

Germany, since German steel had been an essential element in German aggression; and he noted that recently every increase in the coal output of the Ruhr had meant a decrease in the export of coal from Germany. He obviously did not believe that Germany would produce enough coal for export, unless she were compelled to do so. Mr. Bevin based his rejection of M. Bidault's request for coal on his doctrine of the indivisibility of German economic unity, of which the Ruhr constituted only a part, and on the rights of the British taxpayer.

On Friday the 21st the Ministers first heard a progress report on the work of the Austrian Deputies, and agreed to invite Austrian representatives to come to Moscow for consultation. They then began a two-day exchange of views on the future political structure of Germany. Mr. Bevin and Mr. Marshall spoke on Friday, M. Molotov and M. Bidault on Saturday. There was a clear distinction between the ideas of the Russians and the others. M. Molotov desired a centralised, "democratic unitary State" which would give certain powers to the *Laender*. The Control Council would draw up a provisional constitution, "aided by democratic parties, trade unions and representatives of the *Laender*." A Central Government was essential to fulfil Germany's obligations to the Allies. He suggested the Weimar constitution with the autonomy it gave to the *Laender* "as a starting-point." M. Bidault, himself a historian, had no difficulty in showing that Weimar gave less power to the *Laender* than had any previous German constitution, and that it had paved the way to Hitler. In his view all power should belong to the *Laender* who would delegate the essential minimum to a Central Government. But the present subject was the provisional organisation of Germany, stage 2 in the problem. It was premature to deal with stage 3, the provisional Government, before stage 1, "Local Governments," were working properly. The main features of Mr. Bevin's and Mr. Marshall's proposals were almost identical. Both emphasised the fact that a policy of decentralisation was in accord with paragraph 9 of Potsdam, that the Control Council was not a substitute for a proper German Government, based on human rights, and the rule of law. Mr. Marshall

would limit the powers of the Central Government strictly, leaving residual authority with the *Laender*. Mr. Bevin's scheme was at once practical and imaginative. All powers would be vested in the *Laender*, except those delegated to the Central Government to secure the necessary political, legal, economic and financial unity. In the eventual German constitution there would be two Chambers, one representing the nation, one the *Laender*, and the latter would have the means to safeguard all *Laender* rights. Further, a Supreme Court would be set up to watch over the constitution. The President would have only the powers of a constitutional ruler. The practical approach to the problem can be seen in the care taken to ensure that Germany evolves towards freedom, first under guidance and control and, when these become redundant, by her own will. Mr. Bevin's appreciation of the perils which beset the path towards freedom can be seen in the "rights" which he would have guaranteed during the period of growing up, freedom not only to express oneself, but, far more important, freedom to inform oneself. He is alive to the perils of over-centralisation in Germany, and recalled from his own experience, how the bureaucratic centralisation which the Allies set up in Germany after 1918 provided part of the machinery which Hitler used. He is alive, also, to a subtler danger, of Nazism being replaced by a so-called freedom-loving, democratic, but none less totalitarian and exclusive Party. "We want to encourage the interplay of democratic forces and parties which we believe will provide the necessary protection for the Allies." Here the practical mingles with the imaginative, and the aim of Allied policy is shown again to be the conversion of Germany from war to peace. The possibility that Russia's conception of a German constitution may be fundamentally different is suggested in an article which Zalavski wrote in *Pravda* of the 23rd March. He was discussing the Conference: "Before Bismarck Germany had been evolving on the right lines towards unity under the leadership of Marx, Engels, Lassalle, Liebknecht and Bebel. Unfortunately Bismarck and Hitler brought about this unity by the means, *i.e.*, blood and iron."