

Holifield Wants Clarification Of What A-Role Germans Seek

A congressional leader in atom affairs yesterday raised questions about what kind of nuclear role West Germany wants to play in the Western Alliance.

Rep. Chet Holifield (D-Calif.), chairman of the influential Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy, expressed willingness to give the West Germans a larger consultative role. But he made it evident he strongly opposes nuclear weapons solely in German hands.

Holifield raised the question on the eve of West German Chancellor Erhard's December visit to the United States at a luncheon meeting here of the

Atomic Industrial Forum and the American Nuclear Society.

This was one of several ideas on how atomic weapons can be kept from spreading to would-be members of the nuclear club discussed by Holifield at the luncheon and at a news conference. These included:

- Endorsement as "A step in the right direction" of Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara's proposal to set up a Select Committee of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to plan the Alliance's nuclear strategy.

Holifield said he would also favor a "formula" giving "parity participation" to nuclear decisions that effect the security and destiny of NATO nations.

- Reiteration of his opposition to the Multilateral Force (MLF) and the Atlantic Nuclear Force (ANF), U.S. and British schemes for floating missile-carrying ships with mixed crews.

- The suggestion that the United States "should explore," together with "other nuclear nations" the possibility whereby all nations that forego development of an independent nuclear force "will be guaranteed assistance in the event of a nuclear attack by others."

- The further suggestion that the United States use its considerable foreign aid to favor those nations which both "deny themselves independent nuclear weapon capability" and who are willing to place "all their nuclear facilities and projects under International Atomic Energy Agency inspection."

- Inclusion in any treaty to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons of a provision that all civilian atomic power plants

and, more importantly in Holifield's view, processing plants for obtaining weapons grade fissionable material, under international safeguards.

On West Germany's quest for a greater role in the nuclear affairs of NATO, Holifield reminded his audience that "right now" the United States has assigned to West German military forces in NATO, under U.S. control, "nuclear weapons whose fire power far exceeds" the 2-million tons of TNT used in Europe during World War II.

"Let no one mistakenly believe," he said, "that the West Germans have not already been granted a strong participating role in the nuclear defense of Europe. What is apparently wanted is a greater role."

"If they want a greater role in the nuclear defense of Europe, then it is important to ask: What kind of a 'greater role' does Germany want? Do they want this 'greater role' as a separate sovereign power or as a member of NATO?"

Holifield also had some harsh comments for France, which he characterized as preferring "to engage in the outmoded policy of national self-sufficiency."

In another speech to the forum, Vice President Humphrey proposed that civilian nuclear reactors be designed to avert power failures such as the one which plunged the Northeast into darkness last week.

Humphrey said that the development of civilian nuclear power was reaching the phase when "we can look forward to advanced converted and breeder reactors which will result in more efficient and economical use of our nuclear fuel resources."