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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

2 June 1959

STAFF MEMORANDUM NO. 22-59

SUBJECT: O/NE Consultants' Conference, Princeton, 14-15 May 1959

Participants:

Consultants

Hamilton Fish Armstrong
Cyril Black
Calvin Hoover
George Kennan
Klaus Knorr
Col. George A. Lincoln
William L. Langer
Harold Linder
Max Millikan
Philip Mosely
Joseph Strayer
T. Cuyler Young

CIA

Allen W. Dulles
Gen. Charles P. Cabell
Sherman Kent
Adm. Roscoe Schuirmann
Ludwell Montague
James C. Graham
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Keith C. Clark

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Sherman KENT took the chair during this conference and introduced discussion of three principal topics -- Soviet objectives in Berlin and Germany, the situation in Iraq and the Soviet role therein, and the situation in the Caribbean and South America. The Director was present during the afternoon session on Thursday and General Cabell attended the Friday meeting.

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A. Thursday Morning, 14 April: BERLIN

1. Mr. KENT opened this session with a brief recap of O/NE production and activities since the last meeting. He then turned to the question of Berlin, Germany and European security, referring to appropriate Estimates and the Memo to the Consultants and asking the consultants to comment on Soviet objectives concerning these matters.

2. Initial responses centered on Soviet fear of and Western attitudes toward a reunited Germany. DR. LANGER saw in Soviet efforts to gain recognition for the GDR a major attempt to forestall any reunification -- a tactic given insufficient emphasis by O/NE. KENNAN observed -- with concurrence from LINDER, MOSELY, and ARMSTRONG -- that only the US and West Germany really want German reunification. ~~Adenauer~~ Adenauer wants it, but only on his own terms. MR. MILLIKAN thought the French particularly opposed to reunification because, with a divided Germany, Paris feels that it can pull the "determining weights" in the European community.

3. The discussion revolved next around the Soviet attitude vis-a-vis Germany. KENNAN led off by disagreeing with LANGER concerning a Soviet move to forestall reunification through Western recognition of the GDR. Moscow, said KENNAN, had no immediate need

- 2 -

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to raise the issue on these grounds. Further, it is misleading to speak, as the O/NE paper does, of Soviet efforts to create Western disunity as a major objective in the Berlin crisis; this, after all, is a long standing, continuing Soviet objective.

4. MOSELY saw two additional Soviet objectives: (a) a need to take the psychological offensive in foreign policy, following the defeats of 1956 (e.g., Hungary), and (b) more important, Khrushchev's belief that the USSR now has a real strategic military advantage which can be demonstrated by taking over all of Berlin. MOSELY foresaw a series of Soviet-inspired crises and, perhaps, a Summit conference in which Khrushchev might say to the West, "This is it !"

5. MR. KENT asked if the Soviet objectives had pretty much been revealed in public statements -- in other words, is their position now in the open? KENNAN thought not; the depths have not as yet been plumbed. The West cannot discover any possibilities for compromise except through private, secret conversations with the Soviets.

6. Asked wherein there may, in fact, be room for compromise, KENNAN noted four possible areas: (a) concerning atomic armament in general; (b) military dispositions of the two sides; (c) Germany's

- 3 -

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international obligations, such as NATO for the West Germans and the Warsaw Pact for the East; and (d) the question of Germany's frontiers in the East. KENNAN emphasized that he was unable to state that an East-West deal on such matters can be made, but such matters must be discussed with the Soviets before any compromise is possible. If there is any formula at all, it must be on the basis of mutual concessions. MR. HOOVER concurred, and noted that a big deal is conceivable -- perhaps even reunification -- because each side could agree to a formula on the basis of self-interest and a belief that it would be ahead of the game.

7. MR. KNORR demurred, asking what concessions could the West make to gain Soviet compromises. Certainly Moscow was not going to agree to anything which would mean the demise of the GDR. MR. STRAYER expressed the belief that the Soviets are not likely to "give up a fairly good certainty in exchange for a hypothetical future"; in other words, Moscow is relatively happy with the status quo.

8. MR. LANGER disagreed, pointing out that nuclear arms upset the situation (i.e., the status quo). MOSELY and KNORR discounted Soviet fear of nuclear arms in West Germany -- Moscow has a certain residual emotional fear of the Germans but is, nonetheless, capable of a rational assessment. MOSELY also felt that -- contrary to STRAYER -- the Soviets are not content with the status quo; they want something

- 4 -

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better and believe that they can get it.

9. STRAYER, returning to the O/NE memo, objected to its implication that the Soviets seek to shore up their position in the GDR and Europe so that they could then turn to other matters and concentrate on peaceful competition. STRAYER and MOSELY rejected such a thesis because it contradicts the estimate of forthcoming Soviet-induced crises. MOSELY argued that the memo spoke only of economic and political competition, and ignored the use of military power.

said that the memo did not rule out Soviet induced crises, and spoke of quiescence only in terms of the major Soviet posture in Europe over the coming years. Direct use of military forces was intentionally omitted because O/NE believes the main Soviet use of its growing military power will be to support its aggressive political initiatives in the world at large. (b)(3)

10. MR. KENT raised the question of European disengagement. He wondered if the possible primary Soviet aim -- recognition of the GDR -- were achieved whether we would hear any more about the Rapacki Plan from Moscow.

11. KENNAN, answering, observed that the Rapacki Plan was not a Soviet initiative. The Poles had told him that US objections to the plan were very much like those initially encountered in Moscow.

- 5 -

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12. In connection, generally, with disengagement, KENNAN said he wished to return to the problem of Soviet objectives in the broad sense and to outline them as he saw them. To begin with there is the "finality" in Moscow's view of the decision to equip the West Germans with nuclear weapons after the long Soviet campaign to prevent such a measure. Secondly, there has been no diminution of West Berlin's disturbing force in the GDR; there can be no fully satisfactory situation, from the Soviet viewpoint, in Eastern Europe so long as this is the case. Thirdly, there is the Soviet calculation that the Western position has certain weaknesses and that they have a capability against the West in Berlin, short of war.

13. Therefore, continued KENNAN, the Soviets say to themselves, let the division in Europe be a clean one, let it survive, but, first, something must be done about Berlin.

14. Thus, Berlin is a squeeze play to get either recognition of the GDR, or an ouster of the West from Berlin. Either one would rehabilitate the GDR regime. This is more of a local consideration than a global one and is, essentially, a defensive one.

15. MR. BLACK, harking back to some of MR. KENNAN's earlier remarks (concerning possible items for East-West negotiation), wondered

- 6 -

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whether some of the areas delineated by KENNAN were really negotiable issues -- e.g., atomic armament of West Germany. No doubt, Soviet willingness to make concessions in re East Germany should be tested by the West. But are the Soviets seriously concerned about this and can this matter be separated from a Western withdrawal from Germany? What, BLACK asked, are the real specifics in re possible Soviet concessions? Can't Moscow get what it wants -- as defined by KENNAN -- without making any concessions?

16. MR. KENT asked for some guesses concerning the situation in Moscow. Is Khrushchev, for example, under pressure at home to negotiate with the West or to produce a Soviet foreign policy victory? Is there an "out party" in the USSR? MOSELY felt that Khrushchev was in firm control and not subject to pressure of this sort. KENNAN stated that he disagreed, but that he lacked time to explain his position.

17. MR. LANGER said that in much of the discussion there seemed to be implicit acceptance of the thesis that the USSR possesses marked military superiority over the US and that Khrushchev is going to make the most of it. Was this, in fact, the conclusion of the estimates? MR. KENT noted that making net estimates was not our business. He went on to say, however, that we believe the Soviets

- 7 -

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themselves do not -- and perhaps cannot -- assume safely that they do have marked superiority.

18. KENNAN, returning to Berlin, observed that sooner or later he felt that the Soviets would turnover -- in one way or another -- their control over Western access to Berlin to the GDR. MR. KENT expressed the opinion that they would not do so during the foreign minister's or Summit conference. This opinion was challenged by KENNAN, MOSELY, and several others; the turnover could occur during these meetings, maybe even on 27 May. And -- should the foreign minister's meeting fail and the holding of a Summit conference seem in doubt -- the Soviets might make such a move in order to force a heads-of-state meeting. The feeling was that Moscow would estimate, perhaps wrongly, that US resistance to Soviet pressure of this sort would be overcome by panic in Western Europe and that the US would be "dragged" to the Summit by its allies (especially the British). Some present disagreed, arguing that an attempt to force a Summit through crude pressure would be ineffective or would boomerang.

B. Thursday Afternoon: MOSELY Briefing on Soviet Trip

19. Prior to the opening of the substantive session on Thursday afternoon, MR. KENT asked MR. MOSELY to give his impression of his recent trip to the USSR. MR. MOSELY made the following major points.

- 8 -

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20. Living conditions in Moscow have improved significantly since his last (1956) trip. From 60% to 70% of the people on the street were wearing new clothes and shoes of improved quality, cut, and lower cost; in 1956, only 5% were in new clothes. (A Westerner is not now so readily recognized by his shoes.) A greater variety of food is now available, though prices are the same. A great deal of housing construction is underway.

21. The people expect the standard of living to continue to rise. Further, the tangible evidence of regime concern for popular welfare, combined with a tendency to forget the Stalinist tyranny, has resulted in greater popular belief in the regime's general propaganda line, including that toward foreign affairs.

22. MR. MOSELY said that he had had an opportunity to speak to about 30 members of the Soviet Academy of Science, usually in small groups. He observed that these people were quite willing to talk, without apparent fear, and seemed much more knowledgeable about Western affairs than they had been in 1956. Most were able to read such Western periodicals as the NY Times, Manchester Guardian, and the Economist.

23. University professors, on the other hand, seemed more depressed and less willing to talk than the members of the Academy.

- 9 -

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MOSELY learned that six young history instructors at Moscow U. had been fired fairly recently for "objectivism" (not further defined). Members of the faculties of physical sciences were more optimistic and seemed to view their colleagues in the social sciences with some disdain. A physics professor was certain that the educational reform would not affect his department.

24. Students struck MR. MOSELY as being apathetic about ideological matters and as keenly interested in the outside world, though they were generally quite patriotic -- but not chauvinistic -- and pleased about such Soviet successes as the sputniks. Foreign students in Moscow -- such as those from the UAR and India -- were depressed and resentful of the general atmosphere of political repression. MR. MOSELY suggested that it would be worthwhile for the US to invite these students to study in the US -- he thought the contrast would be most beneficial to us. He also recommended most strongly that the US-Soviet exchange program of students and faculty be greatly expanded.

C. Thursday Afternoon: Iraq and the Soviet Role There

25. MR. KENT called for a discussion of the situation in Iraq. On the first sections of the Iraqi paper (SNIE 36.2-3-59), KENNAN

- 10 -

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and others expressed agreement, including the impossibility of defining Qassim's "point of no return." The consensus, in short, accorded with our estimate's proposition that there is no one prospective criterion which will irrefutably indicate that the Soviets are in control. KENNAN noted possible historical parallels: (a) Kerensky's use of the Communists in St. Petersburg to neutralize the army and turn enlisted men against officers, and (b) Communist efforts to keep up a facade of independence in Czechoslovakia until this position was challenged by the Marshall Plan initiative in Europe.

26. Concerning the probable policies of a Communist-controlled Iraq, KENNAN and LINDER stressed continuing Iraqi need for oil revenues from the West, whatever the complexion of regime. In general, there was agreement on the proposition that both the Soviets and the Iraqi Communists would prefer to play this operation quietly at least as far as rocking the Western oil boat is concerned; and would probably make a real effort to maintain a facade of Iraqi independence and dedication to Arab nationalism while they could. KENNAN and YOUNG emphasized Iran as the next likely target, and argued that when Iran is ripe for an exploitable upheaval a Communist Iraq would be likely to pull out the stops.

27. A significant difference of opinion arose over what would

- 11 -

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happen if and when Communist power in Iraq should be challenged militarily from the UAR, Turkey, Iran, and/or the West. Most notably, KENNAN expressed his disagreement with our estimate that the Soviets would on balance, probably not react militarily against US-UK, Turkish or Iranian forces if the latter engaged in full scale intervention in Iraq. He thought it highly probable that the Soviets would respond to any such move quickly and forcefully -- moving into northern Iran at least and probably into Iraq as well. LANCER added Afghanistan to the list of possible targets. Most others agreed that the Soviets would feel compelled, for reasons of prestige and because of sensitivity over southern border areas to react more vigorously than the SNE indicated -- except in the event that outside intervention was limited in scope or requested by the Baghdad regime.

28. STRAYER and BLACK pointed out that the Soviet response to such a military move in Iraq need not necessarily be a countermove in Iraq or a neighboring state; it could take the form of a counter-punch elsewhere -- though KENNAN discounted this with the general argument that the Soviets were already pushing elsewhere about as much as circumstances allow. LANCER thought that the USSR is probably more concerned about gaining control of or neutralizing Iran,

- 12 -

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and estimated that in a pinch the Soviets would sacrifice Iraq to gain Iran. He nevertheless emphasized his feeling that Iraq presented a very explosive situation. BLACK stressed the possibility that Soviet countermoves might take other than military forms. All agreed that there was an almost infinite variety of possible Soviet responses in such a situation.

29. With respect to general Soviet intentions and motives toward Iraq, there was agreement that Soviet policy in the situation was opportunistic. The group generally doubted that Iraqi developments had been planned that way in advance. All agreed in discounting the proposition that Berlin was part of a master scheme to cover a thrust in Iraq. It was felt that Berlin and the German problem are in themselves far too important to the Soviets to be used in this manner.

30. On the broader question of future Soviet policy toward bourgeois nationalist movements in the Afro-Asian area, the consensus was that the USSR would sooner or later have to stop playing the neutralists' game, but they would handle each case on an ad hoc basis, guided by specific opportunities. STRAYER stressed the difficulties raised for the Soviets by this problem, though both

- 13 -

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he and KNORR were inclined to believe that the Soviets would press ahead vigorously despite such difficulties. YOUNG considered that the risk of alienating Nasser would not serve as any kind of effective restraint on a forward Soviet policy in the area.

31. With respect to the general quality and approach of the Iraqi SNIE's, (as well as other crash papers), most agreed with MILLIKAN that it would be desirable to achieve more depth, social and political analysis, etc., than appeared in these hurry-up jobs. STRAYER in particular stressed the disadvantages of devoting so much effort to SNIE's, everytime a crisis arose, at the expense of more comprehensive, long-range estimating. No one, however, came up with a ready solution for meeting these difficulties while still turning out obviously necessary crash papers.

D. Friday Morning: The Situation in the Caribbean

32. Mr. KENT opened the discussion with remarks on Latin America in general and referred to the several study papers at hand covering the Caribbean as a whole, Nicaragua, and recent strike activity in Latin America. Mr. MONTAGUE briefly surveyed the situation in the Caribbean area, focusing on Cuba, and concluded by stating that in Cuba there existed a danger of an Arbenz-type progression of events.

- 14 -

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33. KENNAN questioned whether a man of Castro's temperament could be a part of the international Communist apparatus and recalled Stalin's distrust of Communists in the Spanish Civil War. He warned that we must exercise caution in the use of the word Communist, and differentiate between those vaguely affected by ideology and those hard core disciplined Communists who are a genuine part of the apparatus. He pointed out that the emphasis on personal loyalty in Latin America makes it difficult to grow hard core Communists there. (During KENNAN's stay in Moscow, he noted that there were no more miserable people than the Latin Americans in Russia.) What we need is a new term for the typical Latin American fellow traveler.

34. LINDER indicated that the Castros have manifested a degree of discipline. MONTAGUE added that things like agrarian reform are in the old Latin tradition, but still are also reminiscent of Arbenz. KENNAN suggested that there is a lesson in the Mexican revolution which was a national phenomena. Although many people seem to think there is some magic word by which Russians are able to twist almost any situation, very few people like to submit to foreign direction. BLACK pointed out that whereas the Soviets used military power in Eastern Europe, in Latin America, where real revolutions take place, they jump on the bandwagon. Mr. LANGER asked if there weren't a lack

- 15 -

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of local leadership to facilitate a Soviet move. MONTAGUE stated that the Guatemalan revolution in 1944 was a liberal Latin American affair which became tolerant of Communists and led to Arbenz' dependence on them.

35. There was general agreement that the Nicaraguan situation probably would not come to a head soon. MOSLEY felt that if a Castro-type movement got started in Nicaragua, the middle class influence would be pretty well excluded. STRAYER indicated that whereas there is a sizeable middle class in Cuba, in Nicaragua and Panama it was smaller. Hence a Castro-type revolution in those countries would bring a different result. General CABELL stated that the Panama filibusters made a mistake by including motly Cubans, thus permitting the OAS to do more than it might be able to do in a Nicaraguan revolution utilizing a predominantly national group. There was agreement that if one of the Somozas were to be assassinated, the other could not long survive. In response to LINCOLN's question asking what could be done to deflate Caribbean revolutionary fervor, CABELL mentioned the affect of the OAS' action in the Panama affair.

36. LANGER asked if it is inevitable that Cuba will fall into the hands of communism and confusion. CABELL stated that in view of the

- 16 -

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combination of improper leadership, bureaucratic paralysis, and Communist machinations in Cuba, he believed that there was a better than even probability that drastic action will have to be taken there. But we shouldn't jump in at every turn as this is contrary to our policy. KENNAN emphasized that such action should follow careful preparation to assure that our best interests are served.

37. The major upshot of the morning's discussion was the inability of the group to agree on the likelihood of Cuba's going Communist.

- 17 -

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