LARGE GROUPS OF THE GERMAN people have been roused to vigilance by speeches, articles and news dispatches published in German and foreign papers. There have been certain public letters, too, which do not, by the way, reflect a particular feeling of responsibility. In a few words I shall attempt to make the situation clear. But let me first speak about the open letters published by some Germans, not because I think they are of primary importance for the German people, but because I do not want to mingle the much more important statements I have to make with comments on these letters.

It was maintained in these letters that under my authority German rearmament is being energetically pushed everywhere in the Federal Republic. I can only say that this assertion is a mere invention. In the interest of the originators of such assertions I assume that they fell victims to mystifications and I ask them no longer to listen so credulously to evil talk. When the writer of one of these letters says that persistent rumors speak of agreements between the federal chancellor and Mr. McCloy and perhaps the British chief commissioner, too — to the effect that many German divisions would soon be established — I can but reply that the writer has no notion whatsoever of political and constitutional conditions either in the Federal Republic of Germany, in the United States or in Great Britain.

Such an assertion, to put it cautiously, is more than absurd. These people should be careful not to hurt other nations’ feelings by such words.

LET ME NOW TURN to the main subject of my statements today, which I would call “The International Situation and Germany.” Through events in Korea or connected with Korea, every German, I think, now clearly understands the significance of the dangerous tensions which have developed in recent years between the two groups of powers that now control the world. For us Germans — and I mean all Germans on both sides of the Iron Curtain — another serious sign of warning is the concentration of Soviet troops in the East zone, the establishment of the “People’s Police” army and the threats addressed to us by the responsible men of the Soviet Zone republic.

More important for us are the resolutions of the New York Conference of Foreign Ministers, which I shall read to you now as they were communicated to me:

"With regard to the external security of the Federal Republic, the three Powers have declared that they will regard their troops in Germany not only as occupation troops, but as troops on whom the protection of the Federal Republic and the Western sectors of Berlin is simultaneously incumbent."

The three Powers expressively added that any attack upon the Federal Republic or Berlin, wherever it may come from, and even if it were from the People’s Police, without any Soviet intervention, would be regarded by them as an attack on themselves.

Every word of this declaration was carefully chosen. Since the three Powers say they will regard any attack on us or Berlin as an attack on themselves, we may assume that they will oppose any such attack as though it were against their own country — which means that they would repel it at the frontier.

In my opinion, the German people must note with great satisfaction and delight that the previously expressed idea of a delaying defense back to and even west of the Rhine now definitely belongs to the past.

ACCORDING TO THE LATEST REPORTS I have received, we can be convinced that these resolutions are no mere phrases, but that the Western Allies have already started to apply them in practice.

The Western Allied troops, which are to be reinforced, are not occupation troops, but security forces. Their presence will naturally entail numerous inconveniences for us — as it will for these troops themselves — but comparing these inconveniences with the great asset of security, I think we all will be prepared to undergo the inconveniences.

In foreign papers and the speeches of foreign politicians we read and hear of lively discussions about the German nation and the right time to make use of its resources. May I ask all people discussing these problems to bear in mind that Germans are paying close attention to the tone of such arguments. I also request them to consider that the German people may rightfully expect to be trusted, in view of its attitude during the past years.

In this connection I would like to address a few words to French orators in particular. We Germans have so often stated (and also proved) our firm resolve to go together with France in the future that I think by now they
should stop distrusting us. Distrust never breeds trust on the other side, but only infects with distrust again. At the meeting of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, representatives of all participating countries made excellent statements and took resolutions which demonstrated their feeling of European solidarity. This feeling should now prove itself strong and alive.

CONSIDERING THE STATEMENTS of politicians — and by this I mean the politicians of all countries — one sometimes has the impression that politicians see simple things, simple truths and fact as a little too complicated, whereas non-politicians have a sound sense for the needs and dangers of the time and see the important facts in a clearer and not so complicated way. Everybody knows and feels what Europe needs, and everyone should act correspondingly.

Among the Western Allies, the United States is more or less the leading power. Its policy has been very clearly expressed in two speeches by Secretary of State Dean Acheson. In one address he explained that negotiations with Russia are possible only on a basis of equality, that is, if both sides are equally strong.

From our experience during the time of the National Socialist regime, we Germans can fully confirm his statements about negotiating with totalitarian states. Furthermore, last Sunday, in a speech directed against certain "silly talk," as he called it, Mr. Acheson condemned a preventive war and emphasized once more that the aim of American armament is to secure the peace of the world. It is this very same aim that the federal government, and, as I know, also the federal parliament most heartily approve.

In reply to allegations made here and there of certain obligations upon the Federal Republic of Germany in regard to the establishment of German divisions, I expressly state that no such obligations exist. The Western Allies have been informed that only the federal parliament can decide this question, and that it can take such a decision only if the Western Allies officially ask clearly-defined questions of the Federal Republic of Germany. Whether such questions will be addressed to us, and when that might eventually be, must be left to the future.

LET ME ADD the following: There has been some talk of a plebiscite being necessary. The Basic Law provides for no such plebiscite and for no dissolution of the parliament, except in one particular instance, which, however, does not apply.

In closing, let me say the following, to preclude any misinterpretation of my statements: We Germans love peace more than anything else. But we also know what slavery means, and we appreciate freedom as the highest asset. We came to know slavery during the time of National Socialism and we see today what is happening to our brothers and sisters in the Soviet-occupied zone.

We Germans — and I mean those on the other side of the Iron Curtain — most honestly and wholeheartedly vote for freedom. We do not want slavery under any circumstances. Goethe's statement that only he earns his freedom and existence who daily conquers them anew, applies to everybody — including ourselves. +END

Germans Endorse Firm Stand against Aggression

A SUBSTANTIAL MAJORITY of Germans have confidence in America's determination to stand firm against further Communist aggression, to defend Germany in case of war, and in its ability to win the war in Korea, the HICOG Reactions Analysis Staff reported as a result of a Public Opinion Survey made before the current UN Korean offensive and the Foreign Ministers' Communiqué pledging defense of Western Europe.

The survey also showed that dominant sentiment in the US occupied areas was that America was preparing as well as possible for future international developments. Another notable note of confidence disclosed in the survey is that a majority believed America is doing all it should for the security of West Germany.

Sampling the opinions of some 1,500 persons in the US Zone, 300 in Berlin and 200 in Bremen, the Reactions Analysis Staff conducted the survey from Aug. 8 to Sept. 8. It was pointed out that the general confidence in the West has probably increased since then because of the UN offensive and the Foreign Ministers' Conference.

The dominating opinion is still in the East-West struggle. Most Germans prefer to side with the West rather than to stay out completely or side with the Russians. However, the number believing Germans prefer neutrality rose from one-fourth to one-third since the outbreak of the Korean aggression.

Despite heavy Communist propaganda, there is no doubt among Germans that the Communists were unjustified aggressors in Korea. Almost all Germans sampled, who had opinions in the matter, felt that the North Korean attack was instigated by Russia.

The persistent Communist theme of "Amis*, Go Home" never had much appeal in the areas, and since the example of Korea now has even less.

The survey showed that three-quarters of US Zone residents (85 percent in Berlin) believed that Germany would not be "politically secure" if the Occupation Powers withdrew.

Preponderant opinion held that the Communists do not intend a general war by their Korean aggression, but only a test of Western power. But on the larger question of whether a world war can be avoided during the next decade, the majority was pessimistic, although there has been no appreciable change in opinion since the outbreak of the Korean conflict.

* German slang term for Americans.