

on Berlin issued in Paris December 14, 1958—with which the North Atlantic Council associated itself.

The Ministers agreed to meet again in Paris beginning April 29 in further preparation for the conference with the Soviet Union. A report on the substance of those discussions will be made to the North Atlantic Council. All these preparations are based on a sincere desire to negotiate constructively with the Soviet Union in the interests of world peace.

Address by President Eisenhower, April 4, 1959¹

[Extract]

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Now I turn to one other case, where the hard realities of living confront us with still a further challenge. I refer to West Berlin, a city of over 2 million people whose freedom we are pledged to defend.

Here we have another problem but not a unique one. It is part of a continuing effort of the Communist conspiracy to attain one overriding goal: world domination.

Against this background we understand that the mere handing over of a single city could not possibly satisfy the Communists, even though they would particularly like to eliminate what has been called the free world's showcase behind the Iron Curtain. Indeed, if we should acquiesce in the unthinkable sacrifice of 2 million free Germans, such a confession of weakness would dismay our friends and embolden the Communists to step up their campaign of domination.

The course of appeasement is not only dishonorable; it is the most dangerous one we could pursue. The world paid a high price for the lesson of Munich, but it has learned the lesson well.

We have learned, too, that the costs of defending freedom—of defending America—must be paid in many forms and in many places. They are assessed in all parts of the world—in Berlin, Viet-Nam, in the Middle East, here at home. But wherever they occur, in whatever form they appear, they are first and last a proper charge against the national security of the United States.

Because mutual security and American security are synonymous.

These costs are high, but they are as nothing to those that would be imposed upon us by our own indifference and neglect or by weakness of spirit.

And though weakness is dangerous, this does not mean that firmness is mere rigidity, nothing but arrogant stubbornness. Another fact, basic to the entire problem of peace and security, is that America and her friends do not want war. They seek to substitute the rule of law for the rule of force, the conference table for the battlefield.

These desires and their expressions are not propaganda. They are aspirations felt deeply within us; they are the longings of entire civilizations based upon a belief in God and in the dignity of man. Indeed, they are the instinctive hopes that people feel in all nations, regardless of curtains. People everywhere recoil from the thought of war as much as do any of us present here in this peaceful gathering.

¹ Made at the Gettysburg College convocation at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. *Department of State Bulletin*, April 27, 1959, p. 582.

Tensions are created primarily by governments and individuals that are ruthless in seeking greater and more extensive power. Berlin is a tension point because the Kremlin hopes to eliminate it as part of the free world. And the Communist leaders have chosen to exert pressure there at this moment. Naturally they always pick the most awkward situation, the hard-to-defend position, as the place to test our strength and to try our resolution. There will never be an easy place for us to make a stand, but there is a best one.

That best one is where principle points. Deep in that principle is the truth that we cannot afford the loss of any free nation, for whenever freedom is destroyed anywhere we are ourselves, by that much, weakened. Every gain of communism makes further defense against it harder and our security more uncertain.

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Note from the Soviet Union to the United States, Protesting High-Level Flights in the Frankfurt-Berlin Air Corridor, April 4, 1959¹

[Unofficial translation]

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the instruction of the Soviet Government deems it necessary to bring the following to the notice of the Government of the United States of America.

On March 27 a C-130 type American transport plane, going from West Germany to Berlin along the air corridor lying over the territory of the German Democratic Republic, rose to a height of 7,000 meters, which is a crude violation of the existing procedure of flights along this route. The demonstrative character of this violation is evident from the very fact that the American representative in the Berlin Air Safety Center, which regulates flights of foreign airplanes between Berlin and the Federal Republic of Germany, was informed in good time by the Soviet side about the inadmissibility of the flight of the said plane at a height of more than 3,050 meters, which is the maximum for flights of the Western powers using the air corridors. Moreover, this same airplane, completing on the same day a return trip from Berlin to West Germany, again flew at a height twice exceeding the usual ceiling of flights in the air corridors, although a protest was made by the official Soviet representative to the U.S. representative against the violation of flight rules which had taken place.

One cannot help noting that the violations by American planes of the existing procedure and established practice of flights over the territory of the German Democratic Republic are undertaken at that moment when agreement has been reached concerning the carrying out soon of negotiations between East and West on the question of Berlin and other questions having prime significance for the cause of peace. All this is taking place after the U.S. Government through its Ambassador in Moscow declared at the time of the transmittal of the note on the question of the planned negotiations that in its opinion unilateral actions of any Government in the period of preparation for the forthcoming conferences will hardly help their successful

¹ *Department of State Bulletin*, May 4, 1959, p. 634.