Toward German Unity

Address

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WE STAND TODAY on the threshold of a new era for the German community. It is by intention that I am speaking not simply of the German Federal Republic, but of the whole of Germany. It may be that for some time a part of Germany may not share in the new venture in freedom, and that Berlin, because of its unique situation and significance for all of us, may not yet participate to the fullest extent. But I am confident that the forces which have thwarted German unity and freedom will not be able in the long run to stay this natural evolution which is carried along by the will and the aspirations of millions of Germans, East and West.

It is a heartening fact that the people of Berlin, despite their partial isolation and the dangers inherent in their position, have strongly supported the movement for integration of Germany with the free West and have repudiated the various proposals put forth from the Soviet Sector of this city which could only trap Germans into a spurious unity without those accompanying freedoms which are the goals of Western policy.

What are the events which have led to this transformation by the German community and what is the attitude of the United States in regard thereto? These are questions we often hear and to which I shall try to give some answers tonight.

Faced by the economic dislocation and poverty brought on by the last war and the menace of totalitarian aggression already expanding through large areas of the world, Europe’s efforts to rebuild economic and political stability were thwarted by internal disruptions and stresses and restrained by the almost paralyzing knowledge that it stood with no defense against the danger of being overrun from the East. In this atmosphere of uncertainties and wavering confidence the Western nations, together with the United States, however, undertook the task of building a strong and unified European community to be made secure against aggression.

Convinced that the establishment of a sound economic structure is essential not only to military strength, but to political stability, the United States undertook through the Marshall Plan and its other programs of economic and financial assistance to improve the standards of life in Europe as well as in other regions. Our purpose was to expand the areas of democratic freedoms and create conditions of strength to serve as a barrier to Communist encroachments from within as well as from abroad. This is the meaning of our economic policies since the war, and I need do no more than refer in general to these programs of our assistance which have gone far in the achievement of an economic rebirth in western Europe.

HERE IN BERLIN the people have the unique opportunity to compare what the West has been able to accomplish in contrast to the conditions of economic servitude and poverty of other areas where freedom and democracy are stifled. Germany and western Berlin have taken part in this economic revival and have indeed made their contributions toward it. This does not mean that there do not still remain serious economic problems which have yet to be solved, including those of unemployment, refugees, adjustment of price levels to wage scales, etc. But I am convinced that the progress made through the past few years gives evidence that these obstacles will be overcome in the future as have other more serious ones in the past.

It is further true that Europe is today faced with the necessity of carrying additional financial burdens imposed by the need of creating a military community strong enough to withstand the danger of aggression. The North Atlantic Community has developed a mechanism by which it is expected that the defense programs of the individual countries can be adjusted to their economic potentialities, and realistic goals have been worked out by the Temporary Council Committee for each country. The same machinery was utilized to assist in the preparation of a reasonable program for the Federal Republic’s defense contribution at the time when that becomes operative.

As an example of the care and profound study which are now being devoted to this aspect of European defense and economic problems, attention is invited to the report of the “Three Wise Men” on Germany, recently published (see page 27), which clearly shows that the economic problems of the individual states of Europe are not being overlooked at the time when the interests of all are being consolidated for their mutual benefit. To achieve the goals set for the individual states will require carefully balanced and economic use of all their resources. But the important thing which has been found is that it is possible to accomplish these goals and to create a sound economic as well as military basis for the new partnership of peace.

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ations of this structure of security were laid in the North Atlantic Treaty concluded less than two years ago. Since that time the efforts of the participating states, as Mr. Acheson pointed out in his report to the American people, have been devoted to translating the words of the treaty into solid substance of strength and of unity. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization will command greater resources and greater strength than any potential enemy or group of enemies.

Western Europe, together with America, has the most advanced science, the greatest industrial production and the largest pool of skilled manpower in the world. There remains only the need for a strong spirit and a determined will to mobilize these resources for effective defense, and great strides have been made in this direction. I need only cite the progress just achieved in Lisbon in the consolidation and strengthening of these forces for peace.

WE HAVE MADE it clear that Germany has been invited to share the responsibilities and the protection afforded by this security system. The Federal Republic and Berlin have been given assurances that they will be defended in event of attack. The creation of the European Defense Community, which will merge the military forces of the continent into a single force under a common command, gives the opportunity for the Federal Republic to assume its responsibilities for defense as well as to receive the benefits of the common effort.

This European Defense Community is closely interlocked with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and each is important to the other. Thus a means is provided by which western Germany can be closely associated with the entire defense arrangement for western Europe without the re-creation or the danger of any revival of adventurist militarism in this country. The provision for mutual consultation with these bodies will, furthermore, give the Federal Republic a voice consistent with its new status of equality and its dignity as a full member of the European community of nations.

It has been repeatedly stated that the goal of the Western Powers and that of the United States is the integration of western Germany on the basis of equality within the European community, itself included in the developing Atlantic community. If for no other reason, a German contribution to common defense would require the granting to the German people the status of freedom and equality in the European framework and a feeling of partnership. But furthermore, the United States and its associates have been convinced that the development of democratic freedoms among the German people fully justifies the restoration to Germany of an honored and respected place in the free community of democratic peoples.

We should like to see all of Germany included in this community and to assist in bringing about the peaceful unification of Germany under conditions of freedom. Although this goal cannot be immediately achieved, we are nevertheless determined to put an end to the occupation of western Germany and to grant the Berlin governmental authorities the maximum authority possible.

Through the series of contractual agreements now under discussion with the Federal Government the occupation regime will be liquidated. German sovereignty will be restored to the fullest extent possible under present world conditions. This means the abolition of controls over Germany's external and internal affairs, and the new agreements will establish a firm political basis for Germany's relations with the democratic states of the world.

TO MANY PERSONS these negotiations have appeared to drag on unjustifiably and, by their very slowness, not to have taken into account the realities of the developing situation. However, the complete transformation of a relationship built up during an occupation, the liquidation of the past, the substitution of German authority for Allied authority in the many fields where it has been exercised, the establishment of a mutually acceptable basis for the continued presence in Germany of large defense forces of other nationalities, and the approximation of the conditions of a peace settlement as nearly as circumstances permit, all these have required long and extremely technical series of negotiations.

But as one who has been closely connected with these negotiations from the beginning of last year, I feel justified in reporting that the principal obstacles to the conclusion of the new relationship have now been removed and that I can with a considerable degree of assurance forecast the early conclusion of the contractual agreements.

The United States' interest in Europe is that the free peoples should unite in a community transcending narrow political frontiers. We believe, and I am sure the vast majority of Germans believe, that Germany's future role is that of an integral part of that community. I have just said I believe we are in the final stages of the negotiations which will give the Federal Republic an honorable and an equal status among the Western democracies. It is not surprising that difficulties have developed in our striving toward these ends, nor that doubts and questionings have arisen both on the part of Germans and among other peoples who are embarking upon this venture. Rome was not built in a day, nor can an integrated Europe be created by fiat in a few short months or years.

I should like to refer frankly to some of the doubts that have appeared relative to this new European community and Germany's place in it solely so that you may understand and help in the future to overcome them. As Germany revives and recovers strength there are fears in some quarters as to how she will use her new found power. These fears have been candidly expressed in the recent debates on the European Defense Community in the French National Assembly. These misgivings are present among other peoples who were only yesterday the victims of misused German national power. They are voiced in my own country.

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Now I believe that the Germans have come a long way in their political thinking since the philosopher Hegel proclaimed in this city that the Prussian state was the ultimate realization of the Idea in history. The old Prussia is gone, and with it, I trust, such metaphysical exuberances which only brought disaster to Germany itself. But events of the last two decades are still vivid in the minds of many Europeans; their remembrance cannot immediately be erased.

IN OFFERING TO GERMANY so soon after the last war a place of fellowship and equality among the democratic nations, I believe it must be admitted by all fair-minded Germans that the Western nations are taking a risk. Many are ready to take this risk. We have faith in the new German democracy. The people of this city have given magnificent evidence of its reality and vitality. But we recognize that, in entrusting to an independent German government a large measure of freedom to shape its own course in the future, we are renouncing safeguards in the past retained under the occupation against the dangers inherent in German power if it should ever again be corrupted by totalitarian rule. Our objective is a free and democratic Germany, worthy of trust, capable of exercising its freedom in a manner which will harm neither itself nor its neighbors, and we are convinced that this is the new Germany.

At this critical juncture of their approach to a new status, the German people are voicing their desire for an end to the occupation. Now such aspirations are quite understandable and proper. Yet I would like to be permitted to suggest that freedom entails restraint, both self-restraint and limits imposed by the sheer necessity of the situation under which freedom is exercised. I am told that many a German poet and thinker has extolled the peculiar virtues of “German Freedom” as the antithesis of license, embodying a deep sense of duty and self-limitation. We recognize, of course, that the Nazis perverted this noble concept, distorting it into the obligation of complete subservience to a lawless and licentious regime.

I am merely recalling here that freedom is not an absolute—it is always conditioned. Any people, to deserve it, must earn it by their own achievement from the harsh circumstances of their time and destiny. The thought expressed by one German writer that “only amid storms can the noble plant of humanity flourish” is consoling to those of us who view with some trepidation the plight of the world today. We must all, in these tempestuous times, enlarge our horizons and think less in terms of individual or national prerogatives than of the things that bind us all together.

We have, almost imperceptibly, come to live in an era when full sovereignty is an anachronism. All free nations have, to some extent, renounced a substantial portion of their sovereign right. Not always gladly, I admit—the compulsion of circumstances has been there. But we have done it because it was necessary to do so to preserve and enlarge our freedoms. We have come to realize afresh, in our world of precarious power relationships, what Benjamin Franklin meant when he said of the original 13 American commonwealths: “We must all hang together or we shall all hang separately.” Any real cooperation—among nations as among individuals—implies some sacrifice of cherished privileges. Today it is glaringly apparent that without renunciation of some of our time-honored rights as sovereign states there can be no lasting freedom for any of us, nor any world fit for freedom-loving men to live in.

The world is moving rapidly into an era when only through the pooling of sovereignty can the common rights and interests of all be assured. No nation detracts from its freedom because, of its own will, it renounces sovereign rights which stand as an obstruction on the road to broader freedoms and the general security. I believe, for instance, that the Federal Republic in entering into the European Coal and Steel Community, and in registering its support for the European Defense Community, has acted to enlarge its freedom and in the spirit of those “good Europeans” of the past who appealed to their countrymen to look beyond and above their own national frontiers.

I HAVE FAITH in the new German democracy. It has been one of our great objectives to foster and assist a democratic rebirth of the German nation. But I believe we should not underestimate the enormous difficulties in the way. We harbor no illusion that one nation can “re-educate” another, or that any program of reorientation or cultural influence from outside can transform the minds of a people. We have given abundantly of our means and assistance, but we realize that education must be rooted in self-activity and experience. It is to German education and to German leadership and not to our assistance and support that the Germany of the future will turn and these will shape its destinies.

I believe that the great new political destiny of the German people in the years ahead can consist in cementing the ties of copartnership with their European neighbors and with the Atlantic community, thus achieving a new vision of their own national aspirations and a new reality for their national life.

In the unity of Europe which is being forged today there is ample scope for the energies and aspirations of all European peoples. For Germans there is the compelling fact that such a solution provides a way out of the dilemma in which their own tragic career as a nation has placed them, perhaps the only way out. That the integration of Europe into a federal union presents appalling difficulties cannot be denied. This fact has been only too apparent in the recent debates in Bonn and Paris in connection with the ratification of the Schuman Plan, and even more strikingly evident in the political struggles in both capitals over the European Defense Community.

Yet in both countries the Schuman Plan has been ratified, and the European Defense Community has been approved, albeit with reservations. At London the foreign ministers have acted with success to alleviate a threatening impasse and bring Germany and the West
closer together, and at Lisbon the NATO Council has given its formal approval to the European Defense Community.

When viewed in the long perspective of history, the thousand years of internecine strife that has torn this war-stricken continent, I believe that the reality of paramount importance today is that the French and German peoples have had the courage and the vision to take these momentous steps toward the future. That both peoples have doubts and questionings is understandable. That they have, notwithstanding, acted affirmatively is the fact of supreme significance.

Europe will unite, not because this or that nation wills it so, but because it is driven on by great historic compulsions. The shattering effects of two world wars combined with the gradual loss of Europe's one predominant position in the world economy and as the seat of colonial empires, have resulted in a situation where a divided Europe is scarcely viable. A policy of drift would mean increasing insecurity, rising economic pressure, political radicalism, "crisis governments" and suicidal nationalism. Union is no universal panacea for Europe's ills, but its pooled security and more rational ordering of economic life offers the only hopeful prospect now on the horizon.

**AMERICA WISHES TO SEE** a reunited Germany within a united Europe. It desires to make an honorable and just peace with a united Germany. Of late there have been proposals from the Eastern sector of Berlin, sponsored and supported by the Soviet Government, that action be taken by the responsible powers to make peace with Germany. For years, peace has been the goal of the Western Powers and the aspiration of every German. For years the unremitting opponent of peace in Europe has been the Soviet Union.

While deluging the West with an unparalleled campaign of "peace" propaganda, it has sabotaged every constructive effort to establish peace in the heart of Europe. In protracted negotiations with the Western Powers over the past few years, the Kremlin has made clear its intent and design respecting Germany, that Germany should have peace and unity only at the price of subjection to Communist tyranny. It is only too clear today that the Soviet government rejects a free, united Europe, and above all, a free Europe that will include Germany.

The Western Powers have insisted, and will continue to insist that, highly as they regard the priority of unity and peace settlement, there can be no peace worthy of the name that does not presuppose a Germany unified on the basis of full political freedom. We are today prepared to consider any real offer from the East which will achieve this end.

I do not know when a free and united Europe will be achieved. But I believe that it will become a reality. Europe must come to occupy a position of strength in the free world. It will need to summon all of its resources and all of its statesmanship to the task of creating a unity of ordered power based on law. Such a Europe will be no threat to the security of the Soviet Union, nor of any people. But it will be a challenge to any system of totalitarian tyranny that seeks to build power upon the deception and enslavement of the masses.

Germany today stands at the threshold of a new freedom which will be realized so far as the will and authority of the Western Powers extend. We may hope that this development will inspire that portion of the German people who are still in bondage with the hope that they too, ultimately, may share this freedom. As the West prepares to relinquish its occupation controls and accept Germany in a partnership of mutual trust and good faith, by this decision it makes known its belief, however tempered by doubt, that the German government and the German people will not abuse this trust but will use their newly acquired freedom with restraint and wisdom.

**A GREAT SLOGAN** and watchword of our American democracy has been "unity in freedom." It was for this that two of our great presidents contended — Washington to achieve it for the original 13 colonies, and Lincoln to maintain it for the expanding nation. In our own generation this concept has been projected to the entire world. It was the dream of Woodrow Wilson, as it has now become the slowly emerging, if imperfect reality of the United Nations.

For Germans this idea of "unity in freedom" may well convey a twofold meaning, applicable both to their own nation and to the emergent European commonwealth of which they form a part. It is in the unadorned striving to translate this idea into living reality that the German people, in my opinion, may ultimately rise to the stature of greatness and vindicate the dreams of their truest patriots and noblest thinkers.

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**Steel-Products Sale Revised**

Representatives of the Allied High Commission, the Federal Government and the steel industry have agreed on a plan liberalizing the sale and rebate system for 75 percent of West Germany's rolled steel products. The changes will free both consumers and producers from dependence on the large dealers in steel products.

The new plan provides that steel producers may sell any amount of rolled products to any customer; any consumer or small dealer wishing to buy at least 250 tons of any rolled steel product (the minimum actually depends upon the particular product) may place the order directly with the steel mill, and any consumer using at least 12,000 tons of rolled steel products annually, and, generally any dealer who handles at least 6,000 tons, is entitled to buy all rolled steel products directly from the mill.

Previously only 10 dealers were qualified to buy all rolled products directly from the mill as they were obliged to have handled a certain amount of that particular product in the previous year and to have met a separate qualifying quota for each rolled product they wished to buy directly from the mill.