

cannot ignore the fact that arms reduction has rarely occurred in the face of acute political tensions and of grave international injustices.

One such injustice afflicts deeply one of our NATO members, the Federal Republic of Germany. I should like to reiterate most solemnly our abiding determination that Germany shall be peacefully reunited in freedom. At the summit conference over 2 years ago this was formally and solemnly promised to us by Mr. Khrushchev and Mr. Bulganin. Unhappily, that promise has been repudiated at the cost of the international confidence which the Soviet rulers profess to desire. Likewise, I cannot let this occasion pass without recalling our common concern over the status of Berlin. The clear rights there of the Western Powers must be maintained. Any sign of Western weakness at this forward position could be misinterpreted with grievous consequences.

*Remarks at News Conference by Secretary of State Dulles, on
German Reunification, January 10, 1958*¹

[Extracts]

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Q. Mr. Secretary, you and the President have emphasized on a number of occasions the need for an act of good faith on the part of the Russians as a prerequisite for some NATO negotiation, Summit meeting, or something of that kind. Could you give us your most realistic definition of what you would consider an act of good faith on the part of the Russians?

A. The most realistic and encouraging act would be the carrying out of some of the prior agreements that have been made and most particularly I would say the agreement which was arrived at at the last Summit meeting with the Soviets. There it was stated that the Four Powers recognize their common responsibility for the German problem and the reunification of Germany and agree that Germany shall be reunified by free elections. That agreement was the principal product of the Geneva Summit meeting. Since then the Soviet Union has taken the position that it had no further responsibility for the reunification of Germany and that in any event that reunification by free elections was not an acceptable method. Now that certainly throws doubt upon the worth-whileness of these meetings. You may recall that that Summit meeting was preceded by the consummation of the Austrian State Treaty, a matter where the Soviet Union had been seriously in default. Finally, as a result of many meetings that we had on the subject, it finally agreed to the State Treaty, and that was consummated on the 15th of May, 1955. That created a condition which made it seem worthwhile to have a Summit meeting. It was in that environment that the July meeting was held. But that July meeting in turn produced agreement which apparently has, so far, certainly been repudiated by the Soviets and I would think that at least one possible act of good faith would be to indicate a willingness to carry through on the prior agreement. I don't want to suggest that that is an absolute condition precedent. But you asked me for what might be an act which would make another Summit meeting seem worth while. Certainly that would be such an act.

¹ Department of State press release 7, January 10, 1958.

Q. If I might follow up just one point, sir, is it the position of this Government officially that Russia has repudiated, as you indicated a moment ago, the Geneva Summit Conference in terms of an agreement on Germany? I ask that for the specific reason that there seems to have been a great deal of lack of unanimity of interpretation as to whether indeed the Four Powers did agree at Geneva to a workable reunification of Germany.

A. Well, the Four Powers agreed to what I said—I think I quoted it almost verbatim—agreed that “the reunification of Germany by free elections shall be carried out in conformity with the national interests of the German people and the interests of European security.” That is a quote of the agreement. Now, following that, and indeed including recent times, not only at the Foreign Ministers meeting, which shortly followed the Summit Conference, but in a more recent press conference that Mr. Gromyko held in Moscow just before he came to the United Nations, the Soviet Union asserted that it had no responsibility for the reunification of Germany and they earlier had said that reunification by means of free elections was an artificial, mechanistic, way which would not preserve the “social gains” that had been attained in East Germany and therefore was unacceptable.

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Q. Mr. Secretary, on the German question, a while back you were asked about the proposal to neutralize Germany and your answer, if I understood you, was that this was a topic currently under discussion at the NATO conference. Would you expand on that? Are you referring to the so-called Polish plan for a nuclear-free zone or to some other measure or do you consider the Polish Plan itself to be neutralization?

A. I assume the question related, as indeed my reply related, primarily to the Polish proposal which was repeated more or less in the Bulganin letter. As you point out, that was not a proposal for total neutralization, but partial neutralization, you might say, in the terms of the elimination from the area of nuclear weapons, missiles, and the like.

I might add, however, that it seems to be the opinion of some, at least, of our allies that such a step would in practice be indistinguishable from an almost total neutralization of the area because, if it is not possible to have in the area modern weapons then it might be imprudent to maintain any forces in the area at all because they would be in a very exposed position.

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***Letter from President Eisenhower to Premier Bulganin, on Germany, European Security, and Disarmament, January 12, 1958*¹**

When on December 10 I received your communication, I promptly acknowledged it with the promise that I would in due course give you a considered reply. I now do so.

Your communication seems to fall into three parts: the need for peace; your contention that peace is endangered by the collective self-

¹ *Department of State Bulletin*, January 27, 1958, pp. 122-127.