

1976 Berlin Policy Review

Issues facing us in Berlin over the next year will not be of the "life and death" variety which could require considerable attention from the higher levels of the U.S. Government. The past year has been a successful one for Western interests in Berlin; as Mission Berlin points out in its assessment, the best recipe for 1976 is "more of the same."

However, Berlin continues to warrant considerable attention from US policymakers. Our engagement there is one of the deepest and longest running American commitments in Europe. Issues raised in Berlin are taken very seriously by the two countries which are most important to us in Europe -- the FRG and USSR -- as well as by our British and French Allies. If we are not successful in managing East-West relationships there, it will be difficult to do so in the rest of Europe.

Embassy Bonn points out that the Quadripartite Agreement has neither "solved" the Berlin problem, nor has it removed the city as a point of East-West competition. In Berlin, "more of the same" means continued vigilance in the face of Soviet and East German efforts to undermine the economic and political status of the Western Sectors. It also means renewed effort to manage the increasingly complex problem of coordinating Western policy towards the city. Finally, it means continued attention to the difficult economic and psychological problems of an isolated city.

A common thread running through the submission from Bonn and Berlin is the increased complexity of issues which have arisen in the nearly four years since entry into force of the QA. We are often faced with hard choices on issues involving complicated details of a legal and technical nature. The relatively straightforward questions involved in resisting Soviet military threats have been replaced by more subtle issues, the long term consequences of which are difficult to foresee.

ISSUES

-- FRG-Berlin Ties: Over the long term, development of the important political, legal, cultural and economic ties between the FRG and West Berlin is the only way to guarantee survival of West Berlin in its present form. None of the

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Allies is able or indeed willing to bear the large burden necessary for prosperity of the city. However, the Soviets and East Germans are equally determined to oppose closer FRG-Berlin ties. The QA leaves room for honest disagreement on this point and there has been considerable friction with the Soviets in the past two years. Despite German-Allied agreement on the need to further develop the ties, views on the scope and tactics of this policy often diverge. US policy must continue to tread the narrow line between supporting our German allies and endangering our broader interest in detente with the USSR.

-- Western Consultation on Berlin: Related to the question of FRG-Berlin ties is the issue of Western consultation on Berlin matters. The Allies' need for information often touches on some of the most sensitive aspects of FRG foreign and inner-German policy. Some German officials, including Chancellor Schmidt, resent somewhat the occupation flavor of Allied rights and of formal consultations in the Bonn Group. Schmidt is known to feel that necessary consultation can be conducted with his fellow heads of government. These German attitudes, plus the complexity of the issues involved will make consultation a continuing problem in 1976.

-- Berlin and the European Communities: Related to Berlin's need to feel a part of the FRG, is the continuing desire to have the city participate fully in all steps towards European integration. Although the Rome Treaty was extended to Berlin, present regulations covering extension of Community decisions to the city do not fully take account of questions which would arise when and if the EC moved towards true supernationality. The immediate issue in 1976 will be direct election of Berlin deputies to the European Parliament. Later, if the Parliament is given real powers, difficulties may arise over the voting rights granted Berlin deputies. Over the long term, the three Powers should make sure that increased EC control over internal affairs of member states does not damage our rights and responsibilities in Berlin.

-- Allied Air Service to Berlin: Ground access portions of the QA have been so successful that millions of passengers have been lost by the three Allied airlines serving Berlin. This drop in traffic has forced them to cut-back on service and to raise prices to meet the rising cost of doing business to Berlin. The West has also been frustrated in its efforts to obtain GDR overflight rights by non-Allied carriers serving international routes to Berlin.

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With a further fare increase likely in 1976, we can expect a good deal of friction over the question of air service to the city. While some Berliners are calling for a complete reevaluation of the present Allied monopoly, any move to change the Four Power corridor regime would put in question our ability to fly to the city without Soviet interference. This will probably be the most difficult issue we have to face in 1976.

-- Psychological Situation in Berlin: Berliners have had a hard time adjusting to the more "normal" situation under the QA. They are sensitive to Soviet attacks on the status of the city, but at times seem equally disturbed by disappearance of the excitement and worldwide attention which accompanied the tensions of the past. Recent public opinion polls show increasing acceptance of and satisfaction with the new situation. The psychological situation will, however, remain important in 1976.

-- 1976 US and FRG Elections: Both the US and FRG election campaigns could affect our interests in Berlin. The probability is much higher in the FRG, where we can almost be sure of being drawn into controversies between government and opposition over who is doing more for Berlin. If foreign policy, especially the question of detente, were to become a controversial issue in the US campaign, the sensitive psychological situation in Berlin would almost certainly be affected. Other than being aware of the potential problems, there is little we can do to affect this situation.

RESOURCES

The American commitment in Berlin ties up considerable resources of several executive agencies. It should not, however, be forgotten that the major share of the cost is borne by the West German government through the Berlin occupation budget.

In addition to a military garrison of 3,800 men, there are 2,800 military and civilian American employees in Berlin in non-combat functions. The State Department has thirty-two American employees, broken-down as follows:

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Executive:	2 officer	2 secretarial
Political:	8 officer	3 secretarial
Economic:	5 officer	1 secretarial
Publications Procurement:	1 officer	
Consular:	3 officer	
Administration:	6 officer	1 secretarial
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TOTAL	25 officer	7 secretarial

While this complement may appear large, it is not excessive in light of the special responsibilities borne by the US Mission in Berlin. Under Executive Order, the State Department representatives in Berlin are responsible for administration of the occupation government of West Berlin with our British and French Allies.

These responsibilities include the entire range of municipal activities, as well as relations with Soviet authorities in East Berlin. Several members of the political and economic sections are occupied almost full time with these unique duties, which range in scope from overseeing the West Berlin police forces to regulating civil air traffic to Berlin.

USIS Berlin comprises 8 American employees (6 officer, 2 secretarial). Among USIS programs in Berlin are an information center (1 American) and management of the Radio in the American Sector (RIAS), over 90 percent of the costs for which are borne by the FRG.

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