

The Friedmann plan for unifying Germany

West German parliamentarian Bernard Friedmann's call for the reunification of Germany, excerpted here, was published in the daily Die Welt on Nov. 13. Friedmann, a Christian Democrat, is a member of the parliamentary Budget Committee, and has been a member of parliament since 1976, from Rastatt in the state of Baden Württemberg.

At Reykjavik, both superpowers were unmistakably looking for new security structures. Whether they succeeded or not is of secondary importance. The zero-solution put on the table again there for the medium-range missiles is welcomed by many who are worried about over-armament. But what would be the consequences for Europe? The reduction of all nuclear medium-range missiles in Eastern and Western Europe would naturally give greater importance to the shorter-range missiles. They are concentrated in Eastern Europe. The West has nothing comparable to set against them. So, in the interest of security, the shorter-range weapons would also have to be "negotiated away." Would the East be willing to do that? Hardly, because it would not receive anything, in its view, in return. According to the thinking up to now, a rearmament on the Western side in the shorter ranges would be the result, as many think.

So, would we have a "new" NATO two-track resolution for the medium-range missiles of shorter range? Such a two-track resolution would be difficult to implement politically, and if it were implemented, the political insight would remain, that a nuclear war in the future would be limited to Europe. America would no longer unconditionally secure Europe. The conventional superiority of the East bloc would take on more political-psychological effect. The question therefore inevitably becomes, whether the West is able to allocate more money than previously for its own defense.

The German defense budget is now 51 billion DM. . . . I do not think it is economically or politically feasible to double or triple this sum. An increase of 10 or 20% would require an enormous effort.

The loosening of nuclear deterrence and the knowledge that an arbitrary increase in defense spending for conventional defense is impossible and hardly desirable, have to be seen against the background of certain significant developments. SDI, for example, serves primarily American interests, even if only for technical reasons in the definition and development phase, and not European interests. The immense budget def-

icit in the United States is forcing savings in the American defense budget. There is, in addition, a change of consciousness in the U.S.A., which peaks in the question of why 240 million Americans should defend 320 million Europeans. The question is being posed ever more loudly in the U.S.A. as to why 400,000 young Americans still have to be in Europe. One cannot overlook the fact, that the U.S.A. is not only thinking about Europe, but also increasingly of Asia. I am of the opinion, that Europe cannot stand by and watch these developments. What is to be done?

I am convinced that the reunification of Germany must be introduced as a security concept for operational policy. A reunified, free Germany would be the best security guarantee for East and West. I am also sure, that this reunified Germany must emerge from free and secret elections, whereby the Federal Republic and the G.D.R. [German Democratic Republic, or East Germany—ed.] parliament. The smaller population of the G.D.R. would not out-vote the larger population of the Federal Republic. Surely, communists would also be represented in such a parliament. But democracy seems to me to be strong enough. Such a reunified Germany would choose its own place in alliances. I am not by any means thinking of a neutralized Germany. Within NATO there are already various forms of membership. Should it not be possible to find a status compatible with the Western alliance that corresponds to the interests of a reunified Germany? Some will argue against me, that the major Eastern power will not be willing to give up the G.D.R. This is chiefly because the East bloc depends so much economically on the G.D.R. But could not a reunified Germany offer the East much more than the G.D.R. alone? Some will say, that in the case of reunification, there would be unrest in the East bloc. Other East bloc countries, it could be argued against me, would also want to break out of the East bloc. But is their situation really comparable to that of the G.D.R.? Germans want to come together again!

No other East bloc country is divided like Germany. This special situation can be made clear to the others, and made acceptable to them by special arrangements. There is the argument, that the East has never given up a country it once possessed. Is that true? Austria is one counter-example. And, besides, in the U.S.S.R. too, there are considerations about getting away from over-armament. The population of the East is more insistently demanding a higher living standard.

The essential thing is, that a reunified Germany take account of the security interests of all—its own, the interests of the West, and those of the East. On this line, the new disarmament discussions did not include the French and British nuclear weapons in the talks. For me, this means that parallel to reunification, the idea of a European Defense Community is gaining ground. And it should not be forgotten: In a reunified Germany, which can come about only with a general agreement of all concerned, the borders to the East would be open.