

The Soviet government has never shown any inclination to discuss these agreements on a rational basis, or to take any reasonable attitude toward Germany or Austria. It has avoided constructive discussion and made no attempt to find out about or to seek reassurance or any point about western policy toward the German Federal Republic which it regarded as menacing to the Soviet Union.

No one of course would deny to the Soviet Union, which suffered so cruelly from German arms, the right to issue warnings about German militarism. But we cannot regard Soviet judgments on this subject as superior to those of other nations, which also suffered from the same source.

The logic of the Soviet position on this matter seems to be either that Germans in the German Federal Republic, regardless of the prior rearmament in East Germany, must never possess the right to carry arms, even within a defensive association which imposes controls, or that any arming of Germany can be carried out only on Soviet terms. Looking back a few years this logic seems pretty strange. According to it the western powers had no right to feel alarmed when the Soviet Government, contrary to agreements with allies about the occupation of Germany and without any regard for the wishes of these people, armed its eastern satellites and bound East Germany into the monolithic unity of communist Europe.

The Soviet Government now claims the right to regard almost as a provocation to war the culminating act of a slow process whereby the German Federal Republic, with the consent of its freely elected government and that of 14 other free nations, enters into an association which has as one of its chief purposes the prevention on a permanent basis of German militaristic nationalism.

So we would be unwise and shortsighted if we yielded to Soviet threats about what will happen if these agreements are ratified. Nor in my view will that ratification provoke warlike retaliation, unless the Soviet government, for other reasons, desires to pursue such a belligerent policy.

I think myself that the chance that such retaliation will happen and war might follow are less now than they were last summer after EDC was rejected. On our part we have made it abundantly clear that NATO policies in Europe are defensive and pacific. Among many others, President Eisenhower and Mr. Dulles have both recently emphasized that the aim of the West is to be strong enough to defend itself, to be moderate in responding to the provocations of others, and to be active in seeking every means of easing tensions and ensuring peace.