

COLD WAR - The Berlin Wall 1961

Source 1

SECRET

CG1071/9

RUSSIA, GERMANY AND CONTINGENCY PLANNING

2. You may think it might be worth considering at this stage some views elaborated in Northern Department on Russian intentions as regards Germany and Berlin. These may be very briefly stated as follows: -

- (i) The Russians regard the preservation of the satellite system as a vital interest;
- (ii) East Germany is an integral part of the satellite system and there is no prospect that the Russians will agree to her detachment from it, whether by German re-unification on terms acceptable to the West, or otherwise;
- (iii) Thanks to her indeterminate international status, to the fact that her frontiers are indeterminate and to the Berlin escape-hatch, East Germany is the least satisfactory of all the satellites;
- (iv) Quite apart from the intrinsic Russian interest in stabilizing East Germany, Khrushchev is under direct pressure from Ulbricht and Gomulka to achieve this. He may also be under pressure from the other satellites and perhaps from China also. The stabilization of the East-German régime may well be regarded in the Communist world as one of the

/most

Extracts from a Foreign Office document analysing Soviet leader Khrushchev's attitude to Germany and Berlin, April 1961.

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Source 1 page 2

most important tests of the success of Khrushchev's policy of "peaceful co-existence".

- (v) We must believe Khrushchev when he says that a "settlement" of the German question this year is necessary. The question is: what is his minimum requirement?
- (vi) Three elements which he would consider an adequate framework for stabilizing East Germany are always present in Khrushchev's mind when he talks of Germany: -
 - (a) International recognition of the East German régime;
 - (b) Stabilization of post-war frontiers;
 - (c) Termination of Allied occupation rights in Berlin.

Extracts from a Foreign Office document analysing Soviet leader Khrushchev's attitude to Germany and Berlin, April 1961.

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Source 2

CONFIDENTIAL

Record of Monthly Informal Meeting between the Commandants and the Governing Mayor held in the office of the British Commandant on July 21, 1961

1. Refugees

The CHAIRMAN said that numbers had recently considerably increased and the Commandants were conscious of a great increase in the strain on the existing machinery. They were doing all they could to see that no undue delays occurred, but such delays as there were could not be attributed to any one particular section but rather to difficulties in coordinating throughout the whole procedure. The suggestion that the screening by the three Allies was respons-

refugees out had not been equal to the flow. The air lines had offered to work on Sundays to compensate for this but up to last Sunday this offer had not been accepted. Since last Monday the Allies had all decided to work a seven day week so long as this remained necessary and they would do all they possibly could to make the whole process work smoothly. The Allies could not help feeling resentment at suggestions which had been made that they had thrown a spanner in the works.

The GOVERNING MAYOR said he was most grateful for this assurance. A fortnight ago some difficulties had arisen through Departments not working on Saturdays but this was now settled and he had no objections whatever in the light of the decisions made. He still however, was of the opinion that there were too many offices involved and that a good solution would be the setting up of a new reception centre and a general agreement as to which offices should be established there. It was not reasonable that there should be as many as eight Intelligence Offices involved and there was also too much bureaucratic delay. This was not however a problem which could be solved at this moment. What was needed was to concentrate on the measures necessary to cope with an increased flow of something over 3,000 a week - the drop in numbers in the last day or two was not expected to last. In this connexion he wished to mention

/a conversation

refugees out had not been equal to the flow. The air lines had offered to work on Sundays to compensate for this but up to last Sunday this offer had not been accepted. Since last Monday the Allies had all decided to work a seven day week so long as this remained necessary and they would do all they possibly could to make the whole process work smoothly. The Allies could not help feeling resentment at suggestions which had been made that they had thrown a spanner in the works.

Part of the report of a meeting of the military and civil government of West Berlin discussing refugees, July 1961.

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Source 4



Cartoon from the British newspaper the Sunday Telegraph, August 26th 1962

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Source 5

SECRET

UNITED KINGDOM SECURITY WARNINGS

1. Category AC telegram. Paraphrase NOT required.
2. A telegram which contains a reference to any classified telegram or correspondence must itself be classified.
3. The Ministry of Defence Cypher Office must be consulted if it is desired to distribute or release this telegram, or any part of it, to a person or nation who would not normally be authorised to receive it.

REC

A

21 NOV 1961

CC1082/1(c)

FROM : H.Q. BERLIN

TO : M.O.D. LONDON

OPERATIONAL IMMEDIATE

IZ 19770

TOO 192000Z

TOR 200136Z

INT 2

19th November, 1961.

Sitrep as at 1930Z.

SHAPE. Please pass this information to General Baker at

This is a LIVE OAK message. Special handling required. Releasable only to authorised representatives of France, Germany, U.K. and U.S.

At approx 191700Z East German authorities commenced construction work at the Brandenburg Gate. The aim of the work would appear to be to create an anti-visual screen. The work is being carried out by civilians under supervision of the engineers of the East German Army. There are approx 150 E.G.A. soldiers guarding the wire boundary whilst the work proceeds. Additional construction work is taking place at the Potsdammer Platz where the main effort would seem to be digging of a deep ditch around the Platz. Construction I S work is also taking place in Wilhelmstrasse and a loudspeaker is proclaiming that all is being done as a result of the belligerent efforts of the West. Friedrich Str. crossing remains open.

British Force. We have alerted Tiergarten Coy and 1 Sec and 2 AFCS is fwd keeping situation under observation. Normal patrolling of sector border continues. Latest report as at present time of origin is that the anti visual fence is now approx nine feet high. The ditch at Potsdammer Platz is estimated to be 6 feet deep and in addition to the loudspeaker propaganda stating the belligerent West is to blame they have also stated that this will be a night to remember. However all action at the present time is of a defensive nature. Work has also been rptd from Bernauer Str in the French Sector and anti tank obstacles are also being sited in the area of Friedrichstr but the crossing point remains open.

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Source 6

FRONTIER SEQUENCE:

Germany today.

Barbed wire running like a scar across the land, dividing East from West. But from these Eastern Zone watchtowers the alert is not primarily against the west, but against East Germans who would quit their country - refugees who escape through woods, across lakes, on cycles the routes are many.

REFUGEE SEQUENCE:

.... but for the majority the destination is West Berlin and this suburban road. By train, by bus, on foot, from East Berlin the refugees come to this camp, bringing their world with them in a suitcase.

These are not refugees from hunger or poverty - they are reasonably well fed and clothed. They are fleeing from oppression of the mind. They long to say what they think; to vote freely. Most are young. Nearly 3 million have left East Germany for the West in the last 12 years - and the great majority have come through the gateway to freedom in West Berlin first to this camp, then on to the Airport, and then to West Germany and a new life.

Extract from the script of a film called Outpost of Freedom - The Meaning of Berlin Today produced by the British Ministry of Information in 1962.