

## The Soviet Union and Early West European Integration, 1947-1957: From the Brussels Treaty to the ECSC and the EEC

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The Soviet reaction to the first steps of West European integration after World War II was as influenced by mistrust and Cold-War thinking as by ideological preconceptions. It may be perceived as ironic that the rapprochement of the small Western states, which was caused, at least in part, by their fears of communist takeovers and Soviet expansionism, aroused the Kremlin's suspicions of these countries "ganging up" on it. The inclusion of West Germany into their joint organizations after the outbreak of the war in Korea enraged the Soviet leadership even more.

With few means at their disposal, the main tools of the Soviet struggle became denunciations of the Western integration process, threats, attempts at stirring up discord between its members, as well as propagandistic offers of all-European collaborations. After the 1948 Brussels Treaty on mutual assistance was denounced by the Kremlin as "aggressive", French Foreign minister Robert Schuman's plan for a European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and René Pleven's proposal for a European Defence Community (EDC), both including West Germany, became the focal points of Soviet propaganda. This struggle against West European integration, which was accompanied by appeals by the Soviet-inspired peace movement, lasted from the signing of the Brussels Treaty to the Rome Treaty of 1957, reaching its peak during the four powers' Paris conference of 1951 and the "battles of notes" of 1950 (regarding France) and 1952 (regarding Germany).

While the events in this early phase of European integration are well researched<sup>1</sup> and Soviet reactions have been, at least in part, documented with Russian records,<sup>2</sup> recently declassified papers of the Soviet Foreign minister Viacheslav Molotov and of the ministry allow us new insights into Soviet opinions about early

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1. The literature on this topic is vast. On the ECSC, see, for example, K. SCHWABE (ed.), *The Beginnings of the Schuman Plan*, Nomos, Baden-Baden, 1988; G. TRAUSSCH (ed.), *Die Europäische Integration vom Schuman-Plan bis zu den Verträgen von Rom*, Nomos, Baden-Baden, 1993; A. WILKENS (ed.), *Le plan Schuman dans l'histoire*, Bruylant, Brussels, 2004. On the EDC, cf. E. FURSDON, *The European Defence Community*, St. Martin's, New York, 1980; H.E. VOLKMANN, W. SCHWENGLER (eds.), *Die Europäische Verteidigungsgemeinschaft*, Boldt, Boppard, 1985; K. RUANE, *The Rise and Fall of the European Defence Community*, Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2000; H. TIMMERMANN (ed.), *Deutschlandvertrag und Pariser Verträge*, Lit Verlag, Münster, 2003.
  2. The most comprehensive analysis of Soviet documents to date can be found in: A.S. NAMAZOVA, B. EMMERSON (eds.), *Istoriia Evropeiskoi integratsii 1945-1994*, IVI, Moscow, 1995. See also V. ZUBOK, *The Soviet Union and European Integration from Stalin to Gorbachev*, in: *JEIH*, 1(1996), pp.85-98; A. GRACHEV, *The Soviet Leadership's View of Western European Integration in the 1950s and 1960s*, in: A. DEIGHTON, A. MILWARD (eds.), *Widening, Deepening, Acceleration: The European Economic Community 1957-1963*, Nomos, Baden-Baden 1999, pp.31-40; A. FILITOV, *Sovetskoe rukovodstvo i Evropeiskaia integratsia 40e do nachalo 50kh godov*, in: A.A.

European integration, the Soviet goals, and the background of the Soviet reaction. They are the highest-ranking internal Soviet documents on the topic accessible to date.<sup>3</sup>

### Ideological Principles and Strategic Conditions

Soviet ideology, by defining long-term goals and interpreting the world beyond its borders, offered a set of rules for Soviet foreign policy that was flexibly applicable. Due to the principle that any gain for the USSR was a gain for socialism, Marxism-Leninism was always interpreted with respect to Soviet power interests.<sup>4</sup> In its struggle against European integration, the Kremlin, following the postulate of the unity of theory and praxis, resorted to the words of Lenin, who, in his reaction to the outbreak of World War I, had stated in 1915 that due to great-power egoism, the “United States of Europe” that he had called for a year earlier were either “impossible” or, as a temporary defence alliance of capitalist monopolies, would soon turn out to be “reactionary”.<sup>5</sup> His treatise *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* also predicted that at this stage, which would be close to capitalism’s final crisis and demise, the forces of production would overcome the limits of the national economies, developing a global market, and thus, generate a temporary common interest of the national monopolies to create “international capitalist associations”.<sup>6</sup> These predictions by the “greatest genius of mankind” enabled Soviet Cold-War propaganda to denounce West European integration as a paradigm thereof: as imperialistic, reactionary,

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FURSENKO (ed.), *Istoricheskaia nauka na rubezhe vekov*, Nauka Moscow, 2001, pp.121-141; M. NARINSKI, *La construction européenne vue par l'URSS de 1948 à 1953*, in: S. DOCKRILL, R. FRANK, G.-H. SOUTOU, A. VARSORI (eds.), *L'Europe de l'Est et de l'Ouest dans la Guerre froide 1948-1953*, PUPS, Paris, 2002, pp.61-72; V. ZASLAVSKY, *L'atteggiamento sovietico verso l'integrazione europea*, in: P. CRAVERI, G. QUAGLIARIELLO (eds.), *Atlantismo ed Europeismo*, Rubettino, Soveria, 2003, pp.51-70; M.-P. REY, *Le retour à l'Europe? Les décideurs soviétiques face à l'intégration ouest-européenne, 1957-1991*, in: *JEIH*, 1(2005), pp.7-27; G.-H. SOUTOU, E. ROBIN HIVERT (eds.), *L'URSS et l'Europe de 1941 à 1957*, PUPS, Paris, 2008. Of these works, Zubok, Zaslavsky, and Rey offer overviews of the entire period from Stalin to Gorbachev, and therefore, naturally, they do not provide an in-depth analysis of the events covered here. Among the Western-language articles regarding our period, Grachev and Narinskii had access to a few Molotov documents that are relevant to our topic, but dedicate only small sections of their articles to them.

3. Stalin's and Khrushchev's files on the topic are not yet declassified.

4. N. GOULD-DAVIS, *Rethinking the Role of Ideology in International Politics during the Cold War*, in: *JCWS*, 1(1999), pp.90-109; M. KRAMER, *Ideology and the Cold War*, in: M. COX (ed.), *Twentieth Century International Relations 2: The Rise and Fall of the Cold War*, Sage, London, 2008, pp.26-68.

5. V. LENIN, *On the Slogan for a United States of Europe*, in: *Collected Works 21*, Progress, Moscow, 1974, pp.339-343. Cf. B. DUTOIT, *L'Union Soviétique face à l'intégration européenne*, Centre de recherches européennes, Lausanne, 1964, pp.23-38.

6. V. LENIN, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, in: *Collected Works 21*, Progress, Moscow 1963, pp.677-766.

doomed to failure, and a harbinger of the final crisis of capitalism. The post-war CPSU program of 1961 underlined this viewpoint.<sup>7</sup>

Despite this dogmatic language, there are good reasons to believe that the Kremlin also considered West European integration an undesirable process for power-political reasons. On the one hand, in Soviet eyes the entire “European” idea in the aftermath of World War II appeared discredited due to its abuse by Nazi aggression and in Nazi propaganda, and a full-fledged participation of Germany in the European process was seen as a sacrilege. On the other hand, even the slightest hint of a coalition under anything other than Soviet auspices was perceived as a threat to the Soviet vision of post-war Europe. While Winston Churchill, in his Zurich speech in 1946, had called for the creation of the “United States of Europe” and expressed his confidence that “the British Commonwealth of Nations, mighty America and, I trust, Soviet Russia – for then indeed all would be well – must be the friends of the new Europe”,<sup>8</sup> Josef Stalin felt differently.

Soviet wartime planning for Europe’s post-war order reveals that Moscow was interested in re-establishing rather weak states in order to be the single dominating power on the continent, rather than in seeing European contenders, let alone a strong European bloc, emerge.<sup>9</sup> In their debate on post-war Europe, Soviet planners expressed the opinion that “multinational Europe cannot be united”.<sup>10</sup> Although Britain was, in these Soviet schemes, generously granted a “sphere of influence” consisting of France, Belgium, and the Netherlands, it seems to have been well understood among Soviet leaders that, after the war, the exhausted United Kingdom was economically too weak to exert much influence beyond the borders of its own Commonwealth. Stalin expected the United States to withdraw from the continent within two years after VE-day.

In contrast to these Soviet expectations, the Marshall Plan not only reflected a mid-term commitment of the United States, it also appealed to both West and East European countries, hereby challenging Stalin’s dreams of creating a cordon of obedient states in his neighbourhood. Furthermore, it encouraged all participating states to create and subordinate themselves to common coordinating institutions. It is, therefore, not surprising that the USSR, after some days of wavering, rejected the US proposal and embarked on a fierce propaganda crusade against the European Recov-

7. B. MEISSNER (ed.), *Das Parteiprogramm der KPdSU 1903 bis 1961*, Wissenschaft und Politik, Cologne, 1962, pp.148, 160 and 164.

8. W.S. CHURCHILL, *The Sinews of Peace: Post-war Speeches*, Cassell, London, 1948, pp.198-202.

9. V. MASTNY, *The Cold War and Soviet Insecurity. The Stalin Years*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1996, p.20; A. FILITOV, *Evropa v sovetskikh planakh poslevoennogo ustroistva*, in: A.S. NAMAZOVA, B. EMMERSON (eds.), op.cit., pp.17-29. Cf. Memo Maiskii, 11.01.1944; Litvinov, 11.01.1945, in: J. LAUFER, G. KYNIN (eds.), *Die UdSSR und die deutsche Frage. Dokumente aus dem Archiv für Außenpolitik der Russischen Föderation*, vol.1, Duncker & Humblot, Berlin, 2004, pp.244-271 and 521-524; V.O. PECHATNOV, *The Big Three after World War II. New Documents on Soviet Thinking about Post-War Relations with the United States and Great Britain*, Working Paper 13, Cold War International History Project, Washington, 1995, pp.7 f.

10. Quoted in: A. GRACHEV, *The Soviet Leadership’s View ...*, op.cit., p.35.

ery Program (ERP) as well as the related Organization of European Economic Cooperation (OEEC).<sup>11</sup> The East European countries were forced by Stalin to refuse to join the program, and the Soviet Union institutionalized its own bloc by completing a network of bilateral treaties, founding the Cominform bureau, and countering the Marshall Plan with the Molotov Plan, thus creating, little more than a year later, the CMEA. As West European participation in the ERP and later, the OEEC linked the integration process, to some extent, to US aid, the communist regimes in the Eastern bloc under Soviet command set out to prosecute and “purge” any trace of the all-European idea, calling it a “manifestation of bourgeois cosmopolitanism”, as well as to denounce West European integrationists as “lackeys of US colonialism”.

Furious Eastern propaganda accompanied by communist strikes against the Marshall Plan as well as the Sovietisation of East Central Europe increased West European fears of the imminent Soviet threat and, consequently, accelerated integration. Not only did the French integrationist Jean Monnet realize that the “Russian menace” made West European integration all the more indispensable, also Churchill, who had long ruled out any anti-Soviet component in a unified Europe, began to see it as a reaction to Soviet expansionism.<sup>12</sup>

### **From the Brussels Treaty to the Pleven Plan, 1948-1950**

Due in part to its limited range of means, but also, most probably, in order not to stimulate Western integration by too much pressure from without, the USSR resorted mostly to political, diplomatic, and propaganda activities. On 6 March 1948, the Soviet Union issued a warning against the signing of the Brussels Pact, thus opening an almost decade-long struggle against the creation of various West European alliances and common institutions, and in particular West Germany’s participation therein. Disregarding the ambivalence of the alliance, which had been created first of all as a defence against German aggression, but already also against a possible Soviet threat, Moscow attacked the Brussels Treaty of Britain, France, and the Benelux countries as an “aggressive bloc”, a “weapon of imperialist aggression”, and a “tool for dom-

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11. M.M. NARINSKII, *Plan Marshalla i Sovetskii Soiuz*, in: A.S. NAMAZOVA, B. EMMERSON (eds.), op.cit., pp.30-54, here p.32. The OEEC and the European Payments Union were interpreted by Soviet diplomats as a lifesaver in the case of tensions between the “dollar and the pound zone” and denounced as a “weapon of US monopolies” against Eastern Europe. Arkhiv vneshnei politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii (AVPRF), 0136/42/249/38/5-10, Soviet embassy in Paris to MID, 27.08.1952; K. TÖRNUDD, *Soviet Attitudes Toward Non-Military Regional Cooperation*, Centraltryckeriet Helsingfors 1961, pp.129 ff.
12. A. CHUBAR’IAN, *Rossiiskii evropeizm*, Olma Press, Moscow, 2006, pp.294-298; 306 f.

inating Western Europe".<sup>13</sup> Since the signatories of the treaty could hardly be portrayed as aggressive, Soviet propaganda chose to externalize the responsibility and make the United States and West Germany the main culprits by evoking the spectre of German militarism (which, three years after the war, was certainly not forgotten in France) and combining it with the bogey of "US imperialism". As we know from Soviet documents, the negative internal assessment of the Brussels Treaty by the Soviets had been corroborated by the fact that the treaty referred to threats not only by Germany, but also by "any aggression" in Europe, that the USSR had not been consulted beforehand, and that the conclusion of the treaty had been sped up after the communist takeover in Prague in February 1948.<sup>14</sup>

Diplomatic notes with a warning or even threatening tone, the propagandistic demonization of "aggressive" Western blocs, and tempting offers for all-European cooperation constituted the repertoire of the Soviet crusade to block West European integration efforts. After the Soviet leadership had, on 29 January and 31 March 1949, warned the twelve founding nations of NATO against signing the Washington Agreement,<sup>15</sup> the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was attacked by Soviet propaganda as "preparing for World War III" against the Soviet Union and the "people's democracies", as "legalizing West German rearmament", and as "concealing the colonization of Western Europe" by the US.<sup>16</sup> Similar words were used by Soviet media on the occasion of the birth of the Council of Europe some weeks later; the new club was greeted by *Pravda* as "an auxiliary tool of the aggressive North Atlantic Pact" and its pan-European agenda was discounted as "demagogy".<sup>17</sup> Such assessments were also shared by the Soviet Foreign ministry in its internal reports, and the ministry's West European department judged that the true aim of the Council of Europe was

"camouflaging the imperialist colonization of Western Europe by the United States and the destruction of national sovereignty among independent European states in order to implement their plans of global domination".<sup>18</sup>

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13. V. RAZMEROV, *Brissel'skii pakt i „Plan Plevna“ v Sovetskoj vneshnepoliticheskoj propagande*, in: A.S. NAMAZOVA, B. EMMERSON (eds.), op.cit., pp. 129-140, here pp.131 f.; N.I. EGOROVA, *Voенно-politicheskaia integratsiia stran zapada i reaktivnaia SSSR 1947-1953*, in: N.I. EGOROVA, A. CHUBAR'IAN (eds.), *Kholodnaia voina 1945-1963: Istoricheskaia retrospektiva*, Olma-Press, Moscow, 2003, pp.187-222.
  14. V. ZASLAVSKY, *L'atteggiamento sovietico*, op.cit., p.59.
  15. V. MASTNY, *NATO in the Beholder's Eye: Soviet Perceptions and Policies, 1949-56*, Working Paper 35, Cold War International History Project, Washington, 2002, pp.11 f. Text in: *Keesing's Contemporary Archives* (quoted after the German edition, *Archiv der Gegenwart*, AdG), 1797, 29.01.1949; 1875; 01.04.1949.
  16. M. NARINSKI, *La construction européenne ...*, op.cit., pp.70 f.
  17. G. ZELLENTIN, *Die Kommunisten und die Einigung Europas*, Athenäum, Bonn, 1964, p.49. On the Soviet attitude towards the Council of Europe, cf. N. VASSILIEVA, *L'URSS et la création du Conseil de l'Europe*, in: G.-H. SOUTOU, E. ROBIN HIVERT (eds.), *L'URSS et l'Europe ...*, op.cit., pp.333-340.
  18. Quoted in: N.I. EGOROVA, *Voенно-politicheskaia integratsiia ...*, op.cit., p.199.

These three elements (“US control over Western Europe”, “remilitarization of West Germany”, “preparation of a new war”) <sup>19</sup> remained the *leitmotivs* of the Soviet internal and published assessment of the early integration process. In accordance with this interpretation, both the Schuman Plan on a European Coal and Steel Community, launched on 9 May 1950 by the French government, and the Pleven Plan in October of the same year on a Defence Community were perceived by the Soviet Foreign ministry (MID) as ploys “inspired by the United States after the failure of the Council of Europe” to legalize, “under the cloak of ‘European integration’, the creation of a US-controlled military force and arsenal in Europe”. <sup>20</sup> Both plans’ pan-European rhetoric was dismissed by Soviet analysts as misleading, and the plans themselves were reinterpreted as tools for subduing Western Europe through US influence and for reviving the German military threat under American command.

While Molotov saw such schemes as an outcome of Western discord rather than unity, <sup>21</sup> the French role in the process was perceived by Soviet observers as simply executing US commands. Immediately after the Western powers’ London conference of May 1950, during which the ECSC had been discussed, an internal MID report stated that the French Foreign minister had presented his plan on the “creation of a West European armoury for the aggressive Western bloc [...] on orders from the American government”. <sup>22</sup> In a letter to Stalin, former prosecutor general and then Foreign minister Andrei Vyshinskii described Schuman’s role as being that of a “henchman” of the United States. <sup>23</sup> There cannot be any doubt that the US was among the strongest advocates of the integration process as well as of a West German “contribution” to European defence. When the Indochinese and the Korean wars tied down West European and US armed forces in Asia, this contribution appeared even more needed. However, the Soviet assessment of the French role in the Schuman and Pleven Plans as well as in the Brussels Pact fully disregarded one side of the “double containment”, which was aimed against West Germany. While the Brussels Treaty had been signed to contain both Germany and the USSR by excluding them, the Schuman and Pleven Plans proposed integrating West Germany in order to prevent the uncontrolled reconstruction of German industrial might, and to be better able to influence German activities by “Europeanizing” the country’s basis. <sup>24</sup> The failure and subsequent dismantling of allied control over Germany, as well as the cold and hot wars of the time (in many of which the Soviet Union was anything other than innocent) let

19. N.E. BYSTROVA, *SSSR i formirovanie voenno-blokovogo protivostoiianiia v Evrope 1945-1955*, IRI, Moscow, 2005, p.309; Vyshinskii in the 6<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly, 08.11.1951, in: Ministerstvo inostrannykh del Rossiiskoi Federatsii (ed.), *Vystupleniia glav delegatsii SSSR/Rossiiskoi Federatsii na sessiakh General'noi assamblei Organizatsii ob'edinennykh natsii. Sbornik dokumentov*, Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia, Moscow, 2006, pp.82-96, here p.89.

20. Quoted in: N.I. EGOROVA, *Voенно-politicheskaia integratsiia ...*, op.cit., p.199.

21. N.I. YEGOROVA, *Soviet Perceptions of the Formation of NATO, 1948-1953*, in: *MIZH* 2, 1999, [http://history.machaon.ru/all/number\\_02/analiti4/2/index.html](http://history.machaon.ru/all/number_02/analiti4/2/index.html), p. 12.

22. Quoted in: A. FILITOV, *Sovetskoe rukovodstvo ...*, op.cit., p.131.

23. Quoted in: A. CHUBAR'IAN, *Rossiiskii evropeizm*, op.cit., p.311.

24. M. GEHLER, *Europa. Ideen, Institutionen, Vereinigung*, Olzog, Munich, 2005, p.136 and 152-154. For Germany, this process offered the opportunity to reduce allied tutelage.

this step appear to French leaders as the least of all evils. Yet, these deliberations, making the Schuman and Pleven Plans logical from the French point of view, seem to have been overseen in the Soviet assessment, which considered these plans to represent a “US dictate” favouring West German rearmament and “threatening the vital interests of the French people”. It might be a significant detail for the subordinate role ascribed by Soviet leaders to French politicians, that Viacheslav Molotov, who after his dismissal as Foreign minister remained in charge of foreign policy in the Politburo, receiving daily briefings on the French proposals and debates in the *Assemblée Nationale*,<sup>25</sup> and being consulted by Vyshinskii on the issue,<sup>26</sup> in February 1951 apparently did not even know what the term “Pleven Plan” referred to.<sup>27</sup>

The close connection between the Schuman Plan, Churchill’s proposal for creating a “European Army”, made on 11 August in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and West German rearmament was openly admitted by French leaders. Schuman, in his declaration on board the “Île de France” in September, and Pleven, in his speech in the Assembly on 24 October, underlined that joint control over coal and steel was necessary for moving forward with mutual defence and, thus, with West German rearmament. Such open admissions, which were duly reported to the Soviet leadership,<sup>28</sup> tilted the already one-sided Soviet understanding of the Schuman Plan still further.<sup>29</sup> In his report, dated March 1951 and forwarded by deputy Foreign minister Valerian Zorin to Molotov and, then, to Stalin, the ministry’s economist A.A. Arutiunian characterized the planned ECSC in ideological terms as a “hyper-monopolistic association”, created by US monopolies in order to

“revive the military industry of West Germany, to exploit the economies of the participating countries for carrying out their aggressive plans for a third World War, and to create an economic basis for the aggressive North Atlantic Bloc in Western Europe under American hegemony”.<sup>30</sup>

By creating the ECSC, the United States, according to Arutiunian, aimed at taking over the control of West Germany’s industry and, at the same time, at making West Germany’s integration into NATO (sic) more easily digestible for France. In his conclusion, the economist stressed the economic and political contradictions between the

25. TASS, 26.06.-31.10.1950, Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv sotsial’no-politicheskoi istorii (RGASPI), 82/2/1347/124-130 and 82/2/1333/1-3.

26. Gromyko and Vyshinskii sent their drafts first to Molotov and, then, with Molotov’s remarks, to Stalin. RGASPI, 82/2/1333/63-97, Gromyko to Molotov [with corrections by Molotov], 12.12.1950; Gromyko to Stalin, 13.12.1950.

27. RGASPI, 82/2/1348/7, TASS on the Pleven Plan, [02.1951] with handwritten remark by Molotov: “What plan?”.

28. RGASPI, 82/2/1348/13-21, Zorin to Molotov, 01.04.1951, with report on the Schuman Plan, 28.03.1951; RGASPI, 82/2/1333/1, TASS on Pleven’s declaration, 26.10.1950.

29. K.P. ZUEVA, „Plan Shumana“ i Sovetskii Soiuz, in: A.S. NAMAZOVA, B. EMMERSON (eds.), op.cit., pp.55-67, 57 f. On the Soviet information regarding the EDC, see RGASPI 82/2/1348/3-6.

30. RGASPI, 82/2/1348/13-21, Zorin to Molotov, 01.04.1951, with report on the Schuman Plan, 28.03.1951. Cf. AVPRF, 0136/41/242/33/2-14, Zarubin to Zorin, 13.04.1951; K. TÖRNUDD, *Soviet Attitudes ...*, op.cit., pp.131-140.

ECSC member states – another *leitmotiv* of the Soviet assessment of European integration – and hinted at a possible Soviet strategy to deal with the challenge:

“Current antagonism between the ECSC participants, the opposition of England, and the protest movements in the West European countries against this anti-popular pact are likely to cause great difficulties for the final signing of the ECSC Treaty and for its ratification in the member states’ parliaments”.

Before forwarding the report to Stalin, Zorin added the remark that the Schuman Plan was a “gross violation of the Potsdam Agreement”.<sup>31</sup> Additional internal memoranda linked the ECSC historically with other “imperialistic attempts at unifying Europe”, including, among others, that by Adolf Hitler.<sup>32</sup>

In general, the Molotov papers enable us to better reconstruct how this leading politician assessed West European integration. It is clear that there was no fundamental difference between communist propaganda against the ECSC and the internal Soviet appraisal of the organization. Furthermore, the documents reveal that Molotov, even in the years between his terms as a Foreign minister, played a much larger role in the Soviet decision-making process than previously thought. According to the documents that have been analyzed, it seems that he was an intermediary between, on the one hand, Foreign minister Vyshinskii and his deputy Andrei Gromyko, and Stalin on the other. Given that Stalin received information only from a handful of people, there is little reason to presume that the Soviet leader’s assessment of early West European integration, although his personal papers on the topic have not yet been declassified, was much different from that of Molotov.

### The Soviet Struggle against ECSC and EDC, 1950-1952

It did not take long for the Soviet counteroffensive to start. At their Prague conference from 20 to 21 October 1950, the communist bloc’s Foreign ministers denounced NATO’s recent decision to allow the creation of West German police forces and an increase in the country’s steel production<sup>33</sup> as the “recreation of the West German military potential, which served as the main basis of German imperialism and Hitlerite aggression”.<sup>34</sup> As a solution, the ministers proposed that a program for the demilitarization and pacification of Germany be adopted by the big four. In addition to this, the proposals contained the lifting of restrictions on “peaceful industry” in Germany, the signing of a peace treaty, and the creation of an all-German council consisting of

31. RGASPI, 82/2/1334/3-12, Zorin to Stalin, 05.04.1951.

32. RGASPI, 82/2/1348/22-49, Zorin to Molotov, 11.04.1951. Cf. *Pravda*, 10.05.1950; V.B. KNI-AZHESKII, *Proval planov “ob”edineniia Evropy*”, Gospolitizdat, Moscow, 1958.

33. AdG, 2587, 19.09.1950.

34. AdG, 2636, 21.10.1950. On the Prague Declaration and Soviet policy towards Germany, see G. WETTIG, *Bereitschaft zu Einheit in Freiheit? Die sowjetische Deutschlandpolitik 1945-1955*, OIZog, Munich, 1999, pp.194-200.



representatives from both the FRG and GDR, which should have allegedly led to the country's reunification. It is quite obvious that this declaration can be considered the public point of departure for the famous Stalin offer of 1952 for the reunification and neutralization of Germany. Without explicitly naming the Schuman Plan or the European Army project, the Prague Declaration criticized the "attempt of West German and French capitalist monopolies to create, on US orders, a hyper-monopolistic association of the coal and steel industries" that aimed at orienting West German production towards a new war and at Germany's participation in an envisioned European Army.

The last point in particular seems to have alarmed Stalin who, in a letter to Kim Il Sung on 7 October, expressed his opinion that "only Germany" was able to take a substantial role in such a future European Army, "for the other European capitalist states do not possess serious military might".<sup>35</sup> In accordance with this assessment of Germany as being the cornerstone of a future European Army as well as of the US military presence in Europe, it was consistent that the Kremlin directed its first initiatives against the rebuilding of West Germany's industry and army: Firstly, due to fresh memories in most European states of German aggression, it seemed an easy task to revive the fear of "German militarism" and to mobilize not only Polish and Czech, but also French, Belgian, and Dutch public opinion against such a rebuilding. Secondly, as a consequence of the partition and unclear status of their state, the German public itself seemed susceptible to promises of a peace treaty and reunification – promises that might render them ready to press the Bonn government to give up plans of their integration with the West.

Since the Prague Appeal had not produced any results until then, the Soviet government, on 3 November, proposed an extraordinary session of the four powers' council of Foreign ministers.<sup>36</sup> The conference of deputy ministers that convened for the session's preparation, took place from 5 March to 21 June 1951 in the Palais Marbre Rose in Paris, but did not, however, bring any new results, despite ferocious Soviet accusations against the Western powers and fervent statements regarding the Soviet commitment to German reunification. The actual Soviet goal of disrupting rearmament and the integration processes was not achieved.

In the meantime, the Kremlin had, in its notes of 15 December 1950 and 20 January 1951 to the French and the British governments, opened a second front in its struggle against the Schuman and Pleven Plans, accusing these governments of encouraging new German aggression, thus reminding the two members of their anti-Hitler coalition in the recent war.<sup>37</sup> By proclaiming that the Soviet Union would regard the continuation of these plans a violation of the alliance treaties of 1942 and 1944 with

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35. Stalin to Kim, 07.10.1950, in: *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, 6(1995), pp.116 f.

36. RGASPI, 82/2/1333/5-8, Gromyko to Stalin, 03.11.1950; RGASPI, 17/3/1085, Politburo 78 P. 428, 03.11.1950; AdG, 2656, 03.11.1950; FRUS, 1950, vol.1, Government Printing Washington, 1980, pp.902 f. Cf. W. LOTH, *The Origins of Stalin's Note of 10 March 1952*, in: *Cold War History*, 2(2004), pp.66-88, here p.67.

37. AdG, 2718, 15.12.1950; 2781, 20.01.1951. Cf. RGASPI, 17/3/1086, Politburo 79 P 287, 15.12.1950.

Britain and France (which, due to the Cold War, had, in any case, become obsolete), the notes also evoked the days when the Western powers and the USSR had had to cooperate together to defend themselves against the German war machine. Although the notes' terminology equated a future European Defence Community with Hitler's Anti-Comintern Pact, lambasted the "remobilization of former Hitlerite generals", and condemned the planned ECSC for contributing to West Germany's "remilitarization", Stalin, in an interview with *Pravda* on 17 February 1951 stressed the Soviet commitment to peace, thus insinuating that West European integration and defence initiatives were superfluous.<sup>38</sup> This thesis was echoed by the communist World Peace Council, in its declaration of 26 February, which proposed the conclusion of a Peace Pact between the four powers plus China and, thereby, the return to the merry old days of 1945.

About three weeks after the initiating of the ECSC Treaty on 18 April 1951, a survey taken by the Soviet Foreign ministry among its ambassadors produced an undecided picture: While the representatives to London and the Hague advocated sending protest notes to the US (sic), British (sic), and French governments, the ambassador to the GDR, Georgii Pushkin, spoke out in favour of sending such a protest note from Moscow to Paris and from East Berlin to Bonn. The Soviet embassies in Rome and Brussels recommended not taking any steps at all – an opinion that was, with reference to the fact that the treaty hadn't been ratified yet, shared by the Foreign ministry. In his summary for Molotov, deputy minister Zorin recognized that,

"taking into account the growing West German popular movement against rearmament, it appears advantageous to recommend the government of the GDR to publish a declaration on the initiating of the ECSC draft treaty by the Bonn cabinet, thereby unmasking the true meaning of this plan and, in this respect, the policies of the Bonn cabinet".<sup>39</sup>

Molotov, however, referring to the connection between the ECSC and West German rearmament, advocated (as did Pushkin) publishing one declaration by the Soviet government and one by East Berlin.

Whereas a TASS report on 9 April about the GDR declaration castigated West German participation in the ECSC as "a betrayal of the vital interests of the German people" and "the most grave of all acts by the Adenauer government on its path towards disrupting and remilitarizing Germany and turning it into a new theatre of war",<sup>40</sup> the Soviet side did not react officially until that summer, when a Russian translation of the ECSC treaty was reportedly sent in about one hundred copies to the Soviet leadership from Stalin downward.<sup>41</sup> In August, the Foreign ministry sketched out a plan of action that focused on the EDC instead: it foresaw a Soviet protest to be handed over to the French government, two weeks later, the handing over to the

38. V. MASTNY, G. SCHMIDT, *Konfrontationsmuster des Kalten Krieges*, Oldenbourg, Munich, 2003, p. 410.

39. RGASPI, 82/2/1348/13, Zorin to Molotov, 01.04.1951. Cf. M. NARINSKI, *La construction européenne ...*, op.cit., pp.70 f.

40. AdG, 2893, 09.04.1951.

41. AVPRF, 0136/41/242/33/16-21, Sergeev to Bogomolov, 25.06.1951.

three Western powers of a note protesting against West German rearmament, then an appeal by the GDR to all four powers regarding a German peace treaty and, finally, a positive Soviet answer to the East German request.<sup>42</sup> On this occasion, the Soviet side should, with regard to the special GDR solicitation,<sup>43</sup> publish the Soviet draft of the principles for a peace treaty with Germany that had already been prepared by the MID in 1947 and had been foreseen to be presented at the planned four-power conference of 1951.<sup>44</sup> This roadmap, linking Soviet dealings with France to the preparation of what became the “Stalin Notes” on Germany, was slightly modified in the following days. On 26 August, Foreign minister Vyshinskii sent a revised draft to Molotov, suggesting an appeal by the GDR Volkskammer to the Bundestag, followed by, in the case of a negative West German response, a GDR plea to the USSR requesting a four-power conference on Germany and a Soviet protest against the Schuman and Pleven Plans.<sup>45</sup>

While this plan of action regarding Germany has been known for quite some time, its link to the later action towards France has not been comprehensively analyzed. Some days later, the programme was split into a “German” and a “French” part, and the draft note to the French government was revised by order of the Politburo.<sup>46</sup> When the “French” part was sent to Stalin on 3 September, all references to the German peace treaty had been removed. The Soviet note against the Schuman and Pleven Plans was scheduled to be handed over before the Washington meeting of the Western powers, to “unmask the activities of the French government to reconstruct the West German army and military industry under US dictate”, to “support the Peace Movement in France and West Germany, and to create trouble for the French government”.<sup>47</sup>

When Vyshinskii, on 11 September, handed over the note to the French *chargé d'affaires*, he referred to the Soviet memoranda of 15 December 1950 and 20 January 1951 and warned the French government against pursuing the Schuman and Pleven Plans as they would violate the Soviet-French treaty of 1944. In addition to references to the “remobilization of Hitler’s generals” and the “rule of US and West German monopolies” that could be expected if the ECSC and EDC were implemented, the note alluded to the common experiences of the people of France and the USSR, who had paid dearly for allegedly misguided pro-German French and US policies before

42. K.P. ZUEVA, „Plan Shumana“ ..., op.cit., pp.58 f; N.E. BYSTROVA, *SSSR i formirovanie...*, op.cit., p. 313f.

43. W. LOTH, *Die Entstehung der Stalinnote*, in: J. ZARUSKY (ed.), *Die Stalinnote vom 10. März 1952. Neue Quellen und Analysen*, Oldenbourg, Munich, 2002, pp.19-115, here p.27.

44. J. LAUFER, *Der Friedensvertrag mit Deutschland als Problem der sowjetischen Außenpolitik*, in: *VfZ*, 1(2004), pp.99-118, here pp. 113 f. The draft treaty in: J. LAUFER, G. KYNIN (eds.), *Die UdSSR* ..., op.cit., vol.3, pp.219-225.

45. G. WETTIG, *Die Note vom 10. März 1952*, in: J. ZARUSKY (ed.), *Die Stalinnote* ..., pp.139-200, here pp.177 f. Text in: W. LOTH, *Die Entstehung* ..., op.cit., pp.74 f.

46. RGASPI, 17/3/1090, Politburo 83 P 258, 27.08. 1951.

47. K.P. ZUEVA, „Plan Shumana“ ..., op.cit., p.67.

the war, then suffered under Hitler, and were now again being threatened with militarism.<sup>48</sup>

The last defamatory statements, in particular, were paid back by the French government in kind. After stressing the peaceful and defensive character of West European integration, the Paris reply, handed over two weeks later, emphasized that it was the Soviet government that had not only rebuilt, in its zone, the “only German army currently in existence”, but also made German aggression in World War II possible by concluding the Hitler-Stalin Pact.<sup>49</sup> A furious Soviet refutation followed on 19 October, in which it was alleged that France had, by waging a mere *drôle de guerre*, in fact supported Hitler.<sup>50</sup> The peak of this propaganda war was marked by Iurii Zhukov’s *Pravda* commentary on 22 September in which he stated: “The Schuman Plan means war! The Schuman Plan means unemployment, need, and hunger”! Since there was detailed Soviet intelligence regarding internal French and French-West German contradictions regarding rearmament,<sup>51</sup> Paris, as a pivotal partner in Western integration and whose interest in containing Germany by integrating it into West European structures was, now in 1952, assessed more realistically by Soviet observers than had been done in 1950,<sup>52</sup> remained the primary addressee of Moscow’s attempts to overthrow the Schuman and Pleven Plans.

In the meantime, with the East German appeal of 15 September 1951 to the Bundestag,<sup>53</sup> the “German” part of the Soviet roadmap against the creation of a European Army and rearmament of West Germany started to unfold. This scheme, which had been discussed and approved by the Politburo on 27 August and 8 September,<sup>54</sup> was sped up due to the preparation of the so-called General Treaty on the transfer of certain sovereign rights to the Bonn government between the three Western powers and West Germany. This quickly led to the famous Stalin Note on the neutralization and reunification of Germany of 10 March 1952. In order to let this, most probably purely propagandistic<sup>55</sup> offer appear even more appealing, the Soviet government had, at

48. RGASPI, 17/3/1090, Politburo 83 P 462, 10.09.1951; 82/2/1348/60-61, To the Politburo, 07.09.1951. The note in: AdG, 3110, 11.09.1951.

49. The note in: AdG, 3132, 26.09.1951.

50. RGASPI 17/3/1091, Politburo 84 P 86, 18.10.1951. The note in: AdG, 3162, 19.10.1951.

51. Zorin to Stalin, 01.09.1951; 25.02.1952, in: P. RUGGENTHALER (ed.), *Stalins großer Bluff: Die Geschichte der Stalinnote in sowjetischen Dokumenten*, Oldenbourg, Munich, 2007, pp.89 and 103.

52. RGASPI, 82/2/1071/83-90, Vyshinskii to Molotov, 21.04.1952.

53. G. WETTIG, *Die Note ...*, op.cit., p.179.

54. W. LOTH, *Die Entstehung ...*, op.cit., pp.29 and 33.

55. "Today, taking into account that US, Britain and France try to force the so-called General Treaty upon Germany and integrate it into the war plans of the Atlantic bloc [...], the necessity grows to oppose these aggressive plans with a positive program". RGASPI 17/3/1093, Politburo 86 P 47, 08.03.1952. While it was a serious attempt at frustrating West Germany’s rearmament and integration, the Stalin Note is regarded as propagandistic, since, to most experts it seems unlikely that a convinced Marxist-Leninist like Stalin would have abandoned Socialism in the GDR. On the controversy regarding the interpretation of the Stalin Note, see J. ZARUSKY (ed.), *Die Stalinnote ...*, op.cit.

the last moment, withdrawn a provision forbidding participation by the German coal and steel industry “in any global or European Community”.<sup>56</sup>

While the Stalin Note, which aimed at frustrating West German rearmament, was followed by a brisk international exchange of memoranda, these statements led to nothing due to Soviet unwillingness to give up the GDR and Western unwillingness to give up rearmament and integration.<sup>57</sup> Hence, preparations for the General and the EDC treaties continued. As a Western note regarding Germany arrived in the Kremlin on 13 May, the Politburo apparently decided to integrate Vyshinskii’s draft protest against the EDC into the Soviet response regarding Germany.<sup>58</sup> The Soviet document, handed over on 24 May, right before the signing of the two treaties, questioned the defensive nature of the “self-proclaimed European Community” (sic), called it a “ploy between the revanchist Adenauer government and NATO” to begin a new war, and warned that the integration, allegedly imposed on Germany by the US, would frustrate German reunification.

After the signing ceremonies of the General and EDC treaties on 26 and 27 May and Vyshinskii’s subsequent call for the unanimous condemnation of the agreements by the East European party chiefs,<sup>59</sup> the “battle of notes” was resumed. While the West German population and France remained at the centre of the Soviet struggle against Western integration, further attempts to frustrate the EDC were directed at Italy, in Soviet statements suggesting that the country should conclude a non-aggression treaty with the USSR and declare neutrality.<sup>60</sup>

These diplomatic offensives were accompanied by a fully orchestrated campaign in the Soviet and European communist press against “the subjugation of Europe under the US dictate”, against the “reviving of the German industrial and war machine” for a “war against the Soviet Union and the peoples’ democracies”, and against unemployment as well as exploitation as consequences of the Schuman and Plevén Plans.<sup>61</sup> This campaign achieved its highest level of intensity in France, where the threatening images of fully armed Nazi generals, portrayed as carefully nurtured by French and US politicians, aimed at stirring up the patriotic feelings of the “*grande nation*”, which was, in Soviet eyes, again about to “lose its independence”. Simultaneously, in the summer of 1951, the French communists, having paid little attention

56. A. FILITOV, *Sovetskoe rukovodstvo ...*, op.cit., pp.135 f.

57. The exchange of notes in: R. STEININGER (ed.), *Eine Chance zur Wiedervereinigung? Die Stalin-Note vom 10. März 1952: Darstellung und Dokumentation auf der Grundlage unveröffentlichter britischer und amerikanischer Akten*, Neue Gesellschaft, Bonn, 1985, pp.162, 190 f and 248 f.

58. RGASPI, 82/2/1070/170-178, Vyshinskii to Stalin, 19.05.1952; Politburo 87 P 340, 20.05.1952, 17/3/1094; P 388, 24.05.1952, 17/163/1521.

59. RGASPI, 82/2/1334/145-160, Vyshinskii to Molotov, 31.05.1952.

60. N.I. EGOROVA, *Voенно-politicheskaia integratsiia ...*, op.cit., p.208; N.E. BYSTROVA, *SSSR i formirovanie ...*, op.cit., p.376.

61. I.A. BORKO, *Эволюция взглядов на европеизацию интеграции в СССР и России*, Conference “40 лет Римским договорам”, St-Petersburg, 1997, [www.edc.spb.ru/activities/conferences/40years/borko.html](http://www.edc.spb.ru/activities/conferences/40years/borko.html), p.1; K.P. ZUEVA, „Plan Shumana“ ..., op.cit., pp.61 f. Cf. V.O. SRAGIN, *Что neset narodam Evropeiskoe oboronitel’noe soobshchestvo*, Gospolitizdat, Moscow, 1954; S. BEGLOV, *Evropeiskoe soobshchestvo – ugroza miru i bezopasnosti narodov*, Gospolitizdat, Moscow, 1954.

to the Schuman Plan until that time, joined the struggle and, amidst appeals of the communist World Peace Congress, organized numerous nationalist, anti-German, anti-American, and anti-EDC demonstrations that reached their high point during the Paris conference.<sup>62</sup>

Despite such efforts, Stalin also took precautions in case the creation of a European Army was successful. In January 1951 East European leaders were called to Moscow and secretly instructed to build, with Soviet support, “as long as there is no NATO Army yet”, a unified armed force of three million soldiers plus a strong arms industry. The USSR would, in the meantime, provide its “allies” with arms, training, and advisors. It was agreed to coordinate further East European efforts.<sup>63</sup>

### The “Thaw,” All-European Overtures, and the Failure of the EDC, 1953-1956

The second half of 1952 brought a drop in the intensity of the Soviet struggle against the ECSC and EDC. While Lavrentii Beriia, in a speech for the 34<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the October Revolution in 1951, had lashed out against the Schuman Plan, the project was not mentioned at the 19<sup>th</sup> CPSU congress in the fall of 1952.<sup>64</sup> In any case, the Soviet threats and protests did not jeopardize West European integration. Rather the Soviet pressure, be it in Eastern Europe, in Germany, or in Korea, strengthened the determination of the West to move forward with the project. It was the post-Stalin “thaw,” the Soviet proclamation of “peaceful coexistence,” and the new flexibility in Soviet foreign policy that created a much more serious challenge.<sup>65</sup>

A feature of late Stalinist foreign policy had also been to hamper Western integration by bringing forward Soviet offers for all-European cooperation and, thus, making the ECSC and EDC appear superfluous or even counterproductive. An international economic conference, held in Moscow from 3 to 12 April 1952, right in the middle of the ECSC ratification process, was explicitly organized to develop East-West trade and, thus, to “support the peace-loving economic circles in the capitalist countries”.<sup>66</sup> The gathering, which was – despite a boycott by Western governments – attended by about 450 individuals from 47 states, appealed to the UN to organize

62. L. RISSO, *Against Rearmament or Against Integration? The PCI and PCF's Opposition to the European Defence Community and the Western European Union, 1950-55*, in: *JEIH*, 2(2007), pp. 11-31 and p.24.

63. N.I. EGOROVA, *Voenno-politicheskaia integratsiia ...*, op.cit., p.202. Cf. G. WETTIG, *Stalins Aufrüstungsbeschluss. Die Moskauer Beratungen mit den Parteichefs und Verteidigungsministern der „Volksdemokratien“ vom 9. bis 12. Januar 1951*, in: *VfZ*, 4(2005), pp.635-650.

64. K.P. ZUEVA, „*Plan Shumana*“ ..., op.cit., p.62.

65. M. GEHLER, *Europa ...*, op.cit., p.137 and p.149. Cf. M.P. REY, *L'Europe occidentale et les décideurs Soviétiques entre 1953 et 1955: Perceptions et pratiques diplomatiques*, in: G.-H. SOUTOU, E. ROBIN HIVERT (eds.), *L'URSS et l'Europe ...*, op.cit., pp.411-425.

66. RGASPI, 17/3/1092, Politburo 85 P 498, 21.02.1952. On 15 January, NATO countries decided not to participate. RGASPI, 82/2/1348/122-126, Soviet embassy Paris to MID, 23.05.1952.

an all-European conference on trade. Furthermore, the conference proposed ruling out supranational control over international trade of primary goods, a move clearly meant to block the implementation of the ECSC.<sup>67</sup> Similarly, the Soviet proposal for an all-European security system, launched at the Berlin conference in early 1954, aimed at frustrating the Western community project, and the Soviet proposals regarding Germany were, as in 1952, designed to undermine West German participation therein.<sup>68</sup> In its note of 31 March 1954, the Soviet government conceded US participation in a European security system and even suggested the USSR's entry into NATO. An invitation to a conference discussing such a security system was published on 24 July, followed by further Soviet offers for economic cooperation.<sup>69</sup>

Special attention was given by the Soviets again to France, where, in late 1953, the EDC, heavily criticized by Charles de Gaulle, was put on the agenda.<sup>70</sup> After Stalin's death, the conclusion of a truce in Korea and with the sinking consciousness of a Soviet threat, the French tendency to consider West German rearmament as risky and the Soviet offers at least worth discussing grew.<sup>71</sup> The Soviet announcement on 3 November 1953 that they would participate in the Berlin conference on Germany<sup>72</sup> was instrumental in temporarily removing the EDC from the agenda of the French National Assembly. A subsequent *Pravda* article on the occasion of the ninth anniversary of the signing of the French-Soviet treaty (which, in 1951, Moscow had repeatedly accused Paris of violating) warned that the United States would attempt to dislodge France from its glorious international role and strip it of its independence.<sup>73</sup> The successful Geneva conference on Indochina and the above-mentioned Soviet memoranda concerning an all-European security conference contributed even further to influencing the French parliamentarians' opinion about the EDC and to deepening the gap between the French Socialist and Radical Parties on this issue.<sup>74</sup>

The Soviet offensive was successful. While on 10 September *Pravda* proclaimed the failure in August 1954 of the EDC in the French Assembly a "victory of the

67. M. LIPKIN, *Evropeiskaia integratsia i Sovetskie ekonomicheskie initsiativy (1950e – pervaya polovina 1970-h)*, in: *Novaia i noveishaia istoria*, 3(2009), pp.47-64, here pp.48-52. However, in late 1952, the Stalinist leadership seems to have lost its interest in the project.

68. N.E. BYSTROVA, *SSSR i formirovanie...*, op.cit., pp.439-443.

69. B. SCHALHORN, *Sowjetische Westeuropapolitik*, in: D. GEYER (ed.), *Osteuropa-Handbuch Sowjetunion Außenpolitik II: 1955-1973*, Böhlau, Cologne, 1976, pp.61-145, here p.64 and p.78.

70. AdG, 4264, 23. 11. 1953. On the French ratification debate, see K. RUANE, *The Rise ...*, op.cit., pp.70-102.

71. P. GUILLEN, *The Role of the Soviet Union as a Factor in the French Debates on the European Defence Community*, in: JEIH, 1(1996), pp.71-83. On the public opinion in France, cf. D. LERNER, R. ARON (eds.), *La Querelle de la CED*, Armand Colin, Paris, 1957.

72. Text in: AdG, 4239, 05.11.1953.

73. AdG, 4288, 10.12.1953.

74. T. ANGERER, *Re-launching East-West Negotiations while Deciding West German Rearmament. France, the Paris Treaties, and the Austrian State Treaty, 1954/55*, in: A. SUPPAN, G. STOURZH, W. MUELLER (eds.), *The Austrian State Treaty 1955. International Strategy, Legal Relevance, National Identity*, ÖAW, Vienna, 2005, pp.265-333, here pp.270 f. L. RISSO, *Against Rearmament ...*, op.cit., p.27. The Soviet proposal did not contain supranational elements, as erroneously stated *ibid.*, p.25.

patriotic forces”, ECSC President Paul-Henri Spaak called it a “triumph of the Soviets”.<sup>75</sup> Historian Wilfried Loth characterized it a “drama”,<sup>76</sup> but Wolfram Kaiser stressed that by the Defence and Political Community concept ending, the way was opened for economic integration.<sup>77</sup> Another consequence was West Germany’s accession into NATO, which was negotiated within a few weeks and ratified until May 1955. Moscow, again, warned against this process and called for the above-mentioned all-European security conference, which finally took place in November 1954, albeit with exclusively communist participation. Following the Western lack of response to this gathering’s appeals, the Eastern states advanced towards the founding of the Warsaw Treaty Organization while continuing their calls for the dismantling of military blocs and the removal of non-European (i.e. US) troops from European soil.<sup>78</sup>

With the shift of Western attention towards economic integration, Moscow, from 1954 on, intensified its campaign for all-European economic cooperation. The UN Economic Commission on Europe, which had been used by the Kremlin for disrupting the integration process, was chosen as an arena for such Soviet proposals. The Soviet delegate, A. Arutiunian, had been ordered in 1951 to use the ECE session for “extensively criticizing the Schuman Plan”.<sup>79</sup> After Stalin’s death, the atmosphere calmed down a bit, but already in 1955, when all the East European states except the GDR participated in the session, the ECE was rediscovered as a platform for denouncing Western economic “closed blocs” and inviting the West to join an all-European cooperation instead. At the same time, the Soviet side, as the directives for its delegation to the ECE illustrate, aimed at preventing the establishment of formal contacts between the commission and Western institutions such as the ECSC, OEEC, and Council of Europe.<sup>80</sup>

75. G. BRUNN, *Die Europäische Einigung von 1945 bis heute*, BPB, Bonn, 2005, p.98.

76. W. LOTH, *Der Weg nach Europa. Geschichte der europäischen Integration 1939-1957*, Vandenhoeck, Göttingen, 1996, p.91.

77. W. KAISER, „*Une bataille est perdue, mais la guerre reste à gagner.*“ *Das Scheitern der Europäischen Verteidigungsgemeinschaft 1954 und der Durchbruch zur horizontalen Wirtschaftsintegration*, in: R. KIRT (ed.), *Die Europäische Union und ihre Krisen*, Nomos, Baden-Baden, 2001, pp. 79-95.

78. V. MASTNY, *The Launching of the Warsaw Pact and Soviet Grand Strategy*, in: A. SUPPAN, G. STOURZH, W. MUELLER (eds.), *The Austrian State Treaty ...*, op.cit., pp.145-162.

79. RGASPI, 17/3/1088, Politburo 81 P 462, 17.05.1951. On the intensification of the Soviet activities in the ECE, see AVPRF, 46/19/126/22/143-151, Report Timofeev on the ECE, 14. 08.1957; K. TÖRNUDD, *Soviet Attitudes ...*, op.cit., pp.198-201.

80. AVPRF, 047/1/68/46/59-65, 047/1/68/46/50-53, Directives, [1955]. The resolution in: AdG, 5107, 04.04.1955. Cf. B. SCHALHORN, *Sowjetische Westeuropapolitik*, op.cit., p.75; K. TÖRNUDD, *Soviet Attitudes ...*, op.cit., p.201. Western observers saw the Soviet offensive in ECE as a reaction to Western integration efforts. C. BINNS, *The Development of the Soviet Policy Response to the EEC*, in: *Co-existence*, 2(1977), pp.238-263, here p.243.



### The *Relance Européene* and the Soviet Struggle against the EEC, 1956-1958

After the Soviet bids had been rejected by the West, Moscow tabled three new proposals in the April 1956 ECE session, including an all-European agreement on economic cooperation, the improvement of East-West contacts, and all-European nuclear cooperation.<sup>81</sup> While the course of action suggested in the Soviet draft copied the terms and conditions of ECSC's Spaak Committee, which had been set up in 1955 for sketching out the principles of a European Economic Community (EEC), the Soviet request for the most-favoured nation status of all European states aimed at watering down the emerging bloc. Since the ECE did not adopt a final resolution in this case, in July the Soviet Union, encouraged by ECE executive secretary Gunnar Myrdal, who was interested in reviving "his" commission, sent out a new draft agreement on all-European economic and nuclear cooperation.<sup>82</sup> Also warning against "small European combinations", the Kremlin picked France as the main addressee for this initiative, although this time it fell on deaf ears.<sup>83</sup>

Although the CMEA, in its June 1956 session in Warsaw, decided neither to recognize a future EEC nor to establish any contacts with it,<sup>84</sup> the Soviet preoccupation with the emerging economic community intensified, and the same year, the Soviet Academy of Science's Institute for World Economy and International Relations (*Institut mirovoi ekonomiki i mezhdunarodnykh otnoshenii*, IMÉMO) was given the task of studying the West European integration process. Semi-academic Soviet publications appeared that attempted to support the thesis of the "increasing tensions between imperialist economies" statistically and that denounced the EEC project as an "association of trusts and monopolies" and a "US dictate", thus appealing equally to the concept of class struggle and feelings of anti-Americanism.<sup>85</sup> As the ECSC before, the EEC was equated by Soviet propaganda with NATO and "aggressive intentions", and EURATOM was misconstrued as an attempt at providing the West German army with nuclear weapons.<sup>86</sup>

In January and April 1957, the IMÉMO published its "Seventeen Theses on the 'Common Market' and EURATOM",<sup>87</sup> which served as the basis for the Soviet

81. B. SCHALHORN, *Sowjetische Westeuropapolitik*, op.cit., pp.78 f; G. ZELLENTIN, *Die Kommunisten ...*, op.cit., p.72. Cf. AVPRF, 46/19/126/21/71-79, Chistiakov to Zakharov, 11.02.1957.

82. K. TÖRNUDD, *Soviet Attitudes ...*, op.cit., pp.163-167.

83. B. BONWETSCH, *Sowjetische Westeuropapolitik*, in: D. GEYER (ed.), *Osteuropa-Handbuch ...*, op.cit., pp.146-228, here p.164.

84. K. SCHMIDT, *Die Europäische Gemeinschaft aus Sicht der DDR*, Kovač, Hamburg, 1991, p.72.

85. D. ALEKSEEV, A. MIKHAILOV, *Evropeiskoe ob"edinenie uglia i stali*, IMO, Moscow, 1960, p. 250. Cf. R. TSVYLEV, *Ob"edinenie ugol'nykh i stal'nykh korolei Zapadnoi Evropy*, Gospolitizdat, Moscow, 1956.

86. Quoted in: E.G. CHERKASOVA, *Rimskii dogovor i Evropeiskaia integratsiia: Sovetskie interpretatsii*, in: A.S. NAMAZOVA, B. EMMERSON (eds.), op.cit., pp.160-169, here 161 f.

87. *O sozdanii "obshchego rynka" i Evratoma*, in: *Kommunist*, 9(1957), pp.88-102. Cf. *MÉMO*, 1(1957), pp.83-96. Cf. H. MAYRZEDT, H. ROMÉ (eds.), *Die westeuropäische Integration aus*

assessment of the EEC for the next five years. Following Lenin's dogma of growing contradictions between capitalist nations, which was accepted by Khrushchev,<sup>88</sup> the "Seventeen Theses" characterized the Rome Treaties as a "temporary" alliance being used to temper the competition between capitalist states that had come under pressure as a consequence of the successes of socialism and the independence movements in the Third World. In view of "massive contradictions" between, on the one hand, "revisionist" West Germany and "protectionist" France, and, on the other, between the EEC, Britain, and the United States, the authors predicted – in addition to sinking wages and unemployment – the failure of the Economic Community. In contrast, they praised the "socialist cooperation of sovereign states" within the CMEA and the Soviet proposals in the ECE for all-European cooperation.

Due to this overestimation of the internal conflicts between the EEC states, as well as due to Italian signals that the ratification of the Rome Treaties might be uncertain,<sup>89</sup> the Soviet Foreign ministry took the initiative on 7 March to try to hamper this process, identifying in an internal evaluation several potential starting points, including French-West German disagreements regarding access to nuclear weapons technology, the economic domination within the EEC, and the treatment of the French colonies. After *Pravda*, on 11 March, had denounced the Common Market as a "ploy of US leading circles for deepening the division of Europe and Germany and for subjecting Western Europe to the rule of West German monopolies and militarists", on 13 March the CPSU Presidium approved a note to all EEC member states condemning the Rome Treaties as a "threat" to all-European cooperation and peace. Special warnings against alleged consequences of the EEC were addressed indirectly to West Germany (against further delays in German reunification), to France (against the nuclear rearmament of Germany), to the small states (against their exploitation by Germany and France), and to workers (against sinking wages and unemployment).<sup>90</sup> The memorandum brought forward Soviet proposals regarding all-European nuclear cooperation, trade, and financial support. Left unanswered by the EEC states, the note was the last serious Soviet effort to disrupt the early West European integration process – although Soviet propaganda against the EEC and the flow of "all-European" proposals for its undermining continued.<sup>91</sup>

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*osteuropäischer Sicht*, Laub, Vienna, 1968, pp.49-68; K. TÖRNUDD, *Soviet Attitudes ...*, op.cit., pp.149 f.

88. N.S. CHRUSCHTSCHOW, *Rechenschaftsbericht des ZK der KPdSU an den XX. Parteitag*, Politizdat, Moscow, 1956, p.20.

89. I. KHORMACH, *SSSR – Italia i blokovoje protivostoianie v Evrope*, IRI, Moscow, 2005, pp.510 f. 90. *Europa Archiv*, 12, 1957, pp.9923-9926.

91. W. MUELLER, *Die UdSSR und die europäische Integration*, in: M. GEHLER (ed.), *From the Common Market to European Union Building*, Böhlau, Vienna, 2008, pp.617-662.

## Conclusions

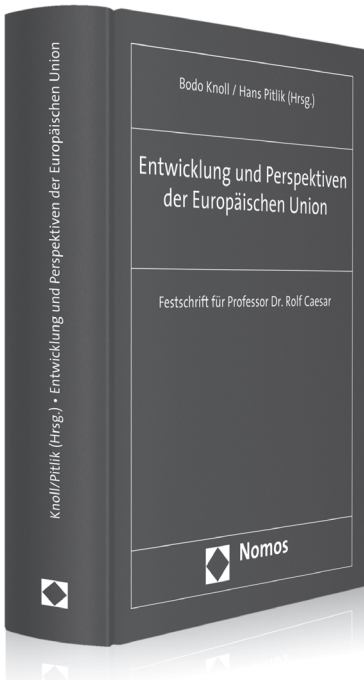
The recently declassified internal Soviet documents allow us to reconstruct the Soviet perception of early West European integration more precisely. The Cold War led the integration process to be negatively judged as a “ganging up” against the communist bloc. In this light, economic integration in the ECSC was seen by Moscow as a measure to build an industrial basis for NATO rather than to avoid war between Germany and France, while the EDC was misconstrued as preparing Western Europe for war against the USSR rather than as defending the West against the communist threat. These assessments did not only constitute the main propaganda theses, designed to be seen by the outer world, in the Soviet struggle against the ECSC and EDC, but can also be found in the Kremlin’s internal reports.

For a theoretical underpinning of their policies, Soviet leaders resorted to the teachings of Marxism-Leninism. While the importance of ideological theses for Soviet propaganda is well known, only internal documents, such as those from the Molotov deposit, can prove that notions of “internal contradictions between capitalist powers” and of an “imperialist colonization of Western Europe by the United States” shaped the political thoughts of even the highest echelons and led them to perceive both the phenomenon, as such, of West European integration and its chances of survival negatively.

Furthermore, the material analyzed above sheds some light on the Kremlin decision-making process, particularly Molotov’s role, which was more important than hitherto known. Secondly, it enables us to reassess the background of and steps taken in Soviet counteraction against West European integration. In particular, the links between, on the one hand, Soviet protests against French participation in the EDC and, on the other hand, the famous Stalin Notes on Germany have become clearer. Further, albeit fragmentary, evidence contributes to a more accurate assessment of the Soviet initiatives for “all-European economic cooperation”, particularly in the ECE, as a part of the Soviet struggle against the creation of the EEC.

The overarching aim of Soviet policy towards West European integration was to hamper the process or obstruct it altogether. To this end, Soviet policy towards the EDC project, the ECSC, and the EEC moved from propagandistic demonization and diplomatic pressure to friendly overtures and invitations for “all-European cooperation”. The 1952 shift from protests to overtures and the post-Stalin “thaw”, which finally led to the successful disruption of the EDC process in 1954, prove that the difference between Stalin’s and his successor’s approaches towards West European integration was less significant than hitherto thought. This allows us to presume that the Soviet leaders used their reservoir of political instruments quite consciously, although their ideologically predisposed belief in the ultimate victory of Communism and the triumph of their country in the struggle for power was never lost.

# Festschrift für Rolf Caesar



## Entwicklung und Perspektiven der Europäischen Union

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Die wirtschaftliche und politische Bedeutung der Europäischen Union hat durch die Währungsunion, durch die Realisierung eines gemeinsamen Binnenmarktes sowie durch die Erweiterung auf 27 Mitgliedsländer stark zugenommen. Wie die vergangene Entwicklung zu beurteilen ist und welche Schlussfolgerungen für den weiteren Integrationsprozess zu ziehen sind, bleibt hingegen in Wissenschaft und Politik umstritten.

Wie erfolgreich ist die Strategie der EZB im Hinblick auf Preisstabilität und Wirtschaftswachstum? Welche Rolle spielen verschiedene institutionelle Akteure im europäischen Integrationsprozess? Bedarf es mehr Wettbewerb der Mitgliedstaaten oder einer stärkeren Koordinierung der Wirtschaftspolitiken? Droht ein Subventionswettlauf oder die Ausbeutung des Steuerzahlers? Hält die Lissabon-Strategie, was sie verspricht?

Experten aus Wissenschaft, Verwaltung und Wirtschaft setzen sich in den Einzelbeiträgen der Festschrift kritisch mit der Geldpolitik der EZB, den Institutionen der EU, den Perspektiven des Integrationsprozesses und Einzelproblemen der Finanz-, Steuer- und Wettbewerbspolitik in der EU auseinander.

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