

REF/CA.66/192

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22nd September, 1966

To: *46* Directeur du Cabinet
 Deputy Secretary General
 Assistant Secretary General Political Affairs
 Executive Secretary
 Legal Adviser
 Military Committee Representative

From: F.D. Gregh

Subject: Berlin Contingency (BERCON) Plans
amendments proposed by the Military Committee

Reference: MCM-121-66 of 25th August, 1966 ✓

1997 1989 1968
 1969
 1970 1971
 1972 1973
 1980 1975 1974
 1976 1977
 1983 1979 1985
 1991 1990 1984 1986
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 1994 1993 1988

It will be recalled that on 9th November, 1962 (Annex C-R(62)53) the Council:

"approved in principle and for planning purposes the Major NATO Commanders' plans in the BERCON and MARCON series, on the basis that these represent a catalogue of plans for possible action by NATO forces in the event that the efforts of the Three Powers to maintain access to Berlin in accordance with the LIVE OAK plans are unsuccessful - the selection and execution of any one of these plans being subject to a prior political decision by member governments at the time" (paragraph 14(2)).

At the same time the Council

"agreed that, should this catalogue of plans require revision or amplification in the light of changing circumstances, any significant amendments should be submitted to the Council by the NATO Military Authorities for approval on the same basis as the present catalogue" (paragraph 14(3)).

2. In April 1966 SACEUR suggested an amendment to the Berlin contingency plan BERCON CHARLIE TWO for his command which, after review, the Military Committee recommended in MCM-121-66 for approval by the Council.

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 Public Disclosure
 SEE:DN (2010)0001

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3. A brief for the Secretary General explaining the Berlin contingency planning in general and the implications of the proposed amendment in particular and a draft AG are attached.

4. It is suggested that the proposal be put on the Agenda of one of the forthcoming Council meetings.

(F.D. Gregh)

DECLASSIFIED - PUBLIC DISCLOSURE / DÉCLASSIFIÉ - MISE EN LECTURE PUBLIQUE

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO BERLIN CONTINGENCY (BERCON) PLANS

Reference: (a) SHAPS/70/62 (March 24th 1962) ✓
(b) C-R(62)53 (November 9th 1962) ✓
(c) SHAPS/28/66 (April 26th 1966) → Unsuccessful
(d) MCM-121-66 (August 25th 1966) ✓
(e) MGLP 513/66 (September 2nd 1966) ✓

A. CURRENT PLANS

1. There exist two catalogues of planned operations from which appropriate action could be selected in the event of serious interference with, or interruption of, access to Berlin.

2. The set of planned operations from which it is envisaged that a selection might be made in the first instance are known as LIVE OAK plans and involve the use of forces of the three powers (France, United Kingdom, and the United States). So far as land forces are concerned, they consist of a variety of probes along the autobahn on a fairly limited scale in order to try to regain access to Berlin.

3. The second catalogue of planned operations consists of the Major NATO Commanders' plans in the BERCON and MARCON series. These represent a catalogue of plans for possible action by NATO forces in the event that the efforts of the three powers to maintain access to Berlin, in accordance with the LIVE OAK plans, are unsuccessful.

4. The BERCON series has been developed to provide a choice of alternatives which may be implemented either singly or in combination as may be indicated by the circumstances. They are grouped as follows:

- (a) BERCON ALPHA
A catalogue of 5 Air plans.
- (b) BERCON BRAVO
Two possible nuclear demonstrations.
- (c) BERCON CHARLIE
A catalogue of four plans involving ground forces.
- (d) BERCON DELTA
A consolidated group of naval measures.

5. The ground plans (BERCON CHARLIE) consist of:

(a) BERCON CHARLIE ONE:

Offensive action to be conducted by a reinforced division along the axis Helmstedt-Berlin;

(b) BERCON CHARLIE TWO:

Attack by two divisions east of Kassel, up to the line Duderstadt-Barbis-Wanfried;

(c) BERCON CHARLIE THREE:

Attack by a four division Corps along the Helmstedt-Berlin autobahn up to the line Mittelland Kanal-Elbe river;

(d) BERCON CHARLIE FOUR:

Attack by a four division Corps to seize and hold the high ground areas of the Thüringer Wald.

B. CONSIDERATIONS

6. Since BERCON CHARLIE ONE and THREE are clearly directed against interference with access to Berlin, they can be regarded as logical extensions of the LIVE OAK probes. The same argument applies, although less directly, to BERCON CHARLIE FOUR, since the Eisenach to Berlin autobahn entrance could be controlled from the high ground of the Thüringer Wald. It is more difficult, however, to see the relation between the attack planned under BERCON CHARLIE TWO and the restoration or maintenance of access to Berlin. Indeed, the Military Committee point out that the road network in the area east of Kassel is of only local minor importance.

7. A further point about BERCON CHARLIE TWO is that it is planned to be performed by two German Divisions under the command of the 3rd German Corps. By contrast, it is specifically provided in SAGEUR's original formulation of BERCON CHARLIE ONE that German command organisation and German troops will not be involved therein.

C. OBJECTIONS

8. MOD Bonn informed SACEUR that Germany objected to the existing plan. Referring in particular to the participation solely of German forces and to the possible misunderstandings of the area's military/political significance, Germany requested that the BERCON CHARLIE TWO plan be reconsidered, so that, if possible, no German forces would be involved and provisions would be made for the capture of a major Berlin access route.

D. PROPOSED CHANGE

9. SACEUR now proposes, with the support of the Military Committee, that BERCON CHARLIE TWO should be designed to force a salient to straddle the autobahn in the vicinity of Eisenach and should be entrusted to two American Divisions with two German Divisions designated as a reserve force. This proposal eliminates the disadvantages referred to above and makes the relationship between BERCON CHARLIE TWO and FOUR more comparable to that which exists between BERCON CHARLIE ONE and THREE.

E. AMENDED VERSION

10. After the change initiated by MOD Bonn, proposed by SACEUR and seconded by the MC, the BERCON CHARLIE TWO plan, as represented in SHAPE/70/62, enclosure # 1, would read:

"BERCON CHARLIE TWO plans a two-division attack at the Eisenach Autobahn entrance to pinch off and hold a salient up to the general line Lengenfeld-Langula-Bad Salzungen."

it being understood that no German troops would be involved.

With regard to the advantages and risks as mentioned in enclosure # 2 to SHAPE/70/62, no other change than the replacement of the name "Kassel" by the name "Eisenach" is proposed by SHAPE, mainly, as may be assumed, to keep the changes as small and as few as possible.

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ORIGINAL : ENGLISH
September, 1966

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FO/66/

To: Permanent Representatives
From: Secretary General

BERLIN CONTINGENCY (BERCON) PLANS

Permanent Representatives will have received MCM-121-66 of 25th August, 1966 in which the Military Committee recommends Council approval of an amendment suggested by SACEUR to his Berlin contingency plan BERCON CHARLIE TWO.

2. It will be recalled that on 9th November, 1962 (Annex to C-R(62)53) the Council:

"approved in principle and for planning purposes the Major NATO Commanders' plans in the BERCON and MARCON series, on the basis that these represent a catalogue of plans for possible action by NATO forces in the event that the efforts of the Three Powers to maintain access to Berlin in accordance with the LIVE OAK plans are unsuccessful - the selection and execution of any one of these plans being subject to a prior political decision by member governments at the time" (paragraph 14(2)).

At the same time the Council:

"agreed that, should this catalogue of plans require revision or amplification in the light of changing circumstances, any significant amendments should be submitted to the Council by the NATO Military Authorities for approval on the same basis as the present catalogue" (paragraph 14(3)).

3. While the operations under the BERCON CHARLIE plans ONE, THREE, and, to a lesser extent, FOUR are directed against interference with access to Berlin and can be regarded as a logical extension of

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the LIVE OAK probes, this is not the case for BERCON CHARLIE TWO, which is primarily directed against the attack and seizure of the line Duderstadt-Barbis-Wanfried East of Kassel, an area in which the Military Committee state the road network to be of only minor local importance. Further, the plan BERCON CHARLIE TWO is planned to be implemented by two German divisions under the command of III(Ge) Corps.

4. The German Authorities have informed SACEUR that they object to the existing plan. Referring in particular to the participation of German forces only and to possible misunderstandings of the area's military/political significance, Germany has requested that the BERCON CHARLIE TWO plan be reconsidered, so that, if possible, no German forces would be involved and provision would be made for the capture of a major Berlin access route.

5. The amendment proposed by SACEUR in response to the German comments would eliminate the disadvantages to which the German Authorities have drawn attention. The operations under BERCON CHARLIE TWO would, as now proposed by SACEUR, be conducted by two US divisions and directed at the entrance to the Eisenach-Berlin Autobahn. This action would be more evidently an extension of the LIVE OAK probes to reopen access to Berlin and would not directly involve any German forces, although two German divisions are designated as a reserve force. These modifications in the BERCON CHARLIE TWO plan are designed to reduce the possibility of misunderstanding or misinterpretation.

It is suggested that the Council:

approves MCM-121-66 of 25th August, 1966 in the spirit of its approval of the initial Berlin plan as set out in paragraph 14 of the Annex to C-R(62)53.

(Signed) Manlio Brosio