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BERLIN TASK FORCE

Minutes and Assignments of Meeting, December 21, 1961

1. INR Briefing

Mrs. Mautner provided an intelligence briefing stressing the following points:
a) Pravda story on possible militant activities along the Berlin border during the Xmas holidays, b) ban on the use of Xmas fireworks in East Berlin, c) announcement of a TV program in West Berlin containing a Xmas message for West Berliners from President Kennedy, d) Character and reputation of new appointees to West Berlin Senat, e) Brandt statement about his impressions of his Paris trip, f) continuing anti-Hausi Heusinger campaign in the Bloc press including intimations that General Heusinger tried to use NATO troops to stop India's invasion of Goa, g) Neues Deutschland representative in England asked to leave, h) new emphasis in East German propoganda on the "slave traffic in human beings" (refugee flow), i) intelligence reports that the East Germans will make their border patrols on elite corps, j) report that Polish or Czech troops may serve as border guards to underline Warsaw Pact commitment to East German viability, k) installation of steel I-beams in the center strip of the autobahn near Helmstedt, and l) rumors that the Soviets will place "16 billion" (sic) DM worth of industrial orders in West Berlin during June 1962.

2. GDR Harassments on Autobahn During Xmas Holidays

Mr. Kohler in consideration of the fact that there may be some harassment of West German traffic on the autobahn during this period has asked GER to draft a telegram to the field expressing our ideas on the character this harassment might take. We will contact the German Embassy here in an effort to encourage the Federal Republic to develop the administrative machinery to enable it to react to harassments of West German civilian traffic.

3. Economic Countermeasures Problems

Mr. Freshman noted that a response to Ambassador Finletter's telegram on these matters had been drafted. Mr. Kohler suggested that the Economic Advisers at NATO take up the problem of commodity ceilings in Bloc trade. Mr. Freshman stated that a response is expected from NATO on restricted attendance and participation in the SPRING Leipzig Fair.

4. ~~SPD~~ ^{Bundestag} Fraktionen Meeting in West Berlin

Mr. Kohler stated that no effort would be made to discourage this meeting in West Berlin.

5. Long Thrust Exercise

General Gray noted that the Joint Chiefs had sent a telegram to General Horstad authorizing this exercise during January. GER will draft a similar telegram to Ambassador Finletter.

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6. Kidnapping of Heins Brandt

Mr. Kohler asked Mr. Cox EUR/P to take action on possible exploitation of this (New York's Telegram 2195).

7. Berlin Clause in Federal Republic Treaties

Mr. Kohler asked that draft notes to the Soviets and Lebanon on this subject be revised by a working group (Kearney (L), an NEA representative, Karl Mautner (S/O) and Mr. Hillenbrand). The revised drafts would be cabled to the field for comments and would be coordinated tripartitely.

8. US Response to Furor Over Heusinger Note

Mr. Kohler stated that we should avoid further public comments on this subject and allow it to die down *as for a quiet statement, as concerned.*

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