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This Week In Congress Radio Address: The Berlin Crisis, 1959 February 5

Speaker: Senator J. Allen Frear

Transcribed by: David Cardillo

[00:00]

Announcer: The Week in Congress, recorded on February 5<sup>th</sup>, 1959.

Mr. Kelly: From Washington, DC, transcribed, United States Senator J. Allen Frear reports again to the people of Delaware on current congressional affairs. Ladies and gentlemen, Senator Frear.

Senator Frear: Thank you, Mr. Kelly. The long, smoldering dispute between East and West over the status of Germany flared anew last week and brought hurried and urgent consultations among Western diplomats and among members of Congress. The particular incident which touched off the latest controversy occurred when the Russian army halted an American convoy coming out of Berlin on the German Autobahn. Of itself, the stopping of this group of motor vehicles and their American drivers is not an unusual tactic by the Red army, but in this instance, the question involved goes far beyond an attempt at harassment of the American and Allied forces. The Soviet Union is pushing hard for diplomatic recognition of its East German puppet regime, and the West is determined to resist. Since Berlin is virtually an island surrounded by Red forces, the implications involved could become quite grave. All of us recall the Berlin airlift of a few years ago when it became necessary to supply the German capital by air after its ground routes were shut off at the direction of Moscow. At that time, the problem of supplying the German capital, though difficult, was accomplished. The United States and its allied governments are endeavoring by every diplomatic means possible to settle the issue without agreeing to recognize the East German government. In Moscow, the Red leaders are actively aware that the East German puppet state has failed miserably to satisfy the East German population. Because it is so easy to compare the standards of living conditions within East and West Germany, the people on the reich-held side (**phonetic [02:36]**) of the city know at first-hand that their fellow citizens on the free side of the border are living much better. The result is that defections in large numbers are constantly going on as East German citizens seek not only refuge, but opportunities to live under a democratic form of government. To combat this embarrassing and most disturbing condition, Moscow seeks greater prestige for East Germany through formal recognition. Western leaders are fully aware of the Russian plan, and I hope will be able to deal with it effectively through appropriately diplomatic negotiations. The Secretary of State Mr. Dulles conferred at length with the new chairman of the

Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Mr. Fulbright, before Mr. Dulles left for Europe to discuss the German question with other Western government officials. Members of Congress are naturally concerned and hopeful that these talks will produce an effective formula for easing the tension. It seems to me that on the basis of recent statements made by the Deputy Russian Premier, Mr. Mikoyan, during his visit to the United States that Russia will not risk open conflict over the German question. Certainly, the Allied governments are taking every possible measure to discourage the use of force. This, however, is why the German East-West crisis continues to be a potential powder keg. In our continued efforts to promote world peace, solution of this issue is paramount.

Mr. Kelly:

Thank you, Senator Frear. From the nation's capital, you have heard United States Senator J. Allen Frear in his regular report to the people of Delaware on current congressional affairs. Senator Frear will be heard again next week at this same time, speaking from the Senate Office Building in Washington.

**[End 04:51]**