

NATO—European Defence Community

the background and for that reason I think our suspicions at this time are well founded.

Now I want to say that of course there is no use attempting to gainsay the fact that there are risks and dangers in connection with the course that is being taken; but on balance—balancing the risks on one side and the dangers on the other with the fact that we are now pushing up very close to the fringe of danger, the border of the Soviet empire itself, with all the implications that may have—I for one believe that it is better for us to have the dividing line at the Elbe if we cannot get it farther east and include East Germany at this time. The hope is that East Germany will some day become part of a unified Germany and be friendly with us, but at this stage it is better to have the dividing line between that part of the iron curtain and ourselves at the Elbe rather than at the Rhine or somewhere farther west.

That is a risk that must be taken but I am wondering, Mr. Speaker, whether the risk is as great as perhaps some people believe it to be. The Soviets have run a gigantic bluff since the end of the last war. They have not been so courageous when it came right down to a critical point. They have always been pretty good at having somebody friendly with them do the dirty work—whether it was Korea, Indo-China, or some other country. The Soviets themselves have been pretty careful not to get their fingers burnt in something that might be close to a hot war. I am satisfied that the dangers have been somewhat overestimated. I am one of those who believe, and I think the minister agrees with me because he said this not so long ago, that a very intensive cold war will be waged. It may go on for three, four, five or six months but in the end it seems to me it will collapse and that we shall come out of this if we simply hold our heads and hew closely to the line that we have taken—and show these people behind the iron curtain that we mean business; that we do not mean war but that we mean that everybody in the world from now on is going to 'keep the peace or else'. I think we have got to take the position that after all peace is what we want and we are prepared to defend that peace to the last ditch.

I want to say this too. There is no reason why this country or any other country should be necessarily provocative. I think that if there is anything which would be a great sin for us now it would be if we were unduly provocative. People who are following a charted course towards peace have no need to provoke anybody. All we want to do in the free world is to mind our own business and to ask other people to mind theirs. In

that spirit we hope there will grow up an era of better understanding between the east and the west.

In connection with a divided Germany from a German point of view their attitude is readily understood. They are Germans and they are proud of it. The nationalistic feeling in that country is of course one that we must take into consideration. Until East and West Germany come together again there will always be that pull or that desire to be together—and that is only natural. Nevertheless if we were to say to West Germany: Well, we are going to leave you now to work out your own solutions with East Germany as a unified nation, I have no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that would only mean throwing West Germany to the wolves. In view of the critical international position I do not think that this country or any other country would want to have anything of that kind done. If we do not do our best to bring West Germany into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization I am satisfied that not only would it have a serious effect on the German people but there would be incalculable consequences for the other units of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Europe and elsewhere.

Do not let us mistake this. While great stress is laid upon the strength of other nations within the North Atlantic community, and there are very strong nations within that community, let us recall that West Germany with her population of nearly 50 million is now in the position of being almost the top nation in strength in that community. Her position with respect to industrialization, and her general economic position, of course are not always fully known. True, she has taken on a very heavy burden for defence under the North Atlantic protocol. We must remember that today West Germany's exports, according to the latest figures I have received, have increased no less than sixfold within the last three years. Her economy is now by way of being the healthiest in all Europe. Some economists have indicated that she is today on a par with or better than either Britain or France economically. In any event, she is in a preferred competitive position.

Three years of intense rebuilding have brought her a larger productive capacity industrially than she had before the war. I am told that she is 50 per cent above the pre-war level, and that has been achieved by an increase of 18 per cent in 1951 alone, which is to be followed by an estimated 15 per cent in the present year. All this indicates, I believe, that the position of West