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Fabian International Bureau

# THE GERMAN PROBLEM

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September, 1952.

# INTRODUCTION

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF 1952

ON 26TH MAY, 1952, the United Kingdom, the United States and France signed in Bonn a series of Conventions establishing a new relationship between themselves and the German Federal Republic. These Conventions will give to the Federal Republic full authority over its internal and external affairs. The three occupying powers retain only such rights as are an inevitable consequence of the continued division of Germany and the peculiar position of Berlin. The Occupation Statute is to be revoked and the High Commissioners are to become Ambassadors to the Federal Republic. In future the armed forces stationed by the three powers in Federal territory will be for the defence of the free world, of which the Federal Republic and Berlin form part.<sup>1</sup>

Next day, 27th May, 1952, the Treaty establishing the European Defence Community was signed in Paris by France, Belgium, the German Federal Republic, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. The essential feature of the Community is that all land and air forces of the member States (with the exception of forces required for the defence of overseas territories, for internal security and for certain international missions) will be merged in a single force. This force, with a common budget and a common arms programme, will be administered by a Board of Commissioners, a supra-national body accepting instructions from no government. Certain high policy matters, however, will require the unanimous decision of the Council of Ministers of the participating powers. The European defence forces will be at the disposal of the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, and will automatically come under his command in war.<sup>2</sup>

All these agreements require ratification by the varying constitutional processes of the signatories. It is clear that this process cannot be complete until the late autumn of 1952 at the earliest. By the end of July only the United States had completed the procedure of ratification.

These Treaties, if they come into force, will mark the climax of a policy for integrating Western Germany into the defensive and economic structure of Western Europe, which has been going on steadily for five years, in default of a Four-Power agreement for the whole of Germany. During this period, though the possibility of pursuing an alternative policy based on a united Germany has never been ruled out, it has grown considerably more remote. Practical steps taken by the occupying powers in their respective zones have increasingly seemed to imply a belief that Germany, for a considerable period at least, is to remain divided. Moreover, the provisions in the European Defence Community Treaty for

<sup>1</sup> A summary of the main provisions of the Convention will be found at Appendix A.

<sup>2</sup> A summary of the Main Principles of the proposed European Defence Community will be found at Appendix B.

a Western German contribution to the armed defence of Western Europe, and the plans recently announced by Herr Grotewohl, the East German Premier, for the formation of an East German national army, mark a decisive departure in the policies of the wartime allies relating to German rearmament. Even if, as can be argued, these steps—at any rate on the Western side—can no longer be avoided, it is impossible not to see in them a new cause of tension in an already tense world.

They should therefore be accepted only after a full examination of the events which have led up to them, and a careful weighing of the risks involved.

## GERMANY SINCE 1945

### *From Potsdam to the Federal Republic of May, 1949*

The immediate post-war policy of the allied powers was set out in the Yalta and Potsdam agreements. Germany, though divided for purposes of occupation by the different allies, was so far as possible to be subjected to uniform treatment, particularly in the economic sphere. The policy was based upon the assumption that the Allies would be able to agree upon measures for demilitarising Germany, purging it of Nazism and gradually restoring it to economic and political health upon a democratic basis. Emphasis was on preventing the renewal of a German military menace. Everything else affecting the long-term future of Germany, including the final determination of frontiers, was left to be settled in a Peace Treaty later on.

From 1945 till the end of 1947 the Council of Foreign Ministers met at intervals to discuss common policy, but the more it met the less it was able to reach agreement. It finally broke down at the London meeting of the Council in December, 1947; and although it met once more in 1949 it made no further progress with the German problem.

During the years from 1945 to 1947 Western Germany was suffering great economic hardship, and signs of recovery were few. Merely to keep her alive imposed a tax burden on Britain and the United States, and their Governments were not disposed to bear it for long. While the Western Powers were striving to find a formula for administering Germany which would put the country once more on its feet, Soviet policy seemed designed to block any progress in the Western Zones. In the Eastern Zone, after an initial burst of reconstruction work, helped by the fact that the Zone was self-sufficient in food, the very severe reparations policy imposed by the Soviet Union and the generally oppressive nature of the regime were, by 1947, beginning to lead to stagnation in Eastern German production.

The incompatibility of Soviet and Western policies was made clear beyond a doubt when M. Molotov at the Paris Conference in July, 1947, declared his Government's attitude to the Marshall Plan for European

Economic Recovery. Rejecting the French and British plans on behalf of the Soviet Union and her satellites, M. Molotov went so far as to warn Britain and France of the "grave consequences" which would ensue if the plans were carried out, thereby eliciting from Ernest Bevin the retort that: "this country has faced grave consequences and threats before but it is not the sort of prospect which will deter us from doing our duty."

From that moment the Eastern and Western Zones of Germany have more and more gone their separate ways. Steps were taken to co-ordinate the administration of the three Western Zones. This gave rise to prolonged discussion, and some friction, between the British, United States and French governments on the future of the Ruhr industries, situated in the British Zone. In November, 1948, the coal and steel of the Ruhr were transferred to German trustees, pending a future decision by an eventual all-German or Western German government on the question of socialisation. In early 1949 this arrangement was followed by a Six-Power agreement setting up an International Authority for the Ruhr. The main purpose of this was to provide for adequate production while ensuring a sufficient measure of international control to satisfy French anxieties about security. The issue of public versus private ownership was again left open, owing to disagreement between the allies, while the Socialist Party of Germany and the trade unions both expressly reserved their positions on this point.

These essentially temporary and compromise arrangements are now in process of being superseded by the European Coal and Steel Community.

The economic stagnation of the Western Zones was dramatically brought to an end by the Currency Reform of the 27th June, 1948. The Soviet retort to this reform, in which she had been invited to participate, was to impose a blockade on Berlin, which lasted from June, 1948, to May, 1949.

In May, 1949, the Federal German Government was proclaimed in Bonn, and five months later, in October, it was matched by the setting up of an East German State.

### *Germany and Western Defence*

By this time the Western Powers were already becoming increasingly anxious about the defence of Western Europe. 1948 had seen not only the blockade of Berlin but the increasing Soviet pressure upon the satellite states, which led to Communist domination of Czechoslovakia and to the break between Yugoslavia and the Cominform. These concrete proofs of Soviet determination to impose her will upon her allies and upon the Germans, even at the risk of serious international crisis, have greatly influenced the thinking both of the allies and of the Western Germans ever since that time. The Western response was to reinforce Western Union by the signature of the North Atlantic Treaty in March, 1949, and by substantially increasing the various national defence programmes.

It was not, however, until war had broken out in Korea in June, 1950,

arousing fears of similar outbreaks elsewhere, that any effective demand was made for a German contribution to the defence of the West. European and British opinion was quite unprepared for this unwelcome development. As late as the 28th March, 1950, Ernest Bevin, speaking in the House of Commons of the arming of Germany, said: "All of us are against it. I repeat all of us are against it. It is a frightful decision to take . . . we have set our face—the United States, France and ourselves—against the rearming of Germany, and that, I am afraid, we must adhere to." Nevertheless, by the end of the year the Council of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation had agreed in principle that Germany should make a military contribution to western defence.

This startling change of front came through the initiative of the United States at a meeting of the Foreign Ministers in New York in September, 1950. At that time it was a principal objective of the European powers to obtain an American Supreme Commander for the North Atlantic Treaty forces in Europe together with the commitment of some United States divisions to the European theatre in peacetime. The United States service chiefs, however, had advised their government that the North Atlantic Treaty forces, without a German contribution, could never be strong enough to defend Western Europe on the Elbe. The United States government, its eye on Congress, stated that its troops and an American Supreme Commander would be available only on the understanding that Western defence would be made effective by inclusion of German forces.

British and French military opinion did not dispute that German manpower would eventually be required in order to hold a line of defence on the Elbe. But there was still so much to be done in building up the forces of the North Atlantic Treaty powers themselves, that there seemed to be no compelling need at that stage to tackle the delicate question of the German contribution, which was so clearly bound to heighten the tension between east and west and to confuse opinion among the Western allies. Ernest Bevin at one point suggested a compromise proposal for the establishment of a Western German gendarmerie to match the armed police already organised in the Soviet Zone; but the Americans insisted that their proposals were all "one package" and must be accepted or rejected as a whole.

### *The "Attlee Conditions"*

Faced with this choice the British and French, and subsequently the other Western allies, accepted the "package," but without precise agreement on the timing or conditions of the German contribution. The French, anxious to prevent the emergence of a new German Wehrmacht, responded with their plan for a European Army, in which German forces would be incorporated. For Britain, Mr. Attlee speaking as Prime Minister in February, 1951, laid down what are now widely known as the "Attlee conditions" in the following words:—

*"We have accepted the need of a contribution from Germany, but the time, method and conditions will require a great deal of*



*working out. There is first of all the provision of arms. Obviously the rearmament of the countries of the Atlantic Treaty must precede that of Germany.*

*Second, I think the building up of forces in the democratic states should precede the creation of German forces.*

*Third, the arrangements must be such that German units are integrated in the defence forces in a way which would preclude the emergence again of a German military menace.*

*Fourth, there must be agreement with the Germans themselves. German democracy must make sure that the armed forces will be its servants and not its masters."*

("Hansard," 12th February, 1951, col. 67.)

In these terms the decision in principle to raise German forces was accepted in Britain. Misgivings were by no means limited to any one section of opinion, though it was in the Labour movement that they were most deeply felt and widely expressed.

Once the decision had been taken, the technicians settled down to prolonged negotiations in Bonn and in Paris. Fortified by recommendations made by the Foreign Ministers and by the North Atlantic Council—at meetings in Washington and Ottawa in September, 1951, and again at Lisbon in February, 1952—they finally produced the texts of the Convention and the European Defence Community Treaty, which, as already stated, were signed on 26th and 27th May, 1952.

### *The Russian Response*

One important effect of these steps towards the reconstitution of German forces was to stimulate a series of proposals from the Soviet side, aimed at preventing, or at least delaying, the Western programme.

The New York Conference of September, 1950, was immediately followed by a conference of the Cominform Foreign Ministers held in Prague, which attacked Western policy and made proposals for an all-German Constituent Assembly which were unacceptable to the West. Shortly afterwards, the French plan for a European Army was followed by further unacceptable proposals made by Herr Grotewohl to Dr. Adenauer. During the spring of 1951, as a result of a Soviet initiative regarding the German problem, the Foreign Ministers' Deputies met in Paris; but they dispersed three months later without even reaching agreement on an agenda for a Ministers' conference.

Another interchange between Herr Grotewohl and Dr. Adenauer followed the declaration of the Foreign Ministers in Washington in September, 1951. Finally, the Lisbon Conference of February, 1952, which seemed to herald the early realisation of a German contribution to a European Army, immediately drew from the Soviet Union, on 10th March, 1952, a proposal that the four occupying powers should meet to conclude a Peace Treaty, and for that purpose should consider the formation of an all-German government. The exchange of Notes on this subject, referred to later, is still in progress.

Despite these varied proposals, there has been nothing in the development of Soviet policy in the Eastern Zone to suggest a sincere desire for unity with the Western Zones. Ever since the Social-Democrats and Communists were merged in the Socialist Unity Party (S.E.D.) in 1946, the possibility of genuinely free political activity in the Eastern Zone has become more and more restricted. Special privileges given to the S.E.D. by the occupying authorities have effectively stultified any opposition, while, within the S.E.D., the Communists have consolidated their power by the appointment of their members to most of the key posts. The centralisation of administration and of control of industry has also proceeded to the point where amalgamation with the other zones of Germany would involve a formidable work of readjustment.

Even more disquieting to the West has been the development of a para-military force in the Eastern Zone. The establishment of "Bereitschaften" (alert squads) was first announced in September, 1948. These were nominally police units required for internal security, and their training consisted of technical police instruction together with some basic infantry training. But by May, 1949, emphasis was already shifting to military training, and senior ex-officers of the army and air force were in command.

A year later (in May, 1950) the Western Powers addressed a note of protest to the Soviet Government about this force, which was then estimated to consist of nearly 50,000 men, and was known to possess and to be trained in the use of artillery and tanks. It also included a Sea Police Force operating fast armed light craft for coastal policing and mine-sweeping. Later still it was reported that the Bereitschaften had become expanded composite units, similar to a Soviet mechanised group. The latest available estimate of numbers, made in May, 1952, gave a total figure of 53,000 members of the East German para-military police, and 3,500 members of the sea police. It is to be noted that the greater part of this force had been created before any proposal for the creation of armed forces in Western Germany had ever been made. Now, ostensibly as a reply to recent Western plans, Herr Grotewohl has made the announcement about an East German National Army, to which reference has already been made.

Underlying the failure of all discussions has been the fact that genuinely free elections would unquestionably lead to an anti-communist and anti-Soviet majority throughout Germany, with the consequence that the Soviet domination of the Eastern Zone would end. There is no evidence that the Soviet Union is prepared to accept so damaging a diplomatic defeat, with all its possible repercussions among the populations in the satellite states. The Western Powers, on their side, will not accept any proposal which opens the way for the communists to capture all-Germany, in the teeth of German opinion, by totalitarian methods or military pressure. In all these circumstances, common ground is hard to find. It is, however, rotatable that each fresh offer from the Soviet side has come rather nearer to the minimum which the Western Powers might be willing to consider. It is this which lends substance to the hope that future deadlock may not be automatically certain merely because it has been so in the past.

# THE PROBLEM IN 1952

## *Current Proposals for a Peace Treaty*

As a result of these events it is becoming increasingly difficult to continue Western integration further without closing the door upon Four-Power agreement for a united Germany. Yet to close the door would be a most serious step; for the one thing that is clear, among so many uncertainties, is that without Four-Power agreement there can be no solution of the German problem which is free from danger.

Western integration has reached its present stage only because the alternative of Four-Power agreement seemed unattainable. When, therefore, the Soviet Union presented its Note to the Western Powers on 10th March, 1952, there was a general desire in Britain and Europe that it should be fully tested, and that a genuine attempt should be made to make it the basis of an agreement for German unity. The Note proposed that a Four-Power discussion should without delay take place on the question of a Peace Treaty with Germany, so as to prepare an agreed draft treaty for submission to a larger conference of all the States concerned. It was recognised that the direct participation of an all-German Government would be necessary, and the occupying powers were accordingly invited to examine the speediest way of forming an all-German Government expressing the will of the German people.

Attached to the Soviet Note was an Appendix containing "Fundamentals of a Peace Treaty with Germany," and this envisaged the restoration of a united Germany, independent, democratic and peace-loving. All armed forces of the occupying Powers were to be withdrawn within a year, and all foreign military bases in German territory were to be liquidated. Her frontiers were to be those "established by the decisions of the Potsdam Conference." There were to be no restrictions upon her peaceful economy or trade. She was to be allowed "national armed forces (land, air and naval) necessary for defence of the country," while her production of war materials was not to exceed what was required for the forces established by the Peace Treaty. Germany, moreover, was to pledge herself not to take part in any coalitions or military alliances "aimed against any power which participated with its armed forces in the war against Germany." An interesting feature of the provisions for guaranteeing the free exercise of democratic rights was to be the granting of full civil and political rights to all former servicemen, including generals, and all former Nazis other than those serving sentences for war crimes.

This scheme, startlingly different from any previous Soviet proposal, made an obvious appeal to German nationalist sentiment, for it offered, on the face of it, a better prospect than the purely western solution incorporated in the Bonn and Paris treaties. It was, however, treated with great caution not only by the Western Powers, but also by the Western Germans, who looked for guarantees that an all-German government would result from genuinely free elections throughout Germany and that the government's international position, both before and after

the conclusion of the Treaty of Peace, would be adequately safeguarded.

The reply of the Western Powers on 25th March stated that discussion of a Peace Treaty could not start "until conditions have been created for free elections and until a free all-German government, which could participate in such discussion, has been formed." It asked that facilities should accordingly be given in the Soviet Zone and East Berlin to the United Nations Commission already set up to investigate conditions for free elections. The reply reserved the question of frontiers until a Peace Treaty and criticised the proposal for German national forces.

Further notes, exchanged on 9th April and 13th May, had little result except to narrow down the issue to the method of ensuring that all-German elections and the resulting government would be genuinely free. The Soviet Union rejected the United Nations Commission as an investigating body, and the Western Powers did not insist upon it; but they did insist upon an impartial enquiry of some kind, to be followed by a Conference of the Four Powers on free elections and an all-German government.

On the question of Germany's right to choose integration into the western defence system, the Soviet Union stated firmly that her proposal "precludes also Germany's inclusion into one or other grouping of powers directed against any peace-loving state." In their reply, the Western Powers, who do not of course admit that the European Defence Community or the North Atlantic Treaty falls within this Soviet definition, stated that they could not accept "that Germany should be denied the basic right of a free and equal nation to associate itself with other nations for peaceful purposes. They must assume that the Soviet Government likewise cannot object to Germany's right to enter into defensive agreements."

The prospects for a conference took a turn for the worse with the Soviet rejoinder on 26th May which struck a more polemical note, accused the Western Powers of dragging out the conclusion of a Peace Treaty, bitterly attacked the Bonn Agreement, and did not take up in any constructive way the proposals with which the Western Note of 13th May had concluded.

The language of this Note was the language of propaganda rather than of negotiation: it produced the impression that the Soviet Union was becoming less concerned to promote an early Conference than to find the best way of laying the blame for failure upon the Western Powers.

It must be said that the Western notes had been widely criticised for not showing a keen enough desire to hold an early meeting of the Four Powers on the key issue of free elections. It seemed as though the Americans and Dr. Adenauer were afraid of disturbing the rhythm of their own plans for Western integration, and had already made up their minds that a conference with the Soviet Union would merely confuse opinion in Europe without offering any real prospect of agreement upon German unity.

The Western Powers evidently found difficulty in agreeing how the matter should be taken further, and it was not until 11th July that they delivered their reply. In it they sought to bring things to a head by

calling an immediate meeting of representatives to set up an impartial enquiry into the conditions for free elections. There, at the time of writing, the matter rests.

### *Is Agreement Possible?*

In the light of past experience it is impossible to feel confidence that, behind the smoke-screen of words, a real intention exists on the Soviet side to allow a united Germany to recover her right of self-determination. It seems unlikely that the U.S.S.R. would agree to this except at a price, which she has not as yet defined. In the past she has seemed to envisage a "neutralised" Germany, *i.e.* a Germany without occupying forces or forces of her own. Now she accepts a measure of German rearmament, but seeks to refuse to Germany the right of combination with other powers for defensive purposes. The Western Powers, for their part, have always rejected full "neutralisation." What is not so certain is whether they should equally refuse to contemplate any solution which fell short of the full integration of an armed Germany into a Western military alliance.

Those whose thoughts have since 1950 been concentrated mainly upon military measures, and have consequently set their hearts upon an early contribution of twelve or more German divisions, will no doubt oppose any alternative which might cause delay or upset their military calculations. So too will those influential and perhaps increasingly numerous persons, especially in France, who see in the Federation of Western Europe the only acceptable solution of the German problem. To them, the European Defence Community is only one of a number of organisms designed to bind Germans to the West in a way that will make independent action by a German state impossible. It is an essential though largely unavowed condition of this plan, that the German partner in the Western Federation should be the present Federal German Republic and not a united German state which, both in numbers and in industrial strength, would tower dangerously over its colleagues. One may accept this essentially French thesis as the best alternative available if the hope of Four Power agreement is to be finally given up. But until that point is reached one must surely agree with the statement in the first Soviet Note that the conclusion of a Peace Treaty with all-Germany would "further an improvement in the international situation as a whole" and might thereby offer greater security to Western Europe than the addition to the N.A.T.O. forces of a limited number of West German troops, however carefully integrated.

Scepticism about the chances of ever reaching agreement on a Peace Treaty is natural and indeed legitimate. It is, however, relevant to point out that Western policy has been based for several years past upon the belief that, as Western co-operation develops, it will become possible to "negotiate from strength" with the Soviet Union.

If the point for negotiation is ever to be reached at all, it may well be approaching now—not only because Western strength has been rising, but also because there is at present hanging in the balance an issue about

which it is well worth while for the Soviet Union to negotiate, namely, the rearmament of Western Germany and her integration into Western European defence. If this issue were to be finally decided, whether by the creation of Western German forces or by the dropping of the whole project, it would cease to be a subject for negotiation, and it is not easy to see what else would take its place.

It may well be, therefore, that the policy of negotiation from strength has a chance to operate in the coming months which it did not have in the past and will not have again.

For all these reasons any genuine opportunity of reaching Four Power agreement must be seized. At the same time, the Western Powers cannot indefinitely sit inactive waiting for some sign of goodwill from the Soviet Union. Considerable patience has been shown on the Western side at each stage since 1945, but so far it has gone unrewarded by any sign of genuine compromise. It is important for the Soviet Union to understand that Western plans cannot now be held up while negotiations are endlessly prolonged.

In particular it is important that if, as seems all too probable at the moment, the Soviet Union intends the present division of Germany to continue, then the Western Powers should not run the risk of forfeiting the support of the people of Western Germany by vainly pursuing a will-o'-the-wisp. The time has come when Germans must have political equality. If Soviet action prevents its being granted to an all-German state, then it must be given to Western Germany just the same. That part of the present treaties must in any event be carried out.

Moreover, in the troubled situation which the continued division of Germany will produce, with tension between east and west constantly aggravated by pressure in Berlin and along the frontier, the strengthening of Western defence will have to go on, and with it the organisation of a German military contribution. This will be a necessary consequence, both because the other Western countries will not forever be prepared to protect Western Germany with their own troops while Germans look on, and also because self-defence is the natural right of every sovereign state. For this reason a sovereign German government will be bound to insist upon it, and already German recovery has reached the point at which such legitimate German aspirations can no longer be ignored.

### *The Development of German Opinion*

There is still a tendency on the part of the Western Powers to underestimate the importance of German opinion in the new phase which is now opening. If all the wartime allies had been able to agree upon their policy for Germany, then it might have been realistic for them to enforce the decision upon her whether she liked it or not. Any such solution became impracticable as soon as disagreement developed between the Soviet Union and the Western Powers. We have now to face the fact that the divergent policies of the former allies are restoring to Germany much of her former bargaining power. It was no doubt a realisation of this fact that led the Soviet Union to make so big a gesture towards

German nationalism in the Note of 10th March. The Western Powers must be careful not to play the Soviet game by making their policy appear to be the major obstacle to German unity.

When the German military contribution was first proposed there was a strong reaction against it in Germany. The feeling that Germans were being asked to fight in a quarrel which was not theirs was widely expressed in the slogan: "Ohne mich" (Without me). Young Germans, after being subjected to five years of anti-militarist indoctrination by the allies, could not develop overnight an enthusiasm for military service. Older Germans, looking at the balance of military force in Europe, suspected that German troops were being asked to fight a rearguard action on the soil of Western Germany merely in order to facilitate the defence of France and the Low Countries. Very large sections of German opinion feared that this step meant an end to their hopes of a united Germany.

In addition, the soundest democratic elements in Western Germany were dismayed at the prospect of a rapid revival of the political influence of the former military caste, and of those traditional allies of the General Staff, the captains of heavy industry, whose wings the occupying powers have so signally failed to clip. In particular the Socialist Party of Germany and a large section of the trade union movement opposed the plans for German defence. They feared that the growth of a new arms industry and armed forces, under the right wing leadership of Dr. Adenauer and the Christian Democratic Union, would bring about a renewal of the old union of reactionary forces which opened the door to the Nazis. Their suspicions were deepened as they reflected that their political opponents have good electoral reasons for preferring the present Western plans to the creation of a United Germany, in which the protestant and socialist elements of Eastern Germany would turn the scales against the catholic and conservative south and west.

This does not mean that German socialists and trade unionists will indefinitely refuse to shoulder responsibility for their own defence. It does mean that before they give their consent they will demand far more carefully considered safeguards for democracy inside Germany as the armed forces grow, and a far more acute awareness on the part of the Western allies of the likely effect of their plans upon the reunification of all-Germany.

Anxiety on this latter point spreads far beyond the Socialist Party and the trade unions and is the main reason for German luke-warmness towards the present treaties. It is the main reason why even Dr. Adenauer, who has made no secret of his scepticism about agreement with the Soviet Union, felt obliged to call for a Four-Power Conference on German unity even while pressing the West German Parliament to vote Western Germany into the European Defence Community. It is also the main reason why the German Socialist Party, backed by the British Labour Party in a recent statement of their National Executive Committee<sup>1</sup> have called for a real attempt at Four-Power agreement and for further con-

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix C.

sultation of German public opinion before the decisive steps are taken.

In all these matters the conclusions reached by the British Labour Party have approximated fairly closely to the conclusions of German socialists. The reasons for the conclusions have, however, often been very different. Above all there are some misgivings felt by non-Germans about the future policy of a divided Germany which Germans themselves cannot share.

### *Germany Between East and West*

It is the declared object of the present treaties so to tie Western Germany into Western Europe that she will be unable to detach herself. Such an arrangement is an unnatural one for Germany which, historically, culturally and economically has always been a Central European Power, looking both east and west. Her need for raw materials, for markets, and now for the territorial unity of her nation, all inhibit her from accepting the Iron Curtain as her future frontier, and from turning her eyes exclusively westward. It is hard to see how even the success of the Coal and Steel and European Defence Communities could bring about a revolution in her thinking on these matters in the face of her history and material needs.

This is the more dangerous because Western Germany is to-day a highly dissatisfied power, far more dissatisfied than Germany after Versailles. She has lost enormous areas of territory which have been German for centuries, and as a result is faced with the problem of resettling some fourteen million refugees from the lost areas in the already densely populated community of Western Germany. As her strength grows it is certain that Germans of all parties will seek to use it to gain the very specific objective which they are already talking about—the restoration of German unity.

German unity means in the first place the re-uniting of the present Zones of Occupation; but there is no doubt that to most Germans it also includes the recovery of lands beyond the Oder-Neisse and of the Saar. So far as the re-uniting of the occupation Zones is concerned, the Western Powers have always been sympathetic. On the larger proposition, however, they have never committed themselves. At Potsdam they stated—and they have repeated this both in recent Notes and in the Convention—that the final delimitation of frontiers should await the peace settlement. An adjustment of frontiers by negotiation is therefore not ruled out; but it is important that the Western Powers should make it clear to Germans that they could not support any irredentist movement to recover any part of the lost land otherwise than by negotiation with the countries concerned. It has never been easy to see how a satisfactory adjustment of the frontier provisions of Potsdam could be arrived at. It is, however, at least conceivable that if a Four-Power agreement could be reached to re-unite the Occupation Zones and to make some adjustments of the other frontiers, Four Power unity could be maintained afterwards, at least for the purpose of resisting further similar German claims. If no such agreement has been reached by the time the Germans are once



again a strong and independent force, the issue is bound to become one not for negotiation between the former allies but for a horse-trade between the Germans, the Soviet Union, and the United States.

There are many who think that the Germans may seek to recover the lost territories by manœuvring the Western Powers into an armed anti-communist crusade. It is this which has led some people to fear that if Western Germany were to be allowed into the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation she would turn it from a defensive into an aggressive alliance. It seems unlikely that the Germans would pursue this course. Single minded as they are in their determination to recover what they have lost, they are not prepared to promote a war which would be fought largely on German soil. As soldiers, moreover, they are aware that the Red Army could only be driven eastwards in the initial stages of a war if the North Atlantic Treaty powers were able to put into the field a far larger force of infantry than they are likely to possess. Such a war would involve Germans fighting Germans on a very large scale, without any guarantee that German national objectives would be served at the end of it all.

It is therefore far more likely that German thinking will turn to the possibilities of re-uniting their country through a deal with the Soviet Union. Such a development, it is true, could hardly occur in the near future. Anti-Soviet feeling is so strong in the Western Zones, that no German government would contemplate any deal which, with Germany still relatively weak, would make Germany a pawn in Soviet policy. But with the growth of German military and economic strength the situation might change, especially if war in Europe were to become more imminent. In such circumstances, the Soviet Union would have a compelling motive for detaching Western Germany from the Western alliance even at the cost of very great sacrifice. On the German side, therefore, the possibility would open up of obtaining their objective at the expense of Poland by remaining neutral—a far more attractive proposition for them than entering a war between east and west.

Should such a situation arise, it is difficult to believe that any purely constitutional provisions, integrating the Germans into a Western European Community, would be strong enough to bind them effectively in the face of so great a temptation. Nor is it easy to envisage any sanctions, military or economic, which the west could effectively take in such a case, without precipitating the very war which all schemes for European unity are designed to prevent.

At that stage, the Western Powers would in very truth have become the enemies of the re-unification of Germany, but would nevertheless be powerless to prevent it.

## CONCLUSIONS

It has been necessary to stress the dangers which may follow as German strength and independence grow, not only because they are very real, but also because it has been too readily assumed that the present Treaties would not only strengthen Western defence, but would finally solve the German problem and promote the unity of Europe. *In fact the Treaties mark the beginning, not the end, of the long-term German problem, and register a further stage in the splitting of Germany and Europe in two.*

It may well be that we shall in fact be forced to adopt the policy represented by these Treaties despite all misgivings; but in that case we should adopt it in a spirit of realism, and should insist upon whatever conditions seem most likely to minimise the risks. The dangers cannot be wholly removed by anything less than Four-Power agreement.

*Our first condition must therefore be to carry the effort to obtain such an agreement either to a successful conclusion, or, if that turns out to be impossible, at least to the point at which it becomes clear to all, and especially to Germans, that it is the Soviet Union and not the Western Powers, which is blocking the restoration of German unity.* In this way not only will German assent to a purely Western solution be more readily obtained, but there will be less risk than at present of the Western Powers being blamed later on for the disadvantages, economic and political, which the German people are bound to suffer through continued disunity.

If, in the near future, it should become clear that the Soviet Union is engaged in nothing more than a tactical delaying action and has no intention of allowing the division of Germany to end, the Western Powers will have to decide whether to resign themselves to a prolonged period in which the unity of Germany will be impossible, or whether there is scope for further efforts before full Western integration, with all its implications, proceeds.

*What seems clear is that the promised ending of the Occupation Statute and the advance to political equality should not be postponed. Further delay in this could only injure the prospects for Western German democracy.* In the existing Treaties, political advance is linked with the agreement for a German military contribution within the European Defence Community. The one cannot take effect without the other. The object, presumably, was to ensure that Germany did not first regain her sovereignty and then refuse to merge her forces in a European organisation.

*There are, however, many grounds upon which the building of German armed forces should be at a somewhat slower pace than the implementation of the political Convention.* For instance, the "Attlee conditions" already referred to, with their insistence upon rearming the existing allies first and upon a proper regard for German opinion, still represent the sane order of priorities and need not involve any general delay in the strengthening of Western defence.

It is tempting to pitch the case for delay in Western German rearma-

ment even higher; but the unpleasant fact has to be faced that, in the circumstances which would be created by Soviet rejection of German unity, there would be a period of tension in Europe in which the steady strengthening of Western defence would be essential. *We cannot long leave British divisions committed to take part in Western defence, nor will the United States leave her troops, unless that defence is made effective; and for this purpose the German contribution will have to be made in the fairly early future if Four-Power agreement cannot be reached.*

This is the situation of increased anxiety to which Europe will be brought if the present exchange of Notes between the Four Powers ends in breakdown. What the Western Powers can do is to ensure that breakdown does not occur through any fault of theirs. If all their efforts fail, then as they enter upon the next testing phase in European affairs, they must set about the task of incorporating Western Germany into the political and defensive structure of Western Europe, at the tempo and under the conditions which present the best chance of Germany remaining under the control of broadly-based democratic forces, and with the least risk that a militarised Germany will once again hold Europe to ransom.

## APPENDIX A.

*Summary of the Main Provisions of the Convention on Relations Between the Three Powers (United States, United Kingdom and France) and the Federal Republic of Germany signed 26th May, 1952.*

The Federal Republic shall have full authority over its internal and external affairs (subject to certain exceptions mentioned below). The Occupation Statute is to be revoked, and the Three Powers will thenceforward conduct their relations through Ambassadors instead of the present Allied High Commission. (Article 1.)

The Three Powers will retain their rights relating to (a) the stationing and security of armed forces in Germany, (b) Berlin, and (c) Germany as a whole, including the unification of Germany and a peace settlement. (Article 4.)

The mission of the armed forces stationed by the Three Powers in Germany will be the defence of the free world, of which the Federal Republic and Berlin form part. There will be consultation on the stationing of these troops, and the consent of the Federal Republic will be required for the introduction of troops of other nations except in the event of actual or imminent external attack.

The Federal Republic will participate in the European Defence Community. (Article 4.)

If the Federal Republic and the European Defence Community cannot deal with an attack or subversion or serious disturbance of public order which, in the opinion of the Three Powers, endangers the security of their troops, the Three Powers may, after consultation, proclaim an emergency. They may then take the necessary measures to ensure public order and the security of their troops. The Federal Government may appeal to the Council

of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation if, after 30 days, it considers that the state of emergency is being unnecessarily prolonged. (Article 5.)

There will be consultation with the Federal Republic over the exercise of the rights of the Three Powers in Berlin, and the Federal Republic will continue to play an active part in the reconstruction of Berlin. (Article 6.)

The Three Powers and the Federal Republic are agreed that an essential aim of their common policy is a peace settlement for the whole of Germany. They agree that the final determination of the boundaries of Germany must await such a settlement.

Pending the peace settlement, the signatories will co-operate to achieve by peaceful means a unified Germany enjoying a liberal democratic constitution, like that of the Federal Republic, and integrated within the European Community.

In the event of the unification of Germany the Three Powers will extend to a unified Germany the rights given to the Federal Republic under the Convention, when it assumes the obligations of the Federal Republic. (Article 7.)

The signatories will review the terms of the Convention—

- (a) on request of any signatory in the event of the unification of Germany or the creation of a European Federation; or
- (b) upon the occurrence of any other event which all of the signatories recognise to be of a similarly fundamental character. (Article 10.)

The Convention will come into force upon the deposit by all signatories of instruments of ratification and upon the entry into force of the Treaty on the establishment of the European Defence Community.

## APPENDIX B.

### *Summary of the Main Principles of the Proposed European Defence Community.*

The aim of the European Defence Community (E.D.C.) is the merging, under common supra-national institutions, of the armed forces of member states for the defence of Europe and the preservation of peace. It is to be a step towards a united Europe. It will work closely with the nations of the Atlantic Community and its forces will, in case of war, be under the command of the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe.

#### *Military Questions.*

The E.D.C. forces will consist of units contributed by member states. The basic unit of one nationality will be the "groupement" of 12,000 to 13,000 men. The groupement will have very small supporting forces, for which it will be closely dependent upon the higher formation (an Army Corps of 80,000 men) which will be composed of units of different nationalities and controlled by an integrated international staff. For air forces the basic unit will be a Wing of 75 aircraft and 1,200—1,800 men, integrated in an Air Division, with supporting services grouped together in a Tactical Air Force.

The naval forces, which cannot be integrated, will consist of coastal defence forces.

The E.D.C. forces will comprise all the forces of member states other than those required for the defence of overseas territories, special international missions (*e.g.* Berlin, Austria or Korea) or internal security duties. Provision is made for temporary withdrawal of forces to meet an emergency arising in one of these spheres.

#### *Political Control.*

On the analogy of the Coal and Steel Community (Schuman Plan) the institutions of the E.D.C. will be:—

1. Board of Commissioners.
2. Council of Ministers.
3. Assembly.
4. Court of Justice.

1. The Board of Commissioners will be composed of nine members appointed for six years by agreement between governments. The members will not take instruction from any government. Decisions will be taken by majority vote. A member may be removed by a judgment of the Court. If the Assembly passes a vote of censure, the whole Board must resign.

The Powers of the Board will cover the planning, recruiting, training and equipping of the forces; the mobilisation, in consultation with governments, of manpower and economic resources, the territorial distribution of troops and the appointment of officers. For appointment to the higher ranks, the unanimous agreement of the Council of Ministers will be required.

2. The Council of Ministers will be composed of specially delegated members of governments and their deputies who will be available to function at any time. The Council's task is to harmonise the activities of the Board with the policies of governments.

The Council may, by unanimous vote, issue directives to the Board. The Board will require the Council's approval (sometimes by unanimous vote, sometimes by a two-thirds majority) for its decisions and recommendations.

A careful distinction has been made between decisions of the Council requiring unanimity, thus fully safeguarding the rights of governments, and decisions requiring simple or two-thirds majority vote, which ensure the efficient working of E.D.C.

3. The Assembly will be on the same lines as that of the Coal and Steel Community. Its first function will be to consider estimates of expenditure and any motion of censure on the Board which may be put before it.

It will have further responsibilities relating to the constitutional development of the Community. It is to be guided in these duties by the principle that the final organisation should be capable of constituting part of a federal or confederal Europe. Its proposals in this field are to be made to the Council within six months of its taking up its duties, and decisions on these proposals should be reached within a maximum further period of fifteen months.

4. The Court of Justice, constituted on the same lines as that of the Coal and Steel Community, will ensure respect for law in the implementation of the Treaty.

*Finance.*

The Board, the Council and the Assembly will each have a role in framing and approving a common budget in consultation with governments. The total of the budget and the contributions of member states will require the unanimous approval of the Council of Ministers.

(*Note.*—The German contribution to the E.D.C. forces is planned to be twelve "groupements" comprising about half-a-million men by 1954. It is unlikely that this time-table can now be maintained.)

## APPENDIX C.

*Statement issued by the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party, 30th April, 1952.*

Steps should be taken without further delay by Her Majesty's Government, in association with the governments of the United States and France, to hold a Four-Power conference with the Soviet Government, limited in the first instance to discussing the possibility of free elections throughout Germany and the means by which such freedom could be assured to the German people.

The National Executive declares that in order to satisfy the fourth condition laid down on behalf of the Labour Party by Mr. Attlee, namely, that before any German rearmament is undertaken there must be agreement with the German people, fresh elections should be held in Western Germany before any commitment is undertaken by the Adenauer Government for a German contribution to the European Defence Community.

The National Executive further expresses the hope that, in the interests of Western European defence, the United States will soon furnish to the French army the arms and equipment already promised. Only if this is done can there be any possibility of satisfying the first condition in the Attlee declaration, namely, that the rearmament of the members of N.A.T.O. must precede that of Germany.

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