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European Policy in relation to the U.S.S.R., South-East Asia, and the question of general disarmament

Report

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1. Introduction

1.1.

The opening of this debate is attended by somewhat unusual circumstances. Our debates are usually characterised by the incisive and cogent logic of French political thought. Yet today we find ourselves abashed by a development in French politics which brings us face to face with new problems. "We must accept the fact that the decision of the National Assembly on 30th August will dominate the whole course of this debate. To shirk that issue would be a dereliction of duty. The most urgent task of the Council of Europe is to assess the consequences of the rejection of E.D.C., to seek some means of filling the vacuum thus created (see [Doc. 285](#)).

Despite its many vicissitudes, the Council of Europe has never wavered nor abandoned the struggle. Now it must take heart from the thought that by holding a Session in the midst of an entirely new situation it finds itself presented with a great opportunity and at the same time faced with a grave danger. The danger is that the Council may find that it lacks the creative imagination and political realism to suggest some valid alternative. The opportunity consists in the fact that these new developments will enable the Council to demonstrate, at this critical juncture, that it can effectively contribute to the framing of a common policy in the light of recent developments in the international situation.

Let us begin by weighing up our difficulties. To surmount any obstacle you must first of all take the measure of it.

In his introductory report of 20th May, M. Guy Mollet very properly pointed out that there was no reason for the Assembly to change appreciably the basis of the conclusions it had reached in the previous debate- of September, 1953, introduced and led by the Rapporteur of that time, M. Spaak. It was not that events had not come tumbling over one another with their usual- rapidity, but the failure of the Berlin Conference changed nothing in our relations with the U.S.S.R. nor in our position concerning the urgent questions of Germany and Austria. Your Committee on General Affairs therefore considered at that time that the Rapporteur, without leaving aside those primary questions, should concern himself with a number of other issues involved in framing a common policy for the States represented in this Assembly. The interesting approaches made by Turkey and Greece to Yugoslavia, the difficulties which threatened to arise between certain Member States, the fact that peace is indivisible and the consequent, necessity not to neglect the question of a common position with regard to the political transformations in Asia ; all these subjects, in the opinion of your Committee, must find their place in the Report. Furthermore, the affirmation of principle contained in Resolution 44 concerning disarmament required us to undertake more detailed consideration of that subject with a view to reaching definite conclusions in the domain of practical politics.

Then came the Geneva Agreements of 20th July. Important as they may be for France, and therefore Europe, they have two other effects : they avert the danger of a general conflict in the Far East which might bring upon us a third World War, and they mark the entry of Communist China into the sphere of international diplomacy.



When your Committee on General Affairs met on 26th July to furnish its Rapporteur with more detailed indications of the probable range and scope of this debate, it found that there had been a shift of emphasis, and that it would be more appropriate to devote the first part only of the Report to purely European problems, though these have lost none of their importance, the second being given up to South-East Asian problems and the third to disarmament.

But since that time — although the foregoing considerations have lost none of their force — the decision of the French National Assembly has left Europe confronted with certain urgent problems. The plan outlined by your Committee still holds good, but the relative importance of its sub-divisions has changed. Any fear entertained by the Committee that a lengthy debate on previous lines might result in useful, but not very inspiring, recapitulation has suddenly been dispelled. An earnest consideration of the damage wrought by the failure of E.D.C., and of the issues raised thereby, must, consequently, be the primary concern of this Report. Furthermore, the Committee on General Affairs expects from this Assembly something more than a mere stock-taking. That has already been done, more than adequately, by many excellent commentators. Your Rapporteur will also attempt a strictly objective assessment of the position. But to draw up a balance-sheet, though useful, is only a preliminary step. What your Committee expects from this discussion is a lumbur of constructive suggestions, which it will later sift over and co-ordinate, so that the Council of Europe, in the course of the following week, may make a realistic contribution to practical political action.

Subject-matter and general lines of the debate

The task assigned to the Council of Europe may be defined as follows. To extend to the fifteen countries represented in the Assembly the close understanding established between the five signatories of the Brussels Treaty ; to draw these links closer ; to awaken in Europe the consciousness of its inherent identity of interests, and of its community of traditions and ideals, still obscured by national diversities, desirable and necessary though, these may be ; and, above all, to bring Europe to realise that its prospects of a worth-while future or of irreparable decay depend upon its own decision either to unite or to fail to do so.

Those who have shared in the work of the Council of Europe since August, 1949 have witnessed the efforts of some of its members to achieve unity by the establishment of a political authority with limited functions but real powers. But it is open to question whether institutional links are indispensable for the establishment of a common policy and for the solution of the complex problems arising in the world today for all the countries of free Europe alike. To be sure, a strictly identical policy would presuppose a single Foreign Minister deriving his authority from an institution endowed with the necessary public support to take decisions on behalf of all. We have found that for the time being it is not possible to set up such an institution. Does that mean we should abandon all hope of the results we expect of it ? Is it not possible to determine, as it were, a common denominator to our several national policies faced with the same difficulties and dangers ? Surely that is the most urgent task. The Council of Europe offers a means whereby the search for a common policy can be carried on in the freest possible atmosphere and be based upon most up-to-date information.. As M. Spaak said in his Report of 14th September, 1953 ⁽¹⁾, the Assembly, not possessing real powers of its own, must fulfil its consultative role to the utmost, and within the limits of its competence discuss all the major problems with which Europe is faced.

It is one of the tasks of the Council of Europe to strengthen the links between its Member States. At the stage we have now reached those links can best be strengthened by the adoption of a common policy in relations between the fifteen countries of Europe and the rest of the world. It is the business of the Consultative Assembly to work out the general lines of this policy and to submit its findings to the Governments represented.

Such, then, is our task, and we are well aware how valuable a one it may be. "When M. Spaak proposed last year that the Assembly should undertake this task, and accepted the responsibility as Rapporteur for introducing and conducting the debate, this initiative proved to be so successful that the working out of a common policy has become, and will remain in the future, one of the main preoccupations of the Council of Europe. The predominant theme of M. Spaak's Report was our relations with the U.S.S.R., linked unavoidably with the German and Austrian situations. Those problems are still outstanding and will be the keynote of our present discussions. Yet when M. Guy Mollet succeeded M. Spaak as Rapporteur in May, 1954, the Berlin Conference had taken place, and in the initial phase of the Geneva Conference the new China was for the first time admitted to the stage of great international discussions. This fact will be given due consideration in

1. [Doc. 181](#) (1953).

the pages of the present document. We shall avoid going over too much familiar ground, and apart from an occasional brief recapitulation, we shall take for granted all those factors which have been dealt with in previous Reports and which have been largely unaffected by the march of events.

Choice of problems to be discussed

As our purpose is to work out a common policy, we must face the inescapable fact that everything in this sphere is interdependent. Not even minor factors can be neglected. We cannot leave out of account the numerous indications of unity between the peoples of Europe and their tangible expression in the Entente Cordiale, the Brussels Treaty, the Benelux Agreements, the Scandinavian Agreements, the Council of Europe, the O.E.E.C., the E.P.U., and the E.C.S.C. These developments must not only be given due consideration, but must be used to buttress our common policy. The Committee has preferred, however, that they should only be briefly recalled, in order to avoid transforming this Report into a ponderous historical retrospect, more documentary than topical, in which the essential problems of the day might be obscured.

The Committee has considered, however, that particular mention should be made of the Ankara Pact. This new Agreement, which was supplemented by others on 9th August, has raised a number of important problems for the Council of Europe. The signatories of the Ankara Pact, which, under the terms of Article 9, is open to the accession of any State prepared to accept its general principles, have apparently aimed higher than the establishment of a limited defensive alliance, and are considering a future Balkan alliance more widely based than at present. The Treaty would also appear to embody a friendly appeal to Italy. Furthermore, the institution, on the initiative of our colleague M. Maccas, of a consultative assembly for the three countries will doubtless bring up the problem of relations between their Assembly and our own, and indirectly the questions of relations between the Council of Europe and Yugoslavia.

In the search for a common policy it would be unrealistic to point with satisfaction to all the favourable factors while turning a blind eye to the internal difficulties of Europe. Though the present document may seem to do so, this does not reflect a "heads in the sand" attitude, but is based upon the following reasons.

Our purpose is to define a policy of the Council of Europe in relation to the outside world. It is quite understandable that certain members of the Assembly should have felt impelled, at the May Session, to inform us of their own particular difficulties, such as the question of Cyprus. We hope, however, to avoid considering those problems in our Report. It would be in contradiction with the Statute to claim that they lie outside the competence of the Assembly, but, in our view, it is not the business of a Report devoted to the framing of a common policy to lay undue emphasis on internal European difficulties. While the study of the Cyprus problem undoubtedly lies within the competence of the Council, and the Council should certainly proffer its good offices to smooth out difficulties arising between Members when direct negotiations seem unpromising, it should be remembered that Rule 15 of the Rules of Procedure lays down the method to be followed in such cases.

The Committee has therefore suggested that its Report should be built upon these major preoccupations, which may be defined in the following terms.

Though the problems of East-West relations have lost none of their urgency, which is indeed intensified by the Soviet Note of 24th July, the problems of South-East Asia without doubt intimately affect the peace of the world and should therefore be given their due place in the final Report,

The Committee entirely approved the action of the Assembly in unanimously adopting in Resolution 44, Section A (3), a definite principle concerning disarmament, but considers it urgently necessary to study this question from a less theoretical and more pragmatic standpoint.

This Report will therefore consider the following three issues :

1. The policy of the Council of Europe in relation to the U.S.S.R. and associated States, in the light of developments since the adoption of Resolution 44, in particular the setback to the Treaty of Paris.
2. The problems of South-East Asia ;
3. Disarmament.

2. The Policy of the Council of Europe in relation to the U. S. S. R. and its Associated States in the light of developments since the adoption of Resolution 44

Our first task is to review succinctly the whole course of events from September, 1953, when Resolution 44 was adopted by the Assembly, up to the beginning of September, 1954,

2.1. Developments since the Session of September, 1953

The outstanding event has been the conference of the Foreign Ministers of the "Big Four" from 25th January to 18th February, 1954. The outcome of the failure of this meeting was that the U.S.S.R. granted the German People's Republic "full sovereignty".

The second major development, which arose directly from this Conference, was the Soviet Note of 31st March, 1954, in which the U.S.S.R. sought to correct the impression given by Article 9 of its proposed collective security treaty, concerning the position of the United States' as observers, and at the same time suggested Soviet participation in N.A.T.O.

The Geneva Conference has led to peace in Indo-China and set an entirely new complexion on the problems of South-East Asia. China now occupies a new place in the world, with consequences which are examined in the chapter on Asiatic problems.

Lastly, there has been the detonation of American thermonuclear bombs[^] These tests have opened the eyes of the public to the menace of these devastating weapons and have spurred efforts on all sides to find some means, however bold; to break through the impasse of East-West relations and dispel this nightmare (cf. the chapter on disarmament below).

2.2. Resolution 44 considered in the light of these events

It is against the background of these events that Resolution 44 must be considered, in order to see whether the measures it recommends for the settlement of European problems are still valid or whether they should not to some extent be supplemented and brought up to date.

Clearly, the principles laid down in Section A still hold good as the basis of the Council's policy. There is therefore no need to refer to them except to reaffirm their importance. This is particularly true of the paragraph concerning the need for multilateral disarmament, to which we devote a separate chapter.

Paragraph 1 : The convening of a four-Power Conference.

The four-Power Conference advocated by the Assembly has now taken place, on the basis of an Agenda including the Austrian and German questions. Agreement was secured, on other questions at least as far as procedure was concerned, but no agreement was reached on the main issues ; no progress was made on the question of the State Treaty for Austria, nor on the reunification of Germany. Yet the Berlin discussions, though they never reached the level of negotiations properly so called, had at least the advantage of serving to clarify the position of the two sides.

Paragraph 2 : The Austrian question

It became clear from the discussions on the State Treaty for Austria that this single problem presented as much difficulty as any other aspect of the general European settlement. The key to this situation is the concern of the U.S.S.R. for its security in Europe, its desire to avoid disturbing the present balance of forces before it has been replaced by an equally satisfactory state of equilibrium. Even the Austrian offer of political non-commitment failed to induce the Russians to abandon their stand on this point. At the end of the Berlin Conference the following alternatives were possible ; either to conclude the Peace Treaty without bringing the occupation to an end, or to maintain the status quo. A peace treaty concluded in such conditions would present the following drawbacks :

- a. Austria would be obliged to pay 150 million dollars without obtaining in return the evacuation of its territory — this being subject to review, according to the latest Soviet proposal, in 1955 ; and still more important,
- b. Austria, while still under occupation, would lose the protection at present afforded by the Occupation Statute, which sets out the responsibilities of the Powers with regard to Austria. Austrian sovereignty could not withstand the pressure of a Power which, though under no further obligations in respect of the Austrian Government, could still maintain troops on its territory.

As the question of the State Treaty is closely bound up with general political developments in Europe, it would appear to be in the interests of Austria, while maintaining its efforts to secure the conclusion of this Treaty, to gain more complete independence in the conduct of its domestic and foreign affairs progressively, and thus

satisfy its basic claims as far as possible, even if the actual signing of a State Treaty is indefinitely postponed. Austria may obtain, for example, a reduction in the occupation forces, control of its own frontier, the return to Austrian hands of factories at present administered by the Russians, etc.

Paragraph 3 : the German question

The outcome of the discussions on this question was summed up by The Times on 24th February, 1954 :

" It is now clear that neither Russia nor the West can agree to German unification on terms incompatible with their vital interests. The linchpin of Western Defence — West German co-operation — remains the hard core of Russian fears; -and the main Western anxiety — Russian armies in the heart of Europe — is, in the Russian view, the indispensable condition of the cold war.

The course of the discussions at the Berlin Conference showed indeed that each side is endeavouring to bring the whole of Germany, once united, into its camp ; the West by its proposal for free elections and freedom for a united Germany to decide its own destiny, in the certainty that the resulting choice would be in its favour : the East by proposing the neutralisation of united Germany, a state of affairs which would clearly favour the strongest neighbouring Power.

The proposals made by either side at Berlin were thus mutually unacceptable. The only solution therefore was to maintain the status quo, as this did not involve any immediate danger, nor affect the present balance of power. Yet the long-term dangers of the situation were not under-rated by the Western Ministers : and the presence of the Red Army in the heart of Europe forbids any hope of cessation of the cold war,

Paragraph 4 : Freedom of decision for united Germany

The position of the Western Foreign Ministers in this respect was the same as that of the Assembly, namely that the decision on the final position of Germany should be freely taréalisée, ken by its future Government. The British plan contained the following proposals :

" The all-German Government shall have authority to assume the international rights and obligations of the Federal Republic and the Soviet Zone of Germany, and to conclude such other international agreements as it may wish. "

Speaking at the Conference on 1st February, 1954, M. Bidault said :

" It will be for the German Government itself to decide whether or not it will assume the international obligations previously contracted by the Federal Republic and the German People's Republic. "

Finally, on 3rd February, Mr. Dulles, in agreement with his two colleagues, proposed to amend the earlier text of the relevant paragraph in the " Eden Plan " as follows :

" The all-German Government shall be free to accept or reject the international rights and obligations... "

That M. Molotov continued to question whether the future German Government would be allowed this freedom of decision arose not so much from scepticism as from the certainty that a united Government freely elected would turn towards the West and thus bring the whole of Germany into the European Communities, in particular the E.D.C. When the Western Ministers asked M. Molotov to take the risk of free elections as they were prepared to do, and acquiesce in whichever decision the German people took, he refused on the pretext that the elections as proposed by the West would not be really free.

Thus on 5th February he said: "Parliamentary institutions are of course a step forward compared with the past, but there is no guarantee today that they will put in power the forces which are working for peace."

But the real reason for M. Molotov's refusal can be deduced from his remark of 30th January, 1954 : " I t is not yet clear what will be the situation in Germany following the elections". Knowing full well that elections would sweep away the regime set up in Eastern Germany, the U.S.S.R. will not agree to hold them unless the future status of united Germany is fixed beforehand. With this fundamental reservation, however, M. Molotov did accept the principle of free elections ; he agreed that the electoral system to be used should be that of the Weimar Republic, and that there shoild first be, a commission of enquiry to ensure that the necessary conditions existed for' free elections, which marked an advance on his previous position.

No compromise was reached at Berlin between the two conflicting concepts ; freedom of decision for a Government appointed by free elections on the one side, and its commitment to neutrality on the other.

Paragraph 5: The policy of European integration.

In this paragraph, the Assembly expressed its belief that the unification of Europe, since it was a response to inherent structural needs of permanent validity, should be pressed forward independently of current political developments. The need for unity was all the more urgent because a United Europe in itself constituted an essential factor in the establishment of an enduring peace; This was also the thesis of the Western Foreign Ministers at the Berlin Conference. On 1st February, 1954 Mr. Eden, reminding M. Molotov of the guarantees offered by the E.D.C, said :

" I put it to the Soviet Delegation ; is this system not a better safeguard than a system of national armies, including a German national army such as the Soviet Government has proposed ? "

This view was supported by M. Bidault, who, on 10th February, pointed out that in the E.D.C Germany would be associated with countries whose peaceful intentions the Soviet Union could not doubt.

M. Molotov persisted in regarding the E.D.C. as an aggressive combination. On 1st February, he alleged that the attempts by the Western Powers to form, in collaboration with the rulers of Western Germany, a military bloc directed against the Soviet Union had a political significance. On 12th February, he drew this distinction between N.A.T.O. and the E.D.C. :

" The first of these organisations is already in existence ; the second exists only on paper. Furthermore, N.A.T.O. was not designed to revive German militarism, as is the E.D.C. "

He concluded accordingly :

" It will not be possible to integrate a rearmed Western Germany into a united Germany... If Western Germany declines to rearm, unification may be possible, but if Western Germany agrees to rearm, unification will be unattainable for some time to come. "

The question whether the Government of united Germany would be allowed to participate in communities of a non-military character was not raised at the Berlin Conference. The only community mentioned by either side was the E.D.C, concerning the nature and purpose of which it proved impossible to reconcile opposing views.

Paragraph 6 : Association of the United Kingdom.

The text of an Agreement for such association was published on 14th April, 1954. It is highly important and significant. It provides a remarkable illustration of what Mr. Nutting said in the Council of Europe. No commentary could be as enlightening as the text itself.

Paragraph 7: Mutual Security Pact.

The Assembly's idea of a mutual security system was discussed in general terms by the Western Foreign Ministers in Berlin. M. Bidault stated on 2nd February, 1954, that his Government was strongly in favour of a European security system in which France and the Soviet Union would jointly seek means of guaranteeing peace. He affirmed on 10th February that France would continue to observe the terms of the Franco-Soviet Treaty. Mr. Eden proposed on 6th February, 1954 to extend the duration of the Anglo-Soviet Treaty and declared his willingness to examine any other means of providing the U.S.S.R. with additional guarantees. Mr. Dulles, in his speech of 9th February, recalled that the security system set up by the United Nations Charter prohibited any attempt at aggression and in this respect applied equally to non-Member States, thus covering the case of Germany.

The proposal for a mutual security pact within the framework of the United Nations between the U.S.S.R., the United States of America, the United Kingdom, the countries adhering to the European Political Community, or — once established — that Community itself, was not discussed at the Berlin Conference in the precise form in which it was put forward by the Assembly.

Nevertheless, the Soviet reaction to any such proposal may be deduced from certain comments of M. Molotov, as, for example, in his speech of 10th February, 1954 : " A n y guarantee for European security presupposes guarantees against the resurgence of German militarism. Yet the E.D.C would inevitably revive that militarism. By linking the question of Soviet security with the establishment of the E.D.C, the Western Powers are entrusting the maintenance of their security to the very country whose resurrection as a military

Power is the greatest threat to European security." Referring next to the Locarno Pact, M. Molotov pointed out that when the United Kingdom and Italy guaranteed France against, possible German attacks they were not partners in a military alliance with Germany.

Thus, M. Molotov insisted on the need for a system of collective security for all European countries and proposed a general "European collective security T r e a t y " as an alternative to the E.D.C.

The Western Foreign Ministers rejected this plan, as it appeared designed to replace the North Atlantic Treaty and relegate the United States to the role of a mere observer in European affairs. On 15th February, M. Bidault asked the pertinent question whether the Soviet plan was compatible with N.A.T.O. M. Molotov's reply, on 18th February, was that the question required examination. "We must not rule out the possibility of modifying the North Atlantic Treaty in such a way as to reconcile differences of opinion as to its nature", he explained. In answer to criticism concerning the disequilibrium of forces within this-system, M. Molotov said that " t h e Soviet Union did not wish to occupy a dominant position in the system".

Lastly, in its Note of 31st March, 1951, the Soviet Government stated that in view of American participation in both wars and the desire of the United Kingdom and France to bring in the United States, it "saw no objection to the participation of the United States in the collective Security Treaty". I t was also prepared, in conjunction with the interested Governments, to consider the possibility of the U.S.S.R. joining the North Atlantic Treaty, which would "lose its aggressive character if all the great Powers of the anti-Hitler coalition became members". This "would definitely prevent either part of Germany from being drawn into a military bloc".

The proposals contained in this Soviet Note were rejected by the Western Powers in their Reply of 7th May, 1954, on the ground that they were not intended to remove the real causes of tension in Europe, namely, its division into two spheres and its general insecurity.

The second criticism levelled at the Soviet plan was concerned with the fact that, in Article 1, it proposed that "pending the establishment of a united, peaceful, democratic German State, the German Federal Republic and the German People's Republic may be parties to the Treaty, enjoying equal rights". The effect of the Treaty, then, as M. Bidault pointed out on 15th February, was to perpetuate the division of Germany. On 10th February, 1954 he declared that even if the notion of a European collective security system was conceivable, it would be preferable to wait until the Peace Treaty with German had been signed.

The Berlin Conference having failed to change the status quo, the U.S.S.R. took the step of granting Eastern Germany "full sovereignty", restricted only by the obligations deriving from the inter-allied agreements on Germany, which implied that the policy of unification was not excluded. The Western Powers reserved the same rights in the Bonn Agreements (Article 7).

I t was also confirmed that Eastern Germany had been rearmed. Obviously, the Russians will incorporate Eastern Germany in their own system of alliances *pari passu* with the integration of the Federal Republic in the free European community.

The clangers of maintaining the status quo were many times emphasised at the Conference. Mr. Eden declared on 25th January, 1954, that there would be no stability in Europe while Germany remained divided. M. Bidault followed, on 3rd February, by saying that the division of Germany could no longer be maintained without grave risk to all parties. M. Molotov stressed, on several occasions, the danger of having two Germanics, each armed against the other. But the U.S.S.R. is the only State interested in maintaining the status quo, which allows it to maintain troops in the heart of Europe, a post of vantage from which it can always exert an influence on political developments.

M. Spaak's first Report to the Assembly contained a paragraph which mentioned the possibility of offering the U.S.S.R. demilitarised zones. The suggestion was later dropped. Yet it was clear from the Berlin discussions that the main fear of the Russians is the inclusion of the whole of Germany in an alliance such as the E.D.C., which would mean that Western Forces would advance as far as the Oder. While such a danger exists the Soviet Government will never relinquish control of the Eastern Zone.

The latest development in the above context is the Soviet Note handed to the American, French and British Ambassadors at Moscow on 24th July.

The significance of certain details of this Note is open to discussion, but at least the broad lines are clear enough. The Soviet Union proposes another conference to seek a fresh formula for collective security in Europe and the unconditional prohibition of atomic weapons. No time, place or form of procedure are suggested. The text may be scanned in vain for any fresh contribution. The Note can only be understood on

the assumption, which any intelligent observer would have made, that the signature of the Geneva agreements would immediately be followed by a new attempt by Moscow to delay the ratification of E.D.C. and to deprive Europe of the American co-operation secured by M. Mendes-France at Geneva.

The general consequences of the Geneva agreements signed on 20th July will be examined in our chapter on the problems of South East Asia. We deal here with their repercussions in the European context.

1. In the first place, the end of the war in Indo-China has relieved France of a heavy burden. The tragic waste of human life has come to an end, and all friends of France will share in this relief. There has been a considerable reduction in French military commitments. The financial drain on the French budget has ceased. Hopes of internal economic recovery, hitherto beset by almost insuperable difficulties, have revived. The stability of France cannot but reinforce the stability of Europe. If we can take advantage of this opportunity to bring about social betterment, that will be the most effective barrier to the spread of Communism from inside, which is as dangerous, and perhaps more so, than external pressure.

2. This is scarcely the place for detailed discussion of the difficulties to which the Geneva Conference gave rise between the European powers and their American allies, except that we must pay tribute to the good offices of British diplomacy and the personal ability of Mr. Eden and M. Mendes-France in smoothing over those difficulties. But the outcome of it all was that the disclosure of American intentions at the present Manila Conference brought Europe up against the problem of South East Asia.

3. Though the Geneva Agreement had the merit of allaying apprehensions, often very real, that the Franco-Vietminh conflict might blaze up into a world conflagration, they were widely exploited by Communist propaganda to discredit the NATO partnership.

To cash in on the diplomatic victory so gained, the Soviet Government handed to the French, British and American Ambassadors the Note of July 24th, followed up by the Note of August 5th. The contents of these Notes can be briefly summarized : they call for a formula for collective security and the flat prohibition of atomic weapons.

In view of the facts recalled above, it will perhaps be found surprising that there are few points in these Notes not covered already in proposals put forward before and during the Berlin Conference. They should, however, be carefully studied from two view points.

In the first place, they undoubtedly leave the door open for fresh negotiations ; they raise hopes, after the Berlin disappointment, that only the first round has been lost, and that we can continue the struggle with better chances of success. A reply has recently been sent. The chancelleries seem to be at pains to avoid rejecting any opportunity for negotiation, while rejecting all formulae which are unduly vague, and too obviously inspired by delaying tactics.

In the second place, though the Soviet Notes may betoken a genuine desire to re-open examination of the problems concerned, they clearly constituted, on the eve of the discussions at the Palais Bourbon, a supreme effort to checkmate the E.D.C. That is the latest development of importance to Europe which can be dealt with in this Report. Contrary to all expectations on 24th July, it subsequently transpired that the Soviet Union has not been pursuing a vain hope. On 30th August the Treaty setting up the European Defence Community was rejected by the French National Assembly.

2.3. The Problems of South East Asia

Strange though it may seem, not only has the rejection of E.D.C. profoundly affected the political problems of the six-Power Europe and relations with Eastern European countries, but it has changed completely the aspect of South-East Asian problems. In the first place, America, disappointed by the turn of events in Europe, is now trying to find in Asia some other means of strengthening collective security ; in the second place, the attitude of the independent Asian countries on the eve of the Manila Conference, was considerably modified as a result of the frustration of the E.D.C.

The Asian countries who look to Communism for a solution of their problems have been encouraged by this development. Those which hold out against Communism, though with extreme caution, see in it a further justification for their attitude of prudent neutrality.

It is vital for Europe to understand that in this age of jet-bombers peace is more than ever indivisible, and that all European efforts to secure it will at best achieve only precarious results, if at the same time a clear and comprehensive understanding is not reached on the deep-seated and difficult problems of the Far East. That

fact seems to have been long since understood by two of the countries represented here : the United Kingdom, whose tactful and far-sighted policy is beyond all praise, and Turkey, whose agreement with Pakistan we should examine with the keenest interest.

I have no need to remind you that twice already since 1944 European peace and security have been jeopardised by local conflicts in Asia, both of which contained the seeds of a third World War.

A common policy of the European peoples with regard to Asian affairs requires to be worked out in the light of a number of factors which are briefly reviewed below².

4. Since the end of the second world war many former dependencies of European countries have obtained national sovereignty. These are, Indonesia, the Philippines, India, Pakistan, Burma, Ceylon and the Associated States of Indo-China. The Chinese People's Republic has imposed a long-lost unity upon China. These States together total 1,000 million inhabitants out of a total world population of 2,500 million.

5. The existence of these countries raises a much greater problem than would arise from aspirations to independence on the part of other "colonial" peoples. It is true that during the period of European occupation they learnt the modern technique essential for the development of productivity, mechanical skills of which they had long been ignorant. But Europe did not bring them civilisation. They possessed an advanced and ancient civilisation of their own, to which they remain profoundly attached. Nothing could be clumsier than to under-estimate this, as has sometimes regrettably been the case.

6. China has always enjoyed an intellectual prestige in the Far East which is still unaffected in spite of the accession to power of a Government of Communist allegiance, even in countries whose rulers are themselves most profoundly and violently anti-Communist.

7. India and China have resumed a dominant place in the international sphere, the former by common consent, the latter by the force of events. The question whether or not to admit China to the United Nations is still open to discussion. Above all, it can and should be asked whether, in return for its admission, China should not make some contribution to a stable peace and whether China's admission should not lead to the admission of other States at present excluded. But the fact remains that China was represented and took part in the discussions at Geneva.

8. The new China has rarely let pass any opportunity of asserting its independence of Moscow. It has adopted a policy with regard to India and Burma based on principles of nonaggression and non-interference with internal affairs.

9. The national awakening of the Asian peoples is accompanied by a very vigorous spirit of independence, and not only independence of their former colonisers. They wish to assert their independence of all and sundry. This feeling is in no way different from the desire for independence of European peoples. It is one point in common between Europe and Asia. When countries realise that they share the same aspirations, they may well adopt policies which are more compatible, which show greater mutual understanding, and which may indeed make possible some measure of association.

10. At the same time nothing less than a technical revolution is required if Asia wishes to prevent a catastrophic fall in the standard of living of the masses. The proportion of people suffering from malnutrition has risen from 38.6 % in 1939 to 59.5 % in 1954. It is in Asia that the great famine areas of the world are to be found.

11. In order to preserve their independence and to make the industrial progress necessary to save their peoples from hunger, the Asian countries need peace. There is little doubt of the sincerity of their desire for peace, since it corresponds with their vital needs. It can therefore be accepted with confidence, tempered by a certain degree of caution. This explains why the Prime Ministers of Burma, Ceylon, India, Indonesia and Pakistan so readily reached agreement at Colombo on the question of preventing all interference with their internal regimes, whether from Communist or anti-Communist sources. It is noteworthy that even the most anti-Communist of them were against any warlike move against Communism.

12. Yet when faced with the grim spectre of famine, the Asian peoples begin to doubt whether democracy is capable of solving the problem of productivity and of supplying their elementary needs in a sufficiently short space of time.

2. See also the memorandum submitted for information by the Secretariat-General.

That is particularly true of countries which, though they have recovered their independence, have not followed in the path of Communist China. These are India, Indonesia, Burma, Ceylon and Pakistan. With the exception of the latter, they look to India for political guidance, and Indian policy towards China was clearly defined by Pandit Nehru in his letter of 1st March this year to President Eisenhower when the United States decided to conclude a military pact with Pakistan.

Here a brief survey of the situation of those countries is necessary.

The country of whose policy most is known is India, and this is sufficiently clearly dealt with in the letter from Pandit Nehru mentioned above. We will not risk distorting the picture by attempting a cursory review of it here.

India's neighbour, Burma, pursues the same policy. It is more exposed to Communist propaganda, but up to now has remained impervious. General elections, which we have no reason to believe were falsified in any way, have given its socialist reformist and anti-Communist government a very strong majority.

The situation in Indonesia is to some extent similar but, owing to a number of factors, more confused. There is a wide diversity among the islands of which the Republic is composed ; some are under-, some are over-populated; natural resources are sometimes more than adequate for the needs of consumption, sometimes the reverse. A further complication is presented by differences of religion and national customs. There are 14 political parties pulling in different directions.

Pakistan is in a very different position from the other states. In the first place, its two parts are separated by 2,000 km. of Indian territory. Secondly, it has no historic roots nor economic cohesion, and is only kept together by the bond of Mohammedanism, with which the political structure is riddled to such an extent that to some observers, such as Tibor Mende, the country had in some degree the appearance of a theocracy. It is still suffering from the uncertainties which result from the fact that its constitutional status is not yet fully defined.

But, in spite of all these differences, there are a number of common factors which these countries should take into account in defining their policy.

13. Having recently gained their independence, they are imbued with a violent anti- Colonialist spirit and a deep distrust of the Western nations.

14. They are proud and sensitive ; though they recognise the technical superiority of the West, they believe they are the inheritors of a civilisation at least the equal of those of their former masters.

15. They are very short of consumer goods, the standard of living being often lower than the already poor standard of 1939. Only capital equipment in both agriculture and industry, coupled with effective agrarian reform can save them. Some effort has been made, but it encounters a further obstacle in a rapid increase in population which more than counter-balances increased production.

16. Another stumbling-block to external assistance is anti-Colonial feeling, the fear of foreign interference in their internal affairs. Thus, in 1952, Burma, a staunchly anti-Communist country, ceased to accept American aid, though this was urgently needed.

17. All these countries are anti-Communist; but, with perhaps the exception of Pakistan, they all refuse to allow the military aspect of the problem to outweigh their internal difficulties. To put it more explicitly, they believe that the improvement of the standard of living of their peoples is a far surer weapon against Communist expansion than any military action.

They have difficulty in accepting American policy, which they consider clumsy, and they refuse to associate themselves with it. They believe in the possibility of friendly coexistence with the China of Mao Tse Tung. They realise that China's Communist problems are the same as their own and they consider that the Chinese have every right to endeavour to solve those problems by Communist methods if they wish to do so. They do not hesitate to point out that, while it would be hard to find acts of Russian policy which tally with Russia's perpetual appeals for peace, the Government of Mao Tse Tung is a very different matter. And they draw attention to the various Treaties signed, for example with India, on the subject of trade relations with Tibet. China, they say, needs peace just as much as we do, and far more than Russia, to accomplish the industrial revolution indispensable to the solution of her food problem.

Any defensive policy against China will always appear to them as a policy of encirclement. Not only can the peoples of the subcontinental regions of Asia not subscribe to it, but it has the disadvantage of throwing China into the arms of Russia, whereas her natural tendency would be to seek the friendship of the other Asian peoples.

It is difficult to know whether Mr. Nehru and his followers are right. But these are the views of hundreds of millions of men who, taken together, represent a quarter of the world's population. Now, if there is one thing certain in politics, it is that one cannot with impunity alienate a quarter of the world's population. The most urgent and important problem is that of providing their daily bread. The present system of helping the backward nations is not necessarily either the best or the most efficient. The system of private investment, often justifiably, arouses distrust and leads to the conflict of interests. Moreover, production, transport, distribution and wages policy should all form part of the same well organised co-ordinated and methodical plan. In order that there shall be no question of partiality, we have obtained these views solely from unprejudiced American observers.

Senator Flanders protested mildly but firmly against his Government's tendency to consider Asian problems from a purely military point of view, whereas the military aspect should in reality take second place. This indeed would seem to be the chief point on which the Manila Conference is open to criticism, despite the economic questions included in its programme.

As Walter Lippmann recently said "an Asian pact should be addressed not to military, but to political problems and should ensure that India has a preponderant role. At any rate, it should not become the sort of military alliance to which Pandit Nehru and the Indian nation are violently opposed...".

Mr. Nixon, Vice-President of the United States, on his return from a visit to South-East Asia, warned the United States that the Indians would consider any such pact as capable of being directed against them just as much as against any other Power.

Mr. Chester Bowles, one-time United States Ambassador to New Delhi, pointed out that, in India, the choice lay between the Nehru Government and Communism, and that to make difficulties for the former was the surest way of serving the latter.

Those words from America are probably words of wisdom. A co-ordinated and far-seeing European policy can give them considerable support and render a very necessary service to the cause of peace.

The United Kingdom seems to be pointing the way. I should like a British speaker to outline his country's Far-Eastern policy before this Assembly, and I should like the Assembly to adopt everything in that policy which we can use in common. If, in this way, we can discover certain points on which we are all agreed instead of leaving the whole burden to one or two, we shall, I am sure, have made an important contribution to the maintenance of peace.

The Manila Pact, is now signed.

The signatories, apart from, the United States, the United Kingdom and France, all three of whom are non-Asian Powers, are New Zealand and Australia whose common characteristic is that their peoples are of Western, not Eastern, descent, since the aboriginal population has been absorbed; Thailand and Pakistan whose particular position is well-known, and the Philippines. Without playing, on words, one might say that it is a pact concerning Asia rather than an Asian Pact. Mr. Nehru's speech of 9th September shows fairly clearly that the really Asian countries are far from finding in it either security or appeasement.

I have said that an agreement to cooperate in helping the South-Eastern countries socially and economically seemed to me of far greater urgency. It is too late to sign such an agreement before the Manila Pact; but it is not too late to do so after that pact, although it will need much more tact than before.

Since, however, we have committed ourselves to the military method, and a method which seems to me to be none too happy a one, it will probably be as well to adopt the procedure outlined by Mr. Eden in the House of Commons. You are aware that the United Kingdom has never been unreservedly enthusiastic about the Manila Conference. While perceiving its advantages, she discerned its disadvantages, and indeed its dangers, only too clearly. The procedure suggested by Mr. Eden is probably the one which will most effectively reduce those disadvantages.

In short I think that both from the political and military points of view, European policy should follow the British lead, which bears the stamp of a thorough experience of Asia. It should also, and this is perhaps even more urgent, apply itself to giving aid to the South-Eastern countries in the form of equipment, as rapidly, effectively and disinterestedly as possible.

2.4. Disarmament

Since the adoption of the Preamble and Article 26 of the Charter of the United Nations on 26th June, 1946, and until the London Meeting of June 1954, the slow and difficult committee work towards disarmament³ was characterised by the unyielding attitude of the Soviet Union in clinging tenaciously to view-points and principles which were unacceptable to the other Member States, while the latter were tireless in their efforts to pursue a policy of cautious but constant conciliation which was to result in the Franco-British proposal of 11th June, 1954.

Why the problem of disarmament is urgent

18. While showing that we are ready and able to defend ourselves, we must also show that we are prepared to undertake general reciprocal disarmament.

19. This is particularly necessary, since Western Germany is to be re-armed for defensive purposes.

20. The possession of the hydrogen bomb, and of even more terrible weapons, by both East and West, makes "race suicide" an immediate possibility ; this was emphasized' by President Eisenhower on 8th December, 1953 and by Sir Winston Churchill on 25th June, 1954.

The Questions of the Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs

In some quarters it is considered that the most immediate threat today is that of local wars, waged with "traditional" weapons, as in Korea, Indo-China or Malaya. The possession of atomic weapons by both camps would tend to make them neutralise each other, as in the case of poison gas.

It would nevertheless be the height of madness to view the possession of atomic weapons⁴ by both camps as a sure guarantee that such weapons will not be employed in any circumstances. On the contrary, the possibility of "race suicide", as I said, has been stressed both by President Eisenhower and by Sir Winston Churchill. It is interesting to recall their words : On 8th December, 1953 President Eisenhower said :

"On 16th July, 1945, the United States set off the World's first atomic test explosion. Since that day in 1945 the United States of America has conducted 43 atomic test explosions. Atomic bombs today are more than 25 times as powerful as the weapons with which the atomic age dawned, while hydrogen weapons are in the ranges of millions of tons of TNT equivalent. Today the United States stockpile of atomic weapons, which, of course, increases daily, exceeds by many times the explosive equivalent of the total of all the bombs and all shells that came from every aircraft and every gun in every theatre of war through all the years of world war II ."

Sir Winston Churchill, speaking in Washington three months ago⁵, talked of "pushing matters to a point where we would all be led to a situation which baffles human imagination in its terror, but which, I am quite sure, would leave us victorious — but victorious on a heap of ruins".

It has been maintained, not without logic, that the only answer to this threat was the creation of a World Democratic Government which would control the entire production and use of fissionable materials. In fact, the means now available to man for destroying civilisation are perhaps the principal argument for supporters of World Government. It would be pointless to refute here the worn-out cliché which insists that no such world government can be formed until an atmosphere of mutual confidence is created and that, if such an atmosphere existed, a world government would no longer be necessary. Political machinery may favour, as well as reflect, relations of this kind. But, since the U.S.S.R. is not prepared to accept, this world authority, nor the Western Powers to propose it next year when the revision of the United Nations Charter is contemplated, it is the urgent duty of all — including the "maximalists" — to continue to advocate a more limited method of controlling atomic weapons.

This attempt was made for the first time by the Americans in 1946. At this period America was the only country possessing atomic bombs, but the United States Government nevertheless offered to surrender this trump card in order to take part in an international pool to banish atomic warfare. This offer, warmly welcomed

3. See the memorandum submitted for information by Secretariat-General.

4. Experiments on the hydrogen bomb were conducted by the Americans at Eniwetok in 1951 and 1952, and in the Marshall Islands in March of this year. The possession of the atomic bomb by the United Kingdom was first confirmed by the Mentebello experiments in October 1952. The U. S. S. R. exploded an atomic bomb in 1949, while the first hydrogen bomb explosion in Russia took place on 12th August, 1953.

5. 25th June, 1954 to the United States Press Association,

by the free world, was rejected by the Soviet group which, while protesting its approval of the idea of control and inspection, made it known that it would not accept controls regarded as indispensable by most Governments throughout the world.

The debate thereupon continued. Its aim was a simple one : the effective control of atomic weapons. The Western spokesmen laboriously pursued their search for a solution at one abortive meeting after another, in the face of all kinds of propaganda campaigns in favour of impracticable peace treaties, unworkable plans for international control and empty formulas such as "outlawing the bomb". Their policy, which has never changed, was as follows :

1. No outlawing is possible unless a law first exists.
2. An essential condition for the enforcement of such a law is an exact knowledge of the facts.
3. No plan for the control of atomic energy is realistic unless it provides for regular and vigilant inspection in each country.

The justification for this policy is that, if East and West confine themselves to a mere promise not to use atomic bombs, the two camps will simply not trust each other and will continue their atomic tests as at present. The only difference is that it will be more difficult for democratic countries, subject as they are to parliamentary control, to keep their experiments secret than the Soviet Union.

Despite the importance of disarmament as regards conventional weapons, it is obviously atomic weapons which are the crux of the problem. The generations which have undergone two world wars are literally "surfeited with horrors", to such an extent that we are, now impervious to newspaper accounts of the new horrors to which an atomic war might expose us. These threats are so frightful that the normal human mind can no longer grasp them, even if described in everyday language. An immense question-mark hovers over the lives of all of us, and it is with this in mind that the average politician should tackle the choice which mankind has imposed upon itself in unleashing atomic energy. Even if the nature of this choice is inherent in the very decision to manufacture the first atomic bomb, it is clear that the issue has since become yet more critical.

It has been officially disclosed that the hydrogen bomb which exploded in the Marshall Islands on 1st March, 1954 could have razed to the ground any capital in the world. It appears that even the scientists conducting the experiment were unable to control it. In these circumstances it is hardly surprising that the inhabitants of Coventry in the Midlands of England should have pointed to the absurdity of talking about civil defence against such weapons. It was in view of the growing urgency of the problem that Sir Winston Churchill made it the main object of his visit to the United States last May. And it is in view of this same feeling of growing urgency that the disarmament question needs to be reconsidered.

Points at issue between the East and West on the subject of disarmament

When the Franco-British proposals were presented on 11th June, three distinct concessions were made to render the plan more ; acceptable to Russia. The West declared that it would not insist on :

1. the former Baruch plan for international ownership of all atomic plants ;
2. a preliminary census and inspection ; and ; furthermore;
3. that it would propose, instead of an overall ; solution, disarmament by stages.

On the other hand, the West could offer no compromise on the following two points:

1. that this disarmament should apply to all kinds of weapons (considering, first, that in the immediate future limited conflicts conducted with conventional weapons would be as dangerous to world peace as total atomic warfare, and, secondly, that only Western supremacy in atomic weapons could successfully counterbalance Communist superiority in conventional weapons) ;
2. effective international control (to ensure " fair-play" by both camps).

It is this second question which lies at the heart of the problem.

In the face of this situation the Soviet representatives showed no signs of intending to conduct serious negotiations. The proposals for the creation of an atomic pool, presented by President Eisenhower in December, 1953, had originally been rejected by the Soviet Union. This had caused such a stir among world public opinion that the Russians had been forced to agree to bilateral negotiations. These, however, came to nothing, and on 29th May Pravda described them as " an attempt on the part of American military circles to

gain control over atomic research in all capitalist countries". The Russian attitude during the London talks also gave the impression that Moscow is not at present seriously disposed to accept the sine qua non condition of effective control imposed by the West. M. Malik did not consider it worth while to discuss the detailed proposals presented by the Western Powers until the first Soviet demand had been satisfied. As this demand was for the uncontrolled prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons, it was at once rejected. The other Soviet demands, forming a coherent whole with which we are all only too familiar, entailed :

1. the liquidation of all bases of the Parties situated on the territory of the other States (i. e. the end of N.A.T.O.) ;
2. the reduction by one-third of all armed forces and military budgets (i.e. the maintenance of Russia's relative superiority) ;
3. the rejection of any international control organ capable of "interfering in the internal affairs of States"⁶.

Is any further progress possible ?

Whether any progress is possible or not, the attempt must be made.

In any case the situation is not as bad as the fresh failure of the Lancaster House meeting might give reason to suppose. The Franco-British proposals represent an important advance and no doubt constitute the maximum concessions which it is possible to make to the Soviet point of view, if disarmament is not to be a trap. Certain indications give us reason to think that these proposals have not yet been seriously studied by the Soviet Government.

Everything seems to depend on the establishment of a modicum of mutual confidence. Some progress could indisputably be achieved in this direction if the Franco-British proposals were to be widely discussed in our national Parliaments and the Consultative Assembly itself. In securing the support of a large majority of the Parliaments these debates would at least clearly show that the proposals constitute a sincere attempt to reach agreement — an attempt to which "Western opinion attaches much importance and of which it would then be able to apportion responsibility for the success or failure.

"We should not be discouraged by considerations as to whether these efforts will or will not be furthered by the practical establishment of a modus vivendi in South-East Asia, nor whether they will be hampered by Soviet reactions to Western German rearmament — in other words, what their chances of success are in view of the general state of East-West relations. The disarmament question has been distorted by a series of previous disappointments and the interminable discussions which have been going on for nearly ten years. It is, moreover, only one of the elements — although the first and main one — of the general Western policy of establishing a means of peaceful co-existence. In view of its importance, however, the attempt should be made.

We must not be discouraged by previous failure

It is our duty to persist in our efforts and that duty cannot be better expressed than in the words of President Truman, in a speech he made on 7th November, 1951, when, voicing the feelings of the great majority of all free peoples, he said :

" In the face of the long and gloomy history of our negotiations with the Soviet Union, there are, no doubt, many people who think that any further attempts to control and reduce armaments are a waste of time. It is true that we have experienced much bad faith, deceit and broken promises on the part of the Soviet Union over the last six years. It is true that we have met rebuffs and refusals from the Soviet Government ever since the day we offered to give up our atomic weapons and to prohibit them under a system of international control. Nevertheless, as responsible men we must try for disarmament in spite of all difficulties. We cannot let history record that we have failed by default."

President Truman was right to draw our attention to the verdict of history. If politicians paid more attention to how their actions would affect succeeding generations, these actions might more clearly bear the stamp of greatness. But President Truman was also right as regards the more immediate future. I cannot say whether our controversy in the special Disarmament Commission are doomed to failure, but I make no secret of the fact that such failure would be a cruel blow to the whole political faith of my closest friends. This misfortune, however, may be crowned by another, with immediate and serious consequences : namely that the

6. The United States delegates suggested that the team of resident inspectors of the control organ should interfere as little as possible with the economic plans and in the private, collective and official relations of the different countries.

Communists should be able to maintain, with some semblance of truth, that this failure was our responsibility. Nothing could be more useful to Soviet propaganda ; nothing would more surely sap our resistance to aggression. Thus if we persevere, with all our strength and our sincerity, in our efforts to progress towards a disarmament solution, we shall, by a rare combination of circumstances, unite the purest idealism with an ingenuity based on complete certainty and absolute necessity.

3. Conclusions

Not without design have we begun with the problem of Europe, its internal organisation, its common defence and its solidarity, then considered all the external problems with which it must be confronted, and finally turned to disarmament.

We are well aware that- Communist propaganda will pour sarcasm on our assertion that our desire to defend ourselves is primarily a desire for peace and that for us there can be no other goal than disarmament, distant though it may seem.

This is, nevertheless, the view of the Western peoples. We shall never cease to recall that by 1948 the United Kingdom had reduced its forces to 787,000 men from 5 million in 1945, or that at the same period the armed forces of the United States were only at 15 % of their 1945 strength, whereas the Soviet Union made no attempt to move in the same direction.

We shall never cease to recall that, had it not been for the grim warnings of Prague and Korea, the Western peoples would never have looked to their own rearmament or to that of Germany. We shall never weary of stating that when the Council of Europe was established, it was strictly forbidden by its Statute to discuss defence problems ; nor again that our one concern was to work together to repair the devastation of war and explore together the road towards social and cultural progress.

We have faced up to the necessities imposed on us by Soviet policy. This has placed a heavy burden upon us, both materially and morally, for we are peace-loving peoples ; the fortitude with which we bear it should not, however, cast doubts upon our will to lay it down when the day arrives. History shows that there have been peoples, or at any rate Governments, which have forced others into war. Our ambition, on the contrary, is to force the world into peace.