

From de Gaulle to Gouin

The recent crisis in France has opened up a new chapter in the troubled political history of post-war France. The British people dismissed their war leader Winston Churchill, not because they did not want to pay the tribute due to him, but because they felt that he did not understand the need for those economic and social changes without which modern society cannot provide justice, prosperity and peace. De Gaulle went on his own account. We wonder how many French people will feel that the weaknesses of de Gaulle are analogous to those responsible for Churchill's defeat in the election.

Will the change be to the better? The picture drawn by our correspondent below, from his impressions on the spot, and close to events, is rather more optimistic than we may think is justified. However, the Socialist Party of France has at last shown the political initiative which it seemed to lack so much during the past year. And it has resumed the heavy responsibilities which have fallen upon it by the exit of de Gaulle with a bolder spirit than many had expected.

The almost super-human effort required of the French Socialists and of all those who want to help them in tackling the thankless tasks of the next few months, can easily be assessed when we consider the difficulties under which they have to labour, difficulties incomparably greater in almost every respect than those facing the British Labour Government. Some of these difficulties are indicated in the subsequent article. Not the least of them arises from the unstable party relations and particularly from the unavoidable partnership the Socialists have to maintain with the powerful Communist Party. Even if concrete decisions on foreign policy are delayed, as in this sphere Socialists and Communists hardly see eye to eye (this was clearly shown in the debate on foreign affairs which took place in the middle of January in the Assembly), the position is bound to remain uneasy. There is a constant danger that party tactics will be unscrupulous, and thus the stability of the Government undermined, because of considerations influenced by the impending general election.

THE resignation of General de Gaulle came as a complete surprise even to very well-informed French political circles. Whilst in London and New York the possibility of such a step was discussed more than a week before it occurred, in Paris two days prior to the event the Ministers themselves were still unaware of what was brewing. On the Friday evening, the deputies of the National Assembly left as usual for their constituencies.

Called together by telegram on Sunday, January 20th, the startled Ministers heard Charles de Gaulle's announcement of his resignation, whereupon he left the room without any further explanation. Nor was any explanation given in his formal letter which, keeping to the usual diplomatic style, was not only a political conventional lie, but, in addition, gave an absolutely false picture of the situation which he painted in incredulously optimistic colours.

Causes of the Conflict

The exact reasons for this decision will not be known until de Gaulle himself decides to open his mouth. Nor can it be predicted what further course he will follow. However, certain interpretations are near enough the mark. Some say that de Gaulle was aggravated by the attacks made upon him by Herriot in the foreign affairs debate on January 16th. Herriot [1] then pointed out the scandalous affair of the "Légion d'Honneur" and other high decorations recently awarded to several officers for having resisted the landings of the Americans in North Africa. Herriot was strongly applauded whilst de Gaulle's feeble reply met with an almost complete silence of disapproval. After this incident, the General had withdrawn from the Chamber and not even attended the speech of his Foreign Minister, Bidault.

Others say that Bidault's attitude to the question of trusteeship for certain French Colonies had caused strong resentment on the part of de Gaulle. It is a fact that de Gaulle and Bidault did not always see eye to eye in matters of foreign policy.

It is also pointed out that shortly before his resignation de Gaulle had learned from a prominent financier of the alarming state of the financial position of France (growing inflation, no funds, tax payments not coming in, capital levy too late and too little). Another version is that he wanted to escape the challenge expected from the Ernest Mercier electricity trust [2], in view of the Bill for the nationalisation of electricity and gas.

Last, but not least, it was said that the General was concerned with safeguarding his prestige and that he withdrew in the hope of being recalled within a few weeks or months by a humiliated Chamber which would no longer dare to resist his personal régime.

Probably all these factors played some part in bringing things to a head. But the crisis had been latent at least since January 1st. On the memorable session of the National Assembly when the socialist motion for a reduction in the Army estimates was debated, only a last-minute compromise prevented its outbreak. In that debate the real issue of conflict was clearly revealed. The General's views in favour of an authoritarian democracy and an independent executive clashed sharply with the idea of a sovereign Parliament which was passionately defended by the socialists. These views were, of course, not new. De Gaulle had never

[Seite im Original:] - 14-

concealed them. The change in the situation came from the socialist side. Up to then, de Gaulle had grounds to assume that the majority of the Socialist Party, together with the M.R.P., would stand by the restrictions he intended to impose upon Parliament. He had been confirmed in this view by the adoption of the so-called preamble to the Constitution to which the socialists had agreed after reaching a compromise in order to prevent a crisis breaking out before the elections for the Constituent Assembly.

Repercussions in Socialist Ranks

Since then, however, the highly unsatisfactory policy of the de Gaulle Government and its repercussions in the country had made a deep impression upon the Socialist Party. Discontent in the population was rising in an almost vertical curve. The Government proved to be split and helpless on all major issues of the day. The policy of "military greatness" began to show its fatal results. A collapse of the State finances was

imminent. Parliament felt its impotence and even amongst de Gaulle's most loyal M.R.P. supporters doubts began to grow.

On January 18th, the opposition to de Gaulle expressed at the meeting of the Socialist Parliamentary fraction was so strong that, had a vote been taken, hardly three members would have voted for remaining in the Government. No wonder that the opinion in favour of accepting the Communist Party's proposals for common action in working out the constitution gained ground. The second meeting of the Socialist-Communist Unity Committee, which was held on January 18th, produced a kind of political armistice between the two parties and an agreement, in principle, to co-operate on the question of the constitution. This agreement, and thus the prospect of being defeated on his own constitutional scheme seems to be the most plausible of all explanations for de Gaulle's exodus.

Badly Staged Exodus

Whatever de Gaulle's strength as a strategist, which must be reckoned with for future and possibly dangerous developments, his exodus was badly staged. The Press did, of course, acknowledge unreservedly the historic part he had played in the war and the resistance, but even his most intimate associates expressed not only concern, but an almost open condemnation. Maurice Schumann [3], one of his close friends, wrote in *L'Aube*, of Januar 22nd - and though his words were very restrained, they were telling enough: "He goes without looking back, either to his first companions or to France", and "silently he serves his demon or his genius as he has served the flag."

The reactionaries who, of late, had become so outspokenly Gaullist, tried to play out de Gaulle's resignation against the left, whilst at the same time exploiting it for their anti-parliamentary propaganda.

One might have expected an ovation for the departing "first resistant of France". But nobody stirred when his letter was read out to the Assembly on January 22nd. His farewell words died down in the silence of a death room. Opinion hardened when the facts about the catastrophic financial situation in France became known. "Impossible that he should not have known these facts", everybody said. "He withdrew to leave us with the mess of a financial collapse for which he himself was largely responsible." More than once the "flight of the General" was the term used.

For the policy of de Gaulle, the reactionary goal of military greatness, the people will have to pay and a tremendous indignation will sweep the country in the coming months. It was understandable that after the collapse of the French Army, after the destruction of the whole military machine, a reconstruction of the defences of the country had to be taken in hand. Improvisations were unavoidable at first, since the war was not over yet when the de Gaulle Government established itself in Paris. But de Gaulle's name stood after all for a military programme, for "new and rational" methods in Army organisation and equipment. Yet nothing new or rational was created. On the contrary, the young officers who had served in the resistance and the maquis, these organisers of a new People's Army, were systematically eliminated. In their place, all the old "Naphtalinards", as they were called, were fetched back, that class of officers who, after having lost the war in 1940, either retired to wait for a new chance, in the meanwhile protecting their uniforms from moths, or accepted posts in the Vichy administration where they almost without exception suffered shipwreck. The "new" Army thus had a percentage of officers far above prewar level and quite out of proportion to its size. They requisitioned ruthlessly hotels, houses, cars and camions. They wasted money, benzine

and food. They made the revived industries, such as textile and leather, work almost exclusively for their purposes, in complete disregard of the needs of economic reconstruction. They tied the hands of hundreds of thousands of young men at a time when there was certainly no threat to French security. They occupied their piece of Germany with military forces such as the Germans had not used to occupy the whole of France.

Milliards of francs were squandered. In 1945, about 90 per cent. of the whole State revenue from taxes went for the purpose of maintaining a very doubtful military greatness. One need not be a military expert to see that a new turning point has been reached in methods of warfare and defence, and that therefore our whole former conceptions of military efficiency have to be radically recast. The fiasco of the French policy of military strength must squarely be laid at the door of de Gaulle. For it was in his power to build up the Army on a new basis and to put an end to the recklessness with which the money and resources of France were wasted.

Socialist-Communist Relations

With de Gaulle's resignation, naturally the question arose at once whether this would mean not only the end of a Gaullist policy but also the end of the previous three-party alliance. A public discussion which took place on this problem between the Socialist Party and the Communists forms an important chapter in the history of the formation of the new Government. Immediately after de Gaulle had so brusquely left his startled Ministers on January 20th, Maurice Thorez [4] declared himself in favour of a Government formed on a three-party basis, or, to be more exact, on a "union basis". This fact was stated by Léon Blum in *Populaire* of January 23rd. On the same day the *Populaire* published the text of a letter from the General Secretary of the Socialist Party, Daniel Mayer, to the General Secretary of the Communist Party, Jacques Duclos [5]. In this letter, Daniel Mayer referred to a discussion he had had on January 20th with both Duclos and Thorez in the bureau of the Communist Federation of Paris, in which "all the three of them, without previous consultation, had agreed that the present situation demanded a three-party Government". According to Mayer, Thorez had spoken of a "Union Government" in the sense that the portfolios should be fairly distributed among the three parties but that the smaller Left parties should be drawn in. "This position of your party", Daniel Mayer wrote, "was incidentally consistent since you have demanded a three-party Government in all

[Seite im Original:] - 15-

the discussions we have had with you". Duclos replied with a chronological record of the events. This was published in full in the *Populaire*, whilst *Humanité* [6] did not contain the whole text of Duclos' letter.

The two General Secretaries of the Communist Party had thus pledged their word for a continuation of the three-party Government. Yet after de Gaulle's resignation, in contrast to their attitude in October, 1945, they claimed at once the right for their party, in fact for Thorez, to form a Government.

Also in contrast to the previous occasion, they started negotiating at once not only with the Socialist Party, but also separately with the M.R.P. They know only too well that in the present international conditions a Communist-led Government was as good as impossible if France was to maintain American and British support. It may, of course, be that the Communists did not mind the risk of losing this support, for the anti-British

attitude of *Humanité* has recently assumed forms which formerly could only be found in the Nazi paper, *Gringoire*[7]. On the other hand, they were certainly aware that the candidature of Thorez, who deserted from the Army in 1939, was also untenable for large section of the French people.

The Communists based their claim formally on the fact that they are numerically the strongest party in the Assembly. However, the substance of their case is rather meagre, since the addition of deputies from the colonial constituencies has brought up the number of M.R.P. deputies to 150, as compared with 151 Communists (the Socialists number 139). In any case, the whole move was merely a party propaganda manoeuvre. For hardly had the M.R.P. declared that it would not participate in a Government under Communist leadership, and this in spite of their previous agreement with the Socialists on the continuation of a three-party Government. Before the Socialist Party had time officially to reject this proposal (pointing out merely that it would stick to the previous common decision) the Communist Party came forward with its third suggestion of a three-party Government under Félix Guoin who, so they said, stood above the parties.

Election of Félix Guoin

Félix Guoin is a Socialist with a record of not less than forty years party membership: he has been Socialist deputy for meridional France since 1924: he defended Léon Blum before Pétain's judges at Riom; immediately after France had been occupied, he started to rebuild the Socialist Party and then went, via Spain, to join de Gaulle in Algiers, where he presided over the first de Gaulle Consultative Committee. Nevertheless, the Communists said he was above party. Eventually, the Socialist Party agreed to the Communist proposal, after Léon Blum and Vincent Auriol had declined to stand for the premiership on grounds of age and health.

The election of Félix Guoin as Prime Minister did not follow automatically. The M.R.P. now came forward with conditions for its participation in the Government. Among the Catholics there were strong tendencies to withdraw into opposition or to be content with supporting the Government without participating in it. What were the conditions put up by the M.R.P.? They demanded a truce between the partners of the coalition: the formulation of an agreed governmental programme; the postponement of any decision on the question of secular education and some assurance on this point for the future constitution. Most of these demands were granted and a pact was signed. The last point, the assurance for the constitution, was rejected.

The pact was published by the Press, except *Humanité*, which only published extracts and in particular omitted the arrangements about the party truce. Even before the pact was signed, the Socialist Party insisted that the Prime Minister should be elected on the evening of Januar 23rd, whether the M.R.P. decided to join the Government or not. Guoin was elected with 497 votes out of 555, with 200 votes more than he needed. The 3 votes which were cast for General de Gaulle showed clearly how much he had forfeited general support. The 35 votes cast for Michel Clémenceau by part of the Rightwingers were a ridiculous gesture. This son of George Clémenceau, until recently completely unknown, is a political nonentity.

Programme of the New Government

Félix Guoin showed at once that his aim was not merely to bring into being a three-party Government without de Gaulle, but to finish once and for all with the Gaullist policy of prestige and military greatness. One of his first steps was to consult de Gaulle's

former Minister of Economics, Mendès-France [8]. Léon Blum, who had taken an active part in the solution of the crisis, generally assisted in these discussions. A clear financial balance sheet was drawn up which revealed the catastrophic position which had been concealed from the public for so long. Mendès-France was compelled by his party, the Radicals, to decline the post of Finance and Economic Minister, for the Radical Party believes that only in opposition can it recover from its collapse at the previous election. In addition, Mendès-France did not get a promise of full powers to issue decrees, a demand which is an old radical croquet. Gouin, however, adopted the plan for financial restoration worked out with Mendès. He submitted to the three parties a memorandum for which he demanded unconditional acceptance. By January 26th he had obtained the agreement of the three parties. The Socialist Party expressed its unanimous and full confidence; the Communists promised their total and unreserved co-operation; the M.R.P. accepted the proposals with a few minor remarks about the necessity to consider the needs of national defence despite the reduction in military expenses.

The memorandum of Gouin contained a "hard and, in the first instance, unpopular policy, which must maintain no illusions on grounds of the possible repercussions for the election." The method of Finance Minister Pleven [9], de Gaulle's right-hand man, an adherent of orthodox tradition in financial policy, will be replaced by the drastic methods recommended by Mendès-France a year ago, before he left the Government, because de Gaulle favoured Pleven. Gouin has so far limited himself to enumerate a few measures, but they are important: ruthless decreases in the military budget (an immediating reduction of forty milliards is envisaged); cancellation of a large part of the present production for military purposes within one year; employment of these factories for civil needs; discharge of the 1943 group and no new call-up this year in order to make free all young arms for economic rebuilding; huge cuts in credits also in the civilian sphere; reduction of posts and offices in the administration; special powers for the Finance Minister to carry out such cuts; temporary suspension of all promotions and pensionings; blocking of further outlay on administrative posts; reductions in the general costs of the nationalised industries; increase in transport tariffs and price for coal; a wage stop on all wages and salaries except over-time; price control and sharp measures against black marketeers; new taxes; concentration of all Ministries and departments concerned with these measures and their submission to the Ministry of Finance and Economics.

[Seite im Original:] - 16-

The Government of Conscious Unpopularity

Once this plan had been accepted by the three parties it only remained to find the men prepared to become a Government of conscious unpopularity. From the Socialist Party the best available were no doubt chosen, André Philip, one might almost say, allowed himself to be sacrificed by becoming Minister of Finance and Economics. This representative of practical Christianity within the Socialist Party, who before the war had often been considered a little queer, had made a name by his spirited interventions, his brilliant knowledge as professor of law at the Lyon University, his courageous stand during the occupation. He secured his first governmental experience with the de Gaulle Committee, first in London, then in Algiers. During the past months, as president of the preparatory commission on the constitution, he has proved what a valuable force the Socialist Party possesses in him. He is impulsive, not afraid of new and bold ideas and an indefatigable worker. His intellectual capacities are far above average. For a long time he had fought against Pleven's financial policy, and thus was entitled to be called

upon to reverse the trend. He must be mentioned in the first place because on the success of his Ministry depends the whole experiment which this new Government will conduct in the three months at its disposal.

The Minister of Finance and Economics has at his side, as Under-Secretary of State, the trade unionist Albert Gazier, a young and reflective man who will be a good match to Philip's often too-impulsive temperament. A socialist again has the important post of Minister of the Interior: André Le Troquer, the present President of the Paris City Council, the well-known counsel for the defence of Léon Blum at Riom, a man full of energy, upon whom the Socialist Party counts as the successor of Blum at the head of the party. Jules Moch [10], the proved socialist technician, remained as Minister of Public Works and Transport, as did the excellent young expert of agriculture, Tanguy Brigent [11], who had been attacked unjustly in recent weeks when the most difficult post as Minister of Food had been added to his burdens. Marius Moutet [12] was given the Ministry of Overseas France; in the Popular Front Government of Blum he had won a reputation for humane administration in the colonies. The Alsatian Edmond Naegelen [13], who had been entrusted with several heavy responsibilities by the party within a short space of time (he had been the leader of the fraction and President of the Supreme Court), and who had discharged them successfully, is in the right place in the Ministry of Education. The appointment of Gaston Defferre [14] for the Ministry of Information and as Gouin's assistant, was also generally welcomed.

Félix Gouin himself had certainly proved his worth as President of the Assembly; he was, in the general view, the best President of any French Parliament for a long time. Whether he will be successful as the head of a Government, remains to be seen. One has not credited him so far with the intellectual strength needed for such a post. However, his start was not bad at all. Léon Blum expressed the opinion of many when he stated the other day publicly that Gouin had shown his quality when entrusted with increased responsibilities. He pointed to Gouin's methodical way of working, his sincerity and incorruptible judgment, the reliability in the discharge of his duties, his love of truth and above all the courage which he carried to self-denial and self-sacrifice.

If, as it seems to be, this description of Gouin's character by Léon Blum is not an exaggeration, Gouin might be the man who will stand up against the overwhelming difficulties of the coming months with the calm serenity and the meridional confidence which distinguish him.

The Communists and the M.R.P. have largely retained their former men and posts. This time, communists and Socialists together have a considerable majority in the Cabinet, an important new feature in the situation. Will they be capable of successfully co-operating to solve the pressing problems which dominate the grave crisis in France? The two main problems are the just distribution of food and the prevention of inflation. It will soon be shown whether the deeds of the new Government are such that they can at last set France on the road towards recovery, in spite of the fact that the period left till the general election is unfortunately very short. The Gouin Government deserves every possible support the British Labour Government may be able to give, and the French Socialist Party, upon whose leadership the future of France now depends, will need the encouragement and help from its many friends abroad.

The Practice of De-Nazification

The following report from one of the large towns in the Ruhr, written on December 28th, shows how much needs still to be done to satisfy the claim that the Nazis have

been eliminated from public positions in Germany. We are very much concerned that the British zone, which generally speaking has the best record, should live up to expectations in this vitally important respect.

THE people in Gelsenkirchen are getting more and more inclined to regard official reports about de-Nazification with the same scepticism with which they listened to Goebbels' propaganda, for in the realm of their own experience they find rather the contrary to be true. The position in the police force is particularly alarming.

In August, 1945, the Lord Mayor of Gelsenkirchen appointed Kivelip **[15]** as chief of police. Kivelip, who had been a high police official in 1933, had lost his post because of his anti-Nazi attitude. He is respected throughout Prussia as an expert on all police questions. An anti-militarist by conviction, he is exceptionally suited not only for helping in the democratic reconstruction of the German police, but for holding any executive post in the administration.

At the time of the appointment of Kivelip, the chief of police of the Munster district had suggested a certain Major Saupe **[16]** for the post and had obtained the support of the Military Government for his nominee. Both the Lord Mayor and Kivelip were strongly opposed to Saupe being appointed. The Military Government then decided that Saupe and Kivelip should jointly occupy the office. Investigations into the record of Saupe showed that he was a Nazi and a militarist. He was

[Seite im Original:] - 17-

arrested as a war criminal. Thus Kivelip alone retained the office.

At the beginning of December, while he was away ill, Kivelip was dismissed by order of the Military Government. A certain Major Kleibaum **[17]** was appointed in his place. Kleibaum had been a member of the Nazi Party since 1933. During the war he was in charge of the information department attached to police headquarters in Cracow, Belgrade and other occupied towns. He could not have held such positions had he not been absolutely reliable from the Nazi point of view; his promotion from police lieutenant to police major was another indication of this fact. Yet, in the eyes of the Military Government in Munster, he was a proper person to hold office in the new administration, whilst Kivelip, a valuable expert who had been victimised by the Nazis, was dismissed.

Another case is that of Police Commissar Volkhardt **[18]**. He was known as an enthusiastic Nazi in 1933, and even to-day he has not changed his opinions, although he no longer professes them publicly. During the war he served in Hungary and Croatia as an officer in the special security police corps. Thus he belongs actually to the group of war criminals defined by the present law and ought to have been automatically arrested. Instead he got a job with the Military Government and also worked for a while for the Field Security Section in Recklinghausen and Buer. The next stage was an order to the Lord Mayor of Gelsenkirchen to procure a home for him and employ him as police officer; both requests were fulfilled. One day the Military Government ordered Volkhardt's dismissal. But this order was cancelled the following day. Volkhardt, and especially his wife, entertain a lively social contact with a Field Security officer and his interpreter, a contact which serves mainly the purpose of obliterating the past record of Nazis and of protecting them vis-à-vis the British authorities. Frau Volkhardt exercises a most sinister influence in this respect.

As a third instance, the case of police officer Willma **[19]** might be mentioned. In

1933 Willma denounced several of his colleagues to the Nazi authorities and brought about their dismissal. He himself joined the Nazi Party in 1937, and his wife was a keen collector for the Nazi Women's organisation. After the collapse of the Nazis he was made chief of the Criminal Investigation Department. In this position he kept police officers in their posts who had been members of the S.A., the Gestapo and the Nazi Party, and even tried to have them promoted. He succeeded in securing for himself a considerable influence with the Military Government, which he used to have anti-Nazis removed from their positions.

It is surprising that amongst people who have such evidence before their eyes the rumour that Hitler is not dead is gathering momentum, and that their faith in the future of a just and democratic Germany is dwindling?

* * *

Fusion and Unity

IT is an established fact that in the European countries occupied by Russia popular support for the Communist Parties there has been declining. The elections in Hungary and Austria were evidence of this. Recent shop steward elections in the Russian Zone of Germany showed strong support for the Social Democratic Party. The following figures from some of the bigger works in Saxony and Berlin are indicative of this trend. (The number of delegates representing Christian and unpolitical groups is negligible.)

	Social Democrats	Communists
<i>Saxony</i>		
Horch [20], Zwickau	5	3
GEG [21]	21	1
Steinkohlenbergbauverband	12	3
Dresden Landesverwaltung	14	5
<i>Berlin</i>		
Reichsbahn [22]- Ausbesserungswerk	10	3
Siemens Giesserei	2	2
AEG [23], Drontheimerstrasse	9	-
AEG, Treptow	11	4
Wittler [24]	11	3

In these elections the workers were allowed to state their political preference. This is in line with the course pursued by the Russians after the occupation of Germany. A fair measure of freedom was then given to the Social Democrats to build up their press and their organisation.

From the beginning a policy of unity of action on the important immediate issues was commonly accepted by both workers' parties; as early as April 28th, 1945, the first proposal for fusion was made by the Social Democrats in Berlin, on the assumption, as Grotewohl pointed out in a speech on December 20th, that the Communists were really willing to make a new start. (Later they realised that this had been a wrong assumption.) Seven further offers were made, all of which were ignored by the Communists.

As it became apparent that the Social Democratic Party had a much greater attraction for the workers, Communist pressure for organisational unity became strong. But the

issue is *not* yet as decided as some British papers are trying to make out.

On December 20th and 21st, it is true, a conference of representatives from the two parties in the Russian Zone took place in Berlin, which adopted a resolution demanding that unity of action should be extended and deepened and immediate steps taken to bring about a complete fusion of the parties.

This resolution had wide repercussions, not only in the Russian Zone, but in the whole of Germany. First of all, in whose name could the executives in Berlin speak? At the Hanover Conference in October, an agreement had been reached between the respective Social Democratic leaders to rebuild their parties in the various zones in accordance with the very different conditions prevailing there. Close contact between the zones was to be maintained through the party leaders, until conditions would allow the building up of a national party. It is obvious, therefore, that although the Berlin resolution appealed to the whole of the German working class, it could have no binding effect on

[Seite: - 18-

the Social Democrats in the Western Zone. In fact, in a broadcast on December 30th, Gustav Dahrendorf [25], one of the Berlin leaders of the Social Democrats, stated in reply to a polemical article in the *Tagesspiegel* [26] (a paper appearing in the American part of Berlin) that: -

"The Berlin Conference has acknowledged that a national party organisation is a necessary condition for the fusion of the parties, which can only be brought about by a decision of the representatives of the whole party. The logical consequence is that the same condition applies to the drawing up of common lists at elections."

He stressed that the Berlin resolution was not meant "as an order, but as an example".

Nevertheless, the reaction of the Western Social Democrats was extremely outspoken, going as far as stating bluntly that the Communist leaders were not concerned with the unity of the workers, but solely with the conquest of the Social Democratic Party by the communists. Conferences were held at the beginning of January in Hanover and Frankfurt-on-Main, addressed by Dr. Kurt Schumacher [27], the Social Democratic leader in Western Germany. A resolution was adopted stating that: -

"As long as Germany is divided into different zones, governed by different methods of political and economic administration, conditions for the organisational unity of the Social Democratic Party do not exist ... The Berlin resolution is a result of special conditions in the Eastern Zone. ... Workers' unity cannot be achieved as long as the parties concerned cannot prove their intellectual and political independence of any outside power. The Social Democratic Party cannot renounce the right to criticise conditions which form a socialist or democratic standpoint call for criticism."

In reply to this resolution the Berlin Social Democratic leader, Fechner [28], wrote in *Das Volk* (the Berlin Social Democratic paper) of January 12th that "as soon as possible a meeting of representatives of the whole party must define their attitude to the question of party fusion". But when, we must ask, will it be possible to hold a somewhat representative national conference of the party? Surely, in view of the present material and psychological difficulties, not for some time.

Strong pressure from the Communists and the Russian occupation authorities is being

brought to bear upon the Berlin Social Democratic leaders. A small instance may be quoted. *Das Volk* was not allowed to report a speech by Grotewohl in which he had stressed that a national conference alone could decide the question of unity with the Communists. On the other hand, great publicity is given through press and wireless to "spontaneous" local resolutions in favour of fusion. The preferential treatment the Communists have always enjoyed under Russian occupation has now assumed very much greater dimension. That there are great differences of opinion among the Social Democrats is indicated by the reluctance with which their Berlin leaders have dealt with the whole fusion issue.

What is the main point at issue? The unity of the German working class, an aim desired by all who realise how much the political split among the workers contributed to the victory of Hitler, seems endangered rather than furthered by the Berlin move. If, under continued pressure, the Berlin resolution is followed by action in the Eastern Zone, the present geographical separation between Socialists in Eastern and Western Germany may well develop into an almost unbridgeable gulf. Moreover, the quarrel between the "fusionists" and the "non-fusionists" would inevitably poison the atmosphere in the ranks of Socialists everywhere. The unity of action which is indeed required to solve many urgent problems in devastated Germany, may become difficult, if not impossible, in the Western as well as the Eastern Zone.

(The above figures and quotations are taken from the London Information Bulletin of the German Social Democratic Party.)

* * *

The Berlin Unity Resolution

*We publish below some extracts from the resolution adopted at the December Conference to which the previous article referred in order to show the type of propaganda phrases handed out to the German workers. (Quoted from *Das Volk*, December 23rd, 1945.)*

"What is the new united party of the Socialist movement to be?"

Fundamentally the *minimum* programme of this party shall demand the completion of the democratic reconstruction of Germany by the building up of an anti-Fascist, democratic, parliamentary Republic with legally safeguarded far-reaching rights for the workers, political, economic and social.

The *maximum* programme shall demand the realisation of socialism through the working class exercising political power in accordance with the teachings of consequent Marxism, as laid down in the *Communist Manifesto*, the *Eisenach Programme* of the German Social Democratic Party and the *Comments on the Gotha Programme* by Marx and Engels.

The united party shall be self-reliant and independent. It is necessary that it should develop its policy and tactics according to the interests of the German working people and the special conditions in Germany.

The complete destruction of the State apparatus and the consistent advancement of the democratic reconstruction of Germany may give rise to special and new forms of transition leading to the political rule of the working class and to socialism.

In accordance with its rôle in the day-to-day struggle and with its social composition, the united party shall be the class organ of the workers and the party of all sections of the working population.

With regard to its internal constitution the party shall be based upon the principle of democratic decisions by its members and of a freely elected party leadership.

The united party shall serve all truly national interests of the German people; this is only possible through the return of our people into the comity of peace-loving nations. In line with the best traditions of the Labour Movement the united party shall be loyal to the idea of proletarian internationalism and thus work for the establishment of close relations with the working class movements of the bourgeois countries and of the U.S.S.R. It shall seek the support of labour movements in other countries. At the same time it is its duty to further the cause of peace, democracy, progress and socialism in all countries and to fight energetically every expression of chauvinism, racial or national hatred as well as all insidious attacks upon the Soviet Union.

Each step towards workers' unity means the strengthening of the unity of Germany."

Published by the International Publishing Co., 7. Carteret St., London, S.W.1, and printed by The Walthamstow Press (T.U.), Forest Rd., London, E.17.

Editorische Anmerkungen

- 1 - *Edouard Herriot (1872-1957), französischer Politiker (Radikalsozialistische Partei), Arbeitsminister (1916-1917), Führer der Opposition gegen den „Bloc national“ (1919-1924), dreimal Ministerpräsident (1924-1925, 1926 und 1932), gleichzeitig Außenminister (1924-1925), wiederholt Minister (1926-1936), Präsident der Deputiertenkammer (1936-1940), Haft in Deutschland (1944-1945), Bürgermeister von Lyon (1945-1957), Präsident (1947-1954) und Ehrenpräsident der Nationalversammlung (1954-1957).*
- 2 - *„Ernest Mercier electricity trust“, nach Ernest Mercier (1878-1955, französischer Ingenieur und Geschäftsmann, Elektrizitäts-Magnat) benannter Elektrizitätskonzern.*
- 3 - *Maurice Schumann (1911-1998), französischer Politiker (MRP, später UDR), Anschluss an de Gaulle in London (1941), Präsident des Mouvement républicain polulaire (MRP, 1944-1949), Abgeordneter der UDR (bis 1973), Vizepräsident des Senats (1977-1983), zahlreiche Ministerposten, darunter Außenminister (1969-1973).*
- 4 - *Maurice Thorez (1900-1964), französischer Politiker (KP), Mitglied des Politbüro der KPF (seit 1925), Generalsekretär der KPF (1930-1964), Ausrichtung der KPF-Politik auf Stalins Generallinie, Unterstützung der Volksfront (1936), Exil in der UdSSR (1939-1944), stellv. Ministerpräsident (1946-1947).*

- 5 - Jacques Duclos (1896-1975), französischer Politiker (KP), Mitglied des Politbüros der KPF (1931-1964), verantwortlich für die illegale KPF während der Besetzung (1940-1944), nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg Aufstieg zum führenden Politiker der KPF neben Thorez, Präsidentschaftskandidat (1969).
- 6 - „L'Humanité“, 1904 von J. Jaurès als Organ der Sozialisten gegründete französische Tageszeitung, Parteibesitz (seit 1907), nach der Parteispaltung (1921) Zentralorgan der französischen Kommunisten.
- 7 - „Gringoire“, 1924 gegründete Pariser satirische Wochenzeitschrift, zunächst linkes Blatt, später faschistisch und antisemitisch orientiert, während der deutschen Besetzung Frankreichs Unterstützung von Marschall Pétain und der Vichy-Regierung, Einstellung der Zeitschrift am 25. Mai 1944.
- 8 - Pierre Mendés-France (1907-1982), französischer Politiker (Radikalsozialist), Gegner des Vichy-Regimes, Inhaftierung (1940) und Flucht nach England (1941), Anschluss an de Gaulle (1942), Finanzkommissar im Französischem Komitee der Nationalen Befreiung (1943-1944), Wirtschaftsminister (1944-1945), Direktor des Internationalen Währungsfonds (1947-1958), Ministerpräsident und zeitweise zugleich Außenminister (1954-1955), Staatsminister und stellv. Ministerpräsident (1956-1957), im Gegensatz zu seiner Partei Gegner der Verfassung der V. Republik (1958), Mitgründer der Parti Socialiste Unifié (PSU).
- 9 - René Pleven (1901-1993), französischer Politiker (Union Démocratique et Socialiste de la Résistance, Progrès et Démocratie Moderne), Anschluss an de Gaulles (1940), Mitglied des französischen Nationalkomitees der Exilregierung (1941), Kolonialminister der provisorischen Regierung, Finanzminister (1944-1946), Wirtschaftsminister (ab 1945), Verteidigungsminister (1949-1950, 1952-1954), Ministerpräsident (1950-1951, 1951-1952), Vorschlag des so genannten Pleven-Plans zur Gründung einer „Europäischen Verteidigungsgemeinschaft“ (1950). Außenminister (1958), Justizminister (1969-1973).
- 10 - Jules Moch (1893-1985), französischer Politiker (Sozialist), Parlamentsabgeordneter (1928-1936, 1937-1940), Unterstaatssekretär bei Ministerpräsident Blum (1937), Anschluss an de Gaulle (1942), Mitglied der beratenden Versammlung (1944) und der verfassungsgebenden Versammlungen (1945-1946), Mitglied der Nationalversammlung (1946-1958, 1962-1967), mehrere Ministerposten während der Vierten Republik, Gegner der Europäischen Verteidigungsgemeinschaft (1954), Austritt aus der Sozialistische Partei (1975).
- 11 - Tanguy Brigent = Francois Tanguy-Prigent (1909-1970), französischer Politiker (PSU), Teilnahme an der Résistance während der deutschen Okkupation (Bewegung Libération-Nord), nach der Befreiung Minister für Landwirtschaft (1944-1947), für die PSU in der Nationalversammlung (1962-1967).
- 12 - Mari(o)us Moutet (1876-1968) französischer Politiker, Abgeordneter (1914-1940), Kolonialminister, Abgeordneter der verfassungsgebenden Versammlung (1945), Minister für Übersee (1946-1947), Berater und Senator (1947-1968).
- 13 - Marcel Edmond Naegelen (1892-1978), französischer Politiker aus dem Elsass, Mitglied der Résistance, sozialistischer Abgeordneter, Minister für Bildung (1946-1948), Generalgouverneur von Algerien (1948-1951).
- 14 - Gaston Defferre (1910-1986), französischer Politiker (Sozialist), Mitglied der Résistance während der deutschen Besetzung Frankreichs, Bürgermeister von Marseille (1944-1945, 1953-1968), diverse Ministerposten, sozialistischer Abgeordneter (1945-1958, 1962-1986), Präsidentschaftskandidat (1969), Innenminister (1981-1984).

- 15 - Kivelip, nach „Europe speaks“ Polizeichef von Gelsenkirchen (August 1945), verlor 1933 sein Amt als hoher Polizeibeamter wegen seiner anti-nationalsozialistischen Haltung. Weitere biographische Daten konnten nicht ermittelt werden.
- 16 - Saupe, Major, war nach „Europe Speaks“ während des Dritten Reichs Mitglied der NSDAP, wurde trotzdem aufgrund einer Entscheidung der britischen Militärregierung 1945 Polizeichef in Münster, später Verhaftung. Weitere biographische Daten konnten nicht ermittelt werden.
- 17 - Kleibaum, Major, war nach „Europe Speaks“ Mitglied der NSDAP seit 1933, aufgrund einer Entscheidung der britischen Militärregierung im Dezember 1945 als Polizeichef von Münster ernannt. Weitere biographische Daten konnten nicht ermittelt werden.
- 18 - Volkhardt, Polizeikommissar, nach „Europe Speaks“ ehemals enthusiastischer Nationalsozialist, während des Zweiten Weltkriegs Offizier der Sicherheitspolizei in Ungarn und Kroatien, aufgrund einer Entscheidung der britischen Militärregierung 1945 Polizeioffizier in Gelsenkirchen. Weitere biographische Daten konnten nicht ermittelt werden.
- 19 - Willma, Polizeioffizier, nach „Europe Speaks“ ehemals Mitglied der NSDAP (seit 1937), Denunziation einiger Kollegen bei den Nationalsozialisten, Chef der Kriminalpolizei nach dem Zusammenbruch des Dritten Reichs. Weitere biographische Daten konnten nicht ermittelt werden.
- 20 - „Horch“ = A. Horch & Cie., Automobilfabrik, von August Horch (1868-1951), dem Erfinder des Kardanantriebs und der Reibungskupplung, 1899 in Köln-Ehrenfeld gegründet, Verlegung der Firma nach Zwickau (1904), in den 1920er Jahren Weltmarktführer im Luxussegment, Fusion mit Audi (1910 ebenfalls von Horch gegründet) zur Auto Union AG, während des Zweiten Weltkriegs Zerstörung der Werke.
- 21 - „GEG“ = Großeinkaufsgesellschaft deutscher Consumvereine mbH, gegründet 1894 mit Sitz in Hamburg, Bau einer Seifenfabrik in Riesa/Sachsen, bis 1933 über 50 Produktionsbetriebe, Zerstörung des Konzerns durch die Nationalsozialisten, nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg Wiederaufbau der GEG.
- 22 - „Deutsche Reichsbahn“, Staatsbahnen des Deutschen Reichs zwischen 1920 und 1945, zahlreiche Ausbesserungswerke u.a. zur Instandhaltung von Lokomotiven.
- 23 - „AEG“ (Allgemeine Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft), 1883 gegründetes deutsches Elektronunternehmen mit zahlreichen Produktionsstätten.
- 24 - „Wittler“, aus einer von den Brüdern Heinrich Wittler (1866-1936) und August Wittler (1861-1946) 1898 gegründeten Bäckerei hervorgegangene Brotfabrik in Berlin, eine der größten Backbetriebe in Europa, während beider Weltkriege Hauptlieferant der Armee, 1982 in Konkurs gegangen.
- 25 - Gustav Dietrich Dahrendorf (1901-1954), deutscher Journalist und Politiker (SPD seit 1918), Mitbegründer der Jungsozialisten, Redakteur des Organs der SPD „Hamburger Echo“ (1914-1933), Mitglied der Hamburger Bürgerschaft (1927-1933), leidenschaftlicher Gegner des Nationalsozialismus, nach dem 20. Juli 1944 Inhaftierung, nach Ende des Zweiten Weltkriegs entschiedener Gegner der Zwangsvereinigung von SPD und KPD zur SED, Rückkehr nach Hamburg (1946), Vizepräsident des Wirtschaftsrates in Frankfurt (1947-1949).
- 26 - „Tagesspiegel“, 1945 von Erik Reger, Walther Karsch und Edwin Redslob gegründete Berliner Abonnement-Tageszeitung, Erscheinen der ersten Ausgabe unter Lizenz der amerikanischen Militärregierung (27. September 1945), seit der

Berlin-Blockade (1948) auf West-Berlin beschränkt.

- 27 - Kurt Schumacher (1895-1952), SPD-MdR (1930-1933), Verfolgung durch die Nationalsozialisten und mehr als zehn Jahre in Konzentrationslagern eingesperrt (1933-1944), maßgeblich an der Wiedergründung der SPD in den westlichen Besatzungszonen beteiligt, SPD-Parteivorsitzender (1946-1952), Vorsitzender der SPD-Bundestagsfraktion (1949-1952).*
- 28 - Max Fechner (1892-1973), deutscher Politiker, Eintritt in die SPD (1914), Mitglied der USPD (1917-1922), Rückkehr zur SPD, Abgeordneter des Preußischen Landtags (1924-1933), Redakteur der kommunalpolitischen Zeitschrift „Die Gemeinde“, als Widerstandskämpfer inhaftiert (1933-1934, 1944-1945), Vorsitzender des Zentralausschusses der SPD in der SBZ, Eintreten für den Zusammenschluss von SPD und KPD, stellv. Vorsitzender der SED (1946-1950), Mitglied ihres Politbüros (1946-1953), DDR-Justizminister (1949-1953), wegen Eintreten für das Streikrecht verhaftet (1953), Begnadigung (1956), erneute SED-Mitgliedschaft (1958).*