

TEXT OF SOVIET NOTE

(1st April '54)

The following text of the Soviet note of yesterday is unofficial, as received from the Associated Press:

London, April 1 (AP) - Moscow broadcast today the text of a Soviet note containing new proposals for European security (the broadcast version was the note sent to the French Government. Similar notes went to the United States and Great Britain.)

The Text:

The Soviet Government finds it necessary to call the attention of the French Government to the following.

The Soviet Union has consistently pursued a policy of peace and of improving relations between countries. This is reflected in the proposals which the Soviet Government has put before the United Nations for a general arms reduction and for the prohibition of atomic and other weapons of wholesale annihilation.

If the problem of a general arms reduction and the prohibition of atomic and other of the most dangerous weapons of wholesale annihilation were adjusted, the heavy burden the peoples carry now owing to the continued arms drive would be greatly raised, and the danger that such major scientific discoveries as the discovery of ways of employing atomic energy might be used for destructive purposes would be eliminated. The solution of this problem would be highly significant in promoting peace and the security of the peoples.

Up to now, as is known it has not been possible to secure the proper international agreements on the aforementioned important issues owing to the difficulties encountered. This circumstances, however, should not detract from the significance of efforts, especially on the part of the big powers, which bear a particular responsibility for the maintenance of world peace, to secure such agreements. As far as the Soviet Union is concerned it will continue to insist that a substantial reduction in the arms and armed forces of the countries is necessary and that an agreement must be reached to rule out the employment of atomic energy for destruction and the wholesale annihilation of human beings.

The significance of such efforts on the part of countries is growing ever greater, especially since the destructive power of atomic weapons is constantly increasing and more than that there have appeared hydrogen weapons which are many times more powerful than atomic weapons. There can be no doubt that the employment of atomic and hydrogen weapons in a war would bring the peoples untold suffering. It would mean the wholesale annihilation of civilians and the destruction of big cities, the centers of present day industry, culture and science, including such old centers of civilisation as the leading capitals of the world.

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In observing corresponding efforts to make it easier to reach agreement on these major problems, the Soviet Government is also acting on the belief that there are other, as yet unutilized, opportunities for building up peace. First of all, the significance of strengthening security in Europe should be noted, inasmuch as the maintenance of peace in Europe is decisively important if general peace is to be maintained and a new world war prevented.

With this in view the Soviet Government put a proposal to guarantee security in Europe before the Berlin meeting of French, British, U.S. and Soviet Foreign Ministers and, in this connection, submitted a draft of the fundamentals of a General European Treaty for collective security in Europe. The draft provides for a general European system of security based on the collective efforts of all the countries of Europe.

All the European countries, irrespective of social systems, can be participants. This includes Germany. Moreover, pending the integration of Germany, the German Democratic Republic and the German Federal Republic could be signatories to the treaty. In the case of an armed attack on any one of the signatories, the treaty stipulates that the attacked country shall be assisted by every possible means, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain international peace and security in Europe. Consequently the draft fundamentals of a general European treaty is intended to establish an effective system of collective security in Europe in accordance with the principles of UN charter. The creation of a general European system of collective security would put an end to the formation in Europe of antagonistic military groups of countries. The establishment of such groups invariably tends to aggravate relations between countries and increase hostility and distrust, to say nothing of the fact that it is attended by an arms drive with all the resulting consequences for the people.

It should also be borne in mind that the creation of one military group of countries invariably precipitates corresponding action on the part of other countries to guarantee their security. As a result, there arises a situation wherein relations between countries are based not on a desire for mutual cooperation in the interests of keeping peace, but on such an offsetting of each other as inevitably increases the strain in relations between countries and thereby heightens the menace of another war.

It must not be overlooked that both the First and Second World Wars were preceded by the establishment of antagonistic military groups of countries and the splitting of Europe into two hostile camps. Nor must we forget the particularly dangerous role of German militarism in such military groups and in provoking the First and Second World Wars. All this underscores how important it is to offset the policy of forming antagonistic military groups of countries with a policy of effective cooperation on the part of all the European countries for the sake of maintaining and promoting peace.

Such cooperation between all the European countries, large and small, irrespective of social systems, would make it possible to avoid a situation wherein Europe is periodically embroiled in devastating wars, as the history of the European countries for the past hundred years shows. It is for this reason that the Soviet Government has time and time again called the attention of the French Government as well as the British and U.S. Governments to the danger inherent in the formation of military groups of countries.

For one, the Soviet Government has drawn attention to this in view of the plans to form what is called the European Defense Community, plans which lead to the restoration of German Militarism with all the resulting dangerous consequences for peace in Europe, especially for the security of West Germany's neighbors. The plans to form a European Defense Community, it is known, stipulate the establishment of a closed military group of six European countries behind the screen of which a so-called European Army, comprising the armed forces of France, Italy, Belgium, The Netherlands, Luxembourg and West Germany too, would be organized.

The main role in this European Army is assigned to the Armed Forces of West Germany with Nazi Generals at the Head. This conflicts with the commitments assumed by France, Britain and the U.S.A., together with the Soviet Union not to permit a resurgence of German militarism. What is more, there are already plans on foot to establish several dozen West German divisions.

It is also well known that in view of the plans to organize a European Army, ruling quarters of West Germany are openly working to speed the remilitarization of West Germany and to form regular armed forces of all kinds and no longer find it necessary to conceal their aggressive aims with respect to neighboring countries, for this reason the peace-minded nations of Europe, especially West Germany's neighbors, cannot but feel a legitimate anxiety for their security, in view of the danger stemming from a reviving German militarism and the incorporation of West Germany in a European Defense community.

Reviving Germany militarism and forming military groups in Europe far from promoting peace means paving the way for another war. Yet today, more than ever before, all the peace-minded countries, and above all the big powers, should direct their efforts to preventing a new war and to seeing that the peoples of Europe, including the German, are not involved in another war which in present conditions is particularly dangerous for the nations. This can be successfully achieved if instead of antagonistic military groups of European countries there is created a system of security based on the common efforts of all the European countries.

At the same time the establishment of such a system of collective security in Europe would promote a general peace. This is the very reason why the idea of collective security in Europe, especially since the Berlin meeting, commands the energetic support of a number of countries as well as of large international forces.

When the Soviet proposal to conclude a General European Treaty was examined at the Berlin meeting, there proved to be divergences which made it impossible to reach agreement. However, in view of the importance of reaching the proper agreement on this major issue, the Soviet Government feels it would be expedient to continue discussion of the proposal.

In connection with the examination of the Soviet proposal to guarantee collective security in Europe, the opinion has been voiced that it is undesirable that the U.S.A. should remain outside the treaty for collective security in Europe. In view of this, and, bearing in mind the participation of the U.S.A. during World War II in the common fight against Nazi aggression, and the responsibility which it bears alone with the Soviet Union, France and Britain for a post-war settlement in Europe, also considering the view expressed by the U.S. Government at the Berlin Meeting, the Soviet for its part, sees no obstacles in the way of a favourable adjustment of the problem of U.S. participation in a General European Treaty for collective security in Europe. Thus the difficulty in the way of an agreement to set up a system of collective security in Europe which has been noted up to now should disappear.

When the Soviet proposal for a General European Treaty was examined at the Berlin meeting, the matter was also raised of the place and role of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in connection with the establishment of a system of collective security in Europe. The spokesman of France, as well as Britain and the U.S.A., asserted that the North Atlantic Treaty is defensive and is not directed against any country or group of countries. Statements to this effect have been made by official representatives of France as well as spokesmen of the U.S.A. and Britain since the Berlin meeting closed in comment on the Soviet proposal to establish a general European system of collective security.

The position of the Soviet Government with regard to the North Atlantic Treaty is well known. The Government of the U.S.S.R. did not share, nor can it today, the view that this treaty is defensive. The Soviet Government proceeds from the fact that the North Atlantic Treaty establishes a closed group of countries and ignores the problem of averting fresh German aggression. And inasmuch as the Soviet Union of all the big powers that belonged to the anti-Hitler coalition is the only one that is not a signatory to this treaty, the North Atlantic Treaty cannot but be regarded as an aggressive pact directed against the Soviet Union.

Plainly enough, given the proper conditions, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization could lose its aggressive character, that is, if all the big powers which belonged to the anti-Hitler coalition became its participants. In view of this the Soviet Government, guided by the unchanged principles of its foreign policy of peace and desirous of relaxing the tension in international relations, states its readiness to join with the interested governments in examining the matter of having the Soviet Union participate in the North Atlantic Treaty.

Inasmuch as the French Government, as well as the British and U.S., say they wish to ease the world tension and promote peace, we may expect that they will look with favor on steps to ensure such a situation whereby the North Atlantic Treaty would acquire a really defensive character and the ground would be laid to prevent any part of Germany from becoming involved in military groups.

In such a case the North Atlantic Treaty Organization would cease to be a closed military group of states, it would be open to other European countries, and this, along with the establishment of an effective system of collective security in Europe, would be highly important in consolidating world peace. The Soviet Government feels that problems arising in this connection could be settled to the satisfaction of all the interested countries in the interests of a more enduring peace and great security for the peoples.