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AD HOC POLITICAL COMMITTEE 20th

MEETING

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Chairman: Mr. Selim SARPER (Turkey).

Appointment of an impartial international commission under United Nations supervision to carry out a simultaneous investigation in the Federal Republic of Germany, in Berlin, and in the Soviet Zone of Germany in order to determine whether existing conditions there make it possible to hold genuinely free elections throughout these areas (A/1938, A/AC.53/L.11, A/AC.53/L.13, A/AC.53/L.13/Add.1, A/AC.53/L.14) (*continued*)

[Item 65]*

HEARING OF THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

1. The CHAIRMAN, in reply to a request for an explanation made at the previous meeting by the Brazilian representative, read out a note from the Secretary-General on the arrangements made by the Protocol and Liaison Section for the reception of the representatives of the German Democratic Republic. It appeared from that note that the reason similar arrangements had not been made for the reception of the representatives of the Federal Republic of Germany was that the Secretariat had not been advised of the time of their arrival and had received no particular requests from that delegation except that identification cards should be issued to its members.

2. Mr. FISCHER (Israel), speaking on a point of order, thought that attention should be drawn to the fact that the representatives of the Federal Republic of Germany, heard by the Committee on 8 December (18th meeting), had not availed themselves of the opportunity to condemn the Nazi régime and to express their sympathy for its victims. He felt that the Committee should note that circumstance, since it showed

the tendency of the German people to forget its responsibilities before history.

3. The CHAIRMAN ruled that the matter did not constitute a point of order. The Israel representative would have an opportunity to bring it up again during the general discussion.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Bolz, Mr. Nuschke, Mr. Ebert and Mr. Ackermann, representatives of the German Democratic Republic, took their places at the committee table.

4. Mr. BOLZ (German Democratic Republic) said that he was appearing before the Committee on behalf of the German Democratic Republic and the peace-loving German people to give his Government's views on the appointment of an impartial international commission under United Nations supervision to carry out a simultaneous investigation in the Federal Republic of Germany, in Berlin, and in the Soviet Zone of Germany, in order to determine whether existing conditions there made it possible to hold genuinely free elections throughout those areas.

5. The delegation of the German Democratic Republic was speaking on behalf of the new democratic and peaceful Germany which had sprung from the ruins of the iniquitous Nazi régime and which was determined to abandon aggressive war in Europe for friendly co-operation with all peace-loving peoples. That policy was based on the decisions taken by the Allied Powers at Potsdam during the war.

6. Short as its existence had been, the Government of the German Democratic Republic had already had considerable success in its work of peaceful reconstruction in Germany, which was what the immense majority of the German people desired. It was determined to do everything it could to enable free elections to be held throughout Germany at the earliest possible date.

* Indicates the item number on the General Assembly agenda.

7. Owing to the policy of the occupying Powers in western Germany, the German people had been placed in a difficult position since the capitulation of Hitlerite Germany. The Allies had formally undertaken at Potsdam to secure the unification of the new German State and to draft a democratic peace treaty with Germany, and had declared the occupation of Germany to be merely provisional.

8. The German people had greeted with enthusiasm the decisions taken at Potsdam on the initiative of Generalissimo Stalin. It had realized that it was necessary to do away with war-mongers, to base the new Germany on the principle of national unity and independence, and to renounce wars of aggression and conquest, which could only result in reducing the peoples of Europe to servitude. The failure of the Western Powers to respect the decisions of the Potsdam Conference had so far prevented the German people from bringing about the unification of the new Germany. For the same reason, the peace treaty with Germany had still not been concluded, although six years had elapsed since the end of hostilities. The presence of occupation troops in western Germany, the remilitarization of that Zone and the expenditure imposed on western Germany by that remilitarization, were a heavy burden for the German people whose aspirations could not be realized.

9. In its time of trial the German people had the noble and disinterested support of the Soviet Union and of the people's democracies, and was sustained by the interest taken in it by the truly peace-loving countries. The same unfortunately could not be said for the countries of the Atlantic bloc, which were responsible for the plight of the German people today.

10. It was high time to implement the decisions of the Potsdam Conference, to unify the new German State, to conclude the peace treaty and finally to withdraw the occupation troops. The German people failed to understand why the proposals to that effect which the Soviet Union had submitted to the Conference of Foreign Ministers in 1947 and 1949 had been rejected by France, the United Kingdom and the United States. The new Germany was peace-loving. It was prepared faithfully to observe the provisions of the peace treaty affecting it and to remove any causes of difference between it and the countries of Europe and the United States and also between it and the Soviet Union, which was still the German people's best friend.

11. The Government of the German Democratic Republic had always regarded the unification of Germany, its transformation into an independent and democratic State, and respect for the provisions of the peace treaty as prime objectives and President Grötwohl had described them as such in his first presidential statement. With a view to achieving those objectives, the Government of the German Democratic Republic had on 30 November 1950 submitted to the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany a proposal for the creation of a constituent council for the whole of the country, composed of representatives of eastern and western Germany. It had also

submitted to that Government a proposal for the drafting of the peace treaty, and had made proposals on the subject to the Governments of the USSR, the United States, the United Kingdom and France. The proposed constituent council would have to decide upon the requisite conditions for the holding of free elections throughout the whole of Germany with a view to setting up a national legislative assembly.

12. The steps taken by the Government of the German Democratic Republic had had the support of the mass of the people both in eastern and western Germany. They had, however, been rejected by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany. The People's Chamber of the German Democratic Republic had thereupon addressed an appeal to the *Bundestag* of the Federal Republic of Germany proposing that a general conference of representatives of eastern and western Germany should be convened (a) to decide, for the whole of Germany, upon the requisite conditions for the holding of free and democratic elections throughout the country by secret ballot with a view to setting up a national assembly which would lay the foundations of a united, democratic and peaceful Germany; and (b) to study the measures necessary for the speedy conclusion of a peace treaty, to be followed by the withdrawal of the forces of occupation.

13. In making those proposals, the People's Chamber of the German Democratic Republic had stated that it was resolved to conduct the negotiations in a genuinely conciliatory spirit.

14. In a statement before the Parliament of the Federal Republic of Germany on 27 September 1951, Chancellor Adenauer had enumerated fourteen principles of electoral legislation that had been adopted by the *Bundestag*. At its meeting on 10 October 1950, the People's Chamber of the German Democratic Republic had, for its part, found that the majority of the proposals adopted by the *Bundestag* appeared acceptable and the President of the German Democratic Republic, in a letter dated 2 November 1951 addressed to the President of the Federal Republic of Germany, had held that the task of determining whether conditions in Germany would enable truly free elections to be held, should devolve upon the Germans themselves, through a commission composed of representatives of eastern and western Germany under the quadripartite supervision of the Soviet Union, the United States, the United Kingdom and France.

15. That same day, President Grötwohl had informed the People's Chamber of the decision of the Government of the German Democratic Republic to set up a commission to draft a bill for the election of a national legislative assembly, taking as a basis for its work the electoral law of the Weimar Republic.

16. All those facts demonstrated the will of the Government of the German Democratic Republic to do everything possible to reach an agreement, freely concluded between the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany, on the question of holding truly free elections for the whole of Germany.

17. Before closing, Mr. Bolz would submit the following general considerations on the subject: first, it was essential, for the peaceful restoration of a united Germany, to ensure agreement among all Germans; secondly, the most rapid means of uniting Germany was to hold free elections for the establishment of a national legislative assembly; thirdly, an agreement, freely concluded between the representatives of western and eastern Germany, with a view to the establishment of a national legislative assembly and to the elaboration of suitable measures for hastening the conclusion of a peace treaty, should be based on a general consultation of the German people.

18. The proposals of the German Democratic Republic for holding free elections throughout Germany and for the early conclusion of a peace treaty had received the approval of the peace-loving German people but had been rejected by the Western Powers and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany. The negative attitude of the Western Powers followed the general trend of their policy with regard to the Federal Republic.

19. That policy, in fact, aimed at the remilitarization of western Germany in preparation for a new war. Free elections would not fail to show that the German people was strongly opposed to such a policy and, in the circumstances, it was understandable that the Western Powers, seeking every possible means of drawing western Germany into the aggressive Atlantic bloc, had opposed such elections.

20. Only recently, the Foreign Ministers of the three Western Powers had, at the instigation of the United States, entered into an agreement with Chancellor Adenauer for the remilitarization of western Germany and the incorporation of the former *Wehrmacht* in General Eisenhower's army. That agreement was contrary to the real interests of the German people as well as to the interests of other peaceful peoples. It was a threat to European peace and security and a veritable betrayal of their country on the part of the representatives of western Germany, for it gave the occupying Powers of that part of Germany the right to interfere in matters of vital importance to the German people, particularly as regards the unification of Germany, namely, German unity. It also gave those Powers the alleged right to protect their forces stationed there, a right which would enable them to justify any interference in the domestic affairs of western Germany and to trample underfoot the most elementary rights of the German people.

21. Finally, the agreement concluded in Paris between Chancellor Adenauer and the Foreign Ministers of the Powers occupying western Germany sanctioned for an indefinite period all action which those Powers might take in that part of Germany. It was well known that the United States, the United Kingdom and France were steadily increasing their occupation forces in western Germany and constantly establishing there new war material and munitions depots. It thus seemed clear that the avowed objective of the Governments

of the United States, the United Kingdom and France was the remilitarization of western Germany. The rebuilding of forces of aggression in western Germany was being speeded up. Since the beginning of the year negotiations had been pursued between military experts of the Powers of the Atlantic bloc and of West Germany with a view to creating an army of mercenaries in that Zone.

22. The excuse of protecting the western world would deceive no one. History showed that the instigators of war had always prepared for their aggression under the cloak of "protection". That had been the case of Hitlerite Germany which had prepared for the most criminal war in history under cover of a so-called pact of protection concluded with Italy and Japan.

23. The Schuman Plan, the object of which was to restore the armaments' industry in western Germany, would turn Europe into an arsenal, the resources of which would be added to the United States military potential and would permit laying the foundations of the war industry of the aggressive North Atlantic bloc. The people of western Germany could no longer bear the burden of the cost of setting up an army of mercenaries and of the constant reinforcement of the occupation forces. Prices were constantly rising and taxation was increasing; the economy and currency were becoming more and more unstable and the conditions of the workers were daily deteriorating. To meet the cost of occupation, the people of western Germany had to find a sum of 10,700 million marks a year, in addition to the 13,000 to 15,000 million for the establishment of West German military formations.

24. That situation, the consequence of the policy of remilitarization and the armaments race, could be contrasted with the results made possible by the work of peaceful reconstruction pursued in the German Democratic Republic: quite recently there had been a further drop of 15 to 30 per cent in the price of food and consumer goods on the free market.

25. On the other hand, a legitimate national resistance was developing in western Germany against the policy of remilitarization, to which the Adenauer Government was retaliating by restricting the exercise of democratic freedoms still more. At the same time fascism was rearing its head again. Ministers of the Adenauer Government publicly defended Hitler's war and the mass executions perpetrated by the fascists. By measures such as the prohibition of popular consultation on the conclusion of a peace treaty and the outlawing of the German Youth Movement and the Communist Party, the Minister of the Interior, Mr. Leer, was trampling upon the rights of the German people, and, by his incendiary speeches and the incidents he provoked with the support of fascist mercenaries at public meetings, was showing himself to be as undemocratic as Hitler's Minister of the Interior, Frick. Just as before 1933, fascist methods were being used to prepare a new war; while the Social Democratic Deputy, Mrs. Lili Waechter, was sentenced by an American military tribunal for telling the truth about the atrocities

committed in Korea, the war criminals previously condemned were being set free and given high administrative and economic posts in western Germany.

26. If democratic elections were to take place throughout Germany, the strength of the groups of fascists and military adventurers thirsting for revenge, on which the Adenauer Government and the Social Democratic Party of Schumacher depended, would be destroyed since it was only maintained by the presence of the occupation forces. The financial oligarchy brought to power by Hitler, to which belonged those who were chiefly responsible for the Second World War and who hoped to put their plans of conquest into effect once again, would be finally destroyed. After the ordeal of the Second World War, all right-thinking Germans realized that a third conflict would be national suicide and would bring with it the annihilation of their country. Remilitarization led to war. Some circles wished to make Germany the scene of a new conflict in which millions of men, women and children would perish.

27. The German Democratic Republic condemned that policy of preparing for war and in demanding equal rights for all Germans envisaged the exercise of those rights in an atmosphere of peaceful reconstruction, solidarity and co-operation, and not in an atmosphere of feverish preparation for a new conflict. Moreover, by turning German industry towards peaceful production, it would be possible to raise the standard of living of the German people, develop world economy, reduce unemployment and combat poverty.

28. The opponents of free and general elections based their arguments on the differences between the position in western Germany and that said to exist in eastern Germany. In that connexion, the Committee had had an opportunity of hearing the accounts of the representatives of western Germany, which were, he wished to emphasize, completely unfounded and a gross distortion of the truth. To describe the internal system of eastern Germany it was enough to say that, in accordance with the provisions of the Potsdam Agreement, the Government of the German Democratic Republic had carried out agrarian reforms and fought against the concentration of industrial power by suppressing the monopolies and cartels which had gained complete control of industry, and had thus drawn down upon itself the hatred of the *junkers* and wealthy industrialists. Again under the Potsdam Agreement the Government had rid the administration, the teaching profession and the courts of justice, of fascist elements. It was not by chance that those persons had then gone to western Germany where they were teaching in schools and universities, sitting on the bench, and engaging once more in their harmful activities. It had been claimed that there were at present 185,000 political prisoners held in concentration camps in eastern Germany. Yet it was well known that for a long time there had not been a single concentration camp in the German Democratic Republic. He categorically denied the allegation and the figures quoted. All such statements had but a single aim :

to create new obstacles to an understanding between all Germans and to prevent the organization of free elections for the whole of Germany.

29. The Government of the German Democratic Republic proposed to organize elections throughout Germany based on a single electoral law, reproducing the provisions of the electoral law of the Weimar Republic of 1924.

30. Those persons who requested a preliminary investigation of the possibility of organizing free elections throughout Germany had but one aim in view : to make general elections impossible, to hinder the peaceful development of the whole German people and to maintain the partition of Germany. By placing on its agenda the item which the Committee was now examining, the General Assembly had again questioned the possibility of organizing general elections in Germany. The majority of the German people longed for unity and was convinced that such elections were not only necessary but possible. The German people itself must settle the question of how those elections should be held ; the Government of the German Democratic Republic was convinced that when it was faced with solving the problem on which its fate would depend, the German people would keep to the peaceful way which it had chosen. Moreover, the organization of elections was a domestic matter which came within the competence of the German people. The creation of a commission of investigation and supervision would constitute intervention in the domestic affairs of the German people and would be contrary both to the interests and wishes of that people and to the principles of the Charter, especially the principles of non-intervention, equality of peoples and the right of peoples to self-determination. Hence, no legal argument could be adduced to justify United Nations intervention in the organizing of free elections in Germany. The Government of the German Democratic Republic was firmly resolved to do everything possible to make the preparations for the holding of elections as brief as possible and to avoid an impasse. It knew the German people's aspirations, it would safeguard its real interests—which moreover corresponded to the interests of all peoples—and it was convinced that its stand would be supported by all patriotic Germans and even by all men who had world-peace at heart.

31. Mr. EBERT (Burgomaster of the eastern sector of Berlin) wished first to recall some basic facts in support of his statement. The agreement concluded between the four occupying Powers concerning the administration of Berlin was an integral part of the agreement on the administration of the whole of Germany. Under the provisions of the Yalta and Potsdam Agreements, the four occupying Powers were required to co-ordinate their policy in Berlin as well as the remainder of Germany. As far back as 1947, the actions of the United States, the United Kingdom and France had shown that they had no desire to co-ordinate their policy with that of the USSR ; on the contrary, those States had sought to oppose the preparation of a peace treaty with Germany, a prelimi-

nary step in re-establishing the country's unification. That attitude of the Western Powers had been manifested in Berlin by the application in the western sector on 23 June 1948 of a new monetary régime instituted in the western occupation Zones of Germany.

32. That monetary reform was contrary to the interests of the German people. It did not correspond to any economic necessity; it was directed against German unity and had completely disorganized the economic life of Berlin. That was the situation which had created the Berlin problem, a problem which the USSR Government and the Soviet Command in Germany had striven to settle through negotiation, whilst the Western Powers had vainly sought a solution by organizing the airlift. The refusal of the Western Powers to resolve the problem by negotiation had clearly established that they were seeking to maintain the difficult situation artificially created by them in Berlin.

33. The workers of the Soviet sector of Berlin had, for their part, tried to prevent the city's population as a whole from feeling the effects of such a difficult economic situation. A democratic municipal assembly had been set up, entrusted with protecting the entire city population from the disastrous consequences of the monetary reform. That democratic municipal assembly had placed itself at the disposal of the population of the western sector of Berlin, and had supplied it with food, fuel and other consumer goods. To some extent, that action had enabled the population of the western sector to stave off destitution. However, owing to the terrorist policy followed by the administration of the western sector, those efforts had not been completely successful.

34. In November 1950, the Commission of the National Front of Democratic Germany and of the City of Berlin, had proposed to the administrations of the two sectors of the city that free democratic elections should take place in March 1951 throughout the city. A joint commission of the administrations of both sectors would have been entrusted with organizing and carrying out those elections. The frontiers between the sectors of Berlin would have disappeared and all the occupation troops would have been withdrawn from the city. If such elections had been held, the unified administration would have been in a position to put an end to unemployment in Berlin, to bring about a fall in prices, to raise the population's standard of living and thus to resist successfully the attempts to remilitarize Germany. The political parties of the western sector of the City of Berlin and its governmental advisory bodies had not accepted that proposal, doubtless because it would have been the first step towards a unified Germany.

35. Comparing the material situation of the western sector of Berlin with that of the eastern sector, Mr. Ebert pointed out that whereas in the western sector of Berlin more than 300,000 persons were unemployed, increased

production in the eastern sector of Berlin had resulted in a progressively greater shortage of skilled labour. The industrial production of the western sector of Berlin had not yet reached 50 per cent of the 1936 level, whilst production in the eastern sector had substantially exceeded that level. Heavy subsidies were needed to balance the budget deficit of the western sector; the eastern sector's budget showed a surplus each year. Such differences served to emphasize the effects of the policy followed by the Western Powers. The policy of aggression carried out by those Powers had made of Berlin a military bridge-head and a centre of unrest. The population of the city did not want it to be the stake in a new war, but the capital of a peace-loving and unified State.

36. That high objective could not, in Mr. Ebert's opinion, be attained by limiting municipal elections to the City of Berlin alone. The German question could not be settled thus. The problem to be resolved was that of the unity of Germany, and it could be resolved only by the election of a national assembly and the abolition of the measures which had led to the division of the country. For that reason he associated himself with the proposals of the People's Chamber of the German Democratic Republic and advocated a general conference for the whole of Germany with a view to organizing elections throughout the whole German territory. He expressed his conviction that at the present time it was possible to hold democratic elections in Germany. Such democratic elections presupposed universal secret suffrage, for which the re-establishment of individual liberty was a basic condition. It was not a case of the individual freedom contemplated by the Chamber of Deputies of the western sector in a bill now under study—a bill which was a challenge against the human person. That bill would in fact restrict in various ways the freedom to work of anyone living in the western sector who might seek to carry on his trade in the eastern sector. True democratic freedom, not so-called individual freedom, must prevail in both sectors of the City of Berlin.

37. The efforts made by the people of the eastern sector of Berlin to reconstruct the war-ravaged city were eloquent proof of the peaceful intentions of the German people, which had learned the bitter lesson of defeat from its warlike past. The Government of the German Democratic Republic and the Berlin Democratic Assembly were resolved to hold free democratic elections by secret ballot.

38. For the holding of elections, there was no need to set bureaucratic machinery in motion and no need for any investigation by a United Nations commission. What the German people wanted was that its freedom and wishes should be respected; that was why it was asking for free elections throughout Germany.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.