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33/4

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ACTION: SecState WASH 380

Date: 14 SEPT. 1964
7:30 P.M.INFO: Amembassy BONN 347 (by pouch)
Amembassy LONDON "
Amembassy MOSCOW "
Amembassy PARIS "
USCINCEUR/POLAD "
USAREUR/POLAD "
USNMR SHAPE FOR BURNS "
USELMLO "

PARIS ALSO FOR USRO "

SUBJ: Martin Luther King Visits Berlin

Martin Luther King's eloquent address at opening of Berlin Festival morning September 13, following his signing of the Golden Book at Berlin City Hall, was primarily eulogy of late President Kennedy with particular emphasis on Kennedy's devotion to human rights throughout the world and specifically to civil rights issue at home. He spoke after GovMayor Brandt and former Ambassador James B. Conant. At afternoon appearance before estimated 20,000 attending annual Protestant retreat (Tag der Kirche) in West Berlin's outdoor stadium (Waldbuehne), King said Berlin was symbol of divided humanity. Continued that Berlin also focal point around which "wheel of history" turns and place where test being made of possibility of coexistence between two ideologies which are competing for world domination. Emphasis on civil rights also strong in this address, in course of which King said negroes in US had been called upon to be nation's conscience.

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At press conference which King had given afternoon September 12, most questions concerned upcoming US election. King attacked Republican candidate and said if Goldwater were elected US negroes would turn to outbreaks of violence hitherto unprecedented. King said Goldwater candidacy was threat to stability in USA and his election would be great disillusion to those who are carrying out nonviolent struggle for civil rights.

Dr. King preached sermon East Berlin Marienkirche Sunday evening September 13. Church filled to capacity (2000) two hours before service began. Overflow sent to nearby Sophienkirche which also soon filled to capacity (over 2000). King greeted warmly upon arrival by crowds outside Marienkirche. Choir inside sang Negro spirituals in his honor.

King began sermon by conveying "Christian greetings from your brothers and sisters in West Berlin." Several people in congregation sobbed openly. King delivered essentially same sermon as he had given earlier in West Berlin. His themes - that "we are all one in Christ Jesus" and that faith overcomes all man-made barriers - had visible impact on tense, hushed crowd.

King outlined negroes' struggle for civil rights in such a way that East Berliners could find in his description much that was applicable to their own situation. His passages on the readiness of negroes to suffer

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and if necessary die for their faith and his emphasis on common struggles, common faith and common suffering were particularly moving to them.

In East Berlin King deleted from his sermon several hard-hitting attacks on automation, big city political bosses, and police brutality that he had included in his West Berlin sermon. "Neues Deutschland" September 14, in two sentence coverage of event, did, however, seize on King's single reference to "slums, police terror, and exploitation on Southern plantations."

King departed Marienkirche shortly before end of service to go over to Sophienkirche where he also addressed waiting congregation.

He was accompanied by East Berlin General Superintendent Gerhard

Schmitt of Evangelical Church Berlin-Brandenburg and by Ralph ZORN, young

✓ ~~young~~ American pastor resident in West Berlin, who acted as interpreter.

East German press gave no advance notice King's appearance at Marienkirche, but announcement was made from every Evangelical church pulpit East Berlin previous Sunday. West Berlin papers September 13 and 14 have given King visit considerable coverage with main attention to his remarks on Goldwater and civil rights issue in US. Tabloid BZ

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(indep) Sept. 14 has full-page interview, headlined "His Weapon is
Nonviolence." Afternoon press Sept. 14 features his two appearances
in East Berlin.

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