Advance Text of Speech by
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THE NEW GERMANY ENTERS MATURITY

In the life of the individual, as well as in the life of a people, there is too often a tendency to find the easy road, the more comfortable one, even though the easier way is not always the right way. But there is great satisfaction in staying on the hard road, if in the end it turns out to be right.

The distinction you have bestowed on me is a great honor. I think I can best show my gratitude by telling you something about how I see the situation of my people and my country today. I shall do this quite frankly, even though to be frank is not always to be comfortable. And in what I shall tell you there will be a request and an appeal.

Twenty years have passed since the end of the Second World War. The Germans have worked hard. In the biggest part of their country, where they were given the chance to do so, they have established quite stable democratic institutions. But as a people they still have not come to rest. Their national problem has not been solved.

Germany is divided. One part of that division, the Federal Republic, has become a strong economic force. Its military power is also substantial, but it is limited and conventional. And it stands under the command of NATO.

The other part of the division, the Soviet Zone, has had a Communist regime imposed on it. But that part too has been economically rather successful recently and is showing increasing self-confidence.

Berlin, surrounded by the Communists of the Soviet Zone, has meanwhile been protected by the West and all attempts by the Communists to drive out the three powers who have become our friends and allies have been repulsed. Meanwhile the Berliners themselves have held fast and have presented a solid front against all efforts to undermine their morale.

Twelve million people--that is more than 20 per cent of the population of the Federal Republic--are refugees or expellees. To a high degree they have been integrated into the community. In West Germany there is no radical political movement of any serious strength on either side of the political spectrum.

Fifty-five per cent of the Germans living today played no conscious role in the Nazi era. Among young people, but also among the older ones, interest in reunification and the demand for it increases steadily.

These are the facts twenty years after unconditional surrender, and with these facts in mind, let me proceed.

The 8th of May will awaken many memories. The terror that filled the world in the name of Germany--a name that was much abused by those who had seized power--will come to life again. People cannot forget that period of recent history. And why should they? We learn from history only by knowing it. However, it should be no surprise that it is not easy for the Germans either to come to terms with this most terrible time in the saga of their people.

I have never shared some people's illusion that ugly things will disappear if they are ignored long enough. I can say here what I have often

said in Germany: It is rank opportunism to suggest that problems can be solved by leaving them alone. Memories cannot be wiped out by statutes of limitations. And I deeply regret the prevalent and mistaken impression that the Federal Republic reached certain decisions recently only under the pressure of world opinion. The decisions were and had to be the result of Germany's own convictions.

This has much to do with pride. No people can live without pride. This is as true for Germans as it is for any other people. And some of that pride is making itself manifest now.

I have read with much concern the worried questions expressed in many places, including the United States, as to whether we are on the verge of a new wave of nationalism in Germany. We are not. I say this without overlooking a series of irresponsible remarks and dubious activities. What we really have to deal with, it seems to me, is this:

For twelve years the German people pursued the course of nationalism to excess. The total claim of world hegemony was followed by total collapse. One of the many results was that national consciousness became a negative quantity, a minus element in German life. In our Basic Law, that is, in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany, the opportunity was established to permit the transfer of national sovereignty to supra-national institutions. An integrated Europe thus became the goal where some of my countrymen hoped to find their greater homeland.

The economic integration of Europe is making progress. Its political integration, however, is halted. The political union, the United States of Europe, which would take over and combine the sovereignty of nations, is not now an active dossier on the desks of our statesmen. Neither is it on their calendars as something to do tomorrow or at any time in the near future.

But this must not lead to resignation. We must make efforts to bring about qualified political cooperation between the six countries of the Common Market. We must strive for arrangements between the Common Market and the Free Trade zone. We must keep the door open for the peoples and countries of Eastern Europe through all forms of communication possible today and tomorrow.

But independent from these efforts, it was as inevitable as the sunrise that the German people would seek their national identity. It would have been inevitable even without General DeGaulle's headstrong and forceful call for a Europe of Fatherlands. His call only accelerated this development in Germany. Why then should anyone wonder that the people of divided Germany demand a Fatherland that goes beyond the narrowed limits of West Germany's Federal Republic? "Why only DeGaulle?" should in this context not be a question that surprises anybody.

Perhaps it is not necessary to recall what John F. Kennedy said in Berlin: "In eighteen years of peace and good faith this generation of Germans has earned the right to be free, including the right to unite their families and their nation in a lasting peace with good will to all people."

The eighteen years he spoke about have now become almost twenty, while the demand for self-destermination has increased and the right to exercise it is in no way less than it was.

We say twenty years is enough. It is enough from the point of view of human rights and for the purposes of peace. We say this knowing that difficulties not yet apparent stand in the way of the right of self-determination, knowing that in addition to the responsibilities of the four powers there is also a German responsibility. And we say it with the full

knowledge that the goal of peace transcends any national purpose.

It will be the task of German policy in the next few years to see to it that the national consciousness of the German people finds its balance. After experiencing the two extremes of excess and negation, we must find the true measure of patriotism, the median that is free from arrogance and based on good will toward all men and all nations.

The fate of democracy in Germany depends on whether we succeed in finding that median. None of the democratic parties in the Federal Republic can shirk the responsibility. If they fail to meet it, if they fail to grasp and respond to the spirit of national identity, if they abandon the cause of self-determination, then, and only then, will it be possible for someone to pick up the banner they have dropped and use a national sense of frustration and disappointment to brew the poison of radicalism.

There is no nationalistic wave in the Federal Republic. Of course there are those who remain intractable, those who never learn and never change -- or those who change too often and too fast. No country is ever completely free of them. What counts, however, is the predominantly healthy process of recovery of a people who, in the long run, and like any other people, cannot live without pride. It is my plea that this be understood.

Please remember that in September, those Germans who were born in 1944 will go to the polls for the first time. More than half the German people, because of their youth, legitimately feel personally free of the responsibility of their fathers. We know, of course, that children do not

come into the world totally unrelated to their country's historical development. But no one has the right to insist that German sons must bear the responsibility for the Germany of the fathers. At least I know from my sons that they do not want to be responsible for everything that I may do.

Never before have there been as many young people in Germany familiar with foreign lands. Hundreds of thousands of them spend their holidays and many spend years of study beyond the borders of their own country. There are literally millions of individual meetings with young people of other countries. A natural self-confidence free from an attitude of superiority, a healthy skepticism toward their elders, a matter-of-fact attitude toward their peers -- these are characteristic features of Germany's youth. Aren't these the characteristics of healthy-minded young people over much of the world today? Even the most critical observers have not discovered any sign of nationalist arrogance, or of hate or contempt for other people, in our German youth anywhere.

The younger generation in my country would like to visit Russia and Poland just as much as France and Italy. This is encouraging.

Therefore I say to my friends in America, but not only in America: I must defend my people against unjust attacks. Germany needs your confidence, it needs the confidence of its friends in the reliability of its word. We also have to convince our present adversaries that Germans want to live in peace and friendship with all their neighbors. Unburdoned by the past, self-confident, open to the world, the young generation in Germany holds out its hand to the youth of other peoples.

This is my appeal. Do not reject this outstretched hand of our youth because suspicion about their fathers has not yet been put to rest. Today's Germany has earned your trust.

I am well aware that asserting my country's claim to the confidence of the world does not and cannot dispel the mistrust that still exists in many places. Too much evil was done, and the undoing of it probably can never be finished completely. But historical processes cannot be held in abeyance until all memories fade away. It is time for us to emerge from the protective wrappings of the postwar years and to act like an adult state in our relationships with other states. We must cease behaving like wards forever looking toward our guardians for help. We have a community responsibility to assert our equality.

I emphasize "community responsibility." We must and we shall continue to act in concert with our allies in the common effort toward achieving a just and enduring peace for ourselves and for Europe. We must and we shall continue to contribute our full share toward the security efforts of the West. But at the same time we must contribute our own judgments and our own initiative toward creating a happier relationship between our state and the states around us, both friendly and unfriendly.

Let me be specific. We want to bring some movement into what is known as the German problem. Not movement for the sake of movement, to give only the appearance of progress. There is an interdependence between the division of Germany and the split of Europe. Therefore we want to see movement with direction and purpose, movement that will bring us closer to a solution of the postwar dilemma that continues to keep Europe divided.

Our people will not be satisfied with a divided Germany in a divided Europe. Their respect for justice, for the right of self-determination, for freedom, is now too well developed. Their coming of age has been powerfully influenced by the principles of Western democracy. It is not reasonable, and it is not wise, to expect them to put these principles on a shelf and wait for others always to act for them.

The German people are well aware that they alone cannot bring about the reunification of their country. They have no illusions on this score. They know that until the Soviet Union is prepared to accept the reunification of Germany the country will remain divided. And they know that it would be foolhardy for the Germans alone to attenpt to negotiate with the Russians without prior understanding with the allies. The peace settlement is a community undertaking in which Washington, London and Paris, as well as Bonn, must be equally involved if not equally active.

It is not always necessary for Germany to wait for American proposals, or French or British proposals, on how to bring a forward movement about. If Washington or London or Paris are not inclined to initiate movement, there is no reason why we Germans cannot say to them: "Here is an idea. It has possibilities. Let us begin to explore it."

It cannot be denied that this has not been the German approach. Not only do we have a weak government, but it is not likely, during the election fever that now will seize Germany, that any audacious concepts of foreign policy will be advanced in my country. This condition of suspended animation during election months is not unfamiliar to Americans. But I am confident that when our elections are over there will be freedom of movement in this area.

In my view, the most urgent task ahead of us is to prepare some basic principles of a peace treaty, and I intend to see to it that in my country activity along this line begins as soon as possible, in other words, after September.

We must begin to explore the ground on which the Western community will stand in negotiations with Russia. We must begin to ask ourselves where the openings are in the wall of mistrust that stands between East and West. We must begin to make a mutual assessment of the potentialities in the openings that already exist. And we must try to reach a consensus on how these openings can best be widened.

It is vitally necessary, in this process, that trust and confidence remain unimpaired. I refer not only to the need for confidence in German democracy, but also to Germany's need for confidence in her allies. I can state unequivocally that the overwhelming majority of my fellow countrymen do have confidence in their allies. We welcome any progress, any positive developments in relations between Washington and Moscow. But as a mature partner, we expect to be kept informed of what is being done, particularly where it concerns the future of Europe and Germany. We are in this dilemma together and we will come out of it safely only together.

Berliners particularly have good reason to be conscious of this from day to day, but Bonn and the rest of the Federal Republic of Germany have no illusions about this either, even without Russian MIG's to break the sound barriers over the Rhine.

The maturity of Germany is part and parcel of the reconstruction of Europe and both stand as dynamic confirmation of the vision and success of American foreign policy. Soviet expansion in Europe has been halted.

America's determination to preserve and expand freedom is nowhere better illustrated than in Berlin, where we not only have reached an extraordinary level of economic viability but where the accompanying maturity of Germany has enabled us to initiate some of the movement to which I have referred. The agreements we have reached with the existing authorities in East Berlin have made some openings in the wall that divides our city. The pass arrangements which permit West Berliners to visit their relatives in East Berlin five times a year are no small achievement in the continuing process of increasing East West contacts.

Everybody who knows me knows that I pursue this policy without any illusions. Our experience with the harassments shortly before Easter have still to be carefully explored. But the obligation to strive for the alleviation of conditions under which human beings must live must not be affected by this.

Europe and Germany, with the help of America, can now be more confident in their ability to contribute to the shaping of their destiny. This is something for the United States to be proud of, not to be worried about. It is a result of many steps taken in concert before. If now Europeans take some further steps which come unexpectedly for the United States, if the Europeans show signs of independent thinking and embark on their own initiatives, it is not because their aims necessarily conflict with those of the United States. It is because Europeans now are too mature to move about

only in a baby carriage pushed by a nurse. And the nurse of yesterday should appreciate this, should not regard this kind of independence as antagonistic. Much of what Europe and Germany are doing comes naturally in the process of history. This should not be resented.

I am not worried about independence growing in Europe. And I am not worried about the danger of America abandoning Europe. I don't think America can or will abandon Europe just because Europe is now in a position to carry a larger share of burdens originally left with the U. S. Neither do I fear that America's deep involvement elsewhere -- especially in Southeast Asia -- will cause her to give up her interest in the welfare and security of Europe.

A nation called upon for world leadership cannot disengage itself from an area where that leadership first emerged. America will, I am sure, always be ready for partnership with Europe. And I hope responsible European leaders also will strive for constructive Atlantic partnership. A reorganization of NATO may be necessary, but not in order to dissolve it. The peace that both America and Europe seek to construct is, in the final analysis, indivisible.

There are some Americans, I am sure, who do not see developments in Europe in this light. To them I can only say, don't be pessimistic, have no fear. The historical process I have in mind is not inimical to the interests of the United States. From time to time there may be differences on tactics, on timing, on strategy. But we must not let that affect the basic community of interest that holds us together. Trust us as we trust you.

We are headed in the same direction. And if, as I hope in the future, Germany shows more initiative than it has in the past in the area of foreign policy, please remember this: We will try to act with care, with the discretion that comes with maturity, and with a deep sense of responsibility toward our allies, toward our neighbors and toward the world.

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