

October 11, 1963

SECRET

MEMORANDUM TO THE VICE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: New Soviet Harassment of our Berlin Convoys.

In the last 48 hours Soviets have begun again to impose harassing delays on our military troop convoys to and from Berlin. They seem to be trying to impose an erosion of our posture by requiring our troop convoys to follow a procedure different from that used in the past and which acknowledges their control of the autobahn access route.

At the moment one of our inbound small convoys is blocked at the checkpoint just outside Berlin by Soviet-armored personnel carriers and troops. Late last night it got past the Western Soviet checkpoint five minutes before the expiration of our ultimatum that it would drive on without clearance unless it was permitted to proceed.

This is an ugly little crisis. We are coordinating with the British and French Ambassadors here and are suggesting that we begin assembling the necessary units to conduct a military probe of Soviet intentions by force. Such an assembling requires 72 hours and would be picked up by Soviet intelligence, thereby conveying to them the seriousness of our intentions. The blocked convoy (61 men, including driver, and 18 vehicles) has enough food and water to remain where it is until midnight Saturday and can be resupplied from Berlin.

Samuel R. Gammon

cc: Mr. Stull -s/s
10/21

SECRET
GROUP 3

Downgraded at 12-year intervals, not automatically declassified.

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