

Drummond Reports

Roscoe Drummond reports on the Washington scene in the absence of Walter Lippmann.

THE CLOUDY SUMMIT
Washington - President Eisenhower has frequently warned of the harm that would be done by allowing great hopes to be built up for the success of a summit conference and then seeing them crushed in failure.

What the President is saying is that if a summit isn't going to accomplish anything, it will leave things worse than before; if it does nothing, it will have done harm.

One way to avert this danger is to refuse to go to the summit unless the preliminary progress of the Foreign Ministers justifies it. The Allies put a little of this condition in their latest note to Moscow, but the pressures for a summit meeting are great and it is arguable that Premier Khrushchev is the only Soviet official who can make top decisions and that it can best be done in person.

The other way to avert a massive let-down from a summit failure is to make sure there is no massive build-up.

IT IS the consensus of those whose duty it is to avoid wishful thinking that the Soviet Union is not ready to negotiate any settlement in Europe which would not be to the overwhelming disadvantage of the West.

Obviously the Kremlin would be delighted to be able to push us out of West Berlin, keep Germany from having modern weapons, persuade us to dismantle NATO and take U. S. forces out of Western Europe.

But Mr. Khrushchev knows he can't get that all at once so he is proposing to take only the first bite.

Why is it wise not to expect much from a summit meeting?

Here is part of the evidence: After Mr. Khrushchev proposed to liberate West Berlin from the West (like the Chinese are liberating Tibet from the Tibetans), we said no. He said, well, what do you propose? We propose uniting the dismembered Germany after which Berlin would be automatically a free city.

What did Premier Khrushchev think of that?

He thought poorly of it and the two Germans to whom he revealed his opposition most bluntly are the two anti-Adenauer Germans who have been most confident that, if only they were in office, they could negotiate something real good with the Soviets. They are Prof. Carlo Schmid, Deputy Chairman of the Social Democratic Party (SPD), and Fritz Erler, Deputy Chairman of its parliamentary section. They traveled to East Berlin to see Khrushchev and to show how Adenauer's "rigidity" was holding up unification.

THEY found out all right. Disappointed and disillusioned, they have reported candidly to their colleagues in Bonn. What they had to report was that Moscow wasn't in the least interested in German unification, that there was no concession which either the West or West Germany could make to bring it about - except to accept the puppet government in East Germany. As to elections leading to basis for unification, Mr. Khrushchev put it quite candidly:

"Since there are more than 50,000,000 West Germans (and only 17,000,000 East Germans), this means that the majority, not truth, would triumph."

This is, of course, authentic Communist doctrine - an election which the Communists can't be sure in advance will come out "right" is no fair.

But even here Mr. Khrushchev mistakes the facts. The West is not asking that the 50,000,000 West Germans be allowed to decide what the 17,000,000 East Germans want. Why shouldn't the East Germans be allowed to decide by ballot whether they want to unite with West Germany on the basis of free elections? But Mr. K. will have none of that. The East Germans might not vote for Mr. K.'s "truth."

What this all adds up to is that Mr. Khrushchev wants to use a summit conference to take Berlin behind the iron curtain. At this stage this doesn't make a summit meeting look very productive.

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Panama Canal Traffic Reaches Record High

Balboa, C.Z. - (UPI) - Panama Canal traffic reached a record high of 1,019 ships in March, it was announced today. The previous record of 972 ships in a month was set in March, 1957.

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