

Statement by the Member States of the Warsaw Pact on Berlin (13 August 1961)

Caption: On 13 August 1961, the Member States of the Warsaw Pact publish a joint statement in which they condemn the imperialist policy of the West and justify blocking the border between East and West Berlin.

Source: United States-Department of State. Documents on Germany 1944-1985. Washington: Department of State, [s.d.]. 1421 p. (Department of State Publication 9446). p. 773-774.

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Declaration by the Warsaw Pact Powers Urging Establishment of “Reliable Safeguards and Effective Control ... Around the Whole Territory of West Berlin” (13 August 1961)

The governments of the Warsaw Pact member states have been striving for a peaceful settlement with Germany for a number of years. In so doing they are guided by the fact that this question has long since been ripe and brooks no further delays.

It is well known that the Government of the U.S.S.R., with full agreement and support of all member states of the Warsaw Pact organization, has proposed to the governments of the countries which participated in the war against Hitler Germany that a peace treaty be concluded with the two German states and, on this basis, the question of West Berlin be settled by granting it the status of a demilitarized free city. This proposal takes into account the situation practically obtaining in Germany and Europe in the postwar period. This proposal is not directed against anyone's interests, and its only aim is to do away with the remnants of World War II and to consolidate world peace.

The governments of the Western Powers have not so far shown willingness to achieve an agreed solution of this question through negotiation among all sides concerned. More, to the peaceful proposals of the socialist countries the Western Powers reply by stepping up their military preparations, fanning up war hysteria, and threatening to use armed force.

Official spokesmen of a number of NATO countries have announced increases in the numerical strength of their armed forces and plans for partial military mobilization; even plans for a military invasion of G.D.R. territory have been made public in some of the NATO countries.

Availing themselves of the absence of a peace treaty, the aggressive forces are increasing the pace of the militarization of West Germany and are reinforcing the Bundeswehr at an accelerated pace, equipping it with the latest types of arms. The West German revanchists openly demanded that nuclear and rocket weapons be placed at their disposal.

The governments of the Western Powers, in every way encouraging the arming of West Germany, thus grossly violate the most important international agreements which envisage eradication of German militarism and prevention of its revival in any form.

The Western Powers, far from having made any effort to normalize the situation in West Berlin, on the contrary continue to use it intensively as a center of subversive activities against the G.D.R. and all other countries of the socialist commonwealth. No place else in the world are there so many espionage and subversive centers of foreign states to be found as in West Berlin, where they can engage in their activities with such impunity. These numerous subversive centers are smuggling their agents into the G.D.R. for all sorts of subversion, recruiting spies, and inciting hostile elements to organize sabotage and provoke disturbances in the G.D.R.

The present traffic situation on the borders of West Berlin is being used by ruling quarters of the German Federal Republic and intelligence agencies of NATO countries to undermine the economy of the G.D.R. The government bodies and military concerns of the German Federal Republic, through deceit, bribery, and blackmail, induce certain unstable elements in the G.D.R. to leave for West Germany. These deceived people are compelled to serve with the Bundeswehr, and recruited for the intelligence agencies for different countries to be sent back to the G.D.R. as spies and saboteurs. A special fund has even been set up for such subversive activities against the G.D.R. and other socialist countries. Recently West German Chancellor Adenauer urged the NATO governments to increase this fund.

It is highly indicative that the subversive activities directed from West Berlin have greatly increased of late, right after the Soviet Union, the G.D.R., and other socialist countries advanced proposals for an immediate, peaceful settlement with Germany. This subversive activity not only inflicted damage on the G.D.R. but also affects the interests of other countries of the socialist camp.

In the face of the aggressive aspirations of the reactionary forces of the German Federal Republic and its NATO allies, the Warsaw Pact member states cannot but take necessary measures to guarantee their security and, primarily, the security of the G.D.R. in the interests of the German peoples themselves.

The governments of the Warsaw Pact member states address the Peoples Chamber and Government of the G.D.R., and all working people of the G.D.R., with the proposal to establish an order on the borders of West Berlin which will securely block the way to the subversive activity against the socialist camp countries, so that reliable safeguards and effective control can be established around the whole territory of West Berlin, including its border with democratic Berlin.

It goes without saying that these measures must not affect existing provisions for traffic and control on communication routes between West Berlin and West Germany.

The governments of the Warsaw Pact member states understand, of course, that protective measures along the borders of West Berlin somewhat inconvenience the population. But the entire responsibility for the present situation rests exclusively with the Western Powers and with the German Federal Republic in the first place.

If so far the borders of West Berlin have remained open, this was done in the hope that the Western Powers would not abuse the good will of the Government of the G.D.R. But they, disregarding the interests of the German people and the population of Berlin, used the order now existing on the border of West Berlin for their own perfidious, subversive aims. An end must be put to the present abnormal situation through stronger protection and control on the border with West Berlin.

At the same time the governments of the Warsaw Pact member states find it necessary to emphasize that this necessity will disappear when a peaceful settlement with Germany is achieved and the questions awaiting their solution are settled on this basis.