

'Joining forces in the struggle for peace and security' from Pravda (1 September 1954)

Caption: On 1 September 1954, the Soviet daily newspaper Pravda welcomes the failure of the European Defence Community (EDC) and emphasises the efforts being made by the USSR to guarantee peace and security in Europe.

Source: Pravda. 01.09.1954. Moskva. "Ob'edinit' usiliia v bor'be za mir i bezopasnost".

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Joining forces in the struggle for peace and security

The French National Assembly's rejection of the Treaty to establish a European army has been unanimously and universally welcomed by all those seeking détente and peace. It is justifiably being considered a victory for peace. Those pushing for the creation of a European army have failed to conceal the aggressive nature of their plans. The plans for a European Defence Community have been revealed for what they really are: an attempt to revive German militarism.

Supporters of a European army have failed to portray their aggressive plan as a way of establishing security in Europe. Their attempts to deceive public opinion by taking advantage of the popularity of the collective security idea have failed.

Over the last few days, several people have condemned the EDC Treaty in France, including former President Vincent Auriol, General de Gaulle, General Weygand, Honorary President of the French National Assembly Édouard Herriot, and several others of various political persuasions. The movement against the European army has become nationwide.

The anti-European army movement has enjoyed considerable success and has proved, once again, that national interests are not just a hollow concept, as proponents of military blocs and aggressive coalitions claim. Once again, it has been proved that peace may be preserved and consolidated only if people take responsibility for it.

In other Western European countries, the movement against rearming West Germany is gathering pace.

Labour leaders in the United Kingdom, led by Aneurin Bevin, have condemned the resurrection of Hitler's *Wehrmacht*, denouncing it as a threat to peace in Europe and to the United Kingdom's national interests.

Speeches by figures such as Otto John and Bundestag member Schmidt-Wittmack show that Germany's leaders are increasingly aware of how dangerous the path chosen by the revanchists might be for Germany.

Great swathes of the public in Italy are also beginning to understand that an organisation such as the European Defence Community could pose a real threat to Italy's national interests.

In conditions such as these, the international hawks are striving ever harder to salvage their plans for the resurrection of West German militarism. They are attempting to patch up the Paris Agreement and push through a military coalition with West German revanchists under some other label. All these attempts are further evidence that the Paris and Bonn Agreements have a common goal: the rearming of West Germany. Now that the French National Assembly has rejected the Paris Agreement, there can be no doubt that the US warmongers will attempt to bring about German rearmament by other means.

This means that all Europeans must be particularly vigilant of the intrigues of those enemies of peace in Europe and that there be tireless efforts to counter any attempt to resurrect a revanchist *Wehrmacht*.

And who would benefit from the re-emergence of West German militarism? The US Administration would. The USA intends to implement its aggressive plans with the help of the West German military and to keep Western Europe in its thrall. German revanchists are of course also interested in creating a close-knit military bloc in Europe and have plans of their own to become dominant in Western Europe, so they would have much to gain from a weakening of France.

International aggressors are striving to prevent détente and are trying to hamper international cooperation and increase the likelihood of war. The threat of a third world war is a great source of anxiety in Europe. This anxiety is mainly due to the threat that the atomic bomb or hydrogen bomb might be used, and it feeds the arms race policy. People are demanding an unequivocal ban on atomic and hydrogen bombs and other weapons of mass destruction, a major reduction in arms and armed forces, and the establishment of strict international controls. The hawks are trying to hamper international agreements on such issues so that they

may freely prepare for a new war.

Fifteen years after World War Two began, people overseas are insisting on finding an answer to the question of whether peace in Europe really can be achieved. Despite all the usual tricks of reactionary propaganda intended to confuse the general public in Western Europe, everyone is convinced that it can be achieved by creating a Europe-wide system of collective security which would meet the basic national interests of all European states.

As far back as the Berlin Conference, the Soviet Government put forward proposals for guaranteeing security in Europe in the form of a draft Pan-European Collective Security Agreement. This draft was supported by many countries, both in Europe and elsewhere. The Soviet proposal was endorsed by the governments of the Socialist Republics in Europe — Bulgaria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Rumania and Albania. The Government of the People's Republic of China supported the proposal. The Polish Government proposed that the French Government, in accordance with the principles of guaranteeing collective security in Europe, conclude an agreement of union and mutual assistance.

A common European collective security system would create favourable conditions for resolving the nine-year-old German question by creating a united Germany as a peace-loving, independent and democratic state. Both the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany could sign the treaty, with the united Germany becoming a single treaty party after unification. This would remove the major obstacles to resolving the German problem caused in recent years by Germany's remilitarisation policy and the plans to include the country in the so-called European Defence Community.

The only sure way to combat aggression in Europe is through collective measures by all states parties to a common European treaty to counter the threat of armed attack in Europe against one or more countries. All parties to the treaty would be obliged to assist, with all available means including military force, any state or states which are being attacked. This would be a genuinely effective way of securing international peace and security in Europe. The agreement would preclude the formation of any coalitions or unions whose aims were contrary to maintaining collective security in Europe.

Is it possible that these principles may be against the national and state interests of any European country? Of course not, since the principles of collective security are founded on respect for the national and state sovereignty of all European countries. It removes any discrimination between small and large countries, irrespective of their social order. These principles are the result of the development of political thought in recent decades. They have been achieved through suffering by the people of Europe and fully reflect their historical experience over the last fifty years. History shows that one can prepare for war from a 'position of strength', but it does not bring about peace. Presently, the only principles for supporting and consolidating peace are those of collective security. The cornerstones of collective security in Europe were the 1942 Anglo-Soviet Agreement and the 1944 Franco-Soviet Treaty.

It is noteworthy that, nowadays, nobody dares to speak out openly against these principles and no serious argument has been put forward against them. But by the same token, leaders in the West have not put forward any positive proposals either.

Opponents of extensive international cooperation cannot deny that the Geneva Conference showed that holding talks on unresolved international issues brings positive results in the interests of détente and of consolidating peace.

Following the Geneva Conference, the Soviet Government proposed that an all-European conference be convened in the coming months to examine the issue of collective security in Europe. Considering the importance of such a conference, the Soviet Government announced on 4 August that it would consider it useful if the Governments of France, the United Kingdom, the USA and the USSR were to hold a preliminary meeting to discuss the convening of such a conference and the measures required to ensure its success. To that end, the Soviet Government proposed a Conference of Foreign Ministers from France, the United Kingdom, the USA and the USSR around August–September to consider the issue of Germany.

By the time August came, there was no reply to the Soviet proposal from the Governments of France, the United Kingdom and the USA. Instead, in Western Europe there was increasing commotion around plans for rearming West Germany. But regardless of what form they take the goal remains the same: to form a strike force for US aggression in Europe that can only alarm neighbouring Germany. They resisted and will continue to resist strongly any implementation of these plans.

It is worth remembering that it is no longer possible to ignore the will of the people who are demanding security in Europe, a solution to the German question, and combined efforts by all European countries to ensure peace.

Yu. Pavlov