

**August 10, 1959**

**N.S. Khrushchev's Views on the Content of a Memorandum [about a Peace Treaty with Germany]**

**Citation:**

"N.S. Khrushchev's Views on the Content of a Memorandum [about a Peace Treaty with Germany]", August 10, 1959, Wilson Center Digital Archive, RGANI, f. 52, op. 1, d. 598, ll. 51-54. Contributed by Sergey Radchenko and translated by Gary Goldberg.  
<https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/270590>

**Summary:**

N. S. Khrushchev outlines his perspective on negotiating with the United States regarding a peace treaty with Germany, emphasizing the need to address the division between the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). He critiques Western policies that led to Germany's division and proposes signing a peace treaty with the GDR, while reassuring the U.S. that this action is not a threat to West Berlin. Khrushchev also touches on broader geopolitical issues, such as parallels with divided Korea and Vietnam, the significance of trade as a diplomatic barometer, and the importance of resolving tensions surrounding Taiwan and the People's Republic of China. Throughout, he encourages a phased approach to negotiations, stressing mutual understanding to avoid exacerbating international tensions. This document summary was generated by an artificial intelligence language model and was reviewed by a Wilson Center staff member.

**Credits:**

This document was made possible with support from Blavatnik Family Foundation

**Original Language:**

Russian

**Contents:**

Translation - English

N. S. Khrushchev's Views on the Content of a Memorandum

10 August 1959

It seems to me that it is impossible to come to agreement with the US about the signing of a peace treaty with Germany. This would mean a capitulation to them. In a conversation with Eisenhower [we might] express ourselves in this connection as follows.

I think that you, Mr. President, cannot fail to agree with me that a peace treaty with Germany ought to be signed by virtue of the logic of things. I am confident that you agree with this, but fear to take such a decision, thinking that it would harm NATO. You are also doing this to please Adenauer.

At the same time it is known that the positions of the Allies on the question of Germany are not the same. For example, the existence of two Germanys satisfies the British, but the French are ready to advocate for four Germanys, etc.

It seems to me that we ought to come to agreement with the Americans that we will sign a peace treaty with the GDR as our supporters will sign it. Of course, the Americans will not sign a peace treaty with the GDR. However, the vestiges of the War would be eliminated by our act, although the Americans will not consider doing this for themselves.

In this sense we could say to the Americans that nothing actually changes with our signing of a peace treaty with the GDR, for you Americans have unilaterally normalized relations with the FRG (dismantling, [then] remilitarizing, etc.). You have already achieved all this. Now you Americans think that you are losing West Berlin. But we ought to come to agreement with you so that you don't lose anything, and we don't get [anything].

I think that we ought to stress that we bear no responsibility for the reunification of Germany for at the end of the War no one thought that Germany would be divided as subsequently happened. It is also well-known that the Control Council was created precisely for all of Germany; I stress, for all of Germany. But you Westerners united the sectors of Berlin, created the FRG, began to arm it, etc. (we ought to look at the factual side of the time the arming of the FRG by the Westerners began and the creation of the GDR armed forces).

Thus, there is no obligation of the great powers for the reunification of Germany. It is useful here to remember that an analogous situation developed both in Germany (the GDR and FRG) as well, as for example, in Korea (the DPRK and South Korea), also in Vietnam (North and South Vietnam).

I think that we will need to also take note of the question of the insecure border [*neustoychivost'*] of Poland and Czechoslovakia with Germany. The question of an insecure border forces us to adopt measures for a radical solution of the problem of Germany. In this connection we ought to criticize all those forces which are trying to find a new leader of Germany, seeing Adenauer as this person.

Therefore we should not say to the Americans that we want you to understand us correctly: we will sign a peace treaty with the GDR. If, however, you do not understand us, then in this event we unfortunately will have to proceed this way, although we realize that this will raise the temperature somewhat. All the same we hope for understanding from your side. If you do not want or for reasons of the domestic situation cannot understand this, then we will have to proceed to an exacerbation [*obostrenie*] [of the situation]. You will say that we are threatening a war?! I think, Mr. President, that you as a former commanding general of troops (yes, as also a participant of the War), will understand the impermissibility of a war.

It seems to me that we could also help the Americans with the following. If you agree with us in principle then we could take steps in stages. We could come to agreement about Berlin inasmuch as we see that there are sound ideas about this in your views. Then we could hold corresponding negotiations. I also do not exclude that we could subsequently declare that both Germanys amicably come to agreement with one another. If they don't do this then we could declare that inasmuch as they have not taken our views into account we should not allow the great powers to clash because of the question about Germany.

Herter could be told that after a certain time or if we do not come to agreement but we see that the partners are using time to delay and realize Adenauer's policy then we would sign a peace treaty with the GDR.

In negotiations with the Westerners we will need to stress that this is not at all about West Berlin being lost by them. No one is making an attempt on West Berlin. It will also be necessary to explain to them our position regarding the creation of a free city. It is also important to bear in mind that as long as a state of war with Germany exists we have equal rights with the Allies. But these rights will be lost to the Allies after we sign a peace treaty with the GDR.

We need to revive all the main questions which we raised in the foreign policy sphere, including the cessation of tests, disarmament, a friendship treaty or a declaration, trade (not so much for the sake of trade itself as much for the purpose of equality and good intentions in relations with all peoples). Trade is a barometer which shows a state of good relations between peoples. We should say that we cannot regard with trust those countries which discriminate against us.

Concerning the question of Taiwan and the PRC we ought to express the main thought approximately as follows. However miserable it is to part with someone close at his passing, it is necessary to bury him after death. So it is with Chiang Kai-shek. He is dead. Why do you Americans hold onto the corpse[?] This only poisons the atmosphere. The earlier you understand this this faster the atmosphere will clear.

4nk,ng

11/August 1959