State Dept. review completed
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

23 September 1961

DAILY BRIEF

*USSR-Berlin: The position Khrushchev outlined in his statements on Germany and Berlin to Belgian Foreign Minister Spaak was more flexible than any he has adopted since he intensified the Berlin crisis after the Vienna meeting with President Kennedy. According to Spaak's report to the NATO council, the Soviet premier contended that he understood Western views on Germany and Berlin and had no desire to impose the Soviet position that a treaty should be signed with both German states. Khrushchev said he was prepared for what he called a "compromise"--the signing of two treaties which would contain some common clauses, including recognition of present German frontiers, an accord on Berlin, and some provison for subsequent study by the two Germanys of formulas for unification.

Khrushchev ruled out any discussion of the status of East Berlin. He also maintained that the West must reach an agreement with East Germany over access arrangements, but said at the same time that "Berlin was not too important." He said that the USSR would guarantee East German execution of any agreement on Berlin, and added that the four powers could work out a Berlin agreement prior to negotiations on the peace treaty. He made it clear that such a four-power agreement would then be incorporated in both peace treaties, or in a separate East German peace treaty concluded by the bloc alone. He claimed that in this way Moscow would guarantee
Berlin accord without requiring Western recognition of the East German regime.

As to timing, Khrushchev indicated no sense of urgency and mentioned no final date, provided there were no "long, drawn out" discussions on Berlin.

Khrushchev's presentation, and his focus on the possibility of "compromise," seem tailored to appeal to those within the Western alliance who, like Spaak, favor formal negotiations as early as possible. In keeping with this general line, Khrushchev's 16 September letter to Nehru, released yesterday, maintained that the USSR was prepared for negotiations "any time, any place, and at any level," and attempted to create the impression that the West opposed "serious negotiations."