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RES DP
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NATO SECRET

UNITED STATES DELEGATION
TO THE
NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL

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September 15, 1962

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Dear Colleague:

In his note on Berlin Contingency Plans (FO/62/581) the Secretary General referred to the discussion in the Council on April 11, 1962, of the Three Power paper concerning the relationships between Tripartite and NATO planning. He referred to certain questions raised during that discussion, and expressed the belief that it would be useful if the Three Powers could now offer comments in reply to these questions.

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1971

On behalf of the Three Powers, I take pleasure in transmitting to you their response to the questions raised on April 11.

See overleaf document! NOT the attached one!

Sincerely yours,

1988

Thomas K. Finletter
Thomas K. Finletter

U.S. Permanent Representative
to the North Atlantic Council

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cc: Permanent Representatives
Lord Coleridge

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RECOMMENDATION BY THE GOVERNMENTS OF FRANCE,
THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE UNITED STATES
CONCERNING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN NATO AND
THE THREE POWERS IN THE PLANNING AND CONTROL
OF BERLIN CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS

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1. The North Atlantic Council has approved some basic instructions to NATO Military Authorities, the purpose of which was to initiate the preparation by major Allied Commanders of NATO Military plans to put the Alliance in a position to cope with actions by the Soviet Bloc in a Berlin crisis. The Council, in issuing these Instructions, was fully cognizant of the relationship which the resultant plans must bear to the tripartite planning (LIVE OAK) being conducted to enable the governments of France, the United Kingdom and the United States to carry out their special responsibilities concerning Berlin. The Council therefore directed that there must be a full coordination between this LIVE OAK planning and NATO planning.

1975

2. It is the hope of all concerned that Allied objectives with respect to Berlin can be achieved without the necessity that action under any of these military plans be taken.

1979

It is moreover clearly understood that all plans prepared are subject to governmental approval, and that the execution of approved plans will be the subject of still additional decisions by governments at the time. It appears therefore desirable to consider at this time the relationships which should exist between NATO and tripartite authorities in the control as well as the planning of such operations as may finally be approved. Full understanding and agreement concerning these matters is necessary in order that General Norstad, in particular, may have adequate guidance on which to organize, direct and coordinate the planning and operational staffs which support him in his NATO responsibilities as SACEUR and his tripartite responsibilities as USCINCEUR.

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3. In the light of these facts, the Governments of France, the United Kingdom and the United States wish to present for Council consideration their joint view concerning the relationships which should exist in the planning and control of Berlin contingency operations.

4. There are two basic and in some respects competing sets of considerations involved in this problem:

(a) On the one hand, the security interests, common objectives and forces of all NATO nations will be threatened if the Soviet Bloc seriously challenges the continued freedom of Berlin.

(b) On the other hand, since the Three Powers have a special and direct responsibility for Berlin, they must be the principal guarantors of its freedom and security and be prepared to act promptly and effectively if this freedom and security is to be maintained. Therefore, responsibility for planning and execution of possible initial military operations should remain tripartite.

5. The essence of this problem is to achieve a solution representing the best balance between these competing factors, and one which is in the best interests of all concerned. To this end the Governments of France, the United Kingdom and the United States propose that the relationships defined in the following paragraphs be agreed and furnished as guidance to NATO Military Authorities in amplification of the Instructions recently issued.

Planning

6. In ground access contingency planning (but not in operations which are covered below), tripartite (LIVE OAK) responsibility should extend up to and including possible division-level support of initial probes. In air access contingency planning, tripartite (LIVE OAK) responsibility

should extend up to and including possible fighter actions in the air corridors to protect air transport operations. Possible ground operations involving forces in excess of a division, and more extensive air operations than those indicated above should be planned by NATO staffs in accordance with the recent "Instructions to NATO Military Authorities".

7. In order to effect this division of the planning effort:

- (a) The LIVE OAK staff should remain a joint and separate entity, but General Horstad should coordinate its planning appropriately with that of NATO staffs.
- (b) Only tripartite NATO commanders directly involved must have complete knowledge of initial (LIVE OAK) operational plans, but General Horstad should inform appropriately the NATO commanders and their staffs of LIVE OAK operational plans.

Operations

8. NATO forces should be put in an appropriate alert condition prior to tripartite operations. The recent Instructions to Military Authorities directed that plans to this end be developed.

9. (a) Initial tests of intentions, both ground and air, and larger elements initially committed, either ground or air, should involve tripartite forces only, under tripartite command:
- (b) In the case of ground access operations, it would be possible (particularly after the buildup) to commit tripartite forces of significant size before the forces of other NATO nations need become involved. However, such forces should operate under NATO command.
 - (c) In the case of air access operations, tripartite

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forces and command and control mechanisms are adequate to conduct initial tests of intention as long as they are restricted essentially to the geographic limits of the air corridors. However, should operations be required outside of the corridors to maintain air superiority, NATO command and control systems should become involved.

10. Considerations of geography and force deployments give the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany a particular interest in initial operations, and FRG forces possess the greatest capability to support tripartite operations. For these reasons, FRG forces should be considered as immediately available reserves. The German forces, like all other non-tripartite forces, should be committed only in accordance with political decisions and after the NATO Military Authorities have assumed full control of operations.

11. It is essential that appropriate NATO military authorities be kept fully informed as to the progress of all initial operations and fully prepared to direct further operations should the situation require.

12. The transfer of control from tripartite to NATO mechanisms should occur:-

(a) In the case of ground access operations, when tripartite forces of battalion or greater size had been subjected to armed attack by Soviet or "GDR" forces and required reinforcement. (Initial reinforcement would be by tripartite military units, but under NATO control). Under other possible conditions, the transfer would be a matter for political decision at the time.

(b) In the case of air access operations, at the point when an escorted flight had been unmistakably engaged in combat by Soviet or "GDR" aircraft

/or

or ground defenses, and immediate tripartite response had not caused the Soviets/"GDR" to desist. Under other possible conditions, the transfer would be a matter for political decision at the time.

General

13. In all cases, as provided in earlier understandings and instructions:-

- (a) The Three Governments will be ready, time permitting, to advise and enter into consultation with the North Atlantic Council prior to implementing LIVE OAK plans.
- (b) All plans prepared by NATO commanders will be sent to the Standing Group for appraisal in consultation with the Military Committee in accordance with established NATO procedure and forwarded to the N.A.C. for approval by Governments through the Permanent Representatives.
- (c) The execution of approved plans will be the subject of decisions by Governments at the time.

14. Within these limits, and consistent with basic political purposes, military commanders should have maximum flexibility in both planning and operation.

UNITED STATES DELEGATION

September 15, 1952

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