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~~Downgraded To: Secret
By Authority: NSC 5/1/89
Date: 11/19/90
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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON
October 20, 1961

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Dear General Norstad:

Since your visit here I have given further thought to the two principal subjects of our discussion in relation to the Berlin situation, namely, contingency planning and the preparatory build-up in NATO military strength.

As you have been informed, all the measures you recommended for immediate action have been authorized and put in motion, except for the replacement of the 3rd battle group now in Berlin which will take place when additional such units move to Europe as part of the Long Thrust exercise.

My present thinking on the preferred sequence of types of actions that we should take in the event of any abrogation of Western rights in Berlin is reflected in the sequence of four courses of action designated by Roman numerals in the enclosed outline. The import of this sequence should be clear to you, and I desire that it serve as the guidance for your discussions with our Allies and for your planning of detailed military operations.

In the course of that planning I ask that you spell out for me with particularity your operational concepts for the command and control procedures [within your command to be used in the "selective nuclear attacks" and "limited tactical employment of nuclear weapons" referred to in Contingencies IV A and B of the enclosure.]

2/1990

Two aspects of my present thinking about Berlin planning and preparation deserve especial emphasis.

2/1990

First: [What I want is a sequence of graduated responses to Soviet/GDR actions in denial of our rights of access.]

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The purpose is to maintain our rights and preserve our alliance. The responses after Phase I should begin with the non-military and move to the military. We cannot plan in advance the exact time each response should be initiated; for one reason, because we cannot now predict the date of Soviet/GDR action, for another because we cannot foresee the duration or the consequences of each response. But there are some principles applicable to this matter of timing. The earlier responses should be thoroughly prepared in advance and the purpose should be to initiate them and keep them going long enough so that the next response may, if necessary, come in when needed. This requires vigor in preparation, readiness for action, and caution against going off half-cocked. The military sequence indicated begins with the air action outlined in III A 1. Since it seems likely that any form of Soviet blockade will include interference with air access, every effort in preparation should be made to increase the chance of success in air operations. The rewards of success would be great indeed. The other indicated steps are those outlined in III A 2 and III B. These courses will require the timely addition of considerable forces to your command, and appropriate dispositions on your central front. Should it appear that Soviet forces sufficient to defeat these actions are being brought into play, the response, on which you would receive specific directives, will be one or more of those contained in paragraph IV.

Second: At this juncture I place as much importance on developing our capacity and readiness to fight with significant non-nuclear forces as on measures designed primarily to make our nuclear deterrent more credible. In saying this I am not in any sense depreciating the need for realization by the U.S.S.R. of the tremendous power of

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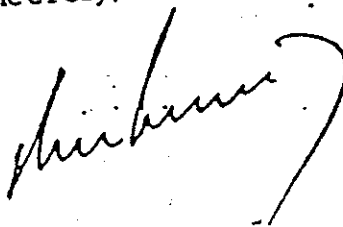
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our nuclear forces and our will to use them, if necessary, in support of our objectives. Indeed, I think the two aspects are interrelated. It seems evident to me that our nuclear deterrent will not be credible to the Soviets unless they are convinced of NATO's readiness to become engaged on a lesser level of violence and are thereby made to realize the great risks of escalation to nuclear war. I will be interested to hear of any suggestion from you as to how we might intensify that realization.]

When contingency plans have been completed and received through established channels, the Joint Chiefs of Staff will review them with me and my other advisors.

Sincerely,



General Lauris Norstad
Supreme Commander
Allied Powers Europe
Paris, France

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