Defense of Democracy

Address

By JOHN J. McCLOY
US High Commissioner for Germany

THE AMERIKA HAUS* in Hanover is the first United States Information Center to be established outside the United States Zone. In the coming months we expect to open Amerika Hauser in Bonn, Essen, Hamburg and Mainz, as well as auxiliary reading rooms in other major cities in northern and western Germany. Like the 25 Amerika Hauser in the United States Zone, these centers will be financed completely by the people of the United States.

The expansion of the Amerika Haus program could not have been accomplished without the full co-operation of the German, British and French authorities. I should like to express my sincere thanks for their support. I want them to know that we shall do everything to reciprocate their help and good will.

This Amerika Haus is a house of freedom. It will be, I hope, a friendly house where men and women, particularly the young, will come to read, to study, to see and to hear. No one is compelled to come; no one is compelled to return. Here you will be able to learn about the good and the bad in American life; here you will be able to find materials to help towards an understanding of the world of today. Here, above all, I hope you will find something of the open-mindedness and tolerance which, despite some lapses, are the fundamentals of American life.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, a week ago today (on May 15) I returned from the Conference of Foreign Ministers in London. In the light of that conference I would like to summarize our policies and objectives in Germany as I view them. So that there will be no misunderstanding I want to make clear that no startling changes of policy were made at London. There was a restatement of a policy which had guided us in the past year. There was a clarification of views.

It was recognized that the world is divided between the free peoples of the West and the oppressed peoples under Soviet domination. The line of demarcation runs through the middle of Europe, through the center of Germany. Spokesmen of the West have stated before and I repeat today: it is the goal of the Western Powers to help Germany to democratic unity under a free government, freely elected. The Communists are opposing this unity. We are doing and shall do everything possible to promote it. At the same time we are doing and shall do everything we can to promote peace in Germany and the world.

The German people, I am sure, have made up their minds that they are a part of the free world and that they have turned their backs on dictatorship, whether from the Right or the Left. There is no choice in the world today for a people that seeks freedom. All must unite against oppression. A strong Western community of peoples is the best guarantee that Germany will not be turned into a battleground. For it is only in unity with the Western peoples, it is only through the development of free institutions in Germany, that Germany can become strong. All efforts based on other measures can only lead in future, as they have in the past, to wars and destruction. I repeat:

A united and strong Western community is the best and only guarantee of peace for Germany.

WE ARE NOW in a period, as we have been for the past year, of co-operation with the German people and leaders to help them develop a healthy, new state. Co-operation is necessary not only for the sake of Germany, but also for the restoration of Europe as a vital, united community. There is no longer time or place to speak of conquest and collaboration. There is only a time and place for co-operation and unity because the future of Europe is at stake. I want to re-emphasize that we are engaged in a joint enterprise, an enterprise in which the British, French and American troops in this country are no longer primarily an occupying force, but a force defending Germany and Europe against a revival of dictatorship and oppression.

I should like to make a second point. German economic recovery has been remarkable, but the economic test ahead is still a large and serious one. Germany has an extremely serious dollar-problem, probably better understood if I refer to it as a Devisen (foreign exchange) problem. As Secretary Acheson has said, 1952 will not mark a terminal date of American interest in Europe, but Germany, as well as other European countries, must begin to think and act realistically in order to meet this economic situation. Continuance of aid in its present form and extent is not feasible.

It is important to understand what has been responsible for the great economic recovery that has taken place in western Germany since 1945. Two major factors are involved. One is the German people. The German people have worked hard and faithfully to rise out of the ruins. They have given the world an outstanding example of their capacity to work on peaceful projects. This readiness and the ability of the German people to rebuild their homes and their cities constitutes a good omen for the future.

It is well to keep in mind, however, that a man or a people cannot work unless there is food to eat and raw materials to process. The United States has fortunately been in the position to provide great quantities of the food and raw materials which Germany lacked. The Mar-

* German name for US Information Center.
shall Plan has helped keep the German people alive and it has made available the materials with which to work. We see, therefore, that German recovery has been the result of co-operation among us all.

It is a warning that in the years ahead, as in the years that have passed, friendly co-operation and understanding are vital. That understanding will help Germany to produce more, to sell more abroad, to narrow the Devisen gap. In other words, that understanding will help Germany to find the means to make up for its lack of indigenous food and materials so that the German people can continue to work and to progress.

**Consideration of economic problems in Germany leads to the political and psychological. I think it is difficult to over-estimate the importance the world attaches to a peaceful and democratic development in Germany. We know that a free and democratic German society, in which every German feels that he as an individual is free, is one of the best guarantees of peace in Europe. Such a free society would make Military Security Boards superfluous. It would be a better guarantee than all the artificial controls that can ever be erected.

It is our purpose to help you create such a society. We know that it cannot be done overnight. We know that it takes persistent effort and patience to overcome long established authoritarian patterns and to eliminate the rust of the Hitler years. The maintenance of free institutions and the preservation of individual liberties are in every country, my own included, obtained only at the price of eternal vigilance.

I should like to quote a few sentences from the communiqué on Germany issued last week by the Western foreign ministers:

The Western Powers desire to see the pace of progress (toward elimination of controls) as rapid as possible. Progress will depend upon the degree of confident and frank co-operation displayed by the government and the people of the Federal Republic. In the first place the pace will be determined by the extent to which the Allies can be satisfied that their own security is safeguarded by the development in Germany of a desire for peace and friendly association with themselves.

In the second place the pace will be set by the rate at which Germany advances toward a condition in which true democracy governs and the just liberties of the individual are assured. Therefore, the Western Powers wish to emphasize most strongly that the natural desire of the German people to secure a relaxation of controls and the restoration of the sovereignty of their country depends for its satisfaction only upon the efforts of the German people themselves and of their government.

**You may ask:** What do we mean by democratization? Let me give you a few examples.

The Allied High Commission recently lifted the disapproval of the Civil Service Law after reassurances from the Bundesregierung (federal government). There was a basic reason for that provisional disapproval. It was to help insure that the German civil service would be democratically administered. The German people recognize the importance of civil servants. In times past German civil servants maintained high standards. Under Hitler some civil servants became autocratic and even debased. One of the fundamentals on which we sought assurance was that civil service positions in the new Germany must not be political and that they should be open to all citizens.

Friendly negotiations have now given us the promise of a good law. It is our hope that in the months and years ahead the implementation of the temporary law and of the final law will guarantee a democratic civil service in Germany.

We recently took action in the field of industrial and economic democracy. I am sure that many of you may have wondered why the High Commission has questioned certain handicraft laws which carry in certain of their aspects old traditions of closed guilds. Here again we feel that there can only be a healthy development of society if each man and woman, each young person has

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*For full text, see "Declaration on Germany," page 61.
a chance to achieve that position in life for which his talents best fit him.

Trades and professions should be open to all who qualify. Artificial restrictions against enterprising young workers should fall if there is to be hope for a better future. This, in my judgment, is essential to a free society. It is particularly important in Germany where so much employment must be found for the many and varied talents of the native and the refugee population.

I WANT TO ADD a word about the Fluechtlinge (fugitive refugee). The refugees from the East constitute a vast and serious problem. We know that it is more than a German problem; it is a world problem. We shall try to help solve it. History has demonstrated, however, that migrations have been of great benefit to the countries which have received refugees, and a deep loss to the countries which have sent them away. The talents and points of view which the refugees have brought to western Germany can enrich German life. It is always well to bear this in mind.

All in all we are trying to help you break down barriers in political and industrial life. If jobs are open for the most talented, if schools are free for the young, if civil service and government offices are open to men and women of all classes irrespective of fraternities or social connections, there will be the great flowering of political and economic enterprise which is so needed in Germany. This freedom, combined with German readiness to work and German ability to perform, would help make Germany prosperous, peaceful and a respected leader in the Western world.

If Germany is to achieve this position of leadership, it is particularly important that no barriers be placed in the way of German youth. Their time must not be dissipated in marching columns. Young German men and women should be given large opportunities. There should be a wider disposition to accept youth in important positions. It would be healthy and beneficial, for example, if the German governments and political parties opened the way for youth to assume positions of higher responsibility.

The German people and their political leaders on their own initiative could do many things to demonstrate their respect for the opinion and friendship of other nations. The peoples outside Germany, and I am sure all right-thinking Germans, feel that one of the gravest injustices the modern world has witnessed was unfortunately committed on German soil — the Nazi persecution of Jews and those who dared to resist. No one can help those who are dead.

The German people, however, can demonstrate their good will by taking prompt and generous action to restitute to the persecutees that which is justly theirs. Such action should not need prodding from any Allied source. It is an obligation, moral more than economic, which the German people must meet. The spirit and speed with which it is met will do much to determine the attitude of other peoples, so many of whose lives have been disrupted and impaired by the aggressions and cruelties of the past. But even more important, it will mark the development of the new Germany's moral structure.

Here, at the opening of this Amerika Haus, it is appropriate to point out how much we can all learn from each other. In the United States we recognize that German schools, universities and educators played a large role in shaping the American school system. More than 100 years ago the source of inspiration for American universities was Germany. Young Americans traveled in Europe, studied at Goettingen, Berlin and Heidelberg. They admired German scholars, libraries and universities. They brought back to the United States the message of Lehr- and Lernfreiheit.* We are proud of that heritage.

This is a complex world and no nation, no people has all the answers. No people holds the magic key. The tragedy of the last 20 years proves that. Germany for many years has been cut off from the main stream of development.

Let me mention one field, industrial design. There is a lag in Germany. In this connection do not be misled by those who would tell you that it is fear of competition or high tariffs that keep German goods out of various countries. Obviously that plays a role. But equally important, however, is the fact that in many fields German goods, either in quality or design, are not yet abreast of the demands of foreign markets. These are facts that cannot be overcome by phrases. They can only be mastered by wider knowledge and a receptive mind.

It is the approach that is illustrated by something I heard of the other day: a great city in the United States before making plans for new buildings, is now sending experts to Europe, including Germany, to study modern housing developments. It is that spirit of inquiry, that willingness to learn from others that is the source of strength.

LARGE AND THOROUGHGOING measures are needed in German politics and society. Germany will not become strong by devoting its greatest efforts and attention to Aussenpolitik (foreign politics). Governments frequently try to focus the attention of their peoples on foreign affairs in order to avoid dealing with important domestic matters. It is a good idea to spend at least half of our time cleaning up in our own back yard.

Ladies and gentlemen, this Amerika Haus, I hope, will bring together the fine and the good in the heritage of Western civilization. You have your heritage some of the noblest achievements of mankind. If the German republic develops the best in the German tradition, Europe and the world will benefit.

In the days ahead, we shall do everything to help you on your own way as long as we are here — and we expect to be here for some time — we shall be on the alert to help you on the road to freedom. We shall also be on the alert to deter all influences that would set you back.

We mean to be active. In our efforts we shall have only one goal: a peaceful, prosperous Germany. In this spirit of co-operation, of friendship, I am very happy to open this Amerika Haus.

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* Freedom of teaching and freedom of student to attend any lecture course in a university.