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Membership of Germany in the United Nations

The purpose of this paper is to argue for admittance of Germany into the United Nations and to suggest a way to bring this about. Presently, the Federal Republic of Germany does not seek UN membership because it is fairly certain that it could not be admitted unless East Germany was also admitted as a separate member. The Federal Republic believes that having two German states in the United Nations would be harmful to the cause of German unification. East Germany has applied for UN membership but this would be opposed by the United States and other Western European countries mainly because they too believe such a step would not be conducive to reunification. The Soviet Union and many other states in Eastern Europe have opposed steps to reunification until there is greater assurance that a united Germany would be a peaceful state. The Communist countries believe unification should only come about after a long process in which the two Germanies have co-operated together in many fields and in the context of reduced tension and armaments in Europe generally and Germany in particular.

The above described stalemate would suggest that it will be many years, if ever, before Germany can become a UN member. But this situation is not conducive to a stable Europe nor world peace because no state as strong as Germany should remain outside the political parts of the international community. Just a few important disputes in Asia can be brought to the UN without the presence of China, few important disputes in Europe can be brought to the UN without the presence of Germany. Furthermore, the participation of Germany in the affairs of the United Nations, and hence the world, would reduce the preoccupation of some groups in Germany with the German problem itself. In other words Germany would tend to become less insulated from the points of view of other nations. Therefore, to postpone German membership in the United Nations will be a drag on efforts to achieve a more stable Europe.

One way to focus on the need for German membership in the United Nations is for the United Nations - the General Assembly, the Security Council or both - to invite Germany to become a member and leave to the two parts of Germany to work out the way in which Germany might be represented. At first, the invitation might not even be taken seriously in either part of Germany. But later some groups in both parts of Germany might consider steps to bring Germany into the United Nations before it had been completely reunited.

A divided Germany in the United Nations would have to have part of its vote divided. Several combinations are possible. One formula would be to give each part of Germany one-half a vote. On some issues each half vote would be cast a different way thereby

cancelling out any German vote. Although this might often be the case German delegates at least would be seated in the General Assembly, listening to and participating in the debates, contributing representatives to special committees established, and paying Germany's proper share of the budget. In other cases it is quite likely that both parts of Germany would agree and a full vote could be cast. This would be the probable case when no differences existed on a given issue between Western and Communist states.

A second formula might be to give the Federal Republic a greater percentage of the vote because it represents a larger part of the population of Germany, but on important issues, in order to achieve the co-operation of East Germany, to require a fifty-fifty split. The voting formula would determine the manner in which the budget payments were shared by the two parts of Germany.

In voting Germany would always have to abide by the Charter requirement of one state one vote. How that vote was cast would be decided by the two Germanies as an internal matter. When they could not agree and if the German vote were divided in half then Germany would not vote or would abstain on the issue in question.

Other formulas may be possible. They should be considered because efforts to have Germany in the United Nations should not languish because there is presently no feasible method to bring about German unification.