

)r Britain

be very different from those of its fellow-members. The face of the new Germany would be turned to the East, not in any aggressive or expansionist spirit, but because this is where German diplomacy will have to be at its most effective if it wishes to use the opportunities for reconciliation and peace that the present political conjuncture offers it. This must be a far more gripping task for the new Germany than the slow gestation in Brussels of legislation on nuts and bolts.

In short, the Eastern bias in German foreign policy will mean that Bonn (or now Berlin?) can hardly share entirely the same political objectives as its European partners. It seems the destiny of a reunited Germany to be the most tireless worker in the construction of Mr Gorbachev's â\200\230 common European houseâ\200\231 â\200\224 a new description of the old Bismarckian policy of the â\200\230 honest brokerâ\200\235â\200\231 between East and West.

For it should not be forgotten that reunification will only be possible by courtesy of the Soviet Union. Mr Gorbachev seems to have

brought about the dissolution of the East

German regime through his firm statement that Soviet troops will not be used to maintain internal order in the GDR. But his only conceivable motive in doing this â\200\224 apart from annoyance at Herr Honecker's intrigues with hard-liners in Moscow â\200\224 must be to reach an agreement with West Germany over a settlement in Central Europe and West German economic and financial support for perestroika. It seems probable,

too, that neutralisation of Germany will be the price of reunification. And neutralisation is a policy which seems to be growing more popular as German public opinion becomes more pacifist. A reunited Germany would be bound to have a â\200\230 specialâ\200\235 relationship with the Soviet Union which would mark it out from all other member-states of the EEC.

Germany would have a distinctive political position within the EECâ\200\224a position which it would share with other member-states who, in the changed circumstances of Europe, had chosen to adopt neutrality â\200\224 Scandinavia and Benelux perhaps â\200\224 as well as with new candidates for membership from Eastern Europe. On the Western periphery of the Community, turned towards the United

States and the Atlantic, would be Britain and France. French foreign policy would be in ruins, though Britain, because of Mrs Thatcher's ties with Mr Gorbachev, might find herself better placed.

Against this background of conflicting interests and aspirations only one sensible conclusion can be reached: that any attempt now to make Europe into a homogeneous whole, on a federal model, would very soon break asunder. Down that path lie strife and turmoil, leading to explosion. Much safer would be a looser confederation - a Europe of nation states, extended to include, as it eventually must, Austria, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. With that kind of Europe Britain can live and live enthusiastically, generously, creatively. Let Mrs Thatcher say so soon in clarion tones. German unity, yes; European federation. no. In espousing such a cause Mrs Thatcher would be putting this country back in step with history: indeed setting the pace.

Peregrine Worsthorne

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SUNDAY COMMENT #

UST AS THE great and the good took
.| steps â\200\224 unrestricted coloured immi-
Â«| gration â\200\224 which led inevitably to Brit-
ainâ\200\231s becoming a multiracial society,
: so today they are trying to take steps
â\200\224 again without consultingâ\200\231 the British
people â\200\224 leading inevitably to Britainâ\200\231s
becoming part of a federal Europe. Only one
person stands in the way of this rush into
federalism â\200\224 the Prime Minister, which is
why there is such a concerted campaign,
orchestrated in the columns of The Indepen-
dent, to get rid of her.

Not that the great and the good admit to
wanting a federalist European superstate, in
which Westminster rule would give way to
Brussels rule, any more than they admitted
to wanting a multiracial society. They claim
that European federalism would be quite dif-
ferent from any other kind of federalism â\200\224
much less centralised, say, than the Ameri-
can federation â\200\224 and that Britain, like all the
member states, would remain as fundamen-
tally independent as ever. That is manifest
duplicity, as Sir Leon Brittan, who ranted so
orotundly along these lines last week in the
Granada lecture, must have known.

The time for prevarication is over. For
something immensely important is now hap-

pening to force the pace of what the federal- -

ists had hoped would be so slow and gradual
an approach to European union that nobody
would notice it until it was too late to turn
back.-That something is the sudden and
unexpected prospect of German reunifica-
tion. So long as Germany was divided there
was no hurry about a Brussels superstate.
The existing Brussels institutions, perhaps
beefed up a bit, were quite strong enough to
contain a divided Germany. But they are not
nearly strong enough to contain a united
Germany: still less a united Germany with

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Eastern Europe as its hinterland. To contain
such an economic and political giant, only a
truly federal Europe, with a strong federal
government, could begin to suffice.

So instead of the federalists being content to work covertly towards a federal Europe slowly but surely, stage by stage, their urgent need now, in the dramatically changed circumstances of the collapse of the Russian empire and the imminent emergence of a greater Germany, is for action this day. Indeed, it is almost a case of now or never. For if Germany were to be united before the Brussels superstate comes into being, it would never come into being, since a Berlin Government, looking eastward, would prevent it. Thus the present rush into federalism.

Why don't the federalists admit as much? Then people would know what the anti-Thatcher campaign over Europe is all about. It is not about ERM or EMS. It is about exploiting German reunification to prod Britain into federal union. The French make no bones about why they want a stronger Brussels. A few years ago they were quite as determined to hang on to French sovereignty as Mrs Thatcher is determined to hang on to British sovereignty. But faced with the threat of being dominated by Berlin they have come to see the relative advantage of being merely bossed about by Brussels. Arguably Britain should reach the same conclusion. Perhaps British independence, too, should be sacrificed in the broader interest of creating federal institutions strong enough to contain a

united Germany.

But what if Britain and France did indeed sacrifice their independence as the federalists want without this having the desired effect? Or to sound an even more sceptical note may not the reality of German reunification prove as deadly to the dream of European federation as the reality of German recovery after Versailles proved deadly to the League of Nations? Does anybody imagine, for example, that the West German Government would pay any attention to the EEC if it tried to put economic spokes in the wheel of German reunification? Of course not. In such circumstances, the Community spirit would count for no more than a scrap of paper. And if this spirit of independence is there before reunification, how much more so would it be there after. Economically, things might not be very different.

(Although, for reasons of trade and to exploit the new markets to the East, Germany would be favourable to an extension of the Community into Eastern Europe with all the consequences that this would have for the Community's nature and orientation.) But politically, German preoccupations would

