

PEACE . . . and the German Problem

Once again the German problem has become the central question in the worldwide struggle to maintain peace.

More than sixteen years have passed since the end of World War II and Germany's unconditional surrender, yet there is still no peace treaty with Germany.

The daily press says that the Soviet decision to sign peace treaties this year with both German States or with one only threatens to plunge the world into another crisis.

Why Should There Be a Crisis?

Briefly, the Soviet Government proposes that the countries which fought against Nazi Germany participate in a conference to conclude a peace treaty with the two German States. It also calls for the withdrawal of all occupation troops from West Berlin, turning it into a Free City, with its own independent Government.

The Soviet Union called for this in 1958. The Foreign Ministers Conference which followed was unfortunately unable to agree on many questions, although the area of disagreement was narrowed by those discussions.

The question of a treaty with Germany—of writing "finis" to World War II and legalising Germany's present boundaries—is regarded by the Soviet Union as urgent. So urgent that Premier Khrushchov recently said that if some countries would not take part in the Peace Conference it proposed, the Soviet Union would nonetheless sign a peace treaty with both West and East Germany. Furthermore, if West Germany would not sign, the Soviet Union would sign a peace treaty with East Germany and hand over its powers in relation to Berlin to the East German Government.

Khrushchov stated that his proposal was by no means a threat and that attempts to threaten the Soviet Union were doomed to failure.

Rise of Militarism in West Germany

Although pledged to disarm Germany, dismantle its war potential and destroy the Nazi Party, the Western Governments have permitted and encouraged the restoration of Germany's armed forces and the growth of the armament kings who financed Hitler. Many leading politicians, officials, judges and generals in West Germany now were formerly leading Nazi Party members.

THESE FORMER NAZIS HAVE NOT GIVEN UP THEIR PLANS OF CONQUEST.

They are openly demanding the return of the territories which are now part of Poland and Czechoslovakia as a result of agreements, during and after the war, between Great Britain, USSR and USA, which established new boundaries for Germany.

West Germany has nuclear weapons on its soil. It has a powerful army and is building a powerful navy. West Germany is pressing to be allowed to develop and control nuclear weapons of its own. It is freely suggested that this may be agreed to soon.

In its eagerness to pursue an anti-Soviet policy, has the USA created a Frankenstein monster it is unable to control? In 1939, a similar policy directed against the Soviet Union backfired and plunged the world into war. Now it could be the horror of nuclear war.

That is why the problem is urgent. That is why the Soviet Union declares there must be a peace treaty this year.

Berlin Still Occupied—A Powder Keg!

As for West Berlin, its continued occupation by British, American and Soviet troops is abnormal, sixteen years after the war has ended. The fact that West Germany has been accepted as a power in the NATO alliance is alone sufficient proof that these troops are not in Berlin for their original purpose which was to carry out the allied wartime agreements to demilitarise Germany, dismantle its war potential and destroy the Nazi Party.

Berlin is an admitted centre of espionage and counter-espionage in the very heart of East Germany; a centre where tension is so high that an incident, or an accident, could easily spark off a conflagration.

The Soviet proposal is that, to help safeguard world peace West Berlin should be made a Free City, with its own independent Government, with free access for both West and East guaranteed by all the Great Powers and by the United Nations, and, if necessary, with neutral troops under United Nations Command stationed in West Berlin to ensure that the freedom of a demilitarised Berlin is not interfered with by any outside Power.

World Peace Endangered By Absence of Peace Treaty

The re-unification of Germany is a big problem. In the last analysis it is a problem which can only be solved by the people of West and East Germany themselves.

However, a treaty with Germany cannot wait until the problem of German unity is solved. World peace is endangered by the absence of a Peace Treaty with Germany—AND WORLD PEACE ABOVE ALL MUST BE SAFEGUARDED BEFORE EVERYTHING ELSE.

Support Call For Conference

What is needed now is not threats and the massing of force by any country, but a serious attempt at the Conference table to reach a solution satisfactory to all the wartime Allies concerned, Britain, Soviet Union, USA and France.

The forces for peace, far stronger now than they were in 1958-9 when the German problem last flared up, can safeguard peace.

The world-wide peace movement has succeeded in maintaining the ban on the testing of nuclear weapons, and has raised the problem of general disarmament (under strict international control), to the forefront of the thinking of all nations.

★ No war over Germany

★ No war over Berlin!

Call on the Australian Government to support the call for a peace conference on the German problem.