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December 19, 1963

USCOB - Colonel Foote

Charles E. Hulick, Jr.

Alleged Checkpoint Charlie Incident

At the December 19 staff conference, General Polk suggested that the US reply to Dobrynin on this incident mention the failure of the Soviets to live up to the terms of the McGhee-Abrasimov agreement on exchange of information. After consultation with Eastern Affairs, I think this would not be as good an idea as it seemed at first. The agreement between the Ambassadors covered only traffic violations, not other incidents. The Soviets have not lived up to this agreement, but it is not directly relevant. Second, Panin has now agreed to look into the alleged Checkpoint incident (Meehan's conversation with him of December 19). We cannot, therefore, even make the general point that the Soviets are refusing to be helpful in dealing with the incidents (granted they are not going out of their way to do so, or to keep the East Germans in check).

I suggest therefore that we not propose such an approach to Washington. They have all the facts now and can design a reply from them.

POL:ARDay/jb

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