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John S. D. Eisenhower 300 CARLISLE STREET, GETTYSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

August 21, 1961

MEMORANDUM OF CONFERENCE WITH FORMER PRESIDENT EISENHOWER

DATE: Sunday, August 20, 1961, 10:10 hours

OTHERS PRESENT: Honorable Allen W. Dulles, CIA
Major General David W. Gray
Mr. Richard H. Davis, Department of State
Colonel John S. D. Eisenhower

Mr. Dulles opened by explaining the purpose of the briefing. Thursday last (17th August) there had been a high level meeting in the White House at which time President Kennedy had directed Mr. Dulles to come and brief Former President Eisenhower on current happenings in Berlin. The basic problem is that the Soviet action in closing off the border between East and West Berlin has caused more shock among the West Berliners and among Western Germany than had been anticipated. There had been a build up to this action for some time, starting with a meeting held recently in Moscow of Warsaw Pact nations.

Ulbricht had attended this meeting, although the length of time he was there is unknown. The sealing off between East and West Berlin is the first act which has been taken under the pretext of the Warsaw Pact. It has been accompanied by a big show and much force brutality.

The action on the part of the Soviets has given a jolt to the morale of the West Berliners, particularly when they saw tanks and other weapons. In addition, the West Germans are in the middle of a political campaign. This resulted in a drop-off in morale more rapid than had been anticipated. Admittedly this morale has recovered to some extent, but the Administration believed that a series of actions were necessary to restore morale in toto.

The legal position of the Soviets is not a clear thing. In all former negotiations, Berlin itself has always been treated as a unit. There have been no clear-cut agreements regarding West Berlin versus East Berlin. At the end of the Berlin blockade, in 1949, a four man Komandatura had published a communique listing as one of the purposes of four-power consultation the "normalizing as far as possible the life of the city." However, there has never been a formalized agreement on very high level. As it is today, 50,000 workers who live in East Berlin, work in West Berlin. By the same token, 15,000 workers who live in the West work in East Berlin. It is still possible for West Berliners to go to East Berlin and to return. Here Mr. Davis added that West Berliners could still go but they may not take vehicles. Strangely enough West Germans from areas other than West Berlin can go into East Berlin without difficulty.

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EO 12958, SEC. 3.6(b)

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Mr. Dulles continued that the flow of refugees has been effectively stopped. They are coming through at the rate of less than 100 per day now. In answer to President Eisenhower's question, Mr. Dulles said that the Zones between East Germany and West Germany outside of Berlin are guarded well. It takes many men, but the Soviets employ East German Militia for this purpose. Up to this time, with the relatively easy escape through East and West Berlin, it has not been a necessity for refugees to take the risks of crossing the regular border. Now, undoubtedly, with this escape valve closed off, other techniques for jumping the border will be developed. From the U. S. viewpoint it has been preferable for refugees to come through Berlin since we have a processing point located at Marienfelde which processes, sorts and interrogates these refugees. The capacity of this center is normally about 1,000 per day. Just before the closing of the border there had been two to three thousand refugees per day going through, which had temporarily overtaxed its capacities.

In answer to a question by the President, Mr. Dulles said that the Soviets have decided to stop the flow of refugees because of the great injury to the East German economy which resulted from this flow. Skilled workers, doctors, and professional people have accounted for a high percentage of the refugees. In addition the loss of these people has been a tremendous prestige blow to the Communists.

The President said he did not think our press has played up the drama of the refugee situation sufficiently. He mentioned he had written to Henry Luce and Bill Paley to this effect. Mr. Davis then said that pictorially this has been depicted fairly well and that at the conference at Paris last week it was decided to step up publicity along this line. The four power working group has been established and USIA is a major participant.

Mr. Davis, in answer to a question, said that the meeting had been highly useful and that the Germans now participate in these conferences fully. The conference had produced the following conclusions:

- (1) Soviet intentions. The four powers agreed that Khrushchev is determined to attain a settlement in Germany at this time. He would of course prefer to do this by negotiation but he is ready to take risks.
- (2) There is no agreement regarding the possibility of revolt in East Germany.
- (3) All agreed that nothing should be done to exacerbate the situation in the direction of promoting a revolt in East Germany.
- (4) On tactics, there is no agreement as to when the Western Powers should offer to negotiate with the Soviets. The French take the position that this is no time for negotiation now; we should only react after a peace treaty. The Germans set the date of their elections as the time before

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which there should be no negotiations. On the other hand Brandt, who is not in the German government, has stated in public that the conference should be held soon. The British favor early negotiations. In short, the critical dates are those of the German elections and of the Soviet party congress which will be held in October.

Mr. Davis thinks that the consensus among the foreign ministers was that we should have negotiations before Khrushchev sets a peace treaty conference. There is always the possibility that the four foreign ministers at the UN could get together and agree on the timing when they come for the beginning of the General Assembly on 17 September. It would be possible at that time to propose to Mr. Khrushchev that negotiations begin either in October or November. This would give him the choice of negotiating either before or after the Soviet party Congress. Again the French do not agree and do not want to respond to what they call "Soviet blackmail." In response to a question, Mr. Davis said that Khrushchev had not suggested a time or specific place for a conference. He has said that he wants to talk. We have also said that we are willing to exhaust all possibilities.

President Eisenhower said that he is inclined to go along with De Gaulle on this matter since we are not the parties who desire a change in the status of West Berlin. We would look weak if we were to come up with a proposal for changing the status, since we desire none. He added however, that it might be possible for an Ambassador, informally, behind the scenes, to say we were willing to talk. Mr. Dulles suggested that some Ambassador could see Gromyko at the General Assembly meeting, September 17th in New York. He added that there is a possibility that Khrushchev may step up his time-table regarding West Berlin since he has been successful in his moves thus far. This could mean that he would sign a peace treaty ahead of time. President Eisenhower said he expected such an eventuality at any time.

Mr. Davis said that one factor tending to slow Khrushchev down is the fact that he has, in his utterances in the past linked the signing of a peace treaty with turning over of access control to the GDR. He knows that we will not accept this particular action. President Eisenhower mentioned the "agent" theory which we had set forth in his own administration, that if Khrushchev would acknowledge GDR as agents of the Soviets, we could possibly accept East Germans at the check points into Berlin. Up to this time, Khrushchev has been unwilling to accept this idea. Mr. Davis added that we could accept GDR officials at the border point if these officials agreed to follow the same procedures as the Soviets. President Eisenhower said we are dealing here with the defacto matters rather than matters of principle. He added that we have always been unwilling to recognize the East German government but that maybe we could go along with this matter if certain procedures do not change.

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Mr. Dulles said that Willie Brandt is now getting temperamental. Brandt wrote a letter the other day to President Kennedy. (Mr. Davis added the letter had been published.) It was hysterical in tone and called for action in the UN, counter measures in travel and in economics, reinforcement of the Berlin garrison. The letter was sent after his speech a couple of days ago. He added that such matters as the visit of the Vice President, the augmentation of the garrison in Berlin were taken as psychological moves to bolster morale of the West Berliners.

President Eisenhower said he would expect that Khrushchev would ignore the reinforcement of the Berlin garrison, but would find an occasion later on to make some cracks, such as "he now has 1500 more hostages" or something in that vein. We should make it clear to Khrushchev that we expect to do the same as in the past, to go on living in the status quo and to maintain our rights. Mr. Dulles again added that the West Berliners have been nearly hysterical for a while. President Eisenhower said once more that he thought reinforcement would only make Khrushchev chuckle. He added, however, that if such action would benefit the West Berliners, he was in favor of it.

Mr. Dulles then said the trouble with trade reprisals is that such actions hurt the people and when you hurt the people of East Germany then the East Germans are inclined to cut East German trade with West Berlin and to cut trade between West Berlin and West Germany. President Eisenhower agreed and said that in his Administration they were always afraid that such might be the case since there is no formal agreement allowing access along roads other than the specified autobahns. Mr. Davis agreed that trade reprisals comprise a two-edged sword. He added that consideration had been given to restriction of travel of East Germans abroad. This action is so picayune that it did not seem to be consistent with the magnitude of this problem.

President Eisenhower said that a year ago he had proposed to the Secretary of State that we clarify the status of West Berlin and move the headquarters of the United Nations there. This proposal had caused some shock in the State Department. He added that if we would ever get a corridor broad enough with Berlin as the apex, such might be a wise move. However, the State Department came up with 15 reasons why such should not be done.

By and large President Eisenhower said he sees little change in the Berlin situation. Khrushchev had begun to step up his attacks on the West about election time and after Vienna found an occasion to snarl seriously. During the election in the United States much talk had been bandied about among the eggheads concerning recognition of Red China and the like. This may have encouraged Khrushchev to push his luck as far as he could. He has now found himself in a position where he cannot back up. There is enough Oriental in the Soviets that face is important and possibly he finds that he is further out than he would like to be. He has now stepped up his virulence so much that he may be determined to make an end somehow. President Eisenhower expressed doubt as to how much real unity the West will show if Khrushchev really moves.

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Mr. Davis said that at the Paris Conference the three foreign ministers had agreed that there are three fundamentals upon which we should insist, (1) freedom of access to the city of Berlin, (2) freedom of viability of the city, and (3) rights to remain on the part of the occupation powers. The President did not comment on this but said that if Khrushchev announced that he would move into Berlin on Thursday, then what do we do? Do the three Western powers declare war jointly? Or do we take the matter to the U.N.? Mr. Davis said undoubtedly we would go first to the U.N. We would like to negotiate before going to war. President Eisenhower said he agreed with this answer if the offensive constituted merely small infringements. But what would we do if Khrushchev really moved? Mr. Davis said that if West Berlin suffers actually physical attack "the ball is up." This was pretty well established by NATO Agreement in 1954. However, it is not anticipated that this will happen. More likely political negotiation will be the order of the day. Mr. Dulles added, however, that in the last few days West Berlin has been afraid that forays or sneak attacks might be launched into the city. This is a major reason for bringing another battle group into the town. President Eisenhower agreed that the decision to go to war has probably been made ahead of time in the NATO Pact.

* * * *

General Gray then took the floor to brief President Eisenhower. He pointed out that he himself is the Army member of the Joint Strategic Survey Committee of the Joint Staff. As such he is a point of contact for the Department of State and the CIA regarding the Berlin problem. He attended the meetings in Paris and the other highlevel meetings regarding this particular problem.

General Gray continued that President Eisenhower had been briefed on the \$3.5 billion military buildup. The problem is now one of coordination, mobilization and deployment, and contingency planning. In Paris the military people had explained to our Allies the nature of our buildup. We also asked what they would do along the same lines. Also the relationship of NATO and status of planning. One object of the United States buildup has been to make our NATO Allies build their forces to the levels set forth in MC 70. This would give NATO more flexibility. All foreign governments had said that there was too little time for them to consider these proposals and therefore their answers were not definitive. However, the French indicated that they would build up their one division still in Europe to full TOE strength. They might send a second one back from Algeria. This has been confirmed over commercial radio but not through official reports as of this meeting.

General Gray said the British plan to deploy two anti-aircraft regiments and one missile unit to Europe by September. Furthermore they will bring their units up to a "greater level of strength," although this term was not defined. They further plan to leave in place three fighter squadrons scheduled for redeployment and to add one more to them. They are furthermore in the process of constituting an armored division in Great Britain ready for deployment to the continent at the first chance. This has been done partly by cutting down their garrisons east of Suez, particularly in Hong Kong. Mr. Dulles added that the British had been hoping

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to save some 34 million pounds by cutting deployment east of Suez. They are, however, keeping their Malaya force while cutting the Cyprus garrison.

General Gray continued that the Germans plan to have nine divisions in being by the end of this year. They can mobilize only two additional divisions next year, however. He emphasized that German divisions are weak in logistic support and therefore cannot be considered as full division fighting forces. The Germans plan to announce that men scheduled to go out of service in the next few months will not go. This will retain an additional 20,000 men in the German army. However, this announcement will be delayed until after the German elections. General Gray himself has worked with German airborne divisions and said they have a long way to go. They are doing much better at the company-level but are behind in modern logistics and staff procedure. Particularly they deal well in command channels, but have not developed logistical and staff channels to the extent that the American Army has.

General Gray said that after the meeting in Paris, Secretary Rusk had explained our buildup to the North Atlantic Council. They promised to give answers tomorrow (August 21). All countries made preliminary statements except for Portugal. (Mr. Dulles added the Portuguese are mad over the Angola situation.)

General Gray said that all countries had agreed in principle that there must be a buildup of forces and all will do what they can. We would like to build the total NATO forces to 30 divisions on the Continent of Europe right now and raise this figure to 40 divisions later.

In the planning phase, General Norstad has a planning staff which has been pulled from his personnel at SHAPE, called the "Live Oak" Planning Staff. Initially it was thought that this planning staff could be evolved into an operational staff, but the British and French are dragging their feet. It is headed up by a British Major General and an United States Air Force General and a French General are also members.

General Gray defined the four major problems, (1) How transition from the relatively modest "Live Oak" planning to general war would be achieved. (2) Worldwide coordination. The Berlin crisis should be viewed in the context of the worldwide scale. (3) Improvement of speed between military situation and political decision. (4) A question whether General Norstad should get new instructions for expansion of the "Live Oak" planning staff. General Gray mentioned the possibility of referring these four questions to an Ambassadorial group meeting in Washington. He noted that this Ambassadorial group might need a military backup. Therefore, it is possible that the standing group of NATO might be augmented. On a temporary basis General Gray, himself, and Mr. Paul Nitze have been representing the United States at these Ambassadorial group meetings. There is the possibility that General Norstad's planning should be expanded. This planning goes only to the battalion-sized probes at this moment.

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General Gray then turned to unilateral United States military planning. It is anticipated that of the 250,000 expansion in U. S. Armed Forces, 210,000 will go to the Army. This will raise its strength to 1,080,000 men. In addition, funds are provided to procure short lead time items. These augmentations will allow the entire Strategic Army Force (of which 3 divisions have been normally considered Strategic Army Corps, STRAC, combat ready divisions, and the other three considered training divisions) into a six division combat-ready STRAC. It will further allow an expansion of the training base and the opening of Fort Carson. In addition the TOE of various units will be brought up to fighting strength. In recent years, cut back in Army funds have required certain reductions of TOE which would not be feasible in combat. For example truck drivers have been doubled up and employed for other duties. Particularly this will be effected in units in Germany. In addition, new type units will be activated. 20,000 selected reserve units of small types will be called up. These line of communication outfits are the units that are needed in Europe now.

General Gray said that the Navy will be expanded by 29,000 spaces, of which 8,000 will be deferred. Their appropriations will be increased by \$709,000,000 and will allow the retention of an ASW carrier, an amphibious lift, and of other units.

Regarding the Air Force, General Gray said that this service will increase by 63,000, plus the calling up of 34,000 National Guard Units, many of which are practically on a combat status right now. \$425 million will be authorized for additional procurement and these funds will allow the retention of six B-47 squadrons, five RB-66 Squadrons, three F-100 squadrons. Twenty-nine National Guard Squadrons, of which five are troop carrier squadrons, will be activated. Furthermore there will be an increase in ground alert of B-52's. SAC is, incidentally, now on 50% ground alert.

Regarding the Marines, General Gray anticipated no increase in the number of their units; however, the three Marine Division Air Wings will be built up to full strength.

Regarding deployment, General Gray said 3,000 men will be deployed to Europe to mechanize the three infantry divisions by providing armored personnel carriers for the five Battle Groups of each division. In addition, 18,000 men further will be deployed to Europe to bring the TOE to full strength by 1 December. Our deployment capabilities from the Continental U. S. to Europe will be two infantry divisions by 1 December; four by 1 January; and six by 1 February. The plan is to raise the Strategic Army Forces to full combat strength and deploy them first.

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The deployment figures include marines, since it is expected that the two airborne divisions will be left home as strategic reserves. In addition it is anticipated that six reserve divisions (these are probably the six first line National Guard divisions) will be called up and activated to combat strength.

The President said it looks as if planners anticipate fighting a ground war. General Gray said there are many concepts, but one utilization of these forces would be the link up between company-size actions and general war. The idea is to give Khrushchev a chance to back off. The JSSC are not in total agreement on this point and would like to avoid this type of situation. They feel that Navy and Air Force can be best used to provide the intermediate pressure. General Norstad has been asked if he could employ limited ground action to improve his battleline for general war. He is not sold on the idea.

At the President's question, Mr. Dulles said there are 20-odd Soviet divisions located in East Germany. There are none in Czechoslovakia, but two, however, are in Hungary and several in Poland. President Eisenhower said his experience in WW II indicated that the Soviet logistic system was unequal to ours. They are capable of a big plunge, but must then stop and pull up their tail. Therefore, an initial Soviet attack might possibly stall at the Rhine River. This fact did not apply to American forces, whose logistics were nearly always capable of supporting combat operations. This resulted in President Eisenhower's decision in the winter of 1944 to continue the fight all winter long. This continued pressure also resulted in the Battle of the Bulge.

President Eisenhower said there is no use to cry over spilt milk; he does regret however, that the 1951 Doctrine which indicated that Europe should provide the foot troops for the NATO Alliance has been forgotten. Initially it was intended that our six equivalent divisions were to be there in Europe on an emergency basis only. The Europeans, in fact, have never done what they should to build up their forces to allow these divisions to be replaced. President Eisenhower expressed some astonishment at our inability to get the Germans to rearm as swiftly as they should. In the old days, when the potential enemies of the Germans were the French, and the potential enemy of the French were the Germans, they used to arm themselves to the teeth to fight each other. He called attention to the European Defense Community, (which later was replaced by the Western European Union) and compared its efforts to rearm in contrast to the short period of time in which Hitler was able to rearm. Mr. Dulles said Germany is getting better.

President Eisenhower went on to say that we should provide the naval and air support. These are the mobile forces. Ground forces are relatively immobile

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and should be provided by the nations on the spot. We, of course, can provide a strategic reserve of airborne divisions and the like but Europe should provide the bulk of the infantry. He pointed out that Western Europe possesses 200 million cultured people. They have twice the number of skilled workers on the Continent of Europe that we have in the United States. The Europeans simply will not make the necessary sacrifices. He has always called this to their attention. President Eisenhower said Foster Dulles and Chris Herter always hated him to talk in this fashion and were frightened by his admonishments to the Europeans that we might cut down our 6-division force. He said he had given "hell" to Winston Churchill over the reluctance of the British to do their part.

President Eisenhower said he is skeptical of the military value of the ground reinforcement being planned by the current administration but if it is judged that such is necessary for the sake of morale in Berlin and Western Europe as well as our own, then he would say OK. Mr. Dulles said that some of the thinking behind this mobilization is to prevent East Germany's being able to steal West Berlin on its own power. This is merely an effort to beef up forces a little bit. Mr. Davis said the intention is to impress Khrushchev since for every 40,000 we mobilize he can produce 400,000 with relative ease. He thinks there is a hope, however, of impressing our Allies. Mr. Davis reinforced this and said that if this move on our part arouses our Allies then Khrushchev is impressed indirectly.

President Eisenhower referred to an interview that John McCloy had had with Khrushchev and McCloy had said that Khrushchev merely laughed at any such mobilization efforts on our part. Mr. Dulles then humorously referred to Mr. McCloy's report in which Khrushchev had sent his regards to President Eisenhower rather sheepishly.

President Eisenhower said he thought there had not been enough study put on Khrushchev himself. Khrushchev is tough and he is smart. If we are determined to impress him we cannot do it by a mere augmentation of 40,000 spaces in Europe. If such were done unannounced perhaps it would have some effect on him.

Mr. Dulles pointed out that the Germans are being represented by two people -- both Adenauer and Brandt. Mr. Davis said that in Paris all three military representatives were skeptical on what we might do in a limited way in Europe. The French would like to confine action to the air; the Germans feel that general war should result if a battalion-sized probe fails; the British expressed reservation and said they would produce their position next week.

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President Eisenhower observed that the British are among the best planners he has ever seen in war. They are extremely meticulous. Perhaps in military operations they are more cautious, however, than Americans. He went on to reminisce about WW II task forces which the Germans put together out of shattered units -- such things as Task Force Lehr, or what have you. He recalled General Gray's remark on American Staff work versus German and said there is some advantage in the simpler staff work on the German side, since it is easier for them to combine units. He thinks sometimes we have become a little bit ponderous. He recalled an instance in which General Marshall had recommended to him to double a Corps staff with the idea of taking half the personnel out to form a second Corps staff. This seemed like a good idea until the time came to take the other half out; by this time all were vitally needed personnel. President Eisenhower said that "Parkinson's Law" sets in at times. He continued that Germany may lack some highly trained staff officers; but Heusinger and Speidel are astonished at the elaborateness of our staff work. The Germans of course keep fewer records. He then asked about the tactical atomic support supplied to our forces in Europe.

General Gray said that the infantry division now contains an 8" howitzer battalion and an Honest John battery to give tactical atomic support to front line units. Corps artillery has Corporal and Honest John; and Army artillery has Redstone missiles. President Eisenhower asked rhetorically how we ever stop a war from going into atomic war. General Gray acknowledged this problem but said we now have more conventional artillery in a division than we did a couple of years ago.

President Eisenhower then turned to the general problem of how long we can carry on expenditures that go up and up. He expressed the belief that we will not have a general war. He is afraid, however, that Khrushchev can break us by making us increase taxes excessively. He pointed out that the federal government lives on profits. Therefore when you raise taxes and squeeze the profits you are taking out any incentive for expansion in the economy. Finally, we will wind up with a managed economy, and eventually centralized control by a centralized government -- which is exactly what we are fighting to prevent.

What we are trying to do is to hold forty years to allow the ferment within the Soviet Union to take place and a new philosophy to supplant it. In the meantime we must keep ourselves strong.

Mr. Dulles pointed out that the British economy at this moment is in bad state. The common market has hurt them severely. The President said that in 1951 on July 3 he had told the British that if the Continent unites, Britain must either join the Continent or join the U. S. as about three states.

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President Eisenhower, in conclusion, said he appreciated the briefing. Shooting from the hip he could see no suggestions to make. The biggest problem is unity and speed in planning. He sees no great difficulty in the transition of military planning from a probe to general war. He thinks that the NATO organization and the NATO planning staffs take care of this.

Mr. Dulles conveyed to the President the regards of Arthur Dean who will be at disarmament negotiations for some ten days. The old hassles over control posts are still going on. In addition the question of resumption of nuclear testing is still alive. It is expected that such will be done but preparations will be made without announcement. The announcement will be made after the UN has met. President Eisenhower has said that he directed once that nuclear testing begin again, but on second thought he decided to wait to see the outcome of the election. Since Mr. Nixon was not elected, he felt it best to pass this decision on to his successor. Mr. Nixon would have gone on with the resumption of testing. After all we went two and a half years on a unilateral moratorium.

General Gray, in summary of his problem, said it is impossible to write "a plan" for any contingency. What is being produced is a family of plans which constitutes a continuing estimate. President Eisenhower quoted a proverb, that "plans are in themselves worthless, made in peacetime but the activity of planning in peacetime is everything," since contingencies never work out the way anticipated, but knowledge of logistical factors, force structures, and so forth is invaluable to the planner. He mentioned von Moltke who had followed peacetime plans slavishly. General Gray dissented somewhat, and said he had taken the Army troops into Lebanon in 1958. At this time they had followed plans to the letter. President Eisenhower said they had not found it necessary to fight. General Gray said they would have fought according to those plans if such had become necessary. President Eisenhower agreed and said that Lebanon and Little Rock were two highly successful military operations. General Gray said that the troops had expected to go to Jordan, but President Eisenhower said that this was primarily a British bailiwick. Mr. Dulles expressed some dismay at the nature of the artificial country of Jordan.

Back to East Germany, General Gray expressed doubt as to whether a military operation of Corps size can be executed in East Germany. He does not think such can be done if Soviets participate. President Eisenhower said that attempting to mount a Corps operation in Western Europe would amount to putting too much in a left jab. A Corps operation is full scale war. He feels that once a reinforced Infantry Brigade is committed in full, if this is resisted and stopped, then we should go to general war. A probe to go into Berlin along the autobahn should be a strong probe, sufficient primarily to brush aside people who try to keep us from putting in bridges and the like.

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At the termination of the conference, Mr. Davis supplied President Eisenhower with a "Berlin kit," which is an unclassified group of papers citing governmental positions, agreements and the like and containing maps of Berlin.

A casual conversation ensued on the way out regarding an individual by the name of Levesque who has been successful in the device of dropping names, thereby getting into the company of some very high-level personnel. The individual is evidently a highly unreliable character.


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