

Remarks by Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey

at Luncheon for Mayor Brandt

April 14, 1965

Mayor Brandt, it is good to welcome you again to Washington. I join with your many American friends and admirers in saying we are happy you could find the time to come and see us.

Mr. Mayor: I would also like to welcome Mr. Erler, the Deputy Chairman of the Party and a valued adviser on international affairs.

I understand you are wearing at least three hats these days. First, you are the Governing Mayor of Berlin. On top of this, you are Chairman of the Social Democratic Party of Germany. And last, but not least, Mr. Mayor, you are the Social Democratic candidate for

Chancellor of the Federal Republic, with general elections coming up in September.

Having recently come through an election battle myself, I know very well what you will go through in the next five months. I understand you were able to take some time off for rest and recuperation in Bavaria, and that you even managed to shed twenty pounds.

It is as the Mayor of Berlin that we know you best here in the United States. As a staunch leader and defender of freedom in one of its most exposed ramparts, you follow in the distinguished tradition of Ernst Reuter.

Just last week the resolution and courage of all of us -- Germans, Americans, British and French -- were tested again. Your constituents in Berlin were subjected to a crescendo of threats, delays and harassment. Attempts were made to terrorize the population of West Berlin by

sonic booms, low-flying aircraft and the firing of automatic weapons. Vehicles and aircraft of the three Western Allies were delayed and their operations obstructed. These attempts failed, just as similar attempts failed in the past.

The pretext for these actions was the meeting of the German Bundestag held on April 7 in Berlin. The Bundestag has already met a number of times in Berlin. In the view of my Government these sessions do not in the slightest affect the special status of Berlin. This special status is an important safeguard for the people of Berlin and for all Germans. We are determined to preserve it. At the same time we intend to respond vigorously to any effort to interfere with our access to Berlin and to intimidate the population of your City.

You are also known, Mr. Mayor, for your positive,

progressive and realistic ideas on relations between the Western nations and the Communist World. You were one of the early architects of the plans to build bridges to Eastern Europe.

You are also associated with a program for "little steps." This is a forward-looking and humanitarian approach to the serious problem caused by the division of your country. Nowhere is this problem more acute or more dangerous than in your city of Berlin, the historic and rightful capital of Germany. I understand there are now those in Germany who are even talking about "medium steps."

I want you to know, Mr. Mayor, that the government and people of the United States remain convinced that the division of Germany is an injustice and a threat to world peace. We will continue our best efforts to find ways

of ending this lamentable situation. We will not be deterred by all the difficulties and road-blocks put in the way of a just and peaceful solution.

We regret that twenty years after the end of the Second World War, we have not yet found a solution. But the unification of Germany in peace and freedom is inevitable. We in the United States shall do our utmost to bind up this remaining wound of^a war long since over.

And finally, Mr. Mayor, we know you well as a friend of the United States, as an admirer of John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson, and as an advocate of the closest ties between Europe and North America. We too are dedicated to the concept of Atlantic cooperation. Only in this way can we march together, using the tremendous resources of the Western World -- economic, political, cultural and military resources -- to ensure peace, to combat

injustice, and to bring about the kind of democratic,
enlightened and prosperous society we all aspire to.

Your contributions to this goal, Mayor Brandt,
have been immense. We appreciate ^{them} /and we salute you
for them.

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