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DRAFT OF SPEECH BY PRESIDENT TRUMAN ON BERLIN CONFERENCE  
(THIRD DRAFT)

I have just returned from Berlin, the city from which the Germans intended to rule the world. It is a ghost city. The buildings are in ruins, its economy and its people are in ruins.

Our party also visited Frankfurt and Darmstadt. We flew over the remains of Kassel, Magdeburg and other devastated cities. German women and children and old men were wandering over the highways, returning to bombed-out homes or leaving bombed-out cities, searching for food and shelter.

War has indeed come home to Germany and to the German people. It has come home in all the frightfulness with which the German leaders started and waged it.

The German people are beginning to atone for the crimes of the gangsters whom they placed in power and whom they wholeheartedly approved and obediently followed.

We also saw some of the terrible destruction which the war had brought to the occupied countries of Western Europe and to England.



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How glad I am now to be home again! And how grateful to  
Almighty God that this land of ours has been spared!

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We must do all we can to spare her from the ravages of any  
future breach of the peace. That is why, though we want no territory  
or profit or selfish advantage out of this war,<sup>nevertheless</sup> the United States  
is going to maintain the bases necessary for the complete protection  
of our interests and world peace. Bases deemed by our military ex-  
perts to be essential for our protection and which are not now in  
our possession we will acquire by appropriate arrangements consistent  
with the provisions of the United Nations Charter.

No one can foresee what another war would mean to our own  
cities and to our own people. What we are doing to Japan now -- even  
with the new atomic bomb -- is only a small fraction of what would  
happen to the world in a third World War.

That is why the United Nations are determined that there  
shall be no next war.

That is why the United Nations are determined to remain  
united and strong. We can never permit any aggressor in the future to



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be clever enough to divide us or strong enough to defeat us.

That was the guiding spirit in the Conference at San  
Francisco.

That was the guiding spirit in the Conference of Berlin.

That will be the guiding spirit in the Peace Settlements  
to come.

Before we met at Berlin the United States Government had  
sent to the Soviet and British governments our ideas of what should  
be taken up at the Conference. At the first meeting our delegation  
submitted these proposals for discussion. Additional subjects  
were added by the Soviet and British governments, but in the main  
the Conference was occupied with the American proposals.

In the Conference at Berlin, it was easy for me to get  
along with Generalissimo Stalin, with Prime Minister Churchill,  
and ~~later~~ later with Prime Minister Attlee.





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Strong foundations of good-will and cooperation had been laid by my illustrious predecessor President Franklin D. Roosevelt. And it was clear that these foundations rested on much more than merely the personal friendships of three individual participants. There was a fundamental accord and agreement upon the objectives ahead of us.

That was especially shown by the cordiality with which I was personally received as the new delegate of the American people.

And it was later shown in the way Mr. Attlee was received as the new delegate of the British people.

Two of the three original conferees of Teheran and Yalta were missing by the end of this Conference. Each one of those absent was sorely missed. Each of them had done his work toward winning this war. Each of them had made a great contribution toward establishing and maintaining a lasting world peace. Each of them seems to have been Providentially ordained to lead his country in an hour of overwhelming need. And so thoroughly had they done their jobs that we were able to carry on and reach many agreements essential to the future peace and security of the world.





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The results of the Berlin Conference have been published. I hope that you have read and studied them. There were no secret agreements or commitments -- apart from current military arrangements. It was made perfectly plain to my colleagues at the Conference that under our Constitution the President had no power to make any treaties without the concurrence of the Senate of the United States.

This Conference was overdue. There were many matters which required consultation and agreement among the three strongest nations of the world.

They were nearly all political and economic questions. But there was one strictly military matter uppermost in the minds of the American delegates. It was winning the war against Japan. That subject was not neglected at Berlin. In fact -- on our program -- that was the most important item.

You need have no doubt that the American delegation -- the military and the civilian members alike -- were entirely satisfied with the war arrangements made at Berlin.

Those arrangements are secret now but will not be long secret.

One of those secrets was revealed yesterday when the Soviet Union declared war on Japan. The Japs will soon learn some of the other secrets. They will learn them first-hand -- and they will not like them.

Close but not  
exactly first



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[The Japs will probably learn of them before the rest of the world. They will learn of them first hand -- and they will not like them.]

The British, Chinese, and United States governments speaking from Berlin have given the Japanese people adequate warning of what is in store for them. We have laid down the general terms on which they can surrender. Since then, they have seen what our atomic bomb can do. They can foresee what it will do in the future. [They would be wise to accept the inevitable before it is too late. Otherwise their fate will be even worse than Germany's.]

The world will note that the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, which is purely a military base. That was because we did not want to destroy the lives of women and children and innocent civilians in this first attack. But that attack is only a warning of things to come. If Japan does not surrender, bombs will have to be dropped on war industries and, unfortunately, thousands of civilian lives will be lost. I urge the Japanese civilians to leave industrial cities immediately, and save themselves from destruction.

I realize the tragic significance of the atomic bomb. The atomic bomb is too dangerous to be loose in a lawless world. We must take steps to harness its use, and make it a powerful and forceful





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influence towards world peace.

Our first agreement in Berlin was the establishment of the Council of Foreign Ministers. The permanent members of the Security Council, are to be included -- the United States, the United Kingdom, Russia, France and China.

The Council is going to be the continuous meeting ground of the principal governments to reach common understanding regarding the Peace Settlements. This does not mean that the five governments are going to try to dictate to, or dominate, other nations. It will be their duty to apply so far as possible, the fundamental principles of justice underlying the charter adopted at San Francisco.

Just as the meeting at Dumbarton Oaks drew up the proposals to be placed before the Conference at San Francisco, so this Council of Foreign Ministers will lay the groundwork for the Peace Settlements.

[There is no idea, of course, that what the Council of Foreign Ministers does will be accepted blindly in the Peace Settlement. The Dumbarton Oaks proposals were not accepted without substantial change at San Francisco. But this preparation by the Council will make possible speedier, more orderly, more efficient and more co-operative Peace Settlements than could otherwise be obtained.

[That kind of preparatory work was missing at the Versailles Peace Conference. We have now learned the value of it in all our international relationships. It will be helpful in ironing out many of the disturbing





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questions which will have to be dealt with before the final peace settlements can be made.

One of the first tasks of the Council of Ministers is <sup>to</sup> draft proposed treaties of peace with former enemy countries; -- Italy, Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Finland -- including the settlement of the territorial problems created by the War.

These treaties, of course, will all have to be passed upon by all the nations concerned. In our own country, the Senate will have to ratify them. But we should begin at once the necessary preparatory work. Adequate study now may avoid the planting of the seeds of future wars.

Other international problems will be referred to this Council from time to time. Some have already been referred to it by the Berlin Conference.

Whenever the Council is to consider a matter in which any unrepresented nation has a direct interest, that nation will be invited to take part in the discussion. In other words, we expect to settle many international problems in this Council by co-operative discussion with all the nations involved.

I am sure that the American people will agree with me that this Council of Foreign Ministers will be effective in hastening the day of peace and reconstruction.

We were anxious to settle the future of Italy first among the former enemy countries. Italy was the first to break away from the Axis. She helped materially in the final defeat of Germany. She has now returned to the world as a free nation.



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against Japan. [ She has freed herself of the fascists. ] She is making real progress toward democracy.

A peace treaty with a democratic Italian Government will



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make it possible for us to receive Italy as a member of the United Nations.

The Council of Foreign Ministers will also have to start the preparatory work for the German peace settlement. But its final acceptance will have to wait until Germany has developed a government with which a peace treaty can be made.

At the Crimea Conference an agency had been planned for the immediate control of Germany. That agency — the Allied Control Council — is now functioning.

The general principles for the control of Germany were also laid down at Yalta. Their objectives were clear — to wipe out Nazism and German militarism, to prevent Germany from ever again waging an aggressive war, and to punish those responsible for the many war crimes committed in the name of the German people.

With these general objectives in mind, the Conference of Berlin convened almost in the very shadow of the ruins of the Chancellery in which the Nazis conceived their brutalities against civilization.

There the Conference agreed upon the specific political and economic principles under which Germany will be governed by the occupying Powers.





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These principles have been published. I hope that all of  
you will read them.

On the political side, they seek to rid Germany of the  
forces which have made her as long feared and hated, and which have  
now brought her to complete disaster. They will eliminate Prussia,  
Militarism, censorship, the Gestapo, the German General Staff  
and all the military tradition. They seek to rebuild democracy by control  
of German education, by reorganized system of local government and the  
judiciary, by encouraging free speech, free press, freedom of religion  
and the right of labor to organize.

We are going to do what we can to make Germany over into a  
democratic nation, so that it may eventually work its way again into a  
place in the civilized world.

On the economic side the policy was designed primarily to enable  
the German people to start on their way back from the economic chaos  
they have brought upon themselves.



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German industry is to be decentralized in order to do away with concentration of economic power in cartels and monopolies.

Primary emphasis is to be on agriculture and peaceful industries and

German economic power to make war is to be eliminated. [All German

foreign assets are to be seized by the Control Council if they are not

now in the possession of a United Nation which was in the war against

Germany. The economic policy makes it clear that] The Germans are not

to have a higher standard of living than their former victims -- the

people of the defeated and occupied countries of Europe. [The policy

was also designed to make sure of Allied control of all German scientific

research that would contribute to war. And these economic principles

are intended to apply alike to all the zones of occupied Germany. ]

The economic action taken against Germany at the Berlin Conference included another most important item -- reparations.

At the Crimea Conference it was decided that we would not again make the mistake of exacting reparations in money and then lending Germany the money with which to pay. Reparations this time are to be paid in physical assets from those capital resources of Germany which are not required for her peacetime economy.





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The first purpose of reparations is to take out of Germany everything with which she <sup>can</sup> ~~could~~ prepare for another war. Its second purpose is to help the devastated countries to bring about their own recovery by means of the equipment and material taken from Germany.

At the Crimea Conference a basis for fixing reparations had been proposed for initial discussion and study by the Reparations Commission. That basis was a total amount of reparations of twenty billion dollars. Of this sum one half was to go to Russia which had suffered more heavily in the loss of life and property than any other country.

But at Berlin the idea of attempting to fix a dollar value on the property to be removed from Germany in kind was dropped. To fix a dollar value on the share of each nation would be a kind of guarantee of the amount each nation would get -- a guarantee which might not be fulfilled.

Therefore it was decided to divide the property by percentages of the total available. We still generally agreed that Russia should get fifty percent of the total for herself and





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Poland, and that the remainder should be divided among all the other nations entitled to reparations.

It was determined that the reparation claims of the Soviet Union and Poland are to be met from the property located in the zone of Germany occupied by the Soviet Union, and from frozen German assets in Bulgaria, Finland, Hungary, Rumania and Eastern Austria. The reparation claims of all the other countries are to be met from property located in the western zones of occupation in Germany, and from German frozen assets in all other countries. The Soviet waives all claim to gold and art treasures captured by the Allied troops in Germany.

[ Under this formula it is unnecessary to have a detailed accounting of the property which has already been taken from the various zones. Such an accounting would have given rise to all sorts of disputes as to what was legitimate war booty and what was reparations in kind. ]

This formula of taking reparations by zones would lead to less friction between the Allies than the tentative basis originally proposed for study at Yalta.

The difficulty with this formula, however, is that the industrial capital equipment not necessary for the German peace economy



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is not evenly divided among the zones of occupation. The western zones have a much higher percentage than the eastern zone which is mostly devoted to agriculture and to the production of raw materials. In order to equalize the distribution and give Russia and Poland their fair share of approximately 50%, it was decided that they should receive, without any reimbursement, ten percent of the capital equipment in the western zones available for reparations.

As you will note from the communique, a further fifteen percent of the capital equipment in the western zone not necessary for Germany's peace economy is to be turned over to Russia and Poland. But this is not free. For this property Poland and Russia will give to the western zones an equal amount in value in food, coal, and other raw materials. This fifteen percent, therefore, is not additional reparations for Russia and Poland. It is a means of maintaining a balanced economy in Germany and providing the usual exchange of goods between the eastern part and the western.



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It was agreed at Berlin that the payment of reparations, from whatever source taken, should leave enough resources to enable the German people to subsist without sustained support from the other nations. [ In working out the economic balance of Germany, the necessary means must be provided to pay for approved imports. The proceeds of exports from current production and stocks in Germany must be available in the first instance for the payment of such imports. ]

The question of Poland was a most difficult one. Certain compromises about Poland had already been agreed upon at the Crimea Conference. They obviously were binding upon us at Berlin. [ The eastern boundary had already been agreed upon approximately at the Curzon line. In exchange, Poland was to receive what the Crimea Declaration called "substantial accessions of territory in the North and West." It was provided that the opinion of the new Polish Provisional Government of National Unity should be obtained as to the extent of these accessions. It was also agreed at Crimea that the final delimitation of the Eastern Frontier of Poland should await the Peace Settlement. ]





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By the time of the Berlin Conference, the Polish Provisional Government of National Unity had already been formed and recognized by all of us. The new Polish government had agreed to hold free and unfettered elections as soon as possible, on the basis of universal suffrage and the secret ballot.

In accordance with the Crimea agreement, we did seek the opinion of the Polish Provisional Government of National Unity with respect to its western and northern boundaries.

They agreed, as did we all, that the final delimitation of the borders must await the Peace Settlement.

However, a considerable portion of what was the Russian zone of occupation in Germany was turned over to Poland at the Berlin Conference for administrative purposes until the final determination of the Peace Settlement. In other words, this area was taken out of the Russian Zone and placed under the administration of the Poles.

Every international agreement has in it the element of compromise. This one on Poland is no exception. No one nation can expect to get everything that it wants. It is a question of give and take — of being willing to meet your neighbor half-way.



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In this instance there is much to justify the action taken. An agreement on some provisional line was necessary to enable the new Poland to organize itself and to permit the speedier withdrawal of the armed forces which had liberated her from the Germans. In the area east of the Curzon line there are over 3,000,000 Poles who are to be repatriated to Poland. They need room to settle. The new area in the west used to be populated with Germans. But most of them have already left in the face of the invading Soviet Army. We were informed that there are only about a million and a half left.

The territory the Poles are to administer in the west is less in square kilometers but much richer in economic resources than what they are losing in the east. It will enable Poland better to support its population. It will provide a short and more easily defendable frontier



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between Poland and Germany. Settled by Poland, it will provide a more homogeneous nation.

[ It was formerly one of the bases for German militarism -- with its resources in arms and men. Poland, which was the first overrun and devastated nation has a justifiable moral claim to this area. ]

The three Powers also agreed to facilitate the earliest possible return to Poland of all Poles who wish to return -- including soldiers -- with the assurance that they would have all the personal and property rights of other Polish citizens.

The action taken at Berlin will help carry out the basic policy of the United Nations toward Poland -- to create a strong, independent and prosperous nation with a government to be selected by the people themselves.

It is what the Poles themselves say they want -- as indicated to us by their new, reorganized government.

It was agreed to recommend that in the Peace Settlement a portion of East Prussia should be ceded to Russia. That, too, as was announced at the time, was agreed upon at Yalta. It will provide Russia with an ice-free port at the expense of Germany.

At Yalta it was agreed, you recall, that the three governments would assume a common responsibility in helping to reestablish in the





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liberated and satellite nations of Europe governments broadly representative of democratic elements in the population. That responsibility still stands. We all recognize it as a joint responsibility of the three governments.

It was reaffirmed in the Berlin Conference in the declarations on Poland and Italy.

It was reaffirmed in the Berlin Declarations on Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary. These nations are not to be spheres of influence of any one power. They now are governed by Allied Control Commissions which are composed of representatives of the three governments represented at Yalta and Berlin. These control Commissions have not been functioning completely to our satisfaction. Improved procedures were agreed upon at Berlin. Until these States are re-established as members of the international family they are the joint concern of all of us.



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The American delegation was much disturbed over the inability of the representatives of a free press to get information out of the former satellite nations. The Three Governments agreed that the Allied Press would enjoy freedom to report to the world upon all developments in Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Finland. The same agreement was reaffirmed also as to Poland.

One of the persistent causes for wars in Europe in the last two centuries has been the selfish control of the water ways of Europe. I mean the Danube, the Black Sea Straits, the Rhine, the Kiel Canal and all the inland waterways of Europe which border on two or more states.

The United States proposed at Berlin that there be free and unrestricted navigation of these inland waterways. We think it important to the future peace and security of the world. We proposed that regulations for such navigation be provided by international authorities representing the nations interested in using these waterways.

To start it, we proposed immediate interim navigation agencies for the Danube and the Rhine. The function of the agencies would be to restore and develop the use of the rivers, and to assure equal treatment on these waterways for all nations. Membership on the agencies would include the United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union and France plus those states which border on the waterways.





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Our proposal was considered by the Conference and was referred to the Council of Ministers. There, the United States intends to press for its adoption,

Other questions referred to the Council of Ministers were the withdrawal of troops from all of Iran and the disposition of Italian Colonies.

We agreed that the zone of Tangier should be discussed in the near future at a meeting of the representatives of Russia, United Kingdom, France and the United States at Paris.

We agreed that Allied troops should be withdrawn immediately from Teheran.

We also agreed that the present status of the Black Sea Straits under the old Montreux Convention fails to meet present day conditions, and that conferences on the subject should be undertaken between each of the three governments and the Turkish Government.

I want to express the thanks of the American people for the fine and successful services which were rendered at this Conference by Secretary of State Byrnes and which were commended by the leaders of the other two Powers. This applies also to the rest of the American Delegation -- Admiral Leahy and Ambassadors Harriman, Davies and Pauley -- and to the entire American staff. Without their hard work and sound





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advice the Conference would have been unable to accomplish as much as it did.

Any man who sees Europe now must realize that victory in a great war is not something that you win once and for all, like victory in a game of baseball. Victory in a great war is something that must be won and kept won. It can be lost after you have won it -- if you are careless or negligent or indifferent.

Europe today is hungry. I am not talking about Germans. I am talking about the people of the countries which were overrun and devastated by the Germans, and particularly about the people of Western Europe. Many of them lack clothes and fuel and tools and raw materials and houses. They lack the means to restore the cities and factories which the Nazis and the war have destroyed.

As the winter comes on, the distress will increase. Unless we do what we can to help -- unless we keep our victory won by keeping alive a world in which that victory can survive -- we may lose next winter what we won at such terrible cost last Spring. Desperate men are liable to destroy the structure of their society to find in the wreckage some substitute for hope. If we let Europe go cold and hungry, we may lose throughout much of the continent of Europe the foundations of order on which the hope for world-wide peace must rest.

We must help to the limits of our strength. And we will.

Our meeting at Berlin was the first meeting of the great allies



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since victory was won in Europe. The overall purpose of the meeting was to find the means by which that victory won at such great cost in lives and treasure might be made the basis of lasting peace in the world.

I think you will agree with us that substantial progress was made in that purpose. We cannot be satisfied with a military victory alone.

Our victory was more than a victory of arms.

It was a victory of one way of life over another. It was a victory of an ideal founded on the rights of the common man, and on the dignity of the human being, and on the conception of the State as the servant -- not the master -- of its people.

The Conference met in a city where there had been established for more than a decade the doctrine that human beings have no individual dignity apart from service to the State, and that they have no rights other than those parcelled out to them by a dictator.

And in the clash between these two doctrines our side won -- won overwhelmingly. A free people showed that it was able to defeat professional soldiers whose only moral arms were obedience and worship of force.





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We tell ourselves that we have emerged from this war the most powerful nation in the world -- the most powerful nation, perhaps, in all history. It is true, but not in the sense some of us believe it to be true.

The war has shown us that we have tremendous resources of iron and coal and copper and petroleum and all the materials for war. It has shown us that we have skillful workers and managers and able generals, and a brave people capable of bearing arms.

All these things we knew before. All these things we have known from the beginning.

The new thing -- the thing we had not known -- the thing we have learned now and never should forget, is this; that a society of self-governing men, is more powerful, more enduring, more creative than any other kind of society, however disciplined, however centralized.

We know now that the basic proposition of the worth and dignity of man is not a sentimental aspiration or a vain hope or a piece of rhetoric. It is the strongest, the most powerful and the most creative force now present in this world.

The Three Great Powers are now more closely than ever bound together in determination to achieve a practical, just peace. From





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Teheran, and the Crimea, and San Francisco, and Berlin -- we shall  
continue to march together to that objective.

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