

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: BRANDENBURG GATE
~~(WEST)~~ BERLIN, GERMANY
FRIDAY, JUNE 12, 1987

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President von Weizsäcker

Chancellor Kohl, Governing Mayor Diepgen, ladies and

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gentlemen: Twenty-four years ago, President John F. Kennedy visited Berlin, speaking to the people of this city and the world at the City Hall. Since then, two other Presidents have come, each in his turn, to Berlin. Today I myself make my second visit to your city.

We come to Berlin, we American Presidents, because it is our duty to speak, in this place, of freedom. But I must confess, we are drawn here by other things as well: By the feeling of history in this city ^{By your courage and determination. And by our} ~~more than 500 years older than our own~~ ^{own} ~~Commitment to bringing Europeans -- all Europeans --~~ ^{together in freedom.} ~~By the sense of energy in your streets. By the beauty of the Grunewald and the Tiergarten. Most of all, by your~~

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~~courage and friendship~~

~~[Perhaps the composer Paul Lincke understood something about American Presidents. You see, like so many Presidents before me, I come here today because wherever I go, whatever I do:]~~

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~~["Ich hab noch einen Koffer in Berlin." ["I still have a suitcase in Berlin" - words from a much-loved song.]~~

Our gathering today is being broadcast throughout Western Europe and North America. I understand that it is being seen and heard as well in the East, ~~[that Berlin television can be seen as far to the southeast as Leipzig, as far to the northeast as Gdansk, that Berlin radio can be picked up as far due east as Moscow.]~~

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To those listening throughout Eastern Europe, I extend my warmest greetings and the goodwill of the American people. To those listening in East Berlin, a special word. Although I cannot be with you, I address my remarks to you just as surely as to those standing here before me. For I join you as I join your fellow countrymen in the West in this firm ~~conviction~~ ^{conviction:} ~~this unalterable~~ ^{belief:}

just our
belief"

~~belief:~~ Es gibt nur ein Berlin. [There is only one Berlin.]

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Wrong

Behind me stands a wall that divides ^{this city. To the West, there is another wall that divides} the entire continent of Europe. From the Baltic south it cuts across Germany in one continuous gash of concrete, barbed wire, guard towers, dog runs, and gun emplacements. Farther south, there may be no visible, no obvious wall. But there remain armed guards and checkpoints all the same -- still a restriction on the right to travel, still an instrument to impose upon ordinary men and women the will of a totalitarian state.

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Yet it is here in Berlin where ^{the world sees} the wall ~~emerge~~ most clearly; here, cutting across your city, where the newsphoto and the television screen have imprinted this brutal division of a continent upon the mind of ^{mankind.} ~~the world~~. Standing before the Brandenburg Gate, ^{every} ~~any~~ man is a German, separated from his fellow men. ^{Every} ~~any~~ man is a Berliner, forced to look upon a scar.

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President von Weizsaecker has said: The German question is open as long as the Brandenburg Gate is closed. Today I say: As long as this gate is closed, as long as this scar of a wall is permitted to stand, it is not the German question alone that remains open, but the question of freedom for all mankind.

Yet I do not come here to lament. For I find in Berlin a message of hope -- even, in the shadow of this wall, a message of triumph.

In this season of spring in 1945, the people of Berlin emerged from their air-raid shelters to find devastation. Thousands of miles away, the people of the United States reached out to help. In announcing the Marshall Plan, Secretary of State George Marshall stated precisely 40 years ago this week: "Our policy is directed not against any country or doctrine, but against hunger, poverty, desperation, and chaos."

In the Reichstag a few moments ago, I saw a display commemorating this 40th anniversary of the Marshall Plan. I was struck by the sign on a burnt-out, gutted structure that was being rebuilt. I understand that Berliners of my own generation can remember seeing signs like it dotted throughout the Western sectors of the city. The sign read simply: "The Marshall Plan at work. For the building of a Free World."

"[T]he building of a Free World" -- in the West, that building took place. Japan rose from ruin to become an economic giant. Italy, France, Belgium -- virtually every nation in Western Europe saw political and economic rebirth. The European Community was founded.

In West Germany and here in Berlin, there took place an economic miracle, the "Wirtschaftswunder." Adenauer, Erhard, Reuter, and other leaders understood the practical importance of liberty -- that just as truth can flourish only when the journalist is given freedom of speech, so prosperity can come

about only when the farmer and businessman enjoy economic freedom. The German leaders reduced tariffs, expanded free trade, lowered taxes. From 1950 to 1960 alone, the standard of living in West Germany and Berlin more than doubled.

Where four decades ago there was rubble, today in West Berlin there is the greatest industrial output of any city in Germany; busy office blocks; fine homes and apartments; proud avenues and the spreading lawns of parkland. Where a city's culture seemed to have been destroyed, today there are two great universities, orchestras and an opera, countless theaters and museums. Where there was want, today there is abundance. ~~Food, clothing, automobiles, the wonderful goods of the Ku'damm, even some computers.~~

From devastation -- from utter ruin -- you Berliners have in freedom rebuilt a city that once again ranks as one of the greatest on Earth. The Soviets may have had other plans. ~~[But, my friends, there was one thing the Soviets didn't count on -- Berliner herz [Berlin heart], Berliner humor [Berlin humor], Ja, und Berliner schнауze [a favorite slang term meaning courage] mixed with toughness -- an applause line.]~~

In the 1960's, Khrushchev predicted: "We will bury you." But in the West today, we see a free world that has achieved a level of prosperity and well-being unprecedented in all human history. In the Communist world, we see failure. Technological backwardness. Declining standards of health. Even want of the most basic kind -- too little food. The Soviet Union still cannot feed itself. East Germany has made strides, but at

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harvest time the news announcers still speak, to use the well-known phrase, of "the battle to bring in the crops."

After these four decades, then, there stands before the entire world one great and inescapable conclusion. Freedom leads to prosperity. Freedom replaces the ancient hatreds ^{among} ~~between~~ the nations with comity and peace.

~~Freiheit Freiheit ist der Sieger.~~ Freedom is the victor.

Now the Soviets themselves may in a limited way be coming to understand the importance of freedom. We hear much from Moscow about a new policy of reform and openness. Some political prisoners have been released. Certain foreign news broadcasts are no longer being jammed. Some economic enterprises have been permitted to operate with greater freedom from state control.

Are these the beginnings of profound changes in the Soviet state? Or are they token gestures, intended to raise false hopes in the West ^{or} ~~and~~ to strengthen the Soviet system without changing it? We welcome change and openness. For we believe freedom and security go together -- that the advance of human liberty can only strengthen the cause of world peace.

There is one sign the Soviets can make that would be unmistakable, that would advance dramatically the cause of freedom and peace.

General Secretary Gorbachev, if you seek peace, ~~if you seek prosperity for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe~~ if you seek liberalization: Come here, to this gate.

~~Herr Gorbachev, machen Sie dieses Tor auf.~~ Mr. Gorbachev, open this gate.

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Yet the West has had decades, even centuries, of experience with those who have ruled in Moscow. Our experience has taught us how uncertain are the prospects of true liberalization. Where the human aspirations for freedom and for security come together, as here in Berlin, we have the right and the duty to ask large and concrete actions of Moscow.

Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall. ~~(This line in English~~

~~for the American audience.)~~

I understand the fear of war and the pain of division that afflict this continent -- and I pledge to you my country's efforts to help overcome these burdens. To be sure, we in the West must resist Soviet expansion. So we must maintain defenses of unassailable strength. Yet we seek peace. So we must strive to reduce arms on both sides.

Beginning 10 years ago, the Soviets challenged the Western Alliance with a grave new threat: hundreds of new and more deadly SS-20 nuclear missiles, capable of striking every capital in Europe. The Western Alliance responded by committing itself to a counter-deployment unless the Soviets agreed to negotiate a better solution -- namely, the elimination of such weapons on both sides. For many months, the Soviets refused to bargain in earnestness. As the Alliance in turn prepared to go forward with its counter-deployment, there were difficult days -- days of protests like those during my 1982 visit to this city -- and the Soviets actually walked away from the table.

But through it all, the Alliance held firm. And I invite those who protested then -- I invite those who protest today -- to mark this fact: Because we remained strong, the Soviets came back to the table. Because we remained strong, today we have within reach the possibility, not merely of limiting the growth of arms, but of eliminating, for the first time, an entire class of nuclear weapons from the face of the Earth.

... more strategic offensive weapons, like Soviet ICBMs, whose reduction will strengthen strategic stability.

As I speak, NATO ministers are meeting in Iceland to review the progress of our proposals for the complete elimination of intermediate-range nuclear forces. At the talks in Geneva, we have proposed deep cuts in strategic forces. And the Western Allies have likewise made far-reaching proposals to reduce the danger of conventional war, and to place a total ban on chemical weapons.

While we pursue these arms reductions, I pledge to you that we will maintain the ^{ability} ~~capability~~ to deter Soviet aggression at any level at which it might occur. And in cooperation with many of our Allies, the United States is pursuing a Strategic Defense Initiative -- research that ^{seeks to} ~~bases~~ deterrence not on the threat of offensive retaliation, but on defenses that truly defend; on systems, in short, that will protect lives not by targeting populations but by shielding them.

By these means we seek to increase the safety of Europe and all the world. But we must remember a crucial fact: East and West do not mistrust each other because we are armed. We are armed because we mistrust each other. And our differences are not about weapons but about liberty. ^{basic} ~~Perhaps~~ When President Kennedy spoke at the City Hall those 24 years ago, ~~it was~~ freedom ~~that~~ was encircled, Berlin ~~that~~ was under siege. ^{Today,} ~~no longer~~ though Berlin feels more secure, ^{still exist,} ~~despite all the pressures upon this city,~~ Berlin stands ^{as a shining} ~~secure~~ in its ^{liberty} ~~freedom~~. And today ~~freedom~~ itself is transforming the globe.

In the Philippines; in South and Central America, democracy has been given a rebirth. Throughout the Pacific, free markets are working miracle after miracle of economic growth. In the

They are of a new and more subtle kind and they require both some old and some new responses. Our troops are still in Berlin, and they will remain here as long as they are wanted by Berliners and needed to demonstrate to the other side that force cannot succeed. But we also need some new initiatives, some

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industrialized nations, a technological revolution is taking place -- a revolution marked by rapid, dramatic advances in computers and telecommunications.

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~~In Europe, only one nation and those it controls refuse to join the community of freedom. Yet in this age of redoubled economic growth, of information and innovation, the Soviet Union faces a choice. It must make fundamental changes. Or it will become obsolete.~~

both ~~of them~~ and challenge.
Today thus represents a moment of hope. We in the West

stand ready to cooperate with the East to promote true openness -- to break down the barriers that separate people, to create a safer, freer world. And surely there is no better place than Berlin, the meetingplace of East and West, to make a start.

Free people of Berlin: Today, as in the past, the United States stands for the strict observance and full implementation of all parts of the Four-Power Agreement of 1971. Let us use this occasion, the 750th anniversary of this city, to usher in a new era -- to seek a still fuller, richer life for the Berlin of the future. Together, let us maintain and develop the ties between the Federal Republic and the Western sectors of Berlin, which is permitted by the 1971 Agreement.

And I invite Mr. Gorbachev: Let us work to bring the Eastern and Western parts of the city closer together, so that all the inhabitants of all Berlin can enjoy the benefits that should come with life in one of the great cities of the world.

To open Berlin still further to all Europe, East and West, let us expand the vital air access to this city, finding ways of

making commercial air service to Berlin through the established corridors more convenient, more comfortable, and more economical. We look to the day when West Berlin can become one of the chief aviation hubs in all Central Europe.

With our French and British partners, the United States is prepared to sponsor international meetings in Berlin. It would be only fitting for Berlin to serve as the site of United Nations meetings, or world conferences on human rights and arms control or other issues that call for international cooperation.

There is no better way to establish hope for the future than to enlighten young minds, and we would be honored to sponsor summer youth exchanges, cultural events, and other programs for young Berliners from the East. Our French and British friends, I am certain, will do the same. And it is my hope that an authority can be found in East Berlin to sponsor visits from young people of the Western sectors.

One final proposal -- one close to my heart. Sport represents a source of enjoyment and ennoblement, and you may have noted that the Republic of Korea -- South Korea -- has offered to permit certain events of the 1988 Olympics to take place in the North. International sports competitions of all kinds could take place in both parts of this city. And what better way to demonstrate to the world the openness of this city -- than to offer in some future year to hold the Olympic Games here in Berlin, East and West?

~~[In these four decades, as I have said, you Berliners have rebuilt a great city. You have done so in spite of threats. The~~

Substitute a more positive ending - attached.

SUBSTITUTE ENDING, BEGINNING AT BOTTOM OF PAGE 9:

In these four decades, as I have said, you Berliners have rebuilt a great city. You have done so despite your physical separation from West Germany and the challenges implicit in the very presence of this Wall behind me. What is the secret of this success, and what message does it carry with it for the future?

I have already mentioned the special fortitude and courage of Berliners. But I believe there is something deeper, something that involves Berlin's whole look and feel and way of life. Something both profound and abiding that speaks with a powerful voice of affirmation -- that says yes to this city, yes to the future, yes to freedom.

I hope, as well, there may be something special in the American presence in this city. We came as soldiers and we have become friends. We came as administrators and we have become partners. We have been involved, along with you and with our French and British colleagues, in building this city -- seeing to its security and freedom, and supporting its cultural and educational institutions. Together we have seen a unique kind of international city emerge. Can Berlin serve as a model for the kind of Europe we want to see, or the kind of Atlantic community we have dreamed of since the end of the War? I think the answer is yes.

So I see a bright future for this city -- as a meeting place for East and West; as a living example of what freedom can accomplish; as a model for what Europe can become in a new era. That is my dream.

~~Soviet attempts to impose the East-mark. The blockade. Today
the city thrives in spite of the challenges implicit in the very
presence of this wall.]~~

~~[What keeps you here?]~~

~~[Certainly there is a great deal to be said for your
fertility, for your defiant courage. But I believe that there is
something deeper. Something that involves Berlin's whole look
and feel and way of life. Not mere sentiment -- no one could
live long in Berlin without being completely disabused of
illusions. Something instead that sees the difficulties of life
in Berlin but chooses to accept them. [That stubbornly refuses to
abandon this good and proud city to a surrounding presence that
is merely brutish.] Something that speaks with a powerful voice
of affirmation -- that says yes to this city, yes to the future,
yes to freedom. In a word, I would submit that what keeps you in
Berlin is love -- love both profound and abiding.]~~

~~[Perhaps this gets to the root of the matter, to the most
fundamental distinction of all between East and West. The
totalitarian world does not produce low living standards and
backwardness because of some technical shortcoming in its
economic arrangements. It produces backwardness because it does
such violence to the spirit, thwarting the human impulse to
create, to enjoy, to worship.]~~

~~[The totalitarian world finds even symbols of love an
affront. During the War, the sculpture atop the Brandenburg Gate
was taken down for safekeeping and stored here, in the Western
sectors of the city. In 19__ , the West turned the sculpture over~~

~~to the East in a gesture of goodwill, and soon the sculpture was once again looking out upon "Unter den Linden" [the main avenue in East Berlin]. But something was different. The cross -- the cross the figure had borne aloft for nearly 150 years -- that cross was gone. In its place was a Communist wreath.]~~

~~[years later, authorities in the East erected what is now the tallest structure in the city, the television tower above Alexanderplatz. I understand that virtually ever since, the authorities have been working to correct what they view as the tower's one major flaw, treating the glass dome at the top with paints and chemicals of every kind. Yet even today when the sun strikes that dome -- that dome that towers over all Berlin -- the light makes the sign of the cross.]~~

As I looked out a moment ago from the Reichstag -- that embodiment of German unity -- I noticed words crudely spray-painted upon the wall -- perhaps by a young Berliner -- words that answer the German question. "This wall will fall. Beliefs become reality."

Yes, across Europe, this wall will fall. For it cannot withstand faith. It cannot withstand truth.

~~Die Mauer kann Freiheit nicht zurückhalten.]~~ The wall cannot withstand freedom. †

Thank you. God bless you all.