

matters when our information is so faulty, so incomplete.

[23.] Q. Mr. President, in connection with the Berlin crisis, there has been quite a bit of speculation about one or more summit conferences. Would you tell us what your attitude is at this time toward summit negotiations?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, the attitude which I have held and still hold is that no summit between East and West is useful unless the groundwork has been laid beforehand which will insure some success. As far as a summit of Western leaders, I think that if it should prove important in coordinating our policy on any matter, Berlin, I think that that meeting should be held and would be prepared to do so.

[24.] Q. Mr. President, during the foreign aid debate, there has been some concern expressed by legislators based upon the reports from Montevideo that some of the Latin American nations are not, apparently, eager to institute the self-help measures which you've made a condition of your program, and that the administration may not insist upon those conditions. Do you intend to insist upon those conditions?

THE PRESIDENT. We're prepared to make a major effort in this regard and we're hopeful that other countries who also have high living standards will do so. But of course it would be completely useless unless an effort were made by all concerned. One of the proposals which have been made in Montevideo which is of particular interest is that under the aegis of the Inter-American Bank, that a study by independent experts be made of each country's economic planning and progress and commitment, and it seems to me that this is a great basis for a hemispheric effort. We're not interested in making the contributions which I think we have to make unless we feel that they're going to improve the life of the people. And, therefore, there's a responsibility on us all, for us to contribute to the success of this goal and for the countries involved to make sure that this effort helps the people, because otherwise the effort will fail and those societies will inevitably be wiped away—unless some real progress is made.

Reporter: Thank you, Mr. President.

NOTE: The President's fifteenth news conference was held in the State Department Auditorium at 10 o'clock on Thursday morning, August 10, 1961.

319 White House Statement and Text of Agreement Between the President and the Vice President on Procedures in the Event of Presidential Inability. *August 10, 1961*

THE PRESIDENT and the Vice President have agreed to adhere to procedures identical to those which former President Eisenhower and Vice President Nixon adopted with regard to any questions of Presidential inability. Those procedures are as follows:

(1) In the event of inability the President would—if possible—so inform the Vice President, and the Vice President would serve

as Acting President, exercising the powers and duties of the Office until the inability had ended.

(2) In the event of an inability which would prevent the President from so communicating with the Vice President, the Vice President, after such consultation as seems to him appropriate under the circumstances, would decide upon the devolution



of the powers and duties of the Office and would serve as Acting President until the inability had ended.

(3) The President, in either event, would determine when the inability had ended and at that time would resume the full exercise of the powers and duties of the Office.

After consultation with the Attorney General, it is the understanding of the President and the Vice President that these procedures reflect the correct interpretation to be given to Article II, Section 1, clause 5 of the Constitution. This was also the view of the prior Administration and is supported by the great majority of constitutional scholars.

The relevant constitutional provision is:

"In Case of the Removal of the President from Office, or of his Death, Resignation, or Inability to discharge the Powers and Duties of the said Office, the same shall devolve on the Vice President, and the Congress may by Law provide for the Case of Removal, Death, Resignation or Inability, both of the President and Vice President, declaring what Officer shall then act as President, and such Officer shall act accordingly, until the Disability be removed, or a President shall be elected."

Under this provision, upon a proper determination of Presidential inability, the Vice President succeeds temporarily to the powers and duties of the Presidency until such time as the President is enabled to act again. Unlike the case of removal, death, or resignation, the Vice President does not permanently become President.

Under the arrangement quoted above, the Vice President agrees to serve as Acting President "after such consultation as seems to him appropriate under the circumstances." There is no provision of the Constitution or of law prescribing any procedure of consultation, but the President and Vice President felt, as a matter of wisdom and sound judgment, that the Vice President would wish to have the support of the Cabinet as to the necessity and desirability of discharging the powers and duties of the Presidency as Acting President as well as legal advice from the Attorney General that the circumstances would, under the Constitution, justify his doing so. The understanding between the President and the Vice President authorizes the Vice President to consult with these officials with a free mind that this is what the President intended in the event of a crisis.

Prior to the Eisenhower-Nixon arrangement, there were no similar understandings of a public nature. For this reason, prior Vice Presidents have hesitated to take any initiative during the period when the President was disabled. Obviously, this is a risk which cannot be taken in these times, and it is for that reason that President Kennedy and Vice President Johnson have agreed to follow the precedent established by the past Administration.

NOTE: The Attorney General's opinion upon the construction to be given to the Presidential inability clause of the Constitution was submitted to the President in a letter dated August 2 (27 pp., Government Printing Office, 1961).



our country and its government today, none is more vital than that of finding a way to relieve mankind of the burden of devising, developing and maintaining arms which could lead to mankind's self-destruction. The burden is not only a danger to life itself, but, because of its ever-growing cost, an increasing threat to the economic well-being and security of everyone.

The United States, together with like-minded nations, is determined to exert every effort to assure that obstacles, procedural or substantive, not continue to interrupt our genuine striving to remove these threats from the daily lives of all the peoples of the world.

I personally follow this matter with the keenest interest and shall follow closely the progress of your task, in which you carry with you my cordial best wishes.

Sincerely,

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

The Honorable James J. Wadsworth
Deputy United States Representative
to the United Nations

40 ¶ Agreement Between the President and the Vice President as to Procedures in the Event of Presidential Disability. *March 3, 1958*

THE PRESIDENT and the Vice President have agreed that the following procedures are in accord with the purposes and provisions of Article 2, Section 1, of the Constitution, dealing with Presidential inability. They believe that these procedures, which are intended to apply to themselves only, are in no sense outside or contrary to the Constitution but are consistent with its present provisions and implement its clear intent.

(1) In the event of inability the President would—if possible—so inform the Vice President, and the Vice President would serve as Acting President, exercising the powers and duties of the Office until the inability had ended.

(2) In the event of an inability which would prevent the President from so communicating with the Vice President, the Vice President,



after such consultation as seems to him appropriate under the circumstances, would decide upon the devolution of the powers and duties of the Office and would serve as Acting President until the inability had ended.

(3) The President, in either event, would determine when the inability had ended and at that time would resume the full exercise of the powers and duties of the Office.

NOTE: This is the text of agreement as set forth in a White House news release of this date.

41 ¶ Message to the Congress Transmitting Second Report on the Promotion of Peace and Stability in the Middle East. *March 5, 1958*

To the Congress of the United States:

I am transmitting herewith the second report to the Congress covering activities through December 31, 1957, in furtherance of the purposes of the Joint Resolution to Promote Peace and Stability in the Middle East. This report supplements the first one forwarded to the Congress on July 31, 1957 concerning activities through June 30, 1957.

The Resolution continues to be an important element in United States foreign policy relating to the Middle East. Communist opposition to it is clearly revealed by the fact that over the past six months Communist propaganda and its adherents in the Middle East have intensified their efforts to distort the purposes of the Resolution and to depreciate the contribution it has made to the creation of more stable conditions in this important part of the world. I am convinced that we must continue to devote major attention in our Middle East policy to assisting the states of the area, on a cooperative basis, in maintaining their independence and integrity. The Resolution forcefully embodies the purpose of promoting these means of achieving international peace and stability in the Middle East.

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

NOTE: The report is published in the and as House Document 349 (85th Congressional Record (vol. 104, p. 3020) Cong., 2d sess.).

