutterlin disputed this account: "I am told by Hal Sonnenfeldt that far from having an hour with Henry Kissinger he actually had five minutes after waiting for an hour." As for the State Department's role, Sutterlin was clear: "certainly no apprehension was expressed here concerning the FRG's Eastern policy." (Ibid., Letters (Incoming))

<sup>5</sup> On January 14, 1970, Rush told Brandt that "the President had no worries whatsoever about lack of consultation, certain newspaper stories notwithstanding. The Chancellor replied that he understood this completely and had no concern that we were dissatisfied." (Telegram 385 from Bonn, January 15; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967-69, POL GER W-US)

47. **Memorandum From Helmut Sonnenfeldt of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)**<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 16, 1969.

SUBJECT

Allied Probe on Berlin: A Status Report

On December 16 the Three Allied Ambassadors in Moscow will deliver an aide-mémoire to the Soviets beginning a new round in the exchanges on Berlin.<sup>2</sup> The aide-mémoire (text at Tab A) makes the following points:

—both the Allied-Soviet exchanges on Berlin and the FRG talks with the Soviets on non-use of force are relevant to improving European security;

—the Allies welcome the FRG–GDR talks on transportation and postal matters, and hope the Soviets will encourage them;

—the Allies propose that the Four Powers should attempt to agree on practical measures to eliminate difficulties involving: (a) free movement between Berlin and the FRG, (b) normalization of internal Berlin life, including movement between sectors, and (c) discriminatory treatment of West Berlin's economy;

—representatives of the four Berlin missions should meet at an early date to agree (at the first session) on an agenda and arrangements for further meetings.

In his memo to the President of October 31,<sup>3</sup> outlining the above points, the Secretary doubted that the Soviets would be favorably disposed to making even small improvements in the Berlin scene, but thought we had “nothing to lose” in making an effort. You expressed your concern to the President, and informed the Secretary by memorandum of November 19 (Tab B)<sup>4</sup> that the President wanted to determine, after the Soviet response, whether to proceed further. In the intervening

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 337, Subject Files, HAK/Richardson Meetings, May 1969–December 1969. Secret. Sent for information. Haig forwarded this memorandum to Kissinger on December 18 as an item to discuss in his meeting with Richardson the same day. Kissinger, however, failed to indicate on the memorandum whether he raised the issue with Richardson. (Memorandum from Haig to Kissinger, December 18; *ibid.*)

<sup>2</sup> In telegram 6848 from Moscow, December 16, Beam reported that he had delivered the aide-mémoire to Deputy Soviet Foreign Minister Kozyrev that morning. Although told that the document was “for the serious consideration of the Soviet Government,” Kozyrev did not ask Beam, or the British or French Ambassador, about its substance. (*Ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 28 GER B)

<sup>3</sup> See Document 42.

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 3, Document 42.

six weeks, the Bonn Group machinery produced the final text of the aide-mémoire and agreed on prior NATO consultation. The process was not without struggle, however, particularly with the French. State applied some pressure in Washington for the French to agree to Berlin as the site for the proposed talks (the French preferred Moscow), and in exchange, State backed down on its insistence that the talks be held at the Ambassadorial level. (I had told State not to press these issues with the French to a deadlock without checking at the White House.)<sup>5</sup>

Throughout this period, the FRG offered encouragement, but the spark was gone—for them it seemed to be a useful albeit futile exercise. However, on December 12, following the negative developments in bilateral talks in Moscow, the Germans pressed forcefully the urgency of moving ahead with the probe—so that they would not be alone in the arena with the Soviets. The UK was interested, in large part motivated by a desire to be active in Berlin matters with an eye toward the potential problems they might face preserving their rights in Berlin as the FRG moves closer to recognizing the GDR. The French had to be pulled much of the time; it was mainly because of the late introduction of a new French draft that the *démarche* did not take place at the time of the NATO meeting (perhaps the French timed their draft to ensure distance between the Allied probe and the NATO meeting). The US was a sparkplug throughout. (See chronology at Tab C)<sup>6</sup>

There is little likelihood that the Soviets will directly accept the Western topics. In response, they will probably again note their readiness to discuss the improvements *they* would like to see, such as the elimination of Federal presence in Berlin. If the Soviets should partially accept the Western points for discussion, much further work will be required to prepare the negotiations, both within the USG and with the Allies.

I believe that it will be essential to take stock of this entire exercise once the Soviet reply is in hand. *Your memo of November 19 provides the basis for this; you may wish to remind Elliot Richardson that next steps require Presidential approval.*

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<sup>5</sup> In a December 11 letter to Dean, Sutterlin noted “a very marked White House sensitivity on anything that could be construed as confrontation with the French. There is a *very* strong inclination to get along with Paris at the present time. For this reason the White House urged that we compromise with the French both on the location and level of the proposed talks with the Soviets. I balked at this and we came out with the solution with which you are familiar, namely a concession on the level but not on the place. This concern for the French is something we have to keep in mind.” Sutterlin also reported: “If we must go through the bureaucratic procedure of referring outgoing telegrams to the White House for clearance under a memorandum from the Secretary or Under Secretary we can usually count on a week’s delay. Having gotten White House clearance earlier on the substance of our reply, we have been resorting this past week to informal clearance with Sonnenfeldt and this has worked pretty well.” (Department of State, EUR/CE Files: Lot 85 D 330, Chron (1969)—Letters (Incoming))

<sup>6</sup> Attached but not printed.

**Tab A**

**Telegram From the Embassy in Germany to the Department of State<sup>7</sup>**

Bonn, December 15, 1969, 0945Z.

15895. For Dept: Deliver to Sutterlin EUR/GER opening of business.

Subj: Tripartite Approach to the Soviets on Berlin. Ref: A) State 207037;<sup>8</sup> B) State 207175;<sup>9</sup> C) Bonn 15884;<sup>10</sup> D) Bonn 15768.<sup>11</sup>

1. Below for convenience of Emb Moscow is confirmatory final text of Tripartite aide-mémoire to Soviets: *Begin text.*

(1) The United States Government, together with the British and the French Governments, has studied the reply of the Soviet Government of September 12<sup>12</sup> to its August 7 statement<sup>13</sup> concerning an improvement of inner-German relations and of the situation as regards Berlin and access to the city. It has also noted with interest the discussions between the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Soviet Government concerning an exchange of declarations on renunciation of the use of force or the threat of the use of force and considers that both these topics have relevance to efforts to improve the situation as regards European security.

(2) The United States welcomes the willingness of the Soviet Union to exchange views on avoiding present and future complications as regards Berlin and access to the city. Improvement in the internal situation of the city and in its links with the outside world would exercise a favorable influence on the general atmosphere in Europe. The United States considers that the Four Powers responsible for Berlin and Germany as a whole should attempt to agree on practical measures aimed at eliminating difficulties and tensions in these fields. To this end, the United States proposes that the Four Powers arrange to have their representatives meet to discuss details of such measures.

(3) In the view of the United States, an important aim of such discussions would be to prevent difficulties in movement between Berlin and the Federal Republic of Germany. To this aim, one could envisage

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<sup>7</sup> Secret; Immediate; Limdis. Repeated to London, Paris, Moscow, Berlin, and USNATO. Another copy is in the National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 28 GER B.

<sup>8</sup> Dated December 12. (Ibid.)

<sup>9</sup> Dated December 13. (Ibid.)

<sup>10</sup> Dated December 12. (Ibid.)

<sup>11</sup> Dated December 10. (Ibid.)

<sup>12</sup> See Document 24.

<sup>13</sup> See Document 21.

agreement on procedures and practical measures aimed at assuring free movement of persons and goods between Berlin and the Federal Republic, which continues to fall within the responsibility of the Four Powers.

(4) A second aim of such discussions would be the normalization of the internal life of Berlin, which is also a quadripartite responsibility. The United States would welcome consideration of how movement of persons, postal and telephonic communications and commerce between the western and eastern sectors of the city could be restored.

(5) A further aim of quadripartite discussions would be the elimination of problems arising from discriminatory treatment of the economy of the western sectors of Berlin.

(6) The United States welcomes the initiation of talks between the two German sides on transport and postal matters. It hopes that such talks will soon lead to positive results, that they can be expanded to include additional subjects, and that the USSR will be prepared to encourage them.

(7) The United States proposes that the Four Powers responsible for Berlin and Germany as a whole authorize representatives of their Missions in Berlin to meet in that city at an early date, to be agreed on among them, to discuss these topics and other topics which the Soviet Union might wish to raise. It proposes that agreement on an agenda and arrangements for further meetings be reached at the first session of the talks. *End text.*

**Rush**

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#### 48. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Washington, January 22, 1970.

SUBJECT

Dobrynin's Démarche on Berlin

Dobrynin came to see me on January 20 to protest the convening in Berlin, later this month, of committees of the West German parliament

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 711, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VI. Secret; Nodis; Sensitive. Sent for action. Although no drafting information appears on the memorandum, much of the text also appears in an attached January 21 memorandum from Sonnenfeldt to Kissinger.