

Broadly speaking, Western Germany is the geographic centre of Europe, and it is of immense strategic importance in the defence of the West. As General Eisenhower pointed out in his First Annual Report (April 1952):

"With Western Germany in our orbit NATO forces would form a strong and unbroken line in Central Europe from the Baltic to the Alps. Depth is always a desirable element in defence; in the restricted area of Western Europe it is mandatory. This defensive depth is indispensable in countering the striking powers of mechanized armies and the speed and range of modern aircraft."

The Problem of Germany - One the other hand, Western European peoples who have suffered at the hands of Germany, and particularly the French, are naturally apprehensive about a rearmed Germany. The inclusion of Germany as a full member of NATO at this stage was therefore clearly impossible.

To resolve this conflict of interests, the French Government proposed an imaginative plan for the formation of a European Defence Community designed to make German forces available through close integration with the forces of their allies in such a way that their military strength could be used for the common defence, and the risk of their misuse reduced. Broadly speaking, the plan provided for the establishment of a European Army which will include all the forces in Europe of France, Italy, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg and Western Germany. This plan has been provisionally accepted by the governments of all six countries pending approval of their parliaments, and it is anticipated that it will begin to be implemented in the early future. The European Defence Community will be, as it were, something of an annex of NATO, and the European Army will be entirely within NATO's European command structure.*

The relevant international agreements to bring Western Germany into Western defence were signed the latter part of May, 1952. Before they become operative they, must, however, be ratified by the legislatures of the participating countries.

Defence and National Economics

In the early stages of NATO military planning, plans were worked out on the basis of military requirements alone. As General Eisenhower says in his Report, plans were drawn up without "a feasibility test to ensure that they were within the economic capacities of member countries". It soon appeared that the military requirements, as assessed by the planners, might seriously strain the economies of certain member countries. If such a situation were to arise in any country, serious internal, social and political difficulties might well

* The project of a European Defence Community broadly parallels in the military field what has already been accomplished for the control of steel and coal in Western Europe under the Schuman Plan. Both plans are aspects of a broader movement towards closer integration of Western Europe which, if achieved, will undoubtedly strengthen Western Europe politically and in other ways. But consideration of this broad subject is outside the scope of this pamphlet.