

Western rights have given rise to responsibilities for the future of two and a half million people living in West Berlin who are entirely dependent for their freedom on the continuance of access to and with the West. There are those who would have us believe that freedom for West Berlin would not be threatened if the West yielded to pressures to withdraw. How can such an argument be accepted against the background of the blockade of 1949, and the Communist pressure which has been steadily mounting to the point of danger in recent weeks?

Retreat in Berlin, by the sacrifice of the pledged word, would mean that the pledged word of the West would be called in question everywhere in the world with consequences impossible to calculate for the future of freedom.

These are the reasons why the freedom of the people of West Berlin is not negotiable.

West Berlin Freedom Not Negotiable

I have heard it contended that we should not take a firm stand on West Berlin because (to put it bluntly) Canada's sacrifice in two World Wars against Germany should deny any attitude but one of indifference to the people of that city.

That argument, with its understandable appeal to those who served and sacrificed, fails to recognize that Western eviction from West Berlin would have repercussions throughout Germany and Europe. It could find freedom in Canada and everywhere in the world wounded dangerously if not beyond recovery. In any event it would mean that the Communist world would be strengthened physically and psychologically and would encourage new and further crises elsewhere in the world wherever it suited the Kremlin's purpose to create them.

The U.S.S.R. contends that German militarism is not dead, that West Germany has aggressive designs and that the NATO alliance may be drawn into military action to recover former German territory. The answer of the West is that West Germany is solemnly pledged to seek reunification by peaceful means only, and that German forces are fully integrated within NATO - an alliance dedicated wholly to the defence of freedom.

Moreover, as with all NATO governments, the West German Government has made it clear that it is prepared to negotiate with the U.S.S.R. and to consider all reasonable proposals. Within and not beyond these limits, members of NATO are bound by treaty obligations.

The North Atlantic Treaty re-affirmed the solemn pledge which binds all members of the United Nations -- the most solemn of all pledges in the Charter of the United Nations. That pledge is: