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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Doc. 981
20 April 1959

General policy of the Council of Europe in the light of the latest developments in the international situation

Report[1]
Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy
Rapporteur: Mr Johannes J. FENS, Netherlands

1. 1959 - 11th Session - First part

A. Draft Resolution presented by the Political Committee[2]

1. The Assembly :

2. Welcomes the forthcoming opening of negotiations between the Western Powers and the Soviet Union on the German problem;

3. Expresses its confidence that the representatives of Member States of the Council of Europe will insist, in the course of these negotiations, on the basic principles laid down in Resolution 155 which was unanimously adopted on 20th January 1959, particularly as regards respect for the right of the inhabitants of West Berlin to live in freedom and security and to have free communications with the West;

4. Stresses also the necessity of maintaining in these negotiations the following other basic principles :

a. The West must stand by the quadripartite undertakings of Geneva 1955 and by its obligations to the Federal Republic of Germany (Article 7, paragraphs 2 and 4, of the Convention on relations between the Three Powers and the Federal Republic of Germany, signed in Paris on 23rd October 1954)" Pending the peace settlement, the Signatory States will co-operate to achieve, by peaceful means, their common aim of a reunified Germany enjoying a liberal-democratic constitution, like that of the Federal Republic, and integrated within the European community ."

a. Nothing can be done which will call into question the existence of the six-Power European Communities;

a. No proposal can be agreed which would involve a change, to the disadvantage of the West, in the balance of military security which is at present assured by N. A. T. 0.;

a. To any concession on the part of the West there must be an equivalent concession on the part of the Soviet Union.

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2. (a) Adopted by the Committee by 14 voles to 1 and 4 abstentions.
MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE : MM. Struye (First Vice-Chairman); Bohy (Second Vice-Chairman) (Alternate : de la Vallie Poussin) ; Aktas, Badini Confalonieri, Bettiol (Alternate : Montini), Elmgren (Alternate : Benglsson), de Felice, Fens, Furier, van der Goes van Naters (Alternate : Patijn), Güdek, Heckscher (Alternate : Regnell), Dame Florence Horsbrugh, Sir James Hutchison, MM. Jakobsen, Jaquet, Kiesinger (Alternate : Kopf), Loulakakis, Lynch, Margue, Marquand (Alternate : Steele), do Menthon, Moo, Rodopoulos, Santero, Schmid, Skarphedinsson, Strasser, Toncic.
N. B. THE NAMES OF THOSE WHO TOOK PART IN THE VOTE ARE PRINTED IN ITALICS.
(b) See 5th Sitting, 23rd April 1959 (draft Resolution adopted as amended and draft Order adopted), Resolution 1C5 and Order 140.

B. Draft Order

The Assembly invites the President to send Resolution... to the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Member States, members of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

C. Explanatory Memorandum submitted by M. FENS

1.

1. The Political Committee held a preliminary exchange of views on the policy of the Council of Europe in the light of the international situation in Paris on 21st March 1959. This was in preparation for the debate which is due to take place in the Assembly on 21st and 22nd April 1959.

2. The Committee first discussed certain procedural points. It will be recalled that, last January, by common agreement, the debate was limited to the problem which was the main issue of the day and uppermost in the minds of Europeans—the problem of Berlin. This innovation was generally thought to have been useful, and the resulting debate, which was shorter and more concentrated— and was attended by the Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Germany, M. von Brentano, the Mayor and Head of the Government of Berlin, M. Willy Brandt, and the Federal Minister for All-German Affairs, M. Lemmer—was successfully concluded with the passing of a unanimous resolution. This Resolution (No. 155) was sent by the President of the Assembly to the Foreign Ministers of all Member Governments. In a covering letter to the Rt. Hon. Selwyn Lloyd, Chairman of the Committee of Ministers, M. Fernand Dehousse expressed the hope that he would place the Resolution on the agenda of the Committee of Ministers and that the Assembly would be informed of the Committee of Ministers' views on the Resolution in due course. Another new departure in the debate was that speeches in support of the Resolution were made in turn on behalf of the three Political Groups. The Rt. Hon. John Edwards spoke on behalf of the Socialist Group, M. Ernest Pezet on behalf of the Christian Democrats, and Lord Grantchester on behalf of the Liberals. The President of the Assembly welcomed this innovation which, it has been said, brings the practice of the Consultative Assembly closer to that of the European Parliamentary Assembly, where Political Groups play a considerable part.

3. Your Rapporteur thinks that the modifications recorded here, and for which we are largely indebted to our then Rapporteur, M. Struye, have several advantages. It is useful to concentrate the debate on a limited number of subjects instead of having a very long and very wide debate where the trends are difficult to ascertain. The practice of political groups appointing spokesmen shortens the debates, but some members of the Committee feel that, if such a practice were generally resorted to, there would be a danger of stifling the debate, whose purpose is by its very nature to allow of as wide a discussion as possible. There is the added difficulty that several members of the Assembly do not belong to any political group. The value of appointing spokesmen for the political groups is, of course, to prevent repetition and speed up the business of the Assembly. At the same time, it is obvious that any member of the Assembly who does not belong to a political group, who does not want to join one or who is in disagreement with the group to which he belongs, can make an independent speech. A combination of these methods should make it easier for the Assembly, as a parliamentary body, to fulfil its role effectively, which is to deliberate on the European problems of the day, choose among possible courses and express this choice clearly so that Member Governments may know precisely what European public opinion expects of them and wishes them to do.

4. Having discussed these procedural points, the Committee went on to consider what question is to be the subject of the Assembly's debate when it resumes on the 21st April 1959. It decided that it would be useful if the Assembly could concentrate again this time mainly, but possibly not exclusively, on the problem of Berlin and Germany. The Assembly will be meeting one month before the 27th May, which is the time-limit originally set for his ultimatum by M. Khrushchev, though he has now told us that we may be given one, two or even three months' grace. Important developments are therefore likely to occur before or during the summer, and it is the duty of Europeans to express their views. It is true that the situation has changed since January 1959 in this sense—that it was then timely for the Assembly to make a stand on Berlin following the publication of M. Khrushchev's proposals, framed as they were in ultimatum style, whereas, as things are, the Assembly could not go into the details of the forthcoming East-West negotiations and substitute itself for the Governments concerned. Nevertheless, the Committee felt that the Assembly should not abdicate its right to proffer advice, which is written into the Statute of the Council of Europe, and accordingly a draft Resolution, in general terms, is submitted to the Assembly.

Other problems

5. This does not mean, however^ that there are not other problems that could not profitably be discussed. The number of "family disputes" between members of the Council of Europe has happily diminished by one, with the long hoped-for settlement of the Cyprus question arrived at by the Zurich and London agreements (19th February 1959). But the Anglo-Icelandic fisheries dispute is as yet unresolved. There is going to be a

Second Conference on the Law of the Sea, organised by the United Nations, in April 1960 in Geneva, but in the meantime no modus vivendi has been reached and incidents occur from time to time. There are also difficulties between Austria and Italy over ethnic minority rights in South Tyrol (Alto Adige).

6. In this connection, one member of the Committee proposed that some way should be found, some procedure proposed, so that such "family disputes" might be settled within the Council of Europe. There is, of course, the European Convention for the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes signed in April 1957, but so far ratified only by Norway, Sweden and the Netherlands. Your Rapporteur believes that, in appropriate cases, a "good offices" or conciliation mission might be undertaken by chosen members of the Assembly or by a small group of persons appointed by it. This is a matter to be further discussed, but there is a need to find a way of dealing with disputes before they become acute and start damaging the solidarity of the European family.

7. Another question that the Assembly might wish to discuss is the course of the East-West talks in Geneva on the discontinuance of nuclear tests, which have been going on since the 31st October 1958. More than sixty meetings have been held, and, while we are told that it would be wrong to describe the negotiations as deadlocked, it is clear that the conference is marking time painfully. Your Committee has no information at its disposal other than that reported in the newspapers. For that reason it was felt useful to propose to the President of the Assembly that an invitation should be sent to the Rt. Hon. David Ormsby-Gore, the only European member of this East-West conference, to make a statement to the Assembly next April. An invitation in this sense was despatched by the President to Mr. Ormsby-Gore on 25th March 1959.

8. Your Rapporteur did not feel able to include among the other questions for possible discussion the situation in the Middle East or the Far East. While it is acknowledged that these areas are potentially as dangerous as they were last year, your Rapporteur considers that the debates in the Assembly of the Council of Europe ought to be concentrated, for reasons previously stated, on problems which are more indisputably the responsibility of Europeans and perhaps also more directly connected with our immediate task when we meet at Strasbourg : the building up of Europe.

Berlin and Germany—Developments since January 1959

9. I now propose to turn to the question of Berlin and Germany. I will examine the developments that have occurred since our last debate and I hope to put before the Committee certain principles which I consider should guide the action of the West in this respect.

10. The Soviet proposals on Berlin were fully described in M. Struye's report (Doc. 936), and I do not propose to go over this ground again. But there are several points that need to be mentioned. First there was controversy in the Committee last January as to whether M. Khrushchev's proposals still amounted to an ultimatum with a fixed time-limit in the light of M. Mikoyan's remarks in the United States. A little light has been thrown on this matter by M. Khrushchev himself, who said on March 19thj according to Tass : "The 27th May is not an ultimatum but an approximate time-limit. If the problem were solved, not in six months but in two, the U. S. S. R. would welcome this. If, however, it were not solved in six months, then let it be solved in seven months". The fact that the East-West Conference of Foreign Ministers is now envisaged by the Soviet Union as lasting "two or three months" is a further indication that the enforcement of the Berlin ultimatum might be delayed.

11. Another point is this : M. Khrushchev's innumerable speeches have given the impression, in some quarters, that the Soviet position may, to some extent, have altered. Such a proposition must be carefully examined. There have indeed been three changes : the Soviet Union has now accepted a four-Power meeting of Foreign Ministers, having previously rejected it. Also there has been an emphasis on the United Nations as one of the guarantors of the free city status of West Berlin and the suggestion that a minimum of Western and Soviet troops might be stationed in Western Berlin to guarantee the observance of its free status. They would have no right to interfere in the internal affairs of the city. (Incidentally, the Mayor of West Berlin, Herr Brandt, speaking in the House of Representatives on March 10th, rejected any idea of stationing Soviet troops in West Berlin.) Lastly, there have been repeated assertions that the Soviet Union would sign a separate peace treaty with the "D. D. R." if one with both Germanies cannot be agreed upon. A Soviet-East German peace treaty, it is asserted, would mean the transfer of Soviet responsibilities in Berlin to the Governement of the "D. D. R.", who would then exercise their sovereign rights. Some shifting of positions, therefore, has certainly taken place, but we must be quite clear that it does not involve any new departure in the basic Soviet position on Berlin and German reunification. On this latter question, M. Khrushchev lost no opportunity, in the course of his recent visit to East Germany, of stating that reunification could only be achieved through agreement by

the two Germanies. It is sometimes considered idle to speculate on the motives of the Soviet Government, but it does appear as if the limited aim of the Soviet Union is to compel the West to accept a settlement of the Berlin question on terms acceptable to the U. S. S. R.

The Soviet draft peace treaty

12. To its proposals on Berlin, the Soviet Union added in January that a peace conference on Germany should be convened in Warsaw or Prague within two months of January 10th. This conference was to be attended by all nations that took part "with their armed forces in the war against Germany" and by the Federal Republic of Germany and the "D. D. R." The peace treaty is to be concluded with the "two Germanies" or with a German Confederation of the two States; German reunification, so the Soviet Note reiterated, is a matter for negotiations between the two Germanies. The draft peace treaty emdsages a neutralised Germany. Under it, Germany is to undertake not to enter into any military alliances against the signatories of the treaty, or alliances which exclude all the four Powers. When the treaty comes into force, the Federal Republic is to withdraw from N. A. T. 0. and the "D. D. R." from the Warsaw Pact. Under Article 26, Germany would have national armed forces "necessary for defence"; but Article 28 states that Germany shall not have, produce or acquire nuclear weapons, rockets and guided missiles or "apparatus and installations necessary for their launching or guiding", or bombers or submarines. Under Article 30, all foreign troops stationed in Germany would be withdrawn not later than one year after the treaty comes into force; alternatively, they could be withdrawn within an agreed time-limit provided that one-third were withdrawn within six months.

The Western Notes of 16th February 1959

13. On the Western side, it has been proposed that a Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of France, the United Kingdom, the U. S. A. and the U. S. S. R. should be convened to deal with "the problem of Germany in all its aspects and implications". Furthermore, the Western Powers suggested that German advisers should be invited to the Conference and should be consulted. This means that representatives of the free Federal Republic and of the Communist-controlled "D. D. R." would be in attendance as advisers.

The Soviet reply of 2nd March 1959

14. In reply, the Soviet Government, in a further note to the Western Powers dated 2nd March, proposed that a summit conference should take place in April in Geneva or Vienna to examine the draft peace treaty with Germany as well as the Berlin situation. Poland, Czechoslovakia, the Federal Republic of Germany and the " German Democratic Republic " should also be invited to attend. The Soviet Government added that other questions might be discussed : European security, disarmament, the withdrawal of foreign troops, the creation of. a denuclearised area, the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons and the reduction of American, British, French and Soviet forces outside their national territories. If the Western Powers were not ready to have a summit conference, the Soviet Government agreed to a meeting of Foreign Ministers from the countries to he represented at the summit conference, subject to the condition that it should not last more than two or three months.

Replies of the Western Powers of 26th March 1959

15. The Western Powers thereupon proposed that a meeting of France, the United Kingdom, the U. S. A. and the U. S. S. R., at Foreign Minister level, should be convened at Geneva on May 11th to consider " questions relating to Germany, including a peace treaty with Germany and the question of Berlin ". The Western Powers also agreed to a meeting of Heads of Governments, later, as soon as developments in the Foreign Ministers' meeting warrant holding such a conference. The possibility of other countries participating in the meeting at a certain stage in the negotiations could be contemplated. German advisers should be invited and consulted.

Soviet Note of 30th March 1959

16. On March 30th, the Soviet Government agreed to a four-Power Foreign Ministers' Conference at Geneva on May 11th " to consider questions related to Germany, including the peace treaty with Germany and the Berlin question ". It noted that " the question of the representation of the two German States —the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany—-at the Foreign Ministers' meeting which is to start on May 11th is a matter already decided. "

The question of Berlin

17. I do not propose to deal at great length with the specific question of Berlin, partly because it has already been exhaustively discussed and partly because the vote in January at Strasbourg showed that there was no disagreement in the Assembly. There was equal determination on all sides not to yield to threats, to stand by our common obliga-tions to the people of West Berlin, to reject the " free city " proposals because they would mean that very soon West Berlin would be swallowed in the Communist Dominions and to insist on the sanctity of treaties and the maintenance of our rights.

18. Nevertheless, it is a fact that M. Khrushchev has continued to insist that unless agreement is reached by 27th May or soon after, the Soviet Union will sign a separate peace treaty with the " D. D. R. ", which will be granted full sovereignty on land, sea and in the air. The question therefore still arises : what will the West do on 27th May or whenever transfer of control rights takes place, if by then no satisfactory agreement has been concluded with the Soviet Union? The dangers of this situation were sharply recalled in one passage of the Soviet Note of 2nd March : " The Soviet Government would like to emphasise, as the ally of the German Democratic Republic under the Warsaw Pact, that it will fulfil its obligations under this agreement. As is well known, the same position is held by all the Member States of the Warsaw Treaty, which are united in their determination to do everything possible to preserve and, if necessary, to restore peace, " M. Khrushchev has stated the Soviet intention to block the autobahn to prevent the passage of allied convoys to Berlin and a few days ago the Soviet Union claimed that an American aircraft had violated the altitude ceiling (which the Americans do not recognise) in the Western air corridor to Berlin.

19. There are those in the West who consider that, if the Soviet Union does hand over responsibility for communications between Berlin and the West, and the East German authorities desire to inspect the " work tickets " of Allied vehicles, the matter should be handled as a diplomatic incident. At any rate they feel that this is not an essential matter of principle over which no arrangement is possible. The vital question is to protect the freedom of West Berlin. Whether this involves the checking of Allied traffic by East Germans instead of Soviet officials (or possibly the former acting as agents for the latter) is in their view a matter of secondary importance (so long as legal rights are made clear and there is no interference) which need not affect our commitments or vital interests.

20. On the other hand, the inspection of work tickets by officials of the puppet Pankow Government does represent a concession, and there are those who consider that we should not yield an inch, that we should give nothing away unless we get something in exchange. Our policy of firmness has led to our positions being upheld in a series of previous Soviet-created crises, in Quemoy and Matsu, in Jordan and the Lebanon, and it is felt that a resolute policy of standing up to Soviet threats which has yielded dividends should not be abandoned. If the East German authorities try to interfere, whenever the transfer of control rights takes place, Ave should first and foremost stand by our obligations and exercise our rights. Additionally, Ave should consider the possibility of raising the matter in the Security Council, and, if the Soviet Arcto operates there, in the General Assembly of the United Nations. The General Assembly Avould be asked to support the action of the Western Powers.

21. Once again Ave are led to the conclusion that the potentially explosive situation of Berlin must be the subject of negotiations, but not in isolation, for it is not the position of that city that is anomalous and requires a solution in the interests of peace. It is the problem of a divided Germany.

Prospects of negotiations

22. M. Khrushchev has noAv agreed to a meeting of Foreign Ministers, and it is greatly to be hoped that the procedural disagreements that have blocked the progress of previous conferences Avili not begin again IIOAV. At the same time the basic positions of the tAvo sides are so diametrically opposed to each other that Ave should not lure our peoples into believing that agreement over German reunification is likely in the near future. M. Khrushchev is eviedently not prepared to budge from his bluntness and intransigeance, and Ave are not prepared to abandon our pledge, to Avhich the Soviet Union subscribed in 1955, to re-establish German unity through free elections. Nor do we see any signs, rather the reverse, that M. Khrushchev is willing to make political concessions in return for increased military security. In fact he recently said that he did not mind whether the Federal Republic of Germany was in N. A. T. 0. or not, as the Soviet Union could defeat the N. A. T. 0. coalition in any case. This, together with M. Khrushchev's statement that " Nobody really wants the reunification of Germany at this moment—nobody at all ", and that all-German elections would mean that " the majority but not the truth would prevail " suggest that, for the immediate future, no more than a modus vivendi is likely to be achieved.

Towards deciding on our political response

23. The West has consistently been accused of not having any policy to match the agility of the Soviet leaders. I do not know whether as a result of our deliberations the beginnings of such a policy will emerge, but the Consultative Assembly has long recognised the compelling need for putting forward proposals. It is my belief, however, that any proposal which the West can put forward must be governed by the following general considerations.

24. First, we must stand by our obligations, in the first place, the quadripartite undertaking of 1955 to work for German reunification through free elections, and we cannot sacrifice our purpose, which is to permit the people of East Germany eventually to choose freely its form of government. The Soviet Union has entirely failed to win over this people. Indeed seldom in history can a people have become so alienated from their Government as the inhabitants of the " D. D. R. " Yet now, in effect, the Soviet Union proposes the status quo, with a difference, and that is that the political outpost of West Berlin, which is the symbol of our continued intention to help the East Germans and other .peoples of Eastern Europe to regain their liberty, by peaceful means, is to be dismantled. What is more, we are under other obligations under the Paris Agreements, signed on 23rd October 1954. Article 7, paragraph 2, of the Convention on relations between the Three Powers and the Federal Republic of Germany, as amended, states : " Pending the peace settlement, the Signatory States will co-operate to achieve by peaceful means their common aim of a reunified Germany enjoying a liberal democratic constitution, like that of the Federal Republic, and integrated within the European Community. " The Western Powers are also bound, under Article 7, paragraph 4, of the treaty mentioned above " to consult with the Federal Republic on all matters involving the exercise of their rights relating to Germany as a whole. " Your Rapporteur firmly believes that it is an overriding consideration that we should at all times in the matter of German reunification have special regard for the wishes of the German people themselves. The will of the German people living in the Federal Republic is clearly expressed by their Chancellor, Government and Parliament. The East Berlin risings of 1953 and the continued flow of refugees escaping from the " D. D. R. " is eloquent testimony to the feelings of the others. So is the crushing defeat inflicted by the two-and-a-half million West Berliners on Communism at the elections last December.

25. Secondly, nothing can be clone which will endanger the movement towards European unity which started with the Hague Congress in 1948, has now taken concrete form with the formation of the Common Market, and must lead on to the establishment of a political community of Europe. This movement has been the one dynamic and forward-looking part of Western policy since the end of the second world war that is likely to influence the destiny of the world. It has been a unique foundation for welding Germany into the six-Power Community. It is a magnet for Europeans—hoth in the East and in the West. We cannot do anything which might reverse this policy of European economic resurgence leading to political strength.

26. Third, we cannot agree to any proposal involving a change in the balance of military security to the disadvantage of the West or making it impossible to operate N. A. T. 0. It was because the West felt insufficiently strong that the Federal Republic of Germany was invited to join N. A. T. 0. in 1954. To depart from this policy now would be to return to the pre-E. D. C. era at a time when M. Khrushchev not only announces that he has begun the " serial production of intercontinental ballistic missiles " but adds further to the strength of his conventional forces. As for the question of a demilitarised zone, the best military opinion is against it. General Norstad is on record on 30th March 1959 as having stated that he found it impossible to see any form of military disengagement " in the present and existing political context, which would not be absolutely disastrous ". This confirms the unequivocal declarations which he made to the Assembly of Western European Union last December. I venture to refer also to the report of M. Goedhart embodied in a communication from the Assembly of Western European Union to the Consultative Assembly dated 24th April 1958(Doc. 811)in which he dealt so exhaustively with this problem that it is unnecessary for me to go into greater detail here. The British Prime Minister, however, has now introduced a new idea. The communique issued at the end of his visit to M. Khrushchev says : " In this connection, they agreed that further study could usefully be made of the possibilities of increasing security by some method of limitation of forces and weapons, both conventional and nuclear, in an agreed area in Europe coupled with an appropriate system of inspection. " This idea, which has been explained as " thinning out of forces ", has aroused much controversy. It has been claimed on the British side that the suggestion was not new and was part of the Western proposals at Geneva in October 1955 for a treaty of assurance in the context of German reunification. It has also been said that the limitation of forces and weapons in an area in Europe does not presuppose disengagement, which means the separation of the main land forces of East and West by a " neutral " and " atom-free " belt and the withdrawal of all non-indigenous forces. Nor would it entail the withdrawal of any particular force or the exclusion of any particular weapon. Your Rapporteur feels bound to say that the effect of the British proposal is not clear, and it would indeed be of great value if a member of the British Government were able to come and elaborate on it for the information of the Assembly. Your Rapporteur understands that such an invitation has in fact been sent by the Presi-dent of the Assembly, on behalf of the Bureau, to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. Nevertheless, I must add that, even if some kind of demilitarised area involving

equal military sacrifices could be devised in Central Europe, it is difficult to maintain that the security of the West, seen from a global standpoint, would thereby be assured unless (1) there were comparable arrangements wherever East and West forces are facing each other and (2) there was some disarmament agreement covering intermediate range and intercontinental ballistic missiles. Thus one is quickly led to the inevitable conclusion that increased security could only be achieved through general controlled disarmament, and a beginning is being made in that direction at the conference for the discontinuance of nuclear tests at Geneva and at the meeting of experts on the prevention of surprise attacks (unfortunately suspended since December). That is why the suggestion was made earlier in this paper that the prospects of the first of these conferences might be reviewed and Mr. Ormsby-Gore invited to make a statement to the Assem-bly.

2. Conclusion

27. The enunciation of these general considerations in no way implies reverting to the diplomatic stalemate of the previous years. I am convinced that the gravity of conditions requires that we should negotiate, but plans which we are prepared to accept must pass these tests, and it would be a grave mistake for the West to try and take short cuts to German reunification and Soviet withdrawal from East Europe fraught with the risks of Western military insecurity and German isolation from its European destiny.

28. The Assembly may ask whether the Political Committee are able to contribute a definite proposal which might be useful in the search for new ideas. Certain members of the Committee drew attention to the fact that the possibility of joint international action, within the framework of the United Nations, may have been insufficiently explored. They doubted whether it could harm our just cause to raise the matter in the United Nations and ask that free elections should be organised, under United Nations supervision, in both the " D. D. R. " and the Federal Republic. But a majority of the Committee, having heard the views of our German colleagues, felt that, while this was an avenue which might be further explored at the appropriate time, it was not likely to lead to practical results at the moment.

29. Another idea that was mentioned was whether it might be suggested that the Conference of Foreign Ministers of the four Powers should set up a special committee of Deputies for Germany in the same way as the Council of Foreign Ministers (France, United Kingdom, U. S. A. and U. S. S. R.) had created a Special Committee of Deputies to discuss and prepare a State Treaty with Austria. It was recalled that this committee had met repeatedly from 1947 to 1955 and eventually, after lengthy and arduous negotiations, a State Treaty was signed on 15th May 1955. It was pointed out, however, that there was hardly a parallel between the Austrian and German situations. In Austria the Soviet Union did not have to give up a Communist dictatorship, inasmuch as a united Austrian Government existed. At the same time, it was also pointed out that Soviet reactions were sometimes unpredictable. Indo-China and Finland offered examples of Soviet restraint. One had the impression that in Indo-China the Communist forces could probably have pressed on to complete conquest, but they changed their policy and agreed to negotiate.

30. Your Committee, in conclusion, invite the Assembly to reaffirm at the same time the Western determination not to be forced out of Berlin and its willingness to negotiate. Beyond that, it would like to restrain expectations that any spectacular or comprehensive settlement with the Soviet Union is likely. In these circumstances, the need for strengthening European unity and for going ahead vigorously with our plans for establishing a prosperous and powerful European community is greater than ever.

31. This Report was considered by your Political Committee on 20th April 1959. The draft Resolution was adopted by 14 votes to 1 and 4 abstentions.