

Aide-mémoire from France, the United States and the United Kingdom (30 July 1948)

Caption: On 30 July 1948, in a memorandum addressed to the Soviet authorities in Berlin, the British, French and US representatives reject the reasons put forward by Moscow for closing the access routes to 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. 162.

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URL: http://www.cvce.eu/obj/aide_memoire_from_france_the_united_states_and_the_united_kingdom_30_july_1948-en-60c8af22-8957-491c-a965-c1649ed6f231.html

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Aide-Mémoire From the United States to the Soviet Union Suggesting Four-Power Discussion of “the Present Situation in Berlin and Its Wider Implications”, July 30, 1948

The United States Government has given the most serious consideration to the note delivered by the Soviet Ambassador in Washington and has exchanged views with the British and French Governments on the similar notes received by these Governments. The United States Government does not accept the contention in the Soviet note that the right of the Western occupying powers to participate in the occupation of Berlin no longer exists, and while they do not wish to enter into a detailed discussion of the allegations contained in Mr. Panyushkin's note of July 14, they would like to make it plain at the outset that they cannot accept the Soviet version of the facts nor the interpretation placed on them.

Whatever may be the reasons which have led the Soviet authorities to decide the restriction of communications between Berlin and Western zones of occupation of Germany, whether these reasons be technical, as was first stated, or political, as Mr. Panyushkin's note would seem to indicate, the measures taken by the Soviet authorities in Berlin have created an abnormal and dangerous situation, the gravity of which does not need to be emphasized.

The Soviet reply of July 14 offers no constructive suggestion for the bringing to an end of the abnormal situation in Berlin. Nevertheless the United States Government, as any peace-loving government, holds the view that this situation is capable of settlement. They trust that the Soviet Government share this view: the question of negotiation has never been, and is not the issue. The willingness to negotiate in the absence of duress has always been there. In the opinion of the United States Government, the best way to a solution of the present difficulties lies in direct approach. They think that a frank discussion between Generalissimo Stalin and Mr. Molotov on one side and the representative of each of the three Western occupying powers on the other side should give the opportunity of finding a solution. I accordingly have been instructed by my Government to request that you should arrange an interview between Generalissimo Stalin and Mr. Molotov, on the one hand, and the French Ambassador, the U.K. Charge d'Affairs, and myself, on the other hand, in order to discuss the present situation in Berlin and its wider implications.