



Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Germany¹

Abschrift

Washington, August 12, 1961, 6:26 p.m.

339. Re Embtel 286 Aug 7, Deptel 172 July 22, Deptel 311 Aug 8.²

Situation in East Germany causing us increasing concern. Explosion along 1953 lines at this time would be highly unfortunate. Despite inevitable memories in East Germany of 1953 and Hungary, we assume that not only danger of escape hatch being closed but also rising tension between Moscow and Free World is contributing factor. It would be particularly unfortunate if an explosion in East Germany were based on expectation of immediate Western military assistance. Such an explosion would precipitate crisis before military and political measures now underway for dealing with Berlin problem have become effective.

Please report urgently FRG thinking on likelihood of early explosion, what action it contemplates to prevent one, and what action by US and other Allies it would consider useful. As FRG knows, this subject discussed at Paris Foreign Ministers Meeting which decided unanimously "that as a matter of policy, the Allies should do nothing to exacerbate the situation".

Re Tosec 34 rptd Bonn 311. Subject did not arise during Secretary-Chancellor conversation. Request your views and judgement on apparent divergence.

Rusk

[Quelle: U.S. Department of State (Hg.), 1993: *Foreign Relations of the United States, Vol. XIV: Berlin Crisis, 1961-1962, Washington, S. 324.*]

¹ Source: Kennedy Library, National security Files, Germany, Berlin, Cables. Secret; Limit Distribution. Drafted by Ausland and Achilles; cleared by Brandin (GER), Davis, Tyler, Kohler, Ball, Johnson, and Bundy (in draft); and approved by Rusk. Repeated to Berlin, London, Paris and Moscow.

² Telegram 286 from Bonn transmitted the appraisal that East German efforts to stem the flow of refugees might become so restrictive as to precipitate a crisis. (Department of State, Central Files, 101.21-NIS/8-761) (...) In telegram 311 to Bonn, the Department of State noted that officials in West Germany differed among themselves concerning the reaction to an uprising in the Soviet Zone. (Department of State, Central Files, 396.1-PA/8-661)