

NATO—European Defence Community

unfair to members of the house when I said that there were only 33 in their seats. That was the number present, but I was not aware that several important committees were sitting. Something like 60 per cent of the members of the house are on those committees. Consequently I should like to put the matter right because I do not like to be unfair to my colleagues.

At the conclusion of my remarks this morning I said that I thought we had to consider the state of public opinion in the NATO countries generally and particularly those in western Europe, as well as some of those which may not be included in the NATO organization. First, we have to pay some attention to the state of public opinion in Germany because if we ratify and deposit this protocol and it is followed by the signing or ratification of a peace treaty we want to be sure that we have achieved something of a permanent nature.

I have been following the reports emanating from Bonn and other places with a good deal of interest and also with some misgiving. For example, I notice that last week the treaty system that will rearm a sovereign West Germany within the framework of the Atlantic alliance has been challenged in the courts as to the right of the government to enter into such an agreement. We have been told that there is in Germany a steady increase in public support to induce the chancellor, Mr. Adenauer, in the words of his minister for all-German affairs, and I quote:

To demonstrate the government's willingness to take the responsibility for the reunification of Germany.

In other words, the feeling is growing in Germany, and I believe it is a majority opinion, that prior to anything else in the way of rearmament or otherwise being done, the reunification of Germany should be considered an essential factor. As a matter of fact the German chancellor is faced with something of a rebellion in his own party, as is indicated to some extent by the quotation I have just made.

The social democratic party, which is the strongest opposition in that country, is certainly opposed to these steps being taken until the unification of Germany has been discussed and indeed until free elections have been achieved.

Not only is there misgiving and grave opposition to what is being done in Germany; we find a somewhat similar situation in France. The French government is not a socialist government; it is a coalition government. We read in a dispatch from Paris in the *New York Times* of Thursday, June 12,

that the French cabinet instructed its foreign minister, Mr. Schuman, to urge an early conference between the Soviet union and the big three western powers. That was to be confined to two questions: first, the conditions of a free election in Germany, and the circumstances under which the unification of Germany would be effective. Although it has not been confirmed, it was assumed that the note from the British foreign secretary, Mr. Anthony Eden, favoured a four-power conference in reply to the latest Soviet note. According to this news dispatch from Paris, Mr. Schuman was urged to support that view if Mr. Eden expressed it. As I say, the reference to Mr. Eden was not confirmed from London.

The same dispatch in the *New York Times* says that there is a strong feeling among officials in France that no government should risk appearing reluctant to negotiate with the Soviet union in view of the fear in Europe of greater tension as a result of the signature of the treaties linking West Germany with the western coalition. It goes on to say that even Mr. Schuman pointed out recently that there would be time to negotiate before the treaties were ratified and that there is a disposition in France to put off ratification to perhaps the end of the year and to press for negotiations with the Soviet union again this summer. It adds that ratification by the French parliament might well be vitally affected by the belief or lack of belief that the western powers had made a genuine effort to discuss the German problem with Moscow.

I think all this underlines something that the minister of external affairs said this morning. He said that if this house ratifies the protocol, at the conclusion of this debate the instrument will not be deposited with the United States but will be held until there has been a clarification of the general position in western Europe. I think that that is a wise provision. In fact, had the minister not said that this morning I would have been inclined—in fact I would have done it—to move an amendment to delete the last part of the resolution before us and to substitute words to that effect. In view of the statement made by the minister of external affairs I believe that the moving of such an amendment is unnecessary because the instrument will not be deposited until there has been a further clarification of the position overseas. So much for the French situation at the present time. The dispatch to which I have referred, and a similar one by Drew Middleton from Bonn appeared in the *Sunday New York Times* of June 15, indicate the same kind of French and German opinion.

Then we have had recent statements made in Great Britain. At the moment I am looking