

5/13-58

15 July 1961

SELECTED STATEMENTS BY KHRUSHCHEV ON BERLIN

10 November 1958 --Speech in Moscow to a Polish delegation headed by Gomulka (speech in which Khrushchev set forth new major proposals on Berlin):

"...It is time to understand that the days when the imperialists could act with impunity from the position of strength have gone beyond recall.... They cannot forget the geographical situation of West Germany which, under the present military techniques, would not last a day in a modern war....

"No powers have the right to interfere in the internal affairs of and to dictate their will to the GDR....

"The signing of the German peace treaty would help normalize the whole situation in Germany and in all Europe. The Soviet Union has been proposing and proposes to tackle this matter without delay....

"The Soviet Union, for its part, will hand over to the sovereign GDR those functions in Berlin which are still exercised by Soviet organs. I think that this would be the correct thing to do.

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[REDACTED]

"Let the United States, France, and Britain form their own relations with the GDR and come to an agreement with her themselves if they are interested in certain questions connected with Berlin. As for the Soviet Union, we shall sacredly observe our obligations as allies of the GDR, that is, those obligations which stem from the Warsaw treaty and which we have confirmed to the GDR many times.

"Should any aggressive forces come out against the GDR, which is an equal partner of the Warsaw treaty, then we will consider it as an attack on the Soviet Union, on all the countries which belong to the Warsaw treaty...."

27 November 1958 --Soviet note to the US, UK, and France

stated that "the Soviet government finds it possible for the question of Western Berlin to be settled for the time being by making Western Berlin an independent, demilitarized free city"; the Soviet Government "proposes to make no changes in the present procedure for military traffic of the USA, Great Britain, and France from West Berlin to the FRG for half a year. If the above mentioned period is not utilized to reach an adequate agreement, the Soviet Union will then carry out the planned measures...."

27 January 1959 --Opening speech to 21st Congress of CPSU:

"...The German problem would be fundamentally solved with the conclusion of a peace treaty with Germany.

That would mean a big step forward toward German reunification....

"A peace treaty with Germany would also serve to solve the Berlin problem on a peaceful and democratic basis and insure West Berlin's conversion into a free city with the necessary guarantee of noninterference in its affairs. The UN organization should be deputized to enforce this guarantee. We want negotiations on all these problems so as to find a sensible solution for them....

"Since there are two sovereign states today and neither can be eliminated without touching off a world war, Germany's reunification can be achieved only through negotiations between the GDR and the Federal Republic of Germany. There is no other way....

"We have never objected to free elections. But again, the issue must be settled by the Germans themselves...."

2 February 1959 --Khrushchev stressed [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] that his Berlin proposal was not an ultimatum and that the USSR was ready to examine Western counterproposals. ( [REDACTED] )

17 February 1959 --Speech at Tula:

"...Some Western leaders say that should the land routes to West Berlin be closed, they would arrange an airlift. The flimsiness of this attitude is obvious. For if a peace treaty is signed with the two German states, or with one of them--and the Soviet Union and some other states which fought against Hitlerite Germany are prepared to sign such a treaty--then the GDR will acquire all the rights and will be bound by all the obligations of a sovereign state. And these rights of the GDR will be guaranteed by international law...."

7 March 1959 --Speech at Leipzig:

"...The most reasonable way out would be to sign a peace treaty with the two German republics. In the present circumstances that would be the most correct solution of the question. The signing of a peace treaty, without altering anything that came into being after the war, by finally determining the existing situation in Central Europe, would represent a decisive step toward normalizing the international situation....

"...it would be better to sign the treaty with the two existing German states but should this not take place, we will sign a peace treaty with GDR...."

[REDACTED]

"We stand for German unity, and the German people need it." But reunification, "though important, is not a fundamental question...."

5 May 1959 --Interview with West German socialist editors:

- "...And once a peace treaty with the GDR has been signed, the Western powers will lose their right to keep their occupation troops in West Berlin, as all existing occupation statutes relating to Berlin will cease to be valid...."

19 March 1959 --Press conference in Moscow:

"...But since the note which contained our proposal for the normalization of the situation in Berlin was sent on November 27, 1958, the six months period expires on May 27, this year. But this is not an ultimatum, it is an approximate date....

"Yes, I believe that the United States, Britain, and France have lawful rights for their stay in Berlin. These rights flow from the fact of the German surrender as a result of our joint struggle against Nazi Germany. But 14 years have elapsed since the end of the war, and there is no need for the further occupation of West Berlin....

"If the Western countries do not want to sign a peace treaty with Germany, the Soviet Union will still sign

[REDACTED]

a peace treaty with the GDR. The rights flowing from the surrender of Nazi Germany, extending to the territory of GDR, too, will then cease to operate....

"We do not intend to hurt the population of West Berlin by abolishing their way of life, and that is why, by agreement with the Government of the GDR, we propose that West Berlin should enjoy the status of a demilitarized free city...."

19 June 1959 --Speech to East German delegation:

"...We have never stated that the time limit indicated in our proposals was the main question, a question of principle...."

23 June 1959 --US Embassy in Moscow reported that Khrushchev, in a private conversation with Harriman on 23 June, took an uncompromising position on Berlin, boasted of Soviet military strength, and in effect, warned that the USSR was prepared to face a showdown over the Berlin issue. He bluntly asserted that the USSR was determined to liquidate the West's rights in Berlin, and that if the West insisted on perpetuating or prolonging its rights in Berlin, this means war. [REDACTED]

29 September 1959 --Answer to TASS correspondent, Moscow:

"...Mr. Eisenhower, the US President, correctly described the essence of the agreement reached by us. We have

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indeed agreed that negotiations on the Berlin issue should be resumed and that no time limit should be fixed for them, but that they should not be protracted indefinitely...."

1 December 1959 --Speech at Hungarian Party Congress:

"...We are doing our utmost to make the Soviet proposals acceptable. We do not impose them, but wish to reach agreement through negotiations, though we have every right to sign a peace treaty with the GDR if the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany does not wish to sign a peace treaty....

"We do not speed up a solution of the problem of West Berlin, we set no deadlines, present no ultimatums, but at the same time we will not relax our energy in striving for agreement with our allies...."

18 January 1960 --Khrushchev told [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] that, when agreement was reached on disarmament, he was prepared to arrange for the total withdrawal of Soviet forces from Poland and Hungary and at some later stage even from East Germany. He declared that the "free city" and peace treaty proposals were still the best solution for West Berlin, but said he was ready to consider any other temporary arrangement if the "occupation basis" were ended. [REDACTED]

25 April 1960 --Speech in Baku:

"...If in spite of all our efforts, the Western powers show themselves unwilling to seek together with the Soviet Union an agreed solution of the question of a peace treaty, and, contrary to common sense, ignore this question, then we shall of course go our own way and will conclude a peace treaty with the German Democratic Republic....I must warn such hotheads that when appeal is not made to right and law, when force is invoked, it is natural that force should be opposed by the force of the other side....

"But West Berlin lies within the territory of the GDR, and obviously when a peace treaty is signed, the GDR will exercise sovereign rights over its entire state territory. If, therefore, the Western powers should not wish to sign a peace treaty with the GDR, that would not preserve for them the rights on whose preservation they insist. They would then obviously lose the right of access to West Berlin by land, water, or air...."

5 May 1960 --Khrushchev speech to USSR Supreme Soviet:

"...Finally, it should not be forgotten that the forces of the Western powers are stationed in West Berlin



according to an agreement between the allied powers and not at the request of the population of West Berlin. This fact removes any legal grounds from the attempt to present the question of the presence of the forces of the Western powers in West Berlin as a question which should be made dependent on the opinion of the West Berlin population. If one were to take the interests of the Germans into consideration seriously, then under the present conditions, when in West Berlin, which is situated in the center of the GDR, there exists a regime differing from the GDR, the only true solution of the issue concerning West Berlin would lie in its conversion to a free city...."

20 May 1960 --Speech in East Berlin while en route to Moscow from abortive "summit" in Paris:

"...Naturally the USSR and all peace-loving countries now have the complete moral right to solve this question without further delay, by signing the peace treaty with the GDR, thereby solving the West Berlin question. A question arises: Has the time come to conclude a peace treaty with the GDR?....

"We believe that regardless of the disruption of the summit conference by the forces of reaction, the ever growing struggle of the peace-loving forces to strengthen peace and settle disputed international questions by

[REDACTED]

way of negotiations will be crowned by their victory over the forces of war and reaction. We believe that the summit conference will take place in six to eight months time. In these conditions it makes sense to wait a little and to try, by joint efforts of all the victorious powers, to find a solution to the question, which has long been ripe, of signing a peace treaty with the two existing German states. We are not losing sight of the matter. Let us wait till things mature more....

"Therefore, regarding the German peace treaty and thus the question of West Berlin, the existing situation will evidently have to be maintained until the meeting of the heads of government which, it should be assumed, will take place in six to eight months' time...."

3 June 1960 --Press conference in Moscow:

"...Obviously some people think that if there is no summit conference the question of concluding a peace treaty with Germany and solving the West Berlin problem arising from it will be postponed indefinitely. If such people exist, they are wrong...."

8 July 1960 --Press conference in Vienna:

"...If West Germany and the GDR and their governments declared their neutrality, we would hold this the

[REDACTED]

greatest fortune for all peoples in the world. We personally would hail and appreciate this neutrality....

"The best solution for Berlin is the solution of the German question. The solution of the German question is the conclusion of a peace treaty with both Germanies. The Soviet Union and the socialist countries will sign this peace treaty, and thus the question of West Berlin will be automatically solved--West Berlin as a free city. And so I repeat for Mr. Brandt: he must do everything he can to improve relations with Grotewohl, with Comrade Grotewohl and Comrade Ulbricht, because, whatever happens, it is they with whom he will have to deal because West Berlin is located on the territory of the GDR, because all roads to Berlin pass through GDR territory and there is no other solution. Perhaps when the Bundestag assembles in Berlin, at the same time a peace treaty will be signed with East Germany, and thus all Bundestag deputies will have to obtain a visa from Grotewohl to be able to leave Berlin for Bonn.

4 August 1960 --Letter to British Prime Minister Macmillan:

"...If later, too, the Soviet Government does not meet with understanding and if hindrances are put in the path of reaching agreement on these questions,

then I assure you, Mr. Prime Minister, that we shall embark on the conclusion of a peace treaty with the GDR...."

4 October 1960 --Khrushchev, [REDACTED]

on 4 October 1960, agreed that a summit conference on Berlin should not be held until the new US administration was firmly installed, and suggested February or March. He again repeated his warning on a separate peace treaty.

[REDACTED]

18 October 1960 --Khrushchev told [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] that summit negotiations on Berlin should be held by April at the latest. He ruled out the possibility of delaying until the West German elections in September. He also insisted on the permanent nature of the Oder-Neisse line and the necessity of a peace treaty with both German states, warning that a peace conference would be called to sign a separate treaty. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

20 October 1960 --Speech in Moscow:

"...No sober politician expects that anyone will give up or renounce the achievements of socialism in the GDR, nor does anyone think that West Germany will today renounce its political and social systems. Therefore

[REDACTED]

it is necessary to give de facto recognition to the situation that has already taken shape and to place it on record in an appropriate treaty. This question must be settled, and it must apparently be settled in 1961. It is necessary, therefore, as we agreed with the Western countries after the US brought about the failure of the Paris conference, that no steps should be taken which would have the effect of exacerbating relations. We proposed a summit meeting after the presidential election in the US so that fresh efforts could be made to settle the issues in dispute to reach agreement on the conclusion of a peace treaty with the two German states and, under that treaty to solve the question of West Berlin by making it a free city. We abide by these positions. But if another policy is forced on us, the responsibility for this will rest with the imperialist powers of the West...."

31 December 1960 --Khrushchev told [REDACTED] that the Berlin question must be raised, but that as long as negotiations were in progress nothing would be done to alter the status of Berlin. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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6 January 1961 --Speech in Moscow:

"...The positions of the United States, Great Britain, and France have turned out to be particularly vulnerable in West Berlin. These powers are still trying to cling to the old statutes.... It is essential to continue, step by step, to bring the aggressive imperialist circles to their senses, to compel them to take the actual position into account. If they are stubborn, we will adopt decisive measures. We will conclude a peace treaty with the GDR because we are fully determined to insure the conclusion of a peace treaty with Germany at last, to do away with the occupational regime in West Berlin, and, thus, to eradicate this splinter from the heart of Europe.

9 March 1961 --Ambassador Thompson reported that Khrushchev, in a conversation with him on 9 March 1961, showed some flexibility in his discussion of the Berlin problem and asserted that the USSR would provide any guarantees necessary to preserve the internal situation in West Berlin and assure the US that its prestige would not suffer as a result of a settlement. Khrushchev reiterated his intention to sign a peace treaty with the GDR with a clause providing for a free city of West Berlin if the West did not agree to a peace treaty with both German states, but he set no deadline for action.

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[REDACTED]

10 April 1961 --Walter Lippmann reported that Khrushchev in a conversation with him at Sochi on 10 April 1961, envisaged three solutions for the German problem. The ideal solution Khrushchev said, would be a peace treaty with both Germanies; but Khrushchev said, he realized that this was impossible of attainment. The second possibility was a temporary arrangement along the lines discussed at the May 1959 Big Four Foreign Ministers' meeting at Geneva, but with a clear understanding that at the end of the temporary period the occupation regime would end. The third possibility was a separate treaty with East Germans. Although Khrushchev insisted the German problem was overripe for solution, he said several times he realized that he must give President Kennedy time to consolidate his position. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

23 May 1961 --Khrushchev summoned Ambassador Thompson to a revue at the Ice Palace in Moscow for an impromptu discussion of his then-forthcoming meeting with President Kennedy. He warned that if the meeting failed to arrive at an understanding on Berlin, the USSR would sign a separate treaty with the GDR in the fall or winter, after the West German elections and probably after the Soviet party congress. Such a treaty, Khrushchev warned, would end Allied occupation rights and mean East German control of communications between Berlin and the Federal Republic. It would

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probably give rise to great tension, but Khrushchev said he was convinced that it would not lead to war. German reunification is impossible, he said, and no one--including De Gaulle, Macmillan and Adenauer--really wants it.

In response to a query from Thompson regarding access rights once a separate treaty is signed, Khrushchev said frankly that access would be impossible--except by agreement with the GDR. He added that no overt move would be made against US forces already in West Berlin and that the Soviets would not impose a blockade, but said that "they might have to tighten their belts." He said that he was prepared to accept a temporary solution to the problem of Berlin in order to give the Federal Republic and the GDR time to negotiate. If, however, no agreement were forthcoming from such negotiations by the end of a stipulated period, the USSR was prepared to conclude



[REDACTED]

treaties with the two German states. He said he knew that we would not agree to this, and he would sign a separate treaty. Khrushchev denied a solution to the problems of a German peace treaty and Berlin could be postponed as part of a "package proposal." He repeated that the problems could not wait, that they "spoil" all US-USSR relations. Moreover, he said, an agreement on disarmament is impossible so long as the Berlin problem exists. Finally, reverting to earlier Soviet proposals for Berlin, Khrushchev said that the USSR asks to station only "symbolic" Soviet forces in West Berlin and rejected Thompson's suggestion that it might be feasible to arrive at an all-Berlin solution. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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9 June 1961 - ~~SECRET~~ noted that Khrushchev and Mikoyan had made the following points in recent talks with Ambassadors Thompson and Roberts:

- (1) The USSR now includes Adenauer among those Western statesmen believed do not desire German reunification;
- (2) the USSR stipulates a Berlin solution as a condition for progress in disarmament; and (3) the USSR stresses settlement of the frontiers as the principal reason for attaching urgency to a German settlement. ~~SECRET~~

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15 June 1961 --Radio-Television speech reporting to Soviet people on meeting with President Kennedy:

"...A peace treaty with Germany is indispensable. ...there can be no question of any new changes of borders. West Berlin, which is situated on GDR territory will, after the signing of the peace treaty, be free of all the conditions established as a result of the capitulation of Hitler's Germany.... The granting to West Berlin of the status of a free city would mean that all countries of the world wishing to maintain economic and cultural ties with this city would have the right and opportunity to freely exercise these ties. Of course, agreement would have to be reached with the country across whose territory the communications that link West Berlin with the outside world pass.

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"If any country violates the peace and crosses the borders -- ground, air, or water -- of another it will assume full responsibility for the consequences of the aggression and will receive a proper rebuff...."

21 June 1961 --Speech in Moscow:

"...Soviet people do not want war. That is precisely why we are seeking to remove the cause of its outbreak. For the sake of this we, together with other peace-loving states, will at the end of this year sign a peace treaty with the GDR...

"As for West Berlin, we propose the status of a free city. We certainly do not intend to change the social and political system of West Berlin. That is an internal matter for its population. Neither the Soviet Union nor the GDR intend to restrict contacts between West Berlin and all the countries of the world. But the sovereign rights of the GDR, across whose territory communications run between West Berlin and the outside world, must be respected in accordance with international law....

"We propose to conclude a peace treaty with Germany which would not curtail the rights and interests of any party, which would not put some states at an advantage over others. The Soviet Union proposes merely to recognize the situation which came into existence long ago, and which exists in

[REDACTED]

actual fact. We propose de jure consolidation of the existing frontiers of Germany.

"Concerning those who are trying to threaten us with war if we sign a peace treaty with the GDR, they will take upon themselves all responsibility for their actions...."

4 July 1961 --Khrushchev told [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] that he is willing to negotiate on Berlin, but that the USSR will not begin where the Foreign Ministers left off at Geneva in 1959. He emphasized the importance of concluding a peace treaty this year, warning that the USSR has its own "prestige" to consider and cannot tolerate what he described as Western efforts to block a "regularization" of relations between Moscow and the GDR. Khrushchev told [REDACTED] that a separate peace treaty would terminate access rights to West Berlin, forcing the US, UK, and France to negotiate directly with the East German regime. Moscow would regard any attempt to push troops through the GDR as an act of war and would support the East Germans.

[REDACTED]

8 July 1961 --Speech in Moscow:

"...One must call for peace, not to war. One must not make the atmosphere white-hot, not bring matters to a conflict. Let us set around a table and discuss all questions calmly, without resorting to threats. We propose that a peace

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conference be called and we shall come to it with our draft treaty....

"We propose such a solution: That West Berlin be given the status of a free city, that it be provided with a guarantee by the four great powers--United States, Britain, France, and the Soviet Union, or by neutral countries, or by the United Nations. If the Western powers have a better version of guarantees, let them propose it.

"It is quite natural, however, that any decision on West Berlin must take into account the fact that it is in the center of a sovereign state, and that all communications of West Berlin with the outside world run across the territory of that state....

"The Soviet Union will be obliged to reach an agreement with the GDR and those countries that wish to conclude a peace treaty with this peace-loving German state." (TASS's version of this sentence subsequently broadcast in English read: "The Soviet Union will be confronted with the need of reaching agreement with the GDR and the countries that wish to conclude a peace treaty with the peace-loving German state.") "The procedure of signing a peace treaty with the GDR will adhere strictly to existing international practice and custom. After the signing of the treaty, the Soviet Union will relinquish all obligations which it previously has been fulfilling in respect to communications with West Berlin....

[REDACTED]

"We shall sign a peace treaty and we shall give our armed forces the order that any aggressor, should he raise his hand against the Soviet Union or its friends, receive a worthy rebuff...."

ORIG: OCI GENERAL DIVISION