

‘The Federal Republic of Germany is a member of NATO’ from the Süddeutsche Zeitung (10 May 1955)

Caption: On 10 May 1955, the day after the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) became a Member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the German daily newspaper Süddeutsche Zeitung describes the ceremonies which took place at the Palais de Chaillot in Paris.

Source: Süddeutsche Zeitung. Münchner neueste Nachrichten aus Politik, Kultur, Wirtschaft, Sport. Hrsg. Friedmann, Werner; Goldschagg, Edmund; Schöningh, Dr. Franz Josef; Schwingenstein, August ; R Herausgeber Friedmann, Werner. 10.05.1955, Nr. 110; 11. Jg. München: Süddeutscher Verlag. "Die Bundesrepublik ist Mitglied der NATO", auteur:E. G., Paulus , p. 1.

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The Federal Republic of Germany is a member of NATO

Formal accession in the Palais de Chaillot in Paris / Cordial welcoming addresses by all 14 Foreign Ministers present / Germany will be a loyal partner, Chancellor Adenauer promises

From our correspondent E. G. Paulus

Paris, 9 May — The black, red and gold flag of the Federal Republic was hoisted for the first time on Monday in front of NATO Headquarters near Paris, while a British military band played the German national anthem. The German flag also fluttered above the Palais de Chaillot, where the Federal Republic was formally accepted as the 15th member of the Atlantic Pact. After brief welcoming addresses from the Foreign Ministers represented, Mr Adenauer, the Federal Chancellor, expressed thanks for the trust placed in him and gave his assurance that the Federal Government would work together with the Member States of the Atlantic Pact for peace and freedom with the backing of the entire German nation.

The Chancellor's speech, which was delivered in German, went as follows:

‘The accession of the Federal Republic has been described by you, Mr President, and by the representatives of the Western nations who have just spoken, as an event of historical significance. I offer you my sincere thanks for the words of welcome which you have addressed to the Federal Republic and to the entire German nation. Your words mark the significance of the hour and of the results achieved. You will understand me when I say that, at this moment, I am deeply moved. The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation represents a community of free nations which have testified to their determination jointly to defend the heritage of Western civilisation, based on the principle of personal freedom and the rule of law. Against the growing threat posed by the countries in the Eastern bloc, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, true to its objectives, was compelled to set up a military power for the common defence of all its Member States, their security and the preservation of peace in the world.

‘In view of the political tension affecting the world, the objectives of NATO and, in particular, the purely defensive character of its tasks are fully in accordance with the true interests of the German nation which, after the dreadful experience of two world wars, is striving for security and peace as wholeheartedly as any other nation in the world. The people of Germany have paid dearly for the misdemeanours committed in its name by depraved and bedazzled leading figures. This suffering has transformed and purified the German nation. Today it is certain that, throughout Germany, peace and freedom are regarded as the most priceless items, as they have been in the most significant periods of German history.

‘In the accession of the Federal Republic to the North Atlantic Pact and in the implementation of the treaties which the Federal Republic has concluded with the nations of the free world, I see an expression of the need to overcome the narrow nationalism which was the root of our misfortune during the course of previous periods of our history. We must harmonise social progress and include the strength gained through it in a system which is suitable for removing from it all the harmful implications. The organisation of common defence must, therefore, be only one of the goals of the North Atlantic Pact. For the reasons outlined above, I regard the Preamble and Article 2 to be among the most important of the provisions of the North Atlantic Pact: they call upon the Member States to cooperate in the economic and cultural sphere as well in order to increase their prosperity and preserve their common cultural heritage. They may rest assured that it is the prime concern of the Federal Republic to do its utmost to enable cooperation in these areas.

‘The Federal Republic is resolved to work with the other Member States for peace and freedom. I know that the whole German nation thinks and feels so, including the 18 million who are still denied the right to give free expression to their opinions and to decide freely on their destiny. In the name of the Federal Government and of the German people, I should like to express my gratitude to the powers represented on the North Atlantic Council for having guided Germany along the path which finally led to accession to this community of nations of the free world and, at the same time, for the fact that they have endorsed the attainment of our goal: the reunification of Germany in peace and freedom. Germany will be an active and

loyal partner in the context of this community of free peoples. We shall devote all our efforts to attaining the goal of ensuring the preservation of freedom and human dignity. These noble objectives are now those of Germany, which is called upon, in common with the other Member States of NATO, to assume its share of responsibility for the preservation of peace in the world.'

The addresses given by the Foreign Ministers were highly cordial. They all declared satisfaction in knowing that their German partner was now in the defence community of the free world. The US Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, said: 'This day will long remain in the nation's memory. The entry of the free German people into NATO is a result of historic significance.' The British Foreign Secretary, Harold Macmillan, said: 'We today proclaim our belief in the German people, just as the German people are proclaiming their belief in the aims and ideals of NATO.'

Adenauer warns against excessively high expectations

Later on, before the Foreign Press Club in Paris, the Federal Chancellor, Mr Adenauer, warned against raising expectations too far and promising that all problems would be solved by a Four-Power Conference. 'It will take a long time for the world to be restored to normal.' The Soviet Union now needed a pause for breath, and this pause for breath would obviously have to be used by the peoples of the free world to commence discussion with the Soviet Union. It must not be forgotten, however, that the use of force had not been renounced in the Soviet Union. It was perfectly conceivable that the world was now entering a 'period of conferences', in which one conference would follow on from another. The psychological powers of resistance of the free world must not be weakened during this period, however, because they were just as much a weapon of resistance as the atom bomb. Adenauer gave an assurance that the German parties which backed the Federal Government had not altered their opinion and that the resolution of the Austrian Question did not in any way weaken or influence this opinion. It was clear to the vast majority of the German people that the Austrian Question differed from the German Question.

Moscow's aims unchanged, says Dulles

At the first working conference of the North Atlantic Council on Monday afternoon, in the presence of the Federal Chancellor, the experts presented a detailed report on developments in foreign policy. It is reported that the US Secretary of State, Mr Dulles, pointed out that Soviet willingness to conclude the Austrian State Treaty represented the most significant shift in Soviet policy this year. He nevertheless felt that the fundamental aims of Soviet policy were unchanged and that the attention paid by the West must not therefore diminish. In his view, the conclusion of the Treaty and the subsequent withdrawal of occupation forces from Austria represented the first fruits of Western policy of including Germany in Western defence under the Paris Agreements. Mr Adenauer, speaking in German, also warned the Allies against any reduction in their vigilance and against expecting too much from one or two short conferences with the Soviet Union. Only a series of lengthy, patient and well prepared conferences could contribute to genuine détente in Europe.

On Monday, NATO announced the appointment of Ambassador Herbert Blankenhorn as permanent representative of the Federal Republic of Germany to NATO. Mr Blankenhorn will be resident in Paris. His position is equivalent to that of a State Secretary for NATO Affairs.