

Assignments

- 1 Sum up the text. [20 BEW]
- 2 List the rights of the basic law we have to look at when we want to discuss the situation
5 in the text and explain their importance. [Material 1] [20 BWE]
- 3 Comment on the position of the defense minister using the Basic Law **or**
Imagine you are the speaker of the pilots in the Luftwaffe. Write a letter to the defense minister.
[35 BWE]
- 4 Using Material 2, compare the situation with the situation in material 1. Illustrate what they have
10 in common and where they differ. [25 BWE]

Material 1

Fury¹ Over Comments: German Minister Would Shoot Down Hijacked Plane

- 15 Germany's Defence Minister Franz Josef Jung has sparked² fury by saying he would order a hijacked passenger jet to be shot down if necessary -- even though the country's highest court ruled last year that such a move would be illegal.



20 Defence Minister Franz Josef Jung is under fire for declaring that he would order a hijacked passenger jet to be shot down if it were being used in a terror attack, despite last year's Constitutional Court ruling that it would be illegal. Jung, a member of Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservatives, told *Focus* magazine in an interview published on Monday: "If there is no other way I would give the order to fire to protect our citizens."

- 25 He admitted that the Federal Constitutional Court had ruled³ that a hijacked plane could only be shot down if only terrorists and no innocent people were on board. But he added: "If it poses a general threat or the fundamental liberal democratic order is threatened, other rules apply." The court in 2006 overturned⁴ the Air Security Act which gave the defence minister the right to order a plane to be shot down even if innocent people
30 were on board. The court ruled that weighing "life against life" was in breach of Germany's constitution. The debate started in Germany after the September 11 terror attacks, and security has moved back to the top of the agenda ever since the arrest two weeks ago of three Islamists suspected of planning bomb attacks. SPD leader Kurt Beck told reporters that if Jung ordered pilots to fire on an airliner, he would effectively be turning responsibility⁵ for the action over

¹ Wut

² auslösen

³ entscheiden

⁴ Umwerfen, hier: für unrechtmäßig erklären

⁵ Verantwortung weitergeben

35 to them. "And after all we've taught people since the Nazi dictatorship ... a German soldier would have to say No, this command isn't compatible with⁶ the constitution."

Germany's organisation of army fighter pilots VBSK also rejected the idea. "I can only advise pilots not to obey⁷ the minister's command in such a case," Thomas Wassmann, VBSK chairman, told the *Leipziger Volkszeitung* newspaper. He said Jung's statement was akin to
40 "calling on pilots to carry out an illegal order."

Bernhard Gertz, chairman of the German Army Federation, a union representing the interests of military personnel, said pilots could themselves be prosecuted as murderers if they shot down a passenger jet that was being used as a missile⁸. But a spokesman for the Defense Ministry said on Monday, that in a state of national emergency pilots wouldn't be allowed to
45 disobey the command.

Source: cro/dpa/AP/ddp/Reuters

<http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/fury-over-comments-german-minister-would-shoot-down-hijacked-plane-a-506225.html>, download 26 April, 12:00 Uhr

Material 2

50 In the 19th century, there was a case of five people whose ship had sunk. They were sailors and the only survivors when their ship sank 1500 miles west of the coast of Rio de Janeiro. The five were the First Officer, three older sailors and a young sailor, 14 ys old. They had no food, no drinking water. After three days, the First officer decided to kill the young sailor so that the four others could survive. The case went before the court.

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Good luck!

⁶ Vereinbar mit

⁷ gehorchen

⁸ Waffe/fliegendes Geschoss