

refusal of the Soviet Government to allow any settlement of the German and Austrian problems except on terms which, regardless of the wishes of the peoples themselves, would in effect guarantee the continuation of Soviet control of those countries equal to, if not exceeding, that already obtaining in the areas which they were occupying. There is no reason I can see to believe that this attitude has now suddenly changed, in spite of the honeyed but ambiguous words which are now issued from the Kremlin and other communist centres.

A reason for, if no justification of, the adamant stand of the Soviet against German unity on the basis of free elections is shown by the results of two recent elections in Germany and Austria. In certain Austrian areas under Soviet army occupation -- and this of course if very significant -- our type of free election took place in August 1954, and the result was a resounding repudiation of the Communists; right under the intimidating shadow of Russian military might. In the Austrian provinces, all or partially within the Soviet zone, the communist party won only 6 out of 100 seats in Vienna and 3 out of 56 in lower Austria. The overwhelming majority of seats were divided fairly evenly between the two government coalition parties. In the two other provinces where elections were held the communists candidates failed to gain any seats at all. In West Berlin only a month or so ago, in elections for the Berlin House of Representatives, the Communists, under free elections, again could do no better than poll 2.7 per cent of the vote. They got about 41,000 votes against 684,000 for the Social Democrats, 466,000 for the Christian Democrats and 190,000 for the Liberal Democrats. No wonder the Communists shudder at the prospect of free elections.

The Berlin Conference then made it quite clear that an honourable and acceptable basis for German unity could not be found. Therefore surely the only possible course that offered any hope of progress was for the West to make its own arrangements with the German Federal Republic, without losing sight of the essential objective of unification, because Germans rightly insist -- and we certainly should support them in this -- that unification must remain the essential goal of German policy.

It is well to keep this background clearly in mind now that we are being urged in some quarters to scrap our present policy and agree to another conference with the Russians immediately; a conference designed by Moscow not, I suggest, so much to achieve constructive results as to delay and prevent the ratification of these agreements, and to divide and disunite the West.

Experience surely shows that we should refuse to be lured into this false course, but should follow through with the policy charted in the Paris agreements for the restoration of