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The Way to European Independence

In 1947-48, when a number of Frenchmen, including Hubert Beuve-Mery, editor of the evening paper *Le Monde*, and myself, at that time editor of the morning paper *Combat*, began to wage a campaign for the independence of France from both blocs and for a 'Third Force' Europe, we were the object of a series of contradictory attacks. Some people maintained in a general way that this was an unreal, abstract policy, that it was necessary 'to choose', and that at the present time it was no longer possible to remain 'neutral'. The Communists violently accused us of failing to recognise the differences between 'the camp of peace' and 'the camp of war', and therefore of playing the game of the latter. The anti-Communists and pro-Americans treated us as disguised agents of international Communism. It was unpopular at that time to be a 'neutralist'. The name, which we did not choose, was picked for us by our opponents and by the pressmen. Rather than deny the title, which was not a particularly fortunate choice because of the aura of sit-back-and-do-nothing that surrounded it, we preferred to take it up and try to popularise it. 'Neutralism' very quickly had people worried. A campaign was launched against *Le Monde* by the French right-wing press, the Quai d'Orsay and the U.S. Embassy, and, on the basis of certain reports that appeared in 'Le Monde', nearly succeeded in ousting Hubert Beuve-Mery from the editorship. Happily, the solidarity of the journalists defeated the manoeuvre. In my own case, my 'neutralism', together with the anti-colonialist policy I was pursuing in *Combat* led to my capitalist associate, acting under various pressures¹, organising a manoeuvre within the company which published the paper, putting me in a minority and compelling me to leave *Combat* at the beginning of 1950.

Even at that time, however, the stigma attached to 'neutralism' began to diminish among serious-thinking people. India, after achieving independence, had based its foreign policy on this kind of approach. The Communist powers, compelled to acknowledge the positive factor Nehru represented for world peace, began, even

¹ One day, the President of the Republic, Vincent Auriol, also closely linked with the family of my associate, invited him, together with myself and the heads of my editorial staff, to tea at the Palais de l'Elysee ... in practice to arraign my whole policy in their presence.

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under Stalin, to change their tune. Yugoslavia, in abandoning the Cominform camp without going over to the American one, provoked a similar response among the Western powers. Both sides seemed prepared to agree that active neutrality, or disengagement—the name is unimportant—was not such a bad thing ... *as long as it did not spread within their own ranks*. The growth in the acceptance of these ideas has been astonishing, when one remembers that it has taken place over a period of only ten years.

East and West Resign Themselves to 'Neutralisms'

The Russians, under Krushchev, appear to be basing their policy to a large degree on the independent powers, *even to the disadvantage of the Communists in those countries*. This, without a doubt, was one of the cruxes of the row between Krushchev and the last of Stalin's key figures, even though this line was in keeping with the development of Stalin's policy in his last years. This is an important fact, the consequences of which have not been sufficiently recognised in the West, as a result of the childish state of mind which sees the Russians as perverse sorcerers, able to overturn the logic of facts to their own advantage. It was doubtless important for the Russians to obtain co-operation from Nehru and Tito; but the sacrifice involved for the Indian Communist Party, and especially the example for all the other people's republics of the reversal of the policy towards Yugoslavia, could not but have extensive repercussions which the old-guard Communists could not contemplate with a light heart. It would appear that the old guard have not yet given up their anti-Titoism, and that the current controversies are a reflection of these internal conflicts. Perhaps these internal difficulties indicate, even more than the great volte-face itself, the ideological and political importance of the new Russian attitude.

No less revealing are the developments in the United States. Here, without a doubt, it was the aggression against Egypt that made the decisive turning-point. The Americans also, in this case, understood that it was impossible to oppose both the Soviet bloc and the 'third camp', and from that moment onward, what had previously been nothing but the private policy of Mr. Byroade and a few ambassadors became the dogma of the State Department that is, that assistance to the neutral powers is the only means of preventing the growth of Communism in certain areas. The welcome Washington gave to the absorption of Syria into the United Arab Republic is a further revealing indication. In all this only one thing has remained unchanged—the hostility of the two great world blocs to any trend towards neutralism *in their own ranks*. Even the idea of a tit-for-tat abandonment of some Western and Eastern countries to neutralism has received only half-hearted encouragement. The

Russians have not made any great effort to obtain a neutralised and reunified Germany, and have accepted the semi-disengagement of Poland solely because they were taken by surprise. The Rapacki Plan, Polish and not Russian in origin, outlines but a timid beginning of central European neutralisation. The Americans rejected it because it worries Adenauer, and because in general it is axiomatic to their policy that any weakening of NATO is a threat to peace, even if it means a parallel weakening of the other side of the iron curtain. Such attitudes are fairly natural. Even those statesmen who understand the factor of stability that the disengaged nations represent in world politics are under pressure from their chiefs of staff, who consider that all is lost once they give up control of a certain number of bases, divisions and arsenals. It is more than clear that even if a non-engaged country manages without too much difficulty to remain outside the two blocs, 'playing off one against the other, the countries entangled in the political, military and economic web of NATO, SEATO and the Warsaw Pact, will most likely not be able to shake off their entanglements except by their own constant individual efforts and by bitter struggles. We should, of course, not completely rule out the possibility of international conferences reaching certain agreements on disengagement, over the question of Germany, for example, but these are distant prospects as long as there is no government to act as the spokesman of neutralism at such conferences. We must, therefore, rely more on the effort of individuals in the countries concerned. So far as we in the West are concerned we have the advantage of conditions of formal democracy which would enable such an effort to be made without developing into the bloodbath it did for the Hungarians. Yet this relatively favourable position is perhaps not destined to last. Now is the time to take advantage of it.

The Basic Fundamentals of World Equilibrium

But now arises the question if we are to achieve independence for ourselves, shall we not by doing so disturb world equilibrium, as there will probably be no offsetting development at the other side of the iron curtain? Shall we not increase the danger of war that we are claiming to reduce? This is the line of a number of 'Atlantic' spokesmen, and it is a pretty safe bet that it was a similar line that was used on Kadar to persuade him to betray Nagy. In such an analysis there is a fundamental misinterpretation of the present bases of peace. In the eyes of the commanders-in-chief *the strategic trump cards during a war* might depend, for the Russians, on the regimes in the satellite states, and for the United States, on American bases and the troop movement system of NATO, but *the threat of destruction* will continue to come from both camps *in peace time*,

irrespective of these factors. It is of little consequence whether a thousand planes or missiles carrying atomic weapons, or only ten, could appear in American or Soviet skies at the beginning of a war. The destructive capacity of both camps is so *enormous* that such a threat, whatever disparity there might be, cannot be contemplated light-heartedly by even the most cynical of statesmen. And this enormous destructive potential depends, not on some alliance or get-together of strategists, but on the enormous industrial and scientific potential of the United States and the U.S.S.R.

It is this mutual fear of the *potentials*, not of *bases* and *alliances*, that has restrained Washington and Moscow since 1947. As was pointed out by Aneurin Bevan, John Freeman and Harold Wilson in 1950 in *One Way Only*, Russia did not attack Yugoslavia in 1948, despite enormous Russian superiority, despite the absence of any treaty between Yugoslavia and the West, and despite the grave danger that the break with Yugoslavia represented for the Communist bloc: this is adequate proof that a sense of the terrifying consequences of a Russian-American war, *no matter how improbable*, is a strong enough 'deterrent', at the present time to dampen any aggressive intentions on the part of a great power, without there being any need to increase the danger by establishing a whole network of alliances and bases. The only argument to be found against this analysis is the outbreak of war in Korea. But this event comes, in my opinion, in the category of 'accidents', as revealed at the time by a number of abnormal states of affairs, as for instance the absence of the Russians from the United Nations in a fit of sulks, at the time of the outbreak of war, when their veto would have prevented the official intervention of the U.N. The system of alliances and bases, bringing further countries into the orbit of satellites, and the explosive tendencies provoked in this way, are a clear contribution to provoking the danger of such 'accidents'. If all this is true we must acknowledge that the withdrawal of a country or countries in Western Europe from the American bloc will have no negative effect on the basic Russian-American equilibrium, and could have a whole series of positive effects that I shall go into later. The same obviously applies to the individual disengagement of countries in the Eastern bloc; but we can help to bring this about only by example.

Individual or Collective Neutrality?

Another important question that needs to be considered is whether or not disengagement is a feasible step for one country to take alone. Or should it be only a collective action? It is because of the alleged inefficacy or even 'danger' of individual neutrality as against collective neutralism that a number of supporters of the idea

of a united Europe urge that a Western Europe be *first of all* created, even though it be in the American camp, since such a united Europe would naturally tend subsequently to become a third force independent of the other two. There are a number of answers to this argument. First, there is no evidence to show that by unifying Western Europe under the shelter of the American flag, one will thereby create a body which will then be able to detach itself by amoebal scission from the American body. This is a biological metaphor and it is no more conclusive than metaphors generally are. Such a Europe, in so far as it represents a 'battering ram' of the Atlantic alliance, will naturally tend to be dominated by the most anti-Soviet, the most militarist or simply the most military elements.

The 'Little Europe' of six countries, which is at the moment the most concrete embodiment of this idea, is in fact a German-U.S. creation in which the German banks, industry, general staff and high clergy go hand in hand with Wall Street, U.S. industry, the Pentagon and Cardinal Spellman. In so far as this 'Little Europe', an American bridgehead, will over the coming years constitute a growing threat to the U.S.S.R., and therefore provoke Russian counter-measures, it will not be able to detach itself from the United States, but will on the contrary increase European dependence on the American financial, military and ideological arsenal.

Furthermore, contrary to the expectation of some fanatical 'Europeans', the establishment of European unity cannot of itself have any magical political effect. It is unfortunately conceivable that the European bloc, because of the way in which it came into existence, and also to the extent that it can be brought to work hand in glove with Franco-Belgian colonialism, will become not a factor for peace, but an eminently aggressive factor in world politics. The work of the Disarmament Sub-Committee in London in 1957 was not sabotaged by the Americans; Stassen and the Russians were, on the contrary, on the point of reaching agreement. The sabotage came from the French and Germans.

The wish of the French, and probably the Germans also, to make a 'European' atom bomb, is quite capable, in its own way, of capsizing a summit conference especially as the French and Germans have for several years in the State Department, the Pentagon and the White House been backing *the course of increased armaments* as against *the course of peace*.

Ideas First

For all these reasons we can have no confidence in the magical outcome of 'European integration', and believe, on the contrary that *Europe will be good or bad according to the way in which it is*

made up. The essential pre-requisite is that it should at the outset comprise countries, or at least a majority of countries, which have come out in favour of peace, improved international relations, and disengagement or neutralism. The idea, furthermore, that only a great power can play an important role as an independent force is an erroneous one. The strength of a disengaged nation or group of nations depends specifically *not on its own potential, but on the equilibrium between the two blocs*. In such a situation there is a neutralisation, a real cancelling out so long as peace lasts of these two enormous accumulations of power. Not only do the strength and scope for action of the small, independent nations then become quite appreciable, but additional factors not involved in the material balance of forces also become politically essential—diplomatic skill, gaining the ear of world opinion, and even the simple objective situation of independence which makes one sought after as a mediator by the more powerful. It is quite apparent that India and Yugoslavia have over the past few years exercised an influence out of all proportion to their material power (the size of India's population is irrelevant, as India is financially, economically and militarily a small nation); and the same situation is probably beginning to apply to the United Arab Republic.

We should not, therefore, distinguish artificially between the concept of European neutralism on the one hand and, for instance, British, French or German neutralism on the other. The movement for the disengagement of the Atlantic bloc must start from the situation as it is, that is, the existence of separate nations. What is more, the first country in Western Europe that manages to shake its policies and economy free of the 'Atlantic' pattern will stimulate a similar movement in all neighbouring countries: the achievements of this country, diplomatically and in terms of its internal equilibrium will lead other countries to follow its example. The association of a number of nations to further a neutralist diplomacy will then take place in Europe just as naturally as has occurred in Asia, with India, Ceylon, Burma, Indonesia and other countries. If such a move is followed by an economic, and even political and military rapprochement, a supra-national unit, animated by a totally different spirit from that of the six-country Europe, or even the Europe of Strasbourg, will have been established. Only a Europe of this kind, furthermore, will have any chance of drawing in the powers of the Eastern bloc, and of obtaining from the Russians, whether they like it or not, permission for these countries to enter it. Of course, *it is not completely out of the question* that such a process might take place within 'Little Europe' or the Europe of Strasbourg and the OEEC. But, for the reasons I have outlined, because of the dominant position of German reactionary circles, and the united power of national

capitalisms already strongly linked and interpenetrating, while the working class remains extremely divided, a development of this kind is to say the least of it, uncertain.

The Price of Independence

An extremely important argument used by the opponents of disengagement in Europe is the economic one-how, they ask, is one to do without aid from America, which is firmly committed to the Atlantic organisation? So far as France is concerned this argument has never been particularly plausible, as the extremely balanced nature of our economy gives our country wide possibilities of maintaining a self-sufficient economy. U.S. dollars have, in fact, gone above all to avoid an equitable fiscal reform in France, and to pay (in respect both of the national budget and of foreign payments) for the enormous expenditure on the colonial wars in which France has been continually engaged since 1946, because of the dominant position of the right, itself a fruit of the American alliance. An important piece of research carried out by one of the senior officials in the economic department of the civil service under the Mendes-France ministry, showed that with a simple re-alignment of imports and exports and the ending of colonial adventures, France's shortage of hard currency could easily be made up-and this analysis did not even take into account the general cut in arms production, which ought to be the logical effect of the decision to adopt an independent foreign policy.

I do not know sufficiently well the details of Britain's economic position to be able to pass judgment on the case of Britain. It seems to me, however, that in view of the import structure of the British economy and the loss of overseas investments during the last war, the problem of dollars is a much more critical one for Britain than it is for France. It is in this sense that the British ruling class could be said to have a vested interest in the cold war, since without a cold war there would be no more need of the 'British aircraft carrier' for the Americans, and therefore no more dollars. But it is also self-evident when one looks at the British budget that the enormous arms expenditure arising out of the Atlantic alliance has doubly unfavourable repercussions on Britain's balance of payments, as on that of all other countries in the same situation-arms production means considerable raw and special material purchases abroad, at the same time as devoting to production for the armed forces factories and labour which would otherwise have been working for overseas markets. This is, in addition to the arithmetical consideration, a psychological one, because the size of the armaments orders is leading British industries to lose their traditional 'taste' for exports and their fighting spirit in the export markets; it

is so much easier to go and look for arms orders at the ministry! This kind of outlook was criticised by Charles Wilson himself in the United States, where even the working class has been infected by it, and where the trade unions are the worst of the supporters of increased armaments (it is they whom he called the 'sleeping dogs' who don't want to go hunting any more when they are fed at home). This is not yet the case in our countries, but the industrialists have manifestly developed this taste for the easy way out. Would a substantial reduction in military expenditure be enough to enable Britain to close the 'dollar-gap'? This is not impossible, though it is naturally extremely difficult to foresee all the economic consequences of a political battle which is conditioned by many and changing factors.

A Lot of Thinking is Needed ...

What is certain, or at least highly likely, is that whilst from the economic point of view a neutralist foreign policy is conceivable in the case of France without any great political upheavals, as no profound structural reforms are needed (this is even more true, of course, in the case of Holland, Belgium and the other West European countries), it means for Britain a 'dramatic re-appraisal' of her economy, the beginning of real planning and controls on foreign trade. All these things could mean-provisionally at any rate-sacrifices for the British working class; I believe it essential therefore for Labour politicians to study this question fundamentally, see what is needed and what the consequences would be. I was astonished at Brighton that Aneurin Bevan, since he had chosen to align himself with the centre of the party on atomic questions, thus breaking the unity of the left, did not at least try to regain the initiative in a field which was also his direct concern as Foreign Secretary in the Shadow Cabinet, and which did not contradict official policy as adopted by the Executive: what should in fact be done is to go into the economic, military and other conditions of a foreign policy independent of the United States, a policy of which Bevan has made himself the spokesman.

I tried to persuade him to reply to a series of questions, pinpointing exactly *this economic basis of an independent policy*. His reply was that it was difficult for him to go into this point in an interview, as it would require an enormous amount of preliminary work and the re-appraisal of the whole economic and military basis of British foreign policy. This was a valid enough reply, though he might have been able to sketch in the main outlines. But, in my estimation, unless such an analysis is made by the Executive and its experts-or, *failing them, by those of the Labour Left* - the next Labour government will have purely and simply to don the mantle

of the Conservative government's foreign policy, for want of adequate planning of all the ticklish steps necessary for the re-establishment of independence.

As far as the financial aspects are concerned, there is, however, one economic factor that could help to make it easier for the West European countries to achieve independence. There is no reason why the blackmail methods used by Nasser, Nehru, Tito and others should not be used by the West European countries also. The initial consequence, of course, of Tito's break with Russia, was the stopping of Soviet aid to Yugoslavia lock, stock and barrel. But it enabled Tito to obtain American credits, without forfeiting her independence in doing so. Economic relations with the Soviet bloc have now been restored; without American aid having completely ceased, and in the event the result has been that over a period of ten years Yugoslavia has drawn ample benefit from both economic zones. The same is proving the case for Nasser, whose break with the West brought him the initial advantage of Russian aid, whilst he has now re-obtained American aid into the bargain. It is absolutely certain that any political and military withdrawal of our countries from the American orbit would mean a temporary halt to the flow of dollars. It is readily foreseeable, however, that the U.S.S.R. and the Soviet bloc in general would provide some compensation for the sacrifice, as the Russians are without any doubt prepared to pay very dearly-and even to go without themselves to help in achieving such a withdrawal. It is quite likely, furthermore, that if this process were to succeed as it has succeeded with other countries, American dollars would begin to flow again in a new form! These are not Utopian perspectives. The psychology of governments is, after all, no more mysterious than that of individuals, and so far the same causes have always produced the same effects.

The Myth of 'Divided We Fall'

There is, however, one objection which has often been raised in America, Germany, France and other European countries: any country, it is said, that abandoned the Atlantic alliance, would have to spend considerably more on its own means of self-defence. *'If you advocate neutralism,'* it is said, *'then you must also advocate austerly, strong national armies, and so forth.'* This is another superficially attractive argument, which at bottom is nothing but sophistry. Armaments are designed to answer a threat. I am not going to discuss the question of whether the Soviet menace is or is not a real one; this seems to me, anyway, an 'irrelevant' question, as we need to get away from political 'Manichaeism', and the 'Adventism' of some of the Marxists. There are no 'good' nations and 'bad' nations; in a given situation *any* nation can become a

danger to others. But if such a threat does exist it can take on two forms, which, to use Western jargon, we can call 'aggression' and 'infiltration'. Aggression means war in the strict sense of the term, whether it be the result of premeditated aggression or of complications arising out of some regional incident. There is one premise underlying all neutralist policy, the premise which I outlined at the beginning of this article, and which seems to me to be substantiated by the psychology of governments and an analysis of the facts-fear of the American potential which acts as a 'deterrent' to the Russians, and vice-versa. The strategic network of alliances and bases is only secondary, incidental and, fortunately, to no avail. It is this equilibrium of the potential of the two blocs which makes disengagement and neutralism possible. It is this very equilibrium that makes it pointless for the minor powers to make any *heavy military provisions* to prevent aggression. The only thing they have to do in this respect is to make it impossible for the other camp to occupy their territory by 'infiltration', or provoke a revolution *without there being either 'aggression' or world war*. But to do this there is no need for atomic bombs, or enormous squadrons of bombers, or vast land armies; all that is required is a defensive force, fighter planes, anti-aircraft defences, and above all a nation which is united and determined to fight to prevent its country from being easily overrun.

The neutralist outlook provides the *moral mainspring of a united nation*, as the war to be waged by the people then becomes a war in defence of their own objectives or, when a neutralist 'European nation' has been achieved, in defence of the territory of United Europe. The defensive air and anti-aircraft forces would have the sole aim of compelling the whole world to acknowledge the state of war; the organisation of internal defence would be aimed purely at making it impossible for the enemy to occupy the country quickly. From this moment on the idea of infiltration disappears, and we are brought back to where we started-the fact that any nation wishing to violate the status quo can do so only at the price of war itself. As, in addition, we are discussing the highly sensitive area of Western Europe, such a violation here, more than anywhere else, could but mean world war. Such a perspective should make it possible to make a radical cut in standing armies, reduced to the function of a defensive force, and supplemented by a well-trained people's militia on the Swiss model. The abandonment of any aim of 'upholding prestige' and playing any quantitatively appreciable part in the Atlantic war effort in an American-Russian war, completely transforms the financial aspect of national defence.

It might be considered that such a policy is 'selfish', since it amounts to relying, for instance, on American power to prevent Russian aggression (those so inclined might take the reverse hypo-

thesis). But the truth is that politics do not live by sentimentality, and above all that one cannot carry over into the discussion of nations and the survival of the world the kind of remorse which says, 'You can protect me, but I shan't protect you', which one might expect to find in the case of individuals. The basic contribution that Europe can make to the world, and hence to the American and Russian peoples alike, lies in consolidating peace: such a contribution to peace is practicable only on the basis of disengagement: this disengagement is itself practicable only on the basis of a new financial and military policy, the conditions of which I have analysed and which constitute the essential pre-requisites.

The Aims of Neutralism

How can this European neutralism work for peace? Let us first imagine a country or a number of countries in Europe deciding to operate policies not in line with those of the United States, and to pursue thenceforward an independent line in world affairs. As I have previously said, such a stand would have a contagious effect, and it should be one of the primary aims of the foreign policy of this country or these countries to encourage this initiative to spread, so as to obtain as rapidly as possible the mass effect of a diplomatic group. To achieve this the countries adopting this position will, without hesitation, have to drop that kind of national gentility which inhibits interference in the affairs of other countries, and return to internationalism as it used to be practised by the labour movement, while continuing to respect national characteristics and the way in which each individual people settle their own problems. There should be no hesitation, for instance, in giving the 'neutralists' of other countries every support in the way of propaganda that they might want. To take a simple example, the statesmen of a Labour Britain which adopted such an international policy should have no scruples about taking the bull by the horns in France, Germany, Italy, and elsewhere to defend this policy, whatever the more or less ridiculous alibis evoked, such as the respect due to the Socialist International, all the member parties of which are not neutralist, and so on.

The second task of this country or these countries should be to tackle the precise problems in relation to which the intervention of a European third force could be crucial. Two such problems stand out clearly—that of the Near East, and that of Germany and Central Europe. An outstanding need is for the neutralisation of the Near East, linked with the fixing and guaranteeing of the Israeli-Arab frontiers and the settlement of the refugee problem by the return of some of them and the settlement of the others in the Arab countries with the aid of Israel and the United Nations, in accordance with

the terms already drawn up by the U.N. Special Commission and endorsed by those Zionists and Israelis who are in favour of improving relations. This is one of the problems, the only obstacle to the solution of which lies in the *highly self-interested game being played in these areas by the United States, the Russians, Britain and France*. On the day when France and Britain, or even the British alone, tackle the question seriously in an effort to solve it peacefully, and call on the Russians and the Americans to help them do so, it is more than probable that a big step forward will be taken.

As far as Germany and Central Europe are concerned, European neutralism would have even greater scope for action. The emergence of a single neutralist great power like Britain or France in Europe would considerably strengthen the movement for the reunification of Germany on both sides of the Elbe. Whether the CDU were still in power in Bonn or not, the government of Federal Germany would be very quickly brought to agree to something like the Polish plan for nuclear neutralisation. The Pankow Government would likewise find it difficult to put obstacles in the path of the principle of a democratic solution of the German question. The cutting of the armed forces in both parts of Germany, the withdrawal of foreign troops from both halves of Germany, and in stages from Western and Eastern Europe, could be one of the first aims of a plan for European neutralisation.

The opponents of such a withdrawal of troops have always raised the objection that it would disturb the equilibrium as Russian domination in Eastern Europe is maintained not only by armed troops, but also by the Communist Parties and the police. But the experience of Poland and of Hungary has shown very clearly that only Soviet troops prevent these countries from returning to a more independent policy. At the same time (and the order in which these questions should be tackled cannot be settled in advance), the agencies dealing with economic co-operation between Western Europe and Eastern Europe would have to be co-ordinated. The body which is naturally fitted to carry out this co-ordination already exists, the U.N. Economic Commission in Geneva; the Russians have, in fact, suggested already that the OEEC on the one hand and the East European economic agency on the other hand, be organically united within it. The Geneva Commission would merely need to be given real powers, which would, after all, be in line with the intentions of those who founded it before the cold war made it into nothing but a statistics agency.

The Problem of 'Neutralist Contagion'

The result of these economic relations, military disinfection and the growth of neutralism in Western Europe will be to stimulate

similar developments in Eastern Europe. This will be the effect of diplomatic agreements, and also of popular pressure in these countries. It is therefore probable that we shall see a progressive movement towards a kind of neutralisation of the whole of Europe, establishing at the same time really complementary groups of states, of such a kind as the OEEC free trade area, and even less the Common Market, can never represent. The logical consequences of all this should be the growth in all the West European countries of democratic socialism, and in Eastern Europe of new forms of Communism similar to the regimes in Yugoslavia and Poland, and to what the Hungarian regime might have been. On both sides of the iron curtain it is in fact the cold war that is the best ally of the conservative forces, be they capitalist or bureaucratic in origin. When such a prospect is held out, an argument often used against it is that *'the Russians won't allow it'*. This argument does not strike me as in the least convincing. The Russians have constantly put forward 'barter' proposals such as, nuclear disarmament on both sides of the iron curtain, aerial and ground inspection on both sides, withdrawal of troops on both sides, etc. It is obvious that the trend thus outlined must necessarily lead-when it meets with goodwill somewhere in the West-to a neutralisation of Eastern Europe, and therefore to greater independence of the Soviet Union. Some people hold that there is in such proposals more Machiavellianism than sincerity, that the Russians have *no real intention* of going so far, and that they are concerned above all to make good propaganda gambits for the sake of European and world opinion. This is not out of the question. But if this be the case, the best means of providing the Russians with such propaganda gambits is to pursue present Western policy. If it is a bluff, there is one simple means of finding out, that is to call the bluff. One must, in that case, put oneself in a position of being able to do it, and only a *'neutralist'* policy in Western Europe can provide the practical possibilities. So much wisdom from the next American government is too much to hope for.

There are, therefore, many reasons why the movement for European independence should stem from Western Europe, if for no other reason than that it is there that such concepts can be openly advocated. But above all, we believe that all this would result in a chain reaction *no matter where it is touched off*. We can conclude also that no country and no group within a country should wait to see what his neighbour is going to do. As is the case with all key ideas, it is enough that a substantial group begin to advocate this idea, which has already gained widespread currency throughout the world. It is an idea that was formulated in Western Europe-and it is only right that it should return to be embodied there.