

As a second step, it was necessary to move toward the consolidation of Western Germany. Originally, all four occupying powers took measures regarded largely as of a transitory nature, on the assumption that a German peace treaty would not be long delayed.

But the failure of the Foreign Ministers' meeting in London last November and December, demonstrated that this was no longer a reasonable assumption. The powers occupying the Western zones have therefore had to consider the pressing needs for administrative and economic reforms in Western Germany of a more lasting character and the United Kingdom and the United States have announced a constitution for Bizonia, or the two zones they control, and in agreement with France, are proceeding to take with Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg, the steps necessary to rebuild self government, stimulate production and restore trade in that important area.

This gives reason to hope that an end will be made to the enervating uncertainty and continuous drain which has been such an obstacle to the process of general recovery.

The other very important step which was announced by Mr. Bevin in his speech of the 22nd of January last, was the plan for what has been called Western Union. The first result is the Brussels Treaty which, was signed by the United Kingdom, France and the Benelux countries, a few days ago. This is no mere military alliance directed against a possible aggressor from the East. It seeks to mobilize the moral as well as the military resources of the Western European countries and to contain or restrain Soviet expansion, not by a Maginot line, but by building up in these liberal, democratic and Christian states a dynamic counter-attraction to the degrading tenets of totalitarian and materialistic communism.

Such a union is of course not easy to realize among countries so firmly attached to their individual sovereignty, their traditions, their cultures and their ways of living; but it has been successfully started and there is room for hope that it will extend. And it may not be only Western Europe which will be forced into a spiritual, cultural, economic and political union to offset the union of the totalitarian states under the aggressive leadership of Russia.

No one wishes to see the United Nations break up nor even to force the Soviet group to secede from the United Nations. But without sacrificing the universality of the United Nations or supplanting it, it is possible for the free nations to form their own union for collective self-defence under Article 51 of the Charter.

The trend towards the formation of such self-defensive unions is not a confession of despair, but rather a message of hope. It does not mean that we look upon a third world war as inevitable, but rather that we have decided that the best way of preventing such a war is to confront the forces of communist expansionism with an overwhelming preponderance of moral, economic and military force on the side of freedom.