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DELEGATION OF CANADA
TO THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL

DÉLÉGATION DU CANADA
AU CONSEIL DE L'ATLANTIQUE-NORD



October 1, 1962.

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Dear Lord Coleridge,

This letter will confirm that, in the restricted session of the Council on September 27, I raised the following points about Berlin Contingency Planning.

First, the Canadian authorities wish to have a good deal more information about diplomatic measures which the three powers would undertake in parallel with "Live Oak" planning. Some of the questions they have in mind under this heading are these:

At what stage will the United Nations be consulted, bearing in mind that the General Assembly may well be sitting at the time of a Berlin crisis?

What will the West do if the USSR brings Berlin to the United Nations first?

What are the specific plans for keeping open channels of communication to the Soviet Government at all stages of a Berlin crisis?

What would NATO's reaction be to the signing of a separate peace treaty and its possible consequences?

While the Canadian Delegation would support those who have asked in Council to be kept informed on all aspects of tripartite planning on a prompt and regular basis, we believe that these questions should be discussed in Council now without waiting for the four powers to agree to answers among themselves.

The Canadian authorities are still concerned about the dangers of Soviet miscalculation because Western responses may not be readily identifiable as related directly to access to

Lord Coleridge,
Executive Secretary,
International Secretariat,
NATO.

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Berlin. Even in phases I and II of the so-called "preferred sequence", some of the responses envisaged - particularly those relating to alert measures and economic and maritime countermeasures - are capable of misinterpretation unless their intention is spelled out directly to the Soviet Union. (This is another instance where the Canadian concern about parallel diplomatic measures is directly relevant).

On the military aspects of contingency planning, the Canadian authorities would like more information about the selective use of nuclear weapons, for the purpose of further discussion in the Council. What plans do the military authorities have as to possible targets; as to the use of such weapons on land, sea or in the air; and as to the size of the weapons which might be used? This information would be useful to help in determining what possible effects such plans might have in their political implications. If the selective use of nuclear weapons involves a direct threat to the USSR rather than being directly related to access to Berlin, might it not be difficult to differentiate such selective use from the initiation of general hostilities?

On a further point about military planning, the Canadian authorities understand "Live Oak" planning to include a progression from unarmed probes to limited hostilities. Since the latter would obviously involve the responsibility of all the NATO Governments, would it not be better to have a clearer understanding of the point at which transfer from tripartite to NATO control would take place, rather than a point which would require calling for NATO reinforcements for a stalled tripartite probe? For example, would it not be better to establish NATO control of military operations as soon as the intention of the Soviet Government to use force to hinder access to Berlin had been established?

I have already given the two questions about military planning to the Standing Group Representative in writing, at his request.

Yours sincerely,


G. IGNATIEFF.