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February 8, 1960

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH THE PRESIDENT
THE WHITE HOUSE - 10:00 a. m.

Subject: Summit Preparations - Germany including Berlin

I showed the President the paper setting forth the six principles to govern the allied position in connection with Berlin which has been tabled by the French as having been agreed to during the meeting of the three Western Heads of Government in Paris in December. I told the President that our own records of the tripartite meeting, as well as the records of General De Gaulle's summary thereof at the following day's meeting, did not indicate as rigid a position as the attached memorandum would warrant. The President told me he thought he had made it clear that the United States would not give up its rights or be forced to give up its rights, or volunteer to give up its rights, unless arrangements were made that all parties concerned felt would give greater strength to the position of Berlin over a period of years than is the case with the present situation.

He then discussed at some length his worries about the possibility of a slow strangulation of West Berlin through acts of the GDR which would not necessarily be in contravention of our agreements with the Soviets. Accordingly, he felt perhaps a more solid arrangement assuring the economic access of Western Berlin to the West might possibly be worked out. He likewise asked that he be given a condensed briefing paper on the juridical position of Berlin with particular application to civilian rather than military access to the West.

I told him I did not feel we were in a position to recommend to him any specific proposals at this time, but that before the visit of Chancellor Adenauer we might have recommendations as to what it would be most advantageous for him to discuss with the Chancellor in this field.

Christian A. Herter



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