

Mr. McKeown: Well, would not this idea of a separate and independent German army really play upon French fears more than ever. This is the thing that France really fears, isn't that right?

Mr. Pearson: We all are naturally worried about the revival of German militarism and about any proposal which would seem to make that easier. France - and I cannot speak with authority on French fears and policies - France is, however, also worried about the loss of sovereignty that would be incurred in E.D.C.

Question: You are just back from the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Paris where, I am sure, you have had opportunity to speak to the French. You have explained to us about their fears of the E.D.C. and their fears of making Germany a member of NATO, but what about the positive side - what do the French want? What will they accept?

Mr. Pearson: I think the French would prefer, and I am sure we would all prefer, a Germany that, while associating with the West, would be disarmed completely; but while we might like to see that personally I do not think that is a very practicable proposition.

Mr. Lambert: It has been appearing lately that the Americans now are more concerned with achieving European political union rather than just raising German divisions - is that the case now?

Mr. Pearson: There is some evidence of that. Mr. Dulles mentioned in Paris that the value of E.D.C. to him was not only in the military association of Germany with the west through E.D.C. but also that it would bring the European countries, especially Germany and France, together for other purposes - non-military purposes.

Mr. Lambert: The main obstacle right now to the French ratification seems to be the lack of guarantee. Now if the Americans are so anxious to see this E.D.C. become a concrete thing why is there such hesitation to give such a guarantee?

Mr. Pearson: Wouldn't you think the presence of British, American and Canadian troops on European soil a pretty effective guarantee of the association of those countries with France and the other Western European countries in ease of aggression? It is true that they are not there under treaty for 50 years or anything like that, but they are there. Isn't that something that French Governments in the Twenties would have given a lot to bring about?

Mr. McKeown: Well, isn't this one of the fears at the moment that the Americans are planning some sort of withdrawal from Europe. They haven't fulfilled or are not going to fulfill their commitments for another armoured division in Europe this year and, as well, there is the statement that Admiral Radford made in Paris that they were going to base their strategy on a system of peripheral bases rather than on troops in Europe and that this withdrawal of troops was going to take place whether or not there was an E.D.C. or whether or not France joined E.D.C.