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A Diplomatic History of German Unification, 1989-1990

**A thesis
Presented to the Faculty
of
The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy
by
Philip D. Zelikow
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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ABSTRACT

In 1989, more than forty years after the postwar division of Germany was cemented by the establishment of the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic, this division was suddenly called into question. Within a year the GDR ceased to exist and its territory had been absorbed into the FRG. The unification of Germany was approved by the Soviet Union as well as the United States, Great Britain, and France. These countries relinquished their rights and responsibilities for Berlin and for "Germany as a whole" in a treaty providing a "Final Settlement" of the German question.

The thesis presents a history of the diplomacy surrounding these events in 1989 and 1990. Focusing principally on the actions of the two German states, the United States, and the Soviet Union, the thesis documents the international activities of these governments as well as their most important internal deliberations. The author served in the U.S. government and drew on some direct knowledge of his subject. The thesis is principally based, however, on wide research in American archives, interviews with leading American, Soviet, and German decisionmakers, and an examination of primary and secondary sources published in English, German, and Russian. The historical narrative is accompanied by a review of the history of the German question between 1945 and 1988, a framework for disaggregating the components of international policies, and a discussion of how theorists try to cope with the problem of radical peaceful change in the international system. The problem of explaining the course of a great event is discussed again in the concluding chapter.

PHILIP ZELIKOW

Work Experience

HARVARD UNIVERSITY (1991-date)

Associate Professor of Public Policy - Cambridge, Massachusetts

- Teach graduate students at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, including required core course on policy development, introductory course on international policy, and electives on the uses of history and assessment of other governments.
- Teach in executive programs for senior US government officials, Russian legislators, and Russian general officers
- Research interests include the history and practice of American national security policy, the conceptual structure of public policies, the uses of history and intelligence analysis, and internal conflict in democratic societies.

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL (1989-1991)

Director for European Security Affairs - Washington, D.C.

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- Responsible for White House meetings, policy development, and communications affecting US relations with Great Britain, Ireland, NATO (including May 89 and July 90 NATO Summits), and the CSCE (including Nov 90 CSCE Summit).
- Drafted Presidential speeches and other policy statements on European issues and coordinated interagency reviews of policy toward Western Europe.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE (1985-1989, 1991)

Negotiations on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) - Vienna, Austria

Political adviser to US conventional arms control delegation during its first year.

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Political officer. Also served as consular officer for American Embassy in Vienna when negotiations were not in session.

Operations Center - Washington, DC

Watch officer in Department's round-the-clock crisis management center.

Secretariat Staff - Washington, DC

Line officer for liaison between Department principals and bureaus, especially on Middle Eastern issues, staff officer for Secretary Shultz on trips, coordinated Department support for 1988-89 State Transition Team.

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY (1984-1985)

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Trial Attorney - Houston, Texas

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- Dissertation topic: "A Diplomatic History of German Unification"; Master's thesis on British suppression of the Arab revolt in Palestine, 1936-39

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- First place in nation, 1979 ABA National Moot Court Competition, top speaker in national finals presided over by Justice Byron White
- Best appellate argument, 1979 State Bar of Texas Moot Court Competition
- Third place in nation, 1978 Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition

UNIVERSITY OF REDLANDS

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American Intelligence and the World Economy, background paper for Task Force Report of the Twentieth Century Fund (forthcoming)

Cooperative Denuclearization: From Pledges to Deeds, CSIA Studies in International Security No. 2 (Cambridge: Center for Science and International Affairs, 1993), 293 pp (edited with Graham Allison, Ashton Carter, and Steven Miller)

Articles, Chapters, Case Studies

"America's International Agenda," in William Wallace, ed., Europe and America: The End of the West? (London: Oxford University Press, forthcoming)

"American Security Policy: Toward a New Entente with Russia," in Aspen Strategy Group, Securing Peace in the New Era: Politics in the Former Soviet Union and the Challenge to American Security (Queenstown, Md.: Aspen Institute, 1994), pp. 37-70

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"Foreign Policy Engineering: From Theory to Practice and Back Again," International Security, Vol. 18, no. 4 (Spring 1994), pp. 143-71

"Prelude to War: U.S. Policy Toward Iraq, 1988-1990," Case C16-94-1245.0, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University (co-author and research coordinator)

"Beyond Boris Yeltsin," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 73, no. 1 (America and the World issue, January/February 1994), pp. 44-55

"Offensive Military Options," in Robert Blackwill & Albert Carnesale, eds., New Nuclear Nations: Consequences for U.S. Policy (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1993), pp. 162-95

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"Preventing nuclear proliferation in the former Soviet Union," in United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, Disarmament Topical Papers 10: Non-Proliferation and Confidence-building Measures in Asia and the Pacific (New York: United Nations, 1992), pp. 59-65

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"The Future of Non-Strategic Nuclear Forces and Opportunities for Cooperative Understandings with the New Governments in the Soviet Union," Strengthening Democratic Institutions Project Occasional Paper, Harvard University, August 1991

"The United States Role in European Security," in Samuel Wells, Jr., ed., The Helsinki Process and the Future of Europe (Washington: Wilson Center Press, 1990), pp. 107-118

"The United States and the Use of Force: A Historical Summary," in George Osborn, Asa Clark, et al, eds., Democracy, Strategy, and Vietnam: Implications for American Policymaking (Lexington: D.C. Heath, 1987), pp. 31-81

"Force Without War, 1975-82," Journal of Strategic Studies, Vol. 7, no. 1 (March 1984): pp. 29-54

"Visions of the Future War in Europe," Fletcher Forum, Vol. 7, no. 2 (Winter 1983): pp. 313-321

"The RICO Statute: The Business Client as Racketeer," Texas Bar Journal, Vol. 45 (1982): pp. 159-165 (with David Berg)

"The Constitutionality of Imposing the Death Penalty for Felony Murder," Houston Law Review, Vol. 15, no. 2 (1978), pp. 356-379 (cited by Justice O'Connor in Supreme Court case which later decided this issue)

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Reviews and Commentary

"Can Talks with North Korea Succeed: False Hope, Once Again," New York Times, June 24, 1994, p. A27

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Chapter One

"THOSE IMPROMPTUS WHICH ASTONISH AND ALARM US"

The Johnstown Flood

In 1889 the town of Johnstown, Pennsylvania, population 30,000 was more than fifty years old and was growing fast, fueled by a booming local producer of iron and steel. Johnstown was built in a flood plain, and experienced difficult but manageable floods practically every spring. It was in a valley. Fifteen miles up the valley, at an elevation 450 feet above the town, an earthen dam held in a 450 acre, nearly 70-foot deep, manmade lake -- Lake Conemaugh -- and its estimated twenty million tons of water.

The earthen dam had been around, in some form, almost as long as the town. It had broken 27 years earlier, causing some minor flooding in the valley, and then been rebuilt, in 1879, by a group of wealthy industrialists who wanted to use the manmade lake for their fishing and hunting club.

On Friday, May 31, 1889, the day after Memorial Day, Lake Conemaugh was swollen by unprecedented rains. The dam gave way. All of Lake Conemaugh hurtled down the valley to Johnstown and to one witness who saw the dam break, "it seemed to me as if all the destructive elements of the Creator had been turned loose at once in that awful current of water." By the time the wall of water had passed through the valley, carrying trees, factories, homes, and freight trains before it, and the subsequent fires had subsided, more than 2,200 people had lost their lives.¹

Like the town of Johnstown, built up in a valley lying below a lake, the German Democratic Republic in 1989 seemed to have grown up under precarious circumstances, in the shadow of the wealthy West German republic. Twenty-eight years earlier, in 1961, steady leakage of East Germans to the West had prompted the government to erect a wall to hold them in. The East German government foresaw the cataclysm that might befall it should the Wall ever break and had worked doggedly for decades to guard against the danger. By the end of 1988 East Berlin

¹ David G. McCullough, The Johnstown Flood (London: Hutchinson, 1968). For the quotation from the eyewitness, Colonel Elder, see p. 101.

could feel some real sense of accomplishment. The standard of living of its citizens were the envy of the East bloc. Even the West Germans seemed to acknowledge that the Wall was there to stay.

Then, just over a hundred years after its metaphorical twin drowned in a devastating flood, the GDR was swept away. Before it happened, it seemed improbable if not impossible that Germany's division would be overcome in the way that it was. After the fact, it was hard to see how it could have happened any other way.

The Paradox of Prevision

So too with Johnstown. The danger of a flood was predictable, and predicted. The valley leading to Johnstown was steep and there was only one way the water could go if the dam failed. Indeed, it had been predicted too often. For years townspeople worried, half-jokingly, about what would happen if the dam broke. "At George Heiser's store, people would come in out of the rain ... and nearly always someone said, 'Well, this is the day the old dam is going to break.' It was becoming something of a local joke." Year after year passed. The dam did not break.

When there were warnings of trouble up the mountain, very few took them to heart. The dam always held despite the warnings. People got tired of hearing about a disaster that never happened. And after all, was not the dam owned by some of the most awesome men in the country? If there was anything to worry about certainly they would know about it.²

The "paradox of prevision," according to the great French historian Marc Bloch, is that if a prediction of the future is prescient and persuasive, people will react. Their reactions will insure that the prediction does not come true, at least not in the way that was foretold. In other words, the more prophetic the vision, the more

² Ibid., p. 66.

likely it is that the prophecy will ultimately be false.³

Commentators in the 1940s and 1950s, from Walter Lippmann to George Kennan, had argued that the bipolar division of Europe was inherently unstable because "anything built on the division of Germany was built on sand."⁴ So both blocs strengthened their respective foundations.

The Soviet Union and the West had different nightmares, of course, about what might replace a divided Germany. For the Soviet Union, that vision was of a reunified and militarized Germany, allied with the West and bent again on the destruction of the U.S.S.R. East Germany became the outer armor of the socialist international order's protective shield against the West -- not only against its sophisticated armies but its seductive ideas and lifestyle.

And the West had its own nightmare about the alternatives to a divided Germany. In its darkest foreboding it was of a new "Rapallo," the 1922 treaty that defeated Germany signed with Lenin's outcast Soviet Union. In this vision a Germany without Western moorings leaned eastward, tilting Europe's balance of power toward Moscow.

Having predicted that a divided Germany could be unstable, both West and East worked hard to build stronger foundations to sustain the division and keep their fears at bay. The rearmament debates which culminated in 1954-55 "made sure, if the policies of the superpowers and the separate lives of the two German states over five years had not already done so, that the two halves of Germany would go their own ways, each linked to half of a divided Europe."⁵

³ Marc Bloch, The Historian's Craft, trans. Peter Putnam (New York: Random House, 1953), p. xvi. The same point has been made by others. "In short, it is not that the social sciences do not forecast well. They forecast all of the time and most of their forecasts are so persuasive that people act to defeat them." Scientists call this an iterative feedback loop. Ithiel de Sola Pool, "The Art of the Social Science Soothsayer," in Nazli Choucri & Thomas Robinson, eds., Forecasting in International Relations: Theory, Methods, Problems, Prospects (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman, 1978), pp. 32-33.

⁴ A.W. DePorte, Europe between the Superpowers: The Enduring Balance, 2d ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), p. 180.

⁵ Ibid., p. 181.

policy of Ostpolitik to thaw West German relations with the Soviet Union, Poland, and East Germany, Western governments worried again. Would the two blocs loosen as the two German states came closer? No. A decade later scholars could relax and scoff that "there was no realistic prospect that any German government would even consider renouncing its Western security ties -- still all-important even in a period of detente -- for a mere mirage of reunification, or that the Soviet Union would do anything to make such a mirage less unreal."⁶ Both Germanies and both blocs built up a modus vivendi, Ostpolitik, premised on the mutual understanding that reunification would remain a "mere mirage" because they could predict so much potential for instability if this goal again became real.

Thus, while the original "prevision" that structures resting on the division of Germany were built on sand was indeed prophetic, the "paradox" held true. Reactions to the original vision kept it from unfolding in the manner that had been expected. Both blocs did not dissolve, nor was Germany neutralized between them. Yet, confident that they had blocked off this particular danger, officials on both sides of the Berlin Wall discounted the underlying instability that had given the original prediction its force. In short, it is not that people cannot foresee the general causes that might lead to major structural change. Rather, the problem is that they wrongly believe these general causes to be under control.

Why is this faith so misplaced? Before the Johnstown tragedy people could visit the dam, picnic on it, and feel its reassuring solidity. It had held year after year. Every day that the dam held, it provided confirmation that everything was under control. Unfortunately the dam had weaknesses. But they were not apparent. The flaws were, literally, beneath the surface.

Great Events and Small Causes

The dam was poorly built, but the "awesome men" in charge in 1889 did not know it anymore than the local people did. The dam was an earthen dam, common

⁶ Ibid., p. 185.

enough for that time, but when it was rebuilt ten years earlier the reconstruction had been shoddy, without discharge pipes to control water levels in the lake or let water out to allow the dam to be repaired. An observant civil engineer employed by Johnstown's leading industrialist had noticed the flaws years earlier but his report had been ignored and his powerful sponsor had died.

The dam appeared solid. Over 900 feet long, covered with loose rocks, trees, and grass, it looked like a part of the natural landscape, perhaps carved out by a glacier. It was a picturesque spot for picnics. The dam had broken before, twenty-seven years earlier. Everyone had been alarmed, but it turned out that there was little damage. So even the worst case seemed manageable. Few people knew, or could know, that back then the lake had been half as full, that the dam then had discharge pipes which were used to ease the pressure. That information was not a secret, but it was just too trivial to attract notice or disturb the easy analogy with past experience.

So, in addition to the "paradox of prevision," we have difficulty seeing the seemingly trivial agents of great change. We tend to assume that great changes must have great causes. To think otherwise seems to offend some innate sense of proportion. We are constantly reminded to keep our eyes on the "big picture." It is to be expected that leaders would see the biggest pictures of all.

To be sure, large causes must be present. But the latent potential for change is often realized and or takes tangible form only through seemingly minor deeds or events.

This level of detail in examining human events is usually associated with history, not political science. One political scientist who studied the issue concluded that international relations theory appeared to rely "on intuition and historically informed analogies to guess about the magnitude and character of present-day change."⁷

⁷ Peter Katzenstein, "International Relations Theory and the Analysis of Change," in Ernst-Otto Czempiel & James N. Rosenau, eds., Global Changes and Theoretical Challenges: Approaches to World Politics for the 1990s (Lexington: D.C. Heath, 1989), p. 296. These theorists thus find themselves brought directly back to the allowances made for indeterminate behavior by Raymond Aron, Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations, trans. Richard Howard & Annette Baker Fox (New York: Doubleday and

Yet historians also can succumb to the lure of trying to match great events with large causes. One of America's premier historians of the Cold War, John Lewis Gaddis, explained its end by offering his own list of the "underlying trends that had been present for years without our noticing them."⁸ His list of the "tectonic" forces which led to the earthquakes and aftershocks of 1989-91 includes: the rise of economic strength as a measure of power independent from military might; the ideological collapse of authoritarian alternatives to liberalism; and the decline of brutality as a way of imposing state control over popular forces.⁹

Company, Inc., 1966), pp. 17, 92-93, and Part Two; and the interpretation offered by Stanley Hoffmann, The State of War (New York: Praeger, 1965), pp. 29-31, 32. Experts who study business forecasting also draw an important distinction between qualitative and quantitative forecasting. They freely concede that qualitative forecasting uses inputs that are "mainly the product of intuitive thinking, judgment, and accumulated knowledge." Spyros Makridakis, Steven Wheelwright & Victor McGee, Forecasting: Methods and Applications, 2d ed. (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1983), p. 11.

⁸ John Lewis Gaddis, The United States and the End of the Cold War: Implications, Reconsiderations, Provocations (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 156.

⁹ On the relation between economic power and military power, Gaddis argues that "the conditions that for so long favored a marriage of military and economic capability now seem to be bringing about a divorce." On the past linkage between military and economic strength Gaddis relies mainly on William McNeill, The Pursuit of Power: Technology, Armed Force, and Society since A.D. 1000 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982) and Paul Kennedy, The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000 (New York: Random House, 1987). Gaddis, The United States and the End of the Cold War, p. 157. But he appears to misunderstand the intricacy of McNeill's argument. McNeill describes the interaction between Europe's superior military organization and its development of militarily useful technologies. But he does not assert an iron link between these paired phenomena and raw measures of economic growth. Both were products of particular forms of economic development (contrast Europe with China, for example), commercial activity, political and religious organization of society, and the history and rivalry of particular nations. These more particular factors also help account for significant differences in military power among individual European states as well as between Europeans and their Muslim or Asian foes.

The sharply reduced appeal of authoritarian alternatives to liberalism is certainly important, although the most recent experience in Latin America and South Asia should reinforce attention to particulars — particular forms of authoritarianism and particular forms of liberalism. Still, the failure of communism as a governing system was hardly a trend that had gone unnoticed. American leaders loudly called attention to this failure throughout the 1980s and, privately, sharp critiques of communist weaknesses in governance began appearing regularly in U.S. intelligence estimates from 1985 onward. See Kennedy School of Government Case, "The Fall of the Soviet Empire: The Politics of 'Getting It Right,'" C16-94-1251.0.

Finally we turn to the decline of brutality as a method of political control. Again this trend is certainly important. But Gaddis may be going too far in concluding categorically that "repression no longer represses." The United States and the End of the Cold War, p. 164. Most Chinese, for example, would have arrived at a very different conclusion from the outcome of their turmoil in 1989. The roots of repression are in ideas, individuals and institutions. The reasons these faltered in Eastern Europe in 1989

Suppose this is the right list of general causes (though I do not think it is).

Suppose again that leaders had not noticed these trends (even though they did).

Would observing these general trends have then helped leaders, East or West, master the particular challenges they faced in 1989 and 1990? Gaddis would say yes, because "creative statecraft . . . is often a matter of recognizing the direction in which tectonic forces are moving and adapting one's own purposes to them.

Leadership that tries to resist tectonic forces is certain sooner or later to be swept away, leaving few traces behind. Leadership that accommodates itself to these forces may have no better record of survival . . . but such leaders do have a much better chance of imposing their particular visions of the future upon that which is to come.¹⁰

This conclusion may be true. But it is tautological, since leaders who successfully defy the forces of history were not really defying these tectonic forces at all, otherwise they would have been "swept away." This seems deterministic: If a leader succeeds, we therefore know that the tectonic forces were running his or her way. This sounds a bit like the old Chinese assumption that whoever wins a struggle for power must, thereby, have always had the "Mandate of Heaven."

This philosophical position is suspect, since such determinism does not always exist in nature. Scientists recognize that even systems governed by well-understood physical laws can nonetheless behave in quite unpredictable ways. The phenomenon is sometimes called deterministic chaos. One could answer, however, that little

may again be more particular than universal. The rise of human rights as an issue, increasing mass education, and increasing permeability of borders (the factors Gaddis lists) were all phenomena observed in the years immediately after World War II. None of these factors would, or did, deter Czech or East German communist leaders from committing terrible deeds in their relatively well educated countries during the late 1940s and early 1950s. Better explanations might be found by exploring the background, energy, and confidence of individual leaders. The personal histories of the gerontocracy holding power in 1989, the toll of age and gnawing self-doubt, yield more insight than a statement that "repression no longer represses." So would an examination of the enervating corruption, mediocrity, and intellectual exhaustion at the top of the Communist hierarchies in Eastern Europe in 1989. It is too soon to put "repression" in the trashcan of history. Indeed one of the better studies on why East European protesters defied the repressive apparatus places great emphasis on the irresolute or inconsistent repressive tactics chosen by the authorities, not the inherent ineffectiveness of repression itself. See Rasma Karklins & Roger Petersen, "Decision Calculus of Protesters and Regimes: Eastern Europe 1989," *Journal of Politics*, 55 (August 1993): 588-614.

¹⁰ Gaddis, *The United States and the End of the Cold War*, p. 166.

events do not really matter so much. They might cause some oscillations on the trend-line, but the ultimate destination of the line is fixed. A diversion from the true course will soon be righted. But such an "oscillation" can include events like world wars, or the unification of Germany. To push such oscillations into the background requires taking a very long, very abstract view of historical progress, with time scales measured in decades or centuries.¹¹

Long-term trends are surely important. There is no doubt, for instance, that eventually differing rates of economic growth and technological advancement can have profound effects on the relative power, position, and prosperity of nations. This conclusion finds broad support both from those who study historical cycles and those who comment on contemporary affairs.¹²

¹¹ Projecting a trend into the future without due regard for particular circumstances is a fallacy that Gaddis himself has perceptively noticed, calling it a "predictability paradox." As Gaddis explained: "The generation of theory -- at least in the traditional scientific method -- requires departures from reality; if forecasts derived from theory are to succeed, however, they must also account for reality. That is the paradox that theorists of international relations have been struggling, with such lack of success, to resolve. Theorists in the 'hard' sciences gave up on resolving it some time ago." "International Relations Theory and the End of the Cold War," International Security, 17 (Winter 1992/93): 55.

Scholars have long speculated about long cycles in history, recurrent patterns or waves that extend over decades or even centuries. Arnold Toynbee and Paul Kennedy's works form just the latest part of this rich tradition of charting the rise and fall of nations. The best work on long cycles disclaims any attempt at mechanistic prophecy, arguing only that a better understanding of "deep-seated dynamics in world society" will help individuals make better choices about the future. Joshua S. Goldstein, Long Cycles: Prosperity and War in the Modern Age (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), p. 349; see Arnold Toynbee, A Study of History, vol. 9 (London: Oxford University Press, 1954); Paul Kennedy, The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers. The information yielded by these inquiries can be thought-provoking. They may or may not be prophetic. Joshua Goldstein, for example, projected that the period of greatest danger of great power conflict would probably be in the first few decades of the 21st century, especially the 2020s, and that a new international order rejecting power politics might emerge within a century or so. Goldstein's study, published in 1988, also concluded that, "for at least the next few decades, the issues of U.S.-Soviet balance, cold war, detente, and related matters will remain central to world politics and to the now-imperative effort to avoid the recurrence of great power wars." Goldstein, Long Cycles, pp. 347, 353, 364. This prediction is not especially prescient in 1994; perhaps it will look better in years to come. The main point, though, is that citizens and policymakers can rarely afford to take such a long or philosophical view of "tectonic forces." They must be able to relate these general trends to contemporary choices.

¹² Use of economic growth as an indicator of global power and relative advancement is common. A sophisticated version of the argument, which keeps the military dimension and more subtle political and cultural factors in focus, is Joseph S. Nye, Jr., Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power (New York: Basic Books, 1990). Stepping back again for a broader historical perspective, see, especially, on the role of technology, William McNeill, The Pursuit of Power. Paul Kennedy paints with a broader brush in asserting "the rule seems common to all national units, whatever their favored political economy, that uneven rates of economic growth [will], sooner or later, lead to shifts in the world's political and

There is also wide agreement that weaknesses in a political system can eventually affect a nation's prospects. These weaknesses are usually identified as a bad system, or a bad leader, or a basically good system going through a bad phase. Bad systems can be either authoritarian or democratic.

Social or technological trends can certainly affect the condition of some states. In a long study of how global politics can change, James Rosenau calls special attention to transforming changes in declining public readiness to support governments, global defiance by subordinates of traditional sources of authority, and the rising importance of subgroups or organizations outside the traditional nation-state system.¹³

Aside from general trends that apply to regions or the whole world, there are general trends affecting a particular country. Take East Germany, for instance. GDR-watchers definitely knew the state had economic troubles. It had difficulty paying its foreign debts. It was short of hard currency reserves. It was under pressure to produce quality export goods for hard-currency markets in the West, to satisfy East German consumers, and to pay off obligations to other East bloc states such as the USSR -- all at the same time. Moreover East Berlin shouldered its share of the burden for helping support Moscow's Third World allies, doing its part in upgrading Warsaw Pact defenses, and subsidizing the ailing Polish economy.

That was not all. Few observers thought the East German people were particularly happy with communist rule. A workers revolt had been bloodily crushed

military balances." The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers, pp. 436-37. But since numerous examples can illustrate that both specific technological innovation and its widespread application are not invariably linked to superior rates of aggregate economic growth, Kennedy retreats to the relative safety of a discussion of long cycles, asserting that such raw correlations between growth and military strength may become manifest only "over the longer term." *Ibid.*, p. xvi.

¹³ James N. Rosenau, Turbulence in World Politics: A Theory of Change and Continuity (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990). There is a substantial literature on each of these topics, especially the role of substate or nonstate influence on international politics. Much of this literature is aimed at identifying networks of interaction and interdependence which transcend individual states yet influence their fate. These phenomena are not new, however, and in some cases state control over such transnational forces has actually grown, even as many non-state transactions depend increasingly on traditional state authority. Janice Thomson & Stephen Krasner, "Global Transactions and the Consolidation of Sovereignty," in Czempiel & Rosenau, eds., Global Changes and Theoretical Challenges, pp. 195-220.

in 1953. The Wall had to be built in 1961. Evidence of rising tensions between the Honecker regime and the East German people in 1988 and 1989 was out in the open, from the defiant pronouncements issued by the Politburo to the outrage about the heavy-handed rigging of East German municipal elections in May 1989 to the government's ominous public praise for China's violent June 1989 repression of dissent.

So officials and informed citizens can take comfort that experts can point to general sources of stress in the international system and even identify fault lines and weaknesses in particular countries. But we have already seen that the citizens of Johnstown and the leaders of East Germany found their background knowledge insufficient, even misleading. Try as we may, the truth is that historians and social scientists, diplomats, journalists and citizens alike are miserable at seeing how and when these general causes will result in transforming changes. We are always caught off guard by the timing and direction that events take and contrite that we did not see them coming.

The challenge is even greater when these great changes come peacefully. War, which wipes away the weak and permits the victors to rebuild the system more to their liking, has been a convenient link between general causes and great changes. The connection is clean, direct and, at least in retrospect, logical.

Thus, changes of the magnitude experienced in Europe between 1989 and 1991 are traditionally associated with the outcome of major wars or violent revolution. Indeed, scholarly theories of international relations simply "do not offer a theory of peaceful change."¹⁴ Since terrible conflicts are surely to be avoided in the nuclear

¹⁴ Robert Keohane, "Theory of World Politics: Structural Realism and Beyond," in Keohane, ed., International Institutions and State Power: Essays in International Relations Theory (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1989), p. 65.

While there are theories of peaceful change in the form of social transformation, like those occasioned by wide application of new technologies and agricultural methods (the Industrial Revolution) or natural catastrophes like epidemics (the 14th century Black Plague and the rise of early modern Europe), Keohane like most theorists of international relations is referring to an explanation for how such underlying shifts in social conditions, institutions, international transactions, or relative distributions of power find expression in the reconfiguration of the international political system. The general tendency was to assume that these changes would be incremental until they could no longer be accommodated in such small shifts.

age, the dominant intellectual tendency has been to equate radical change with war and work hard to avoid both. Well meaning citizens and scholars alike concentrated on the origins, management, or containment of conflict, searching for the elusive "enduring logic of conflict in world politics."¹⁵

This essay offers a different approach. Mindful of general trends, not relying on war to serve us as an omnipotent deus ex machina, we can remember the example of Johnstown and wonder about those little problems beneath the surface.

The Black Box of "Historical Accident"

Writing nearly 150 years ago, Alexis de Tocqueville speculated about the course of the February 1848 overthrow of France's monarchy, a sudden but relatively peaceful revolution that, like the 1989 overthrow of communism in East Germany, left the victors "as astonished at their triumph as were the vanquished at their defeat."¹⁶ De Tocqueville, a participant in the turmoil of 1848, reflected later on the experience and tried to find some analytical explanation. But, he wrote, "I detest" those systems which order historical events under great causes and thereby "suppress

Then there would a sharp period of change, punctuated by war or revolution. See, for example, Robert Gilpin, War and Change in World Politics (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981) or, on revolutions, Jack Goldstone, Revolution and Rebellion in Early Modern History (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

¹⁵ Joseph S. Nye, Jr., Understanding International Conflicts: An Introduction to Theory and History (New York: HarperCollins, 1993), p. 1; see also, e.g., Gordon Craig and Alexander George, Force and Statecraft: Diplomatic Problems of Our Time, 2d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Robert Gilpin put it succinctly. If a system becomes out of balance, "resolution of a crisis through peaceful adjustment of the systemic disequilibrium is possible, [but] the principal mechanism of change throughout history has been war, or what we shall call hegemonic war (i.e., a war that determines which state or states will be dominant and will govern the system)." War and Change in World Politics p. 15. For a view on how systems can and should be transformed without increasing the danger of major war, see Charles F. Doran, Systems in Crisis: New imperatives of high politics at century's end (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

¹⁶ Alexis de Tocqueville, Recollections, ed., J.P. Mayer, tr. Alexander Teixeira de Mattos (London: Harvill Press, 1948), pp. 67-68. The best French text is Alexis de Tocqueville, Oeuvres Complètes, vol. 12, Souvenirs, ed., J.P. Mayer (Paris: Gallimard, 1964).

men from the history of the human race."¹⁷

His solution was to combine the general with the particular: "The Revolution of February, in common with all other great events of this class, sprang from general causes, impregnated, if I am permitted the expression, by accidents."¹⁸

De Tocqueville took further care to explain what he meant by both "general causes" and "accidents." By general causes he explained he meant that, "Antecedent facts, the nature of institutions, the cast of minds and the state of morals are the materials of which are composed those impromptus which astonish and alarm us."¹⁹

A century and a half later we can add little to this succinct characterization of such general causes. But, like us, de Tocqueville was drawn back to the small causes, the "accidents." He despised the "narrow" theories, "false beneath their air of mathematical exactness," that downgraded the significance of these seemingly trivial, but crucial, events. He believed, "(pace the writers who have invented these sublime theories in order to feed their vanity and facilitate their work) that many important historical facts can only be explained by accidental circumstances." Some

¹⁷ "Je hais, pour ma part, ces systemes absolus, qui font dependre tous les evenements de l'histoire de grandes causes premières se liant les unes aux autres par une chaîne fatale, et qui suppriment, pour ainsi dire, les hommes de l'histoire du genre humain." Souvenirs, p. 84. For an example of how theorists can "suppress men" from their models, one need look no farther than Kenneth Waltz, who has explained that, "In defining international-political structures we take states with whatever traditions, habits, objectives, desires, and forms of government they may have. ... We abstract from every attribute of states except their capabilities. ... What emerges is a positional picture, a general description of the ordered overall arrangement of a society written in terms of the placement of units rather than in terms of their qualities." Kenneth Waltz, Theory of International Politics (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979), p. 99. But for a plea that the specific attributes of the "units" must be taken into account in order to explain the behavior of the system, see John Gerard Ruggie, "Continuity and Transformation in the World Polity: Toward a Neorealist Synthesis," in Robert O. Keohane, ed., Neorealism and Its Critics (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), pp. 131-57.

¹⁸ "La révolution de Février, comme tous les autres grands événements de ce genre, naquit de causes générales fécondées, si l'on peut ainsi parler, par des accidents; et il serait aussi superficiel de la faire décourir nécessairement des premières, que de l'attribuer uniquement aux seconds." Souvenirs, p. 84.

¹⁹ Recollections, p. 68. "Les faits antérieurs, la nature des institutions, le tour des esprits, l'état des mœurs, sont les matériaux avec lesquels il compose ces impromptus qui nous étonnent et qui nous effraient." Souvenirs, p. 84.

historical facts were just inexplicable.²⁰

Although de Tocqueville referred to "accidents," he quickly made it clear that these events were not really random occurrences. "Chance," he wrote, is really "that tangle of secondary causes which we call chance, for want of the knowledge how to unravel it." Moreover he conceded that "chance does nothing that has not been prepared beforehand" by the general causes.²¹

Historical "accidents" vex social scientists. Classical science postulated patterns of behavior or action which could produce testable hypotheses and valid theories. Historical accidents constantly disrupted these patterns. Try as they might, social scientists could not measure or control enough variables to wipe out the effect of such "chance."

Because an understanding of secondary effects -- whether one chooses to call them chance or small causes -- is so difficult, social scientists often respond, as we have seen, by simply raising the level of abstraction. If one steps back far enough from the details of events, the role of "chance" seemed to fall into the background. So the dominant trend in international relations theory was to develop hypotheses about the behavior of entire international "systems."²² "Historical accidents" thus fall beneath scientific interest, as theorists urged that, "The main challenge [is] to develop

²⁰ Recollections, p. 68. "Je les trouve etroits dans leur pretendue grandeur, et faux sous leur air de verite mathematique. Je crois, n'en deplaise aux ecrivains qui ont invente ces sublimes theories pour nourrir leur vanite et faciliter leur travail, que beaucoup de faits historiques importants ne sauraient etre expliques que par des circonstances accidentelles, et que beaucoup d'autres restent inexplicables...." Souvenirs, p. 84.

²¹ Recollections, p. 68. "...qu'enfin le hasard ou plutot cet enchevetrement de causes secondes, que nous appelons ainsi faute de savoir le demeler" ... "mais je crois fermement que le hasard n'y fait rien, qui ne soit prepare a l'avance." Souvenirs, p. 84.

²² For excellent surveys of the systemic literature, see James Dougherty & Robert Pfaltzgraff, Contending Theories of International Relations: A Comprehensive Survey, 3rd ed. (New York: HarperCollins, 1990); Ole Holsti, "Models of International Relations and Foreign Policy," Diplomatic History, 13 (Winter 1989): 15-44; Andrew MacKay Scott, The Functioning of the International Political System (New York: Macmillan, 1967); Jack S. Levy, "The Causes of War: A Review of Theories and Evidence," in Philip Tetlock, Jo L. Husbands, Robert Jervis, Paul C. Stern, & Charles Tilly, eds., Behavior, Society, and Nuclear War, vol. 1 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 209-33.

statements that transcend time, location, and personality."²³

If social scientists refused to overlook "historical accidents," they candidly acknowledged their frustration. John Gerard Ruggie has commented that, "Like Newtonian mechanics, conventional international structural approaches are simple, powerful, elegant and useful for many things. But just as Newtonian mechanics does not have much of a grasp on transformation of the palpable forces in nature -- because the universe comprised by the theory presupposes their stability -- so too it is with conventional structuralism in international relations. As a result, the processes of international transformation are among its voids."²⁴

It is thus no surprise why at the end of the 1980s little of the work on systemic theory or general causes turned out to be of much use to the officials and citizens confronting the "impromptus" of 1989, 1990, and 1991 that so astonished the world.

Returning to the case of East-Central Europe in 1989, it is not hard to argue with hindsight that by the late 1980s an unstable disequilibrium was emerging in the postwar international system. That is, the nominal structure of the system no longer comported with the actual distribution of power. Some would have argued that real Soviet power was declining rapidly due to its political and economic weaknesses. Others would have chimed in to say that America was declining too. Such predictions had been made for both countries before. Under such circumstances social scientists might have predicted, following Robert Gilpin, that "the system will be changed, and

²³ K.J. Holsti, Change in the International System: Essays on the Theory and Practice of International Relations (Aldershot: Edward Elgar Publishing Company, 1991), p. 5. Kenneth Waltz therefore acknowledged that: "Systems change, or are transformed, depending on the resources and aims of their units and on the fates that befall them." But he still hoped to devise structural theories that could confine the vagaries in the way the "units" behaved "within specified ranges." After all, "the behavior of states and of statesmen...is indeterminate." Waltz, Theory of International Relations, p. 68. See also Waltz, "Reflections on Theory of International Politics: A Response to My Critics," in Keohane, ed., Neorealism and Its Critics, p. 343.

²⁴ John Gerard Ruggie, "International Structure and International Transformation: Space, Time, and Method," in Czempiel & Rosenau, Global Changes and Theoretical Challenges, pp. 32-33. Ruggie's pessimistic conclusion can be contrasted with earlier optimism about the science of international forecasting, whose high-water mark must be the collection of essays, including one by Ruggie, in Nazli Choucri & Thomas Robinson, eds., Forecasting in International Relations: Theory, Methods, Problems, Prospects (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman, 1978).

a new equilibrium reflecting the distribution of power will be established," probably through a war among the great powers.²⁵

Yet knowing all this, a social scientist might still admit, as Gilpin himself did, that we cannot know in advance "if there will be an eventual return to equilibrium or a change in the nature of the system. The answer is dependent, at least in part, on what individuals choose to do." Ultimately, Gilpin yields to the decisive influence of "historical accidents." It is, he wrote, "impossible to predict political outcomes or that revolutionary change will in fact take place and, if it does occur, what the consequences will be. Although one might devise a general theory of political change, ultimately the study of change cannot be divorced from specific historical contexts and those static elements that influence the triggering and the direction of political change."²⁶ We are left with Raymond Aron's judgment, a generation ago, that "it is possible neither to predict diplomatic events on the basis of the study of a typical system, nor to prescribe a form of behavior to princes on that basis."²⁷

Policymakers have intuitively sensed the limits of social science and long-range prediction. It is one reason why, though they often proclaim a hearty belief in prediction and planning, they seldom seem to trust that it will do them much good when the chips are down. One planner and former intelligence analyst, Chester Cooper, made a point years ago that still holds true, that: "Long-range international policy planning and, by extension, international relations forecasting ... is, for all practical purposes, nonexistent in Washington. ... [D]espite all the good intentions and an innate sympathy for the process ... the policy maker will rarely think to retrieve the relevant long-term planning paper -- even if he was aware that there was

²⁵ Gilpin, War and Change in World Politics, p. 186. For a useful refinement of Gilpin's view on the role of hegemonic war and system change, see K.J. Holsti, Change in the International System: Essays on the Theory and Practice of International Relations (Aldershot: Edward Elgar, 1991), pp. 210-11.

²⁶ Gilpin, War and Change in World Politics, pp. 46, 48-49 (emphasis added).

²⁷ Aron, Peace and War, as quoted in Hoffmann, The State of War, p. 32.

one -- and even if, indeed, there was one.²⁸

Policymakers tend to sense, rightly, that the actual crisis always seems to bear little resemblance to past predictions about how and when the crisis will develop, though these are among the most important questions to be answered. Planning can be more helpful if it is thought of not as predictive but rather preparatory -- like the team that practices infrequently used plays designed for desperate but unlikely circumstances. The Bush administration knew that the breakup of the Soviet Union was possible but could not predict when, how or if it would happen. But in contingency planning, certain scenarios had been played through and one of them -- whether to warn the Soviet leadership if the U.S. received information of an impending coup -- did materialize. Having thought and fought through differences in the administration about the wisdom of warning Gorbachev, the decision to warn him was easier, even though the exact timing and circumstances had not been predicted.

There is no need to give up on the task of anticipating sudden changes. But it seems clear that looking at "general causes" is not enough. Social science theories are stymied by "historical accidents" and thus tend to discuss more abstract questions. Casual analogies with past experience, as at Johnstown, are often confounded by overlooking seemingly small but crucial differences.²⁹ To make matters even more difficult, any projection of the future must accommodate the chance that it will be startlingly different from the past.

The Linear Imagination

There is another reason that the citizens of Johnstown were caught unprepared when Lake Conemaugh descended upon their town. They could scarcely envision the

²⁸ Cooper, "Micawber versus De Jouvenel: Planning and Forecasting in the Real World of Washington," in Choucri & Robinson, eds., Forecasting in International Relations, p. 341. As Cooper goes on to point out, "Washington planners are typically a disillusioned and frustrated lot. When all is said and done, planners write planning papers, but decision makers 'plan.'" Ibid.

²⁹ On the many ways analogies can be misused, see Richard E. Neustadt & Ernest R. May, Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision-Makers (New York: The Free Press, 1986), pp. 34-90.

full potential for catastrophe. It was just too sharp a break from their past experience. The Johnstown newspaper solemnly concluded, after one of the first dam break scares, that, "Several of our citizens who have recently examined the dam state it as their opinion that the embankment is perfectly safe to stand all the pressure that can be brought to bear on it, while others are a little dubious in the matter. We do not consider there is much cause for alarm, as even in the event of the dyke breaking there is plenty of room for the water to spread out before reaching here, and no damage of moment would result."³⁰

So even after huge rainfalls on May 30-31 had caused even more than usual flooding in Johnstown's streets, no alarm went up. Everyone understood the stress that could be put on the system. This storm seemed to be just a particularly bad example of it. It is one thing to reason that the water might be thigh-deep this time instead of just ankle-deep. To project a thirty-foot high avalanche of water requires a terrifying leap of imagination from which most people would recoil.

The future is usually projected as a more or less straightforward extension of what happened in the past.³¹ The challenge of nonlinear behavior is not new to military historians. The literature on surprise attack is full of examples of countries that recognized a danger but just could not imagine a completely unprecedented departure from the accustomed standoff.³²

This is not a problem of people being ignorant or naive. Often it is those closest to the problem, those who know it best and are most used to its routine manifestations, who find it hardest, intellectually and psychologically, to imagine or confront the possibility of a complete break with their experience. The Israeli general (later politician) Ezer Weizman wrote, after the October 1973 war, "There are two

³⁰ McCullough, The Johnstown Flood, pp. 63-64.

³¹ John Lewis Gaddis has made this point as a lesson to be learned from his own past failures at prediction. See The United States and the End of the Cold War, p. 153.

³² See, e.g., Richard K. Betts, Surprise Attack: Lessons for Defense Planning (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1982).

popular folk-sayings that are as fatal to military concepts as they are to political ones: "There is no wisdom like experience," and 'History repeats itself.'" If one is a "man of experience who relies on the stability of history, wisdom becomes a broken reed.³³

When, about a week before the attack, the CIA told George Bush that Iraq was preparing to invade Kuwait, Bush promptly called the leaders of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt to seek their judgment of the danger. All assured him that such an invasion was not likely. Bush faced a quandary: Should he believe GS-15 analysts in Langley, Virginia or rely on the judgment of statesmen who had dealt directly with Saddam Hussein for years and had lived near Iraq all their lives? Perhaps it is possible to know a problem too well. Linear imagination can be most pronounced among individuals who lean on the stability and wisdom of their experience.³⁴

Even when the evidence is mounting that events are on a radically different course, there are simply limits to the ability of human beings to make non-linear leaps of imagination. Not surprisingly, then, the fall of the Berlin Wall was not initially seen as cataclysmic by many officials, especially in the Soviet Union and East Germany. Instead they saw it as the start of a more intense, but still linear, progression of Ostpolitik, of warmer relations between a still-different East and West.

This leads us to an uncomfortable state of affairs. Officials, scholars, and citizens alike are best at noticing the "general causes" which can lead to important changes. But they may well still find themselves astonished. This is because they tend to believe that, having correctly perceived the sources of concern, they are managing them. They tend not to see the small facts which can have large consequences. They tend to discount the magnitude of changes that might break dramatically with past knowledge or experience.

³³ Ezer Weizman, On Eagles' Wings: The Personal Story of the Leading Commander of the Israeli Air Force (New York: Macmillan, 1976), p. 209, quoted in Betts, Surprise Attack, p. 96.

³⁴ See Kennedy School of Government Case, "Prelude to War: United States Policy Toward Iraq, 1988-1990," C16-94-1245.0; Michael Gordon & Bernard Trainor, The Generals' War (Boston: Little, Brown, 1995), chapter 1.

Confronting Chaos

The problem of coping with possible "historical accidents" is not impossible. But it is hard. One can start with John Lewis Gaddis's humbling conclusion after the end of the Cold War that, "the 'scientific' approach to the study of international relations appears to work no better, in forecasting the future, than do the old-fashioned methods it set out long ago to replace."³⁵ But we have no miracle formula that opens up the future. There is no such creature. From the world of science and engineering, Harvey Brooks has noted that "the focus on surprise-free models and projections" comes not from ignorance but from the "lack of practically usable methodologies" to deal with such discontinuous behavior. "The multiplicity of conceivable surprises is so large and heterogeneous that the analyst despairs of deciding where to begin, and instead proceeds in the hope that in the longer sweep of history surprises and discontinuities will laverage out, leaving smoother long-term trends that can be identified in retrospect and can provide a basis for reasonable approximations to the future."³⁶

Fortunately the sciences, especially mathematics and physics, have devoted considerable attention in recent years to the behavior of nonlinear systems. The body of work, often referred to as "chaos theory," has yielded some insights about hitherto unpredictable or seemingly random phenomena. Though it is hard to find a truly satisfactory way to import the formal methodology of chaos theory to international political change, some of the concepts are illuminating. They are metaphors for different ways of thinking about world politics.

A classic case in the development of chaos theory was weather prediction. Despite an excellent understanding of the physical principles at work, weather conditions cannot be reliably forecasted more than about three days in advance. In 1963 a scientist at M.I.T., Konrad Lorenz, found that, contrary to general scientific

³⁵ John Lewis Gaddis, "International Relations Theory and the End of the Cold War," 5, 56.

³⁶ H. Brooks, "The typology of surprises in technology, institutions, and development," in W.C. Clark & R.E. Munn, eds., Sustainable Development of the Biosphere (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, 1986), p. 326.

belief, slight differences in a system's initial conditions did not lead to a correspondingly slight difference in the way the system changed over time. Extremely slight differences, over time, could produce exponentially different results. He developed equations to express these nonlinear relationships.³⁷

Nonlinear phenomena are actually quite common in the real world, from the shape of coastlines to the dynamics of war. But they had received little systematic study because they did not yield to the available analytical methods, such as linear mathematical equations or Newtonian theories of international relations.³⁸ As one guide warned scientists, "Lulled into a false sense of security by his familiarity with the unique response of a linear system, the busy analyst or experimentalist shouts 'Eureka, this is the solution' once a simulation settles onto an equilibrium or steady cycle, without bothering to explore patiently the outcome from different starting conditions."³⁹

Aided by new mathematical techniques and powerful computers, scientists have discerned underlying patterns or structures beneath the unpredictable surface manifestations of nonlinear or chaotic systems. This is because chaotic behavior is not really random. Instead, just as De Tocqueville recognized, "historical accidents" are just a label for causes we cannot see or understand. "Chaos is irregular output from a deterministic source."⁴⁰ Still, "deterministic chaos" is characterized by three properties: (1) sensitive dependence on initial conditions; (2) an unstable order; and

³⁷ The best account of this episode, and an engaging introduction to the early development of chaos theory is James Gleick, Chaos: Making a New Science (New York: Viking, 1987).

³⁸ On crossover applications of ideas generated by chaos theory to questions in the humanities and social sciences, see A. Saperstein, "Chaos -- A Model for the Outbreak of War," Nature, 309 (1984): 303-305; Alan Beyerchen, "Nonlinear Science and the Unfolding of a New Intellectual Vision," Papers in Comparative Studies, 6 (1988-89): 25-49; and Beyerchen, "Clausewitz, Nonlinearity, and the Unpredictability of War," International Security, 17 (Winter 1992/93): 59-90.

³⁹ J.M.T. Thompson & H.B. Stewart, Nonlinear Dynamics and Chaos: Geometrical Methods for Engineers and Scientists (Chichester: John Wiley and Sons, 1987), p. xiii.

⁴⁰ David Peak & Michael Frame, Chaos Under Control: The Art and Science of Complexity (New York: W.H. Freeman and Company, 1994), p. 158.

(3) mixing, or a very wide range of potential outcomes in the system.⁴¹

Building on some of these ideas and on principles that have already been articulated by international relations theorists, one can use these three concepts from chaos theory as metaphors that can improve the way we reason about uncertainty in the behavior of nations. First there is the notion of sensitive dependence on initial conditions.

Sensitivity to Initial Conditions

Obviously some situations are more volatile than others. In his discussions of weather prediction, Lorenz referred to a "Butterfly Effect," the thought that the mere flutter of some butterfly's wings can perturb the movement of air, the transfer of heat, setting in motion causes and effects that, over time, might change the direction of the wind or even produce a storm. Not all systems are vulnerable to being affected by slight perturbations. Lorenz, for example, found that his weather models were especially sensitive to variations in thermal conditions.

So the interested observer might reflect upon those international circumstances that are highly sensitive to "initial conditions." The mathematical concept of "attractors" is helpful. If a system moves in a predictable pattern leading to a recurrent point of equilibrium, it may have a stable attractor. An example is the relationship of a pendulum's motion to gravity.

If, on the other hand, a system is subject to repeated but predictable disturbances, like oscillating electrical current, it might stay in constant motion, but forming a more or less comprehensible pattern determined by its periodic attractor. Or the disturbance might be unpredictable, forming less predictable patterns of reaction -- the product of a chaotic attractor.

Systems in the real world are actually subject to multiple attractors. Mathematicians try to calculate the relative influence of the different attractors. If the

⁴¹ See Robert Devaney, A First Course in Chaotic Dynamical Systems: Theory and Experiment (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1992), pp. 114-121.

role of the chaotic attractor is minor, then unpredictable patterns of behavior will fall into the structures forecast by the stable or periodic influences. But even a periodic attractor can produce non-periodic, unexpected results.

Suppose, for example, that a system is in constant motion, but the motion forms a predictable pattern. If the environment of the system changes, the same periodic attractor will cause a reaction mediated by a different set of physical laws. In the new environment the periodic attractor could bring about a transition in the system's behavior that ultimately transforms it. The transformation triggers new reactions and, as time passes, "certain patterns in the waveform repeat themselves at irregular intervals [but] there is never exact repetition, and the motion is truly non-periodic."⁴²

Returning to the task of determining the sensitivity of the system, officials should only start with the aggregate behavior of the system in the past. If it is stable, what components of the stability, what attractors, might have an entirely different effect if some aspect of the environment changes? Or, are there any unstable attractors to which the system is especially sensitive?

Think about the East German case for a moment. For years this country had been stabilized by Soviet power. The influence of the Soviet Union was a constant attractor, but in 1988 and 1989 the underlying political environment in the USSR changed. In this new environment, the attractor remained constant but was a source of instability instead of stability. The East German situation had become much more volatile, far more "sensitive to initial conditions."

Another major stabilizing force in East Germany was West German cash. For years the West German government had sought to improve relations with the GDR by providing needed hard currency to the East German regime. This attractor remained constant in 1989, but the political environment in West Germany changed as Bonn, with American encouragement, moved toward a more ambitious agenda dedicated to

⁴² Thompson & Stewart, Nonlinear Dynamics and Chaos, p. 3 (emphasis in original), see also pp. 187-211.

overthrowing Communist rule in the east. The attractor was now profoundly destabilizing, especially as the East German situation had at that point already become highly sensitive to changes in initial conditions.

Identifying Breakpoints

The second guideline follows from the first. If a system is unusually sensitive to initial conditions, then some variation in those conditions will produce a transition to a new state. This point of transition is referred to, mathematically, as a "bifurcation" between the old and new behavior of the system. Suddenly the system seems to respond to a different reference point. Place a ball at the bottom of a smooth bowl and it will remain stable. Turn the bowl over and try to balance the ball on the curved bottom and suddenly the ball, though still close to the same part of the bowl, becomes highly unstable.⁴³ International relations theorists might call such transition states "breakpoints."⁴⁴ These are not merely places where the system behaves in an unusual way. Many complex systems, like nation-states, behave in a non-linear but fairly stable pattern.⁴⁵ After experiencing these breakpoints we would expect the country to behave in a radically new way, responding to the influence of different "attractors." But is it possible to identify such "breakpoints" in advance? Perhaps.

Let us first use an example from a century ago. In 1890 the German government decided not to renew a relationship with Russia, the Reinsurance Treaty,

⁴³ The illustration is from Peak & Frame, Chaos Under Control, pp. 131-132. Or, to put it another way, "if the evolving system is in a steady state of equilibrium, periodic oscillation or chaos, the prediction of any sudden change is of crucial importance. Such bifurcation of behavior will occur when the phase portrait undergoes a qualitative change of topological form at a point of structural instability. An important distinction ... is between those catastrophic bifurcations at which there is finite rapid dynamic jump to a new steady state, and subtle bifurcations in which the change in response manifests itself in the smooth growth of a new local attractor after the bifurcation point." Thompson & Stewart, Nonlinear Dynamics and Chaos, p. xii.

⁴⁴ For almost identical descriptions of such "breakpoints," see Nazli Choucri, "Key Issues in International Relations Forecasting," in Choucri & Robinson, eds., Forecasting in International Relations, pp. 12-14 and Rosenau, Turbulence in World Politics, pp. 82-87.

⁴⁵ Choucri, "Key Issues in International Relations Forecasting," p. 13.

when it expired that year. This secret treaty was the last vestige of a once-close political relationship between Germany and Russia. The Germans rightly saw that the current treaty was weak. It would not keep Russia from going to war against Germany. It might keep Russia more passive at the outset of a war, delaying any hostile action. So the Germans, afraid that this modest treaty would become public and embarrass relations with Germany's public alliance with Austria, decided to let the treaty go.

The German government did not realize that by eliminating even this weak "attractor" from Russian policy, Berlin would set in motion a process that would lead to substitution of a new "attractor": France. Rather than have no ally at all, public or private, the Russians would quickly be drawn to France, a country whose hatred of Germany would lead them to welcome such a powerful ally with open arms. The immediate stakes seemed small and the German leaders could think of many plausible reasons to discount the cautions of their ambassador to Russia, who warned that Germany was unchaining new forces that must inevitably lead to a Franco-Russian alliance. But the German decision to let the Reinsurance Treaty lapse, a secret decision that involved fewer than a dozen officials, proved to be a "breakpoint," a bifurcation in the way at least one country -- Russia -- oriented itself to its environment. Russia soon formed a secret military connection with France. The Franco-Russian alliance eventually became a prime reason why the Balkan crisis of 1914 escalated rapidly into a general European war that cost millions of lives.⁴⁶

Returning to our present subject, the unification of Germany in 1989-1990, it is not hard to find a potential "breakpoint" in 1989 associated with the issue of East Germany's controls over the travel of its citizens. The 1961 erection of the Berlin Wall showed how much this question mattered to the GDR. So an analyst, in 1989, could reasonably have focused attention on the status of East German emigration controls. The analyst could have concluded, since the evidence was out in the open,

⁴⁶ For a vivid retelling of the story see George F. Kennan, The Fateful Alliance: France, Russia, and the Coming of the First World War (New York: Random House, 1984), pp. 18-36.

that the Wall would be less effective once neighboring communist countries began relaxing their own border controls. He could also have concluded, after glancing at reports from those countries, that such relaxations of controls were possible, even probable.

So, in principle, systematic attention to a short list of "breakpoints" for the East German government could have called quick attention to the chance of a serious crisis over travel issues during 1989. In practice, no clear observations to this effect were actually available to policymakers, at least in the United States, until the crisis had begun. This was because some analysts, like the East Germans themselves, had also fallen victim to the 'paradox of prevision;' they had foreseen the problem and thought it was under control.

The key point is that, as in many dynamic systems, the breakpoint can be a matter, like the application of East German travel laws in other communist countries, that appears minor or obscure but has vital operational significance. Let us glance at another example, from the Soviet Union.

Some writers believe that a plain breakpoint in the path of Eastern Europe and the USSR was Gorbachev's 1987 reforms of the Communist Party, such as the renunciation of the Soviet Communist Party's claimed monopoly on truth.⁴⁷ These reforms were certainly significant. They contributed to new risks of unstable, hard to predict outcomes both in the USSR and Eastern Europe, a greater "sensitivity to initial conditions." But the event remains in the background of general causes of change until some operational development catalyzes the "bifurcation" in the behavior of the system. Seen in this way, the breakpoint is not the rhetorical announcement, but the test of its significance, which first began to be evident for Eastern Europe in Gorbachev's response to events in Poland during the spring and summer of 1989.

⁴⁷ Gregory Freidin, "How Communist is Gorbachev's Communism?", in George W. Breslauer, ed., Dilemmas of Transition in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe (Berkeley: University of California, 1991), p. 27. Rosenau similarly cited the recognition that a threshold had been crossed in Soviet reform as recognition of "breakpoint change." Turbulence in World Politics, p 84. The term is thus used in this study to convey what appears to be a somewhat different, narrower, meaning than the way in which it is used by Rosenau.

Coping with Uncertainty

A third guideline for thinking analytically about the potential for major change is to find some ways to manage the vast uncertainty about the range of consequences. Trying to limit uncertainty is different from just narrowing the range of possibilities. We should be careful, the French philosopher Bertrand de Jouvenel reminds us, not to build dikes "to contain [the] future's uncertainty," because "the more we trust these 'dikes,' the less they provoke our curiosity."⁴⁸

Instead, observers should try to comprehend the potential flow of possible change. "Statements clarifying the limits and likelihoods of future behaviors can still be made for a chaotic process."⁴⁹ Analysts can recognize that even a radical break with the past can follow a pattern. No one might be able to predict when or if the dam would break above Johnstown. But they could predict where the water would go if the dam did break.

In the fall of 1989, when the East German governmental crisis deepened, the question of unification soon came on the international agenda. Once the crisis broke, it was foreseeable that this question would arise. Statesmen and diplomats in the West had labored strenuously for decades to preserve the empty, disused vessel of unified Germany as a possible receptacle for the hopes of the German nation. By doing so they also carved out a kind of channel through the political landscape through which change, change they could barely even foresee, might flow. De Jouvenel urged the strategist to "combat the general feeling of uncertainty which the rapidity of change sheds indistinctly over all institutions. The more change there is, the more valuable are some fixed points; which structural certainties should be tied down and placed beyond doubt?"⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Bertrand de Jouvenel, The Art of Conjecture, trans. Nikita Lary (New York: Basic Books, 1967), p. 47.

⁴⁹ Peak & Frame, Chaos Under Control, p. 158.

⁵⁰ De Jouvenel, The Art of Conjecture, pp. 247-48.

Engineers have developed techniques in risk assessment that try to channel the flow of possible changes. Starting with the idea of "event-trees," which are widely used in decision analysis,⁵¹ risk assessment takes a further step. Having canvassed the very large number of potentially risky events, it tries to isolate or group those sequences that might actually lead to serious consequences. Fault Tree Analysis, first developed at Bell Labs in 1961 for missile launch control reliability, is a commonly used method in risk assessment.⁵² A guide to conducting such assessments prepared in 1982 for the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission, an agency which has the job of regulating the safety and licensing of nuclear power plants,⁵³ lists scores of possible accident-initiating events in nuclear power reactors.⁵⁴ The worst consequence (usually called the "top event") is "excessive offsite release of radionuclides." A "fault tree" tries to show how scores of possible accident-initiating events find their way to the "top event" -- a catastrophe (what the guide more politely calls a Level 1 result).

The analysis is driven by a fairly precise identification of the serious consequence or "top event." Once that is done the key pathways to that event can be drawn, since only certain kind of failures can possibly lead to the worst outcome. Then engineers concentrate on those pathways in order to improve safety design.

⁵¹ See, for example, Howard Raiffa, Decision Analysis: Introductory Lectures on Choices Under Uncertainty (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1968), pp. 10-13.

⁵² A nice summary written for chemical engineers, but still understandable to general readers, can be found in Center for Chemical Process Safety, Guidelines for Chemical Process Quantitative Risk Analysis (New York: American Institute of Chemical Engineers, 1989), pp. 192-211. This discussion actually just picks out a small part of the whole risk analysis equation, which must also compare calculations of the severity of risk with the costs of avoiding or preventing it. For a much richer survey, see Edmund A.C. Crouch & Richard Wilson, Risk/Benefit Analysis (Cambridge: Ballinger, 1982).

⁵³ Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research (NRC), PRA [Power Reactor Analysis] Procedures Guide: A Guide to the Performance of Probabilistic Risk Assessments for Nuclear Power Plants, Final Report, 2 vols, NUREG/CR-2300 (January 1983). The report was prepared by an impressive group of experts under the auspices of the American Nuclear Society and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers.

⁵⁴ Accident-initiating events themselves, or perturbations in a system, can be subjected to extensive probability analysis. A sophisticated example applied to complex man-made organizations, for the mathematically-literate, is Yu-Chi Ho & Xi-Ren Cao, Perturbation Analysis of Discrete Event Dynamic Systems (Boston: Kluwer, 1991).

Two caveats should quickly be offered about these suggestions. First, this analysis can be hard. It requires a detailed understanding of the particular system being examined and a good deal of focused effort. A decent power reactor analysis is estimated to require 135-386 man-months of work. Perhaps countries are more complicated than a nuclear reactor.

Second, unlike mechanical processes, the occurrence of break points in international politics cannot be reduced to a stochastic formula. This is the refuge for scholars who, unable to probe deeper, simply convert "historical accident" or "chance" into statements of probabilities. In this view, "qualitative discontinuities in human affairs share the same measure of unpredictability with their quantitative cousins and are, similarly, amenable only to probabilistic anticipation."⁵⁵

This answer is not good enough. Such methods are based on the notion that "since we don't know what has been left out of the model, the best way to represent this ignorance is to throw a few random variables into the modeling soup. Such an approach is based, of course, on the entirely unjustified thesis that adding a random 'fudge factor' will somehow bring the model closer to reality."⁵⁶

A better purpose for assigning odds to an event is to test the importance of an assumption or force out the premises lying beneath contrasting estimates of probability. The estimates themselves are not answers; they are ways of generating more and better questions.⁵⁷ If we believe, like de Tocqueville, that "chance" is "that tangle of secondary causes which we call chance, for want of the knowledge how to unravel it," we should first try to unravel the tangle. We may not succeed. But we

⁵⁵ R.J. Barry Jones, "Concepts and Models of Change in International Relations," in Barry Buzan & R.J. Barry Jones, eds., Change and the Study of International Relations: The Evaded Dimension (London: Frances Pinter, 1981), p. 23.

⁵⁶ John L. Casti, Reality Rules: Picturing the World in Mathematics, vol. 1, The Fundamentals (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1992), p. 266. Casti goes on to explain that "even with perfect measuring instruments it's quite possible for a system to display behavior that looks as if it were the output of a random device. ... A deterministic mechanism can give rise to random-looking behavior, even when the measurements are exact!"

⁵⁷ For a discussion of seeing time "as a stream" and the "mini-method" of assigning odds to outcomes as a way of probing assumptions, see Neustadt & May, Thinking in Time, pp. 152-156, 247-270.

will know more than we did before we tried.

The direction of change may be appraised, but its particular journey is still not fixed. That is good news for policymakers though not necessarily for scholars. Whether changes are anticipated or not, leaders must deal with the consequences. Even standing, metaphorically, thigh deep in water, they must keep their bearings and construct policies to cope with, shape and direct the torrential changes in "the national interest." It is, in fact, when unanticipated changes have been unleashed that statecraft can find its greatest opportunities to make matters much better or much worse.

Challenges for Statecraft

Anticipating discontinuous change is only the beginning of the problem facing those who try to guide their country's response. Let us suppose that, having charted the possible flow of changes, key issues or potential breakpoints are seen more clearly. Then the question arises: What is to be done? Unlike the operation of a nuclear reactor, international politics is not mechanical. If an engineer sees that a certain safety system is vulnerable, the engineer can design reinforcement or redundancies into the system according to some established physical principles. Although, seen from a distance, the apparent sequence of cause and effect during a period of change can seem predestined, this assumption is often false. The relation between cause and effect is mediated by human beings. These human beings may be confused or disoriented during a period of transition, as they are at once both affected by the changes and are trying to shape them.

The human mediation of cause and effect is thus where statecraft finds both risks and opportunities. There are three features of this process of cause and effect that increase the scope for discretionary action: Refraction, Reaction, and Interaction.

The response to dramatic events is refracted through the prism of particular people, institutions, or circumstances. Take people, for example. They will react based in part on their calculations of their power to influence events. But in a period of transition it is not clear who has how much power. Old verities are suspect.

Leaders respond to each other, trying to shape and reshape their understanding of their country's interests, form coalitions, and do so amid anxious uncertainty about who is powerful and who is not. Uneasy about their footing, the leaders are uncertain whether to react to the former balance of power or to an anticipated future balance. It is hard to say how a leader who knows that his power is declining (or for that matter rising) is likely to react to such a projection, whether to betray premature confidence or be guided by evanescent fears.

These individual calculations are affected by prevailing cultural biases. A successful, dominant technology, like the automobile, can create what Harvey Brooks has called "technological monocultures" that can powerfully influence social responses to change.⁵⁸ In 1987 and 1988 an exceptionally powerful, plausibly grounded, cultural bias had come into being because of a successful, dominant set of policies for managing East-West relations were now in place. In this "monoculture" German unification, in any political sense, was out of the question and a dangerously provocative subject. To improve the lot of those living under communist rule, it was generally believed that the West should reassure the communist rulers and make them feel more secure. It was therefore significant that the surprises of 1989 were refracted through the prisms of leaders like Helmut Kohl and George Bush, whose background and beliefs made them unusually ready to disregard the prevailing cultural bias and adopt policies that accelerated rather than slowed the pace of change.

Refraction is also conditioned by prevailing circumstances. If the unification issue had been delayed or defused until 1991, West Germany's 1990 federal election might have yielded a victory by the SPD candidate, Oskar Lafontaine. Though it is easy to forget now, SPD electoral prospects were considered bright at the end of 1989 and Kohl was considered such a liability that at a September 1989 CDU party conference he faced almost unprecedented challenges against his leadership from within his own party. Lafontaine's position on unification would have differed radically from Kohl's so that even if Germany had eventually unified the new German

⁵⁸ See Brooks, "The typology of surprises," pp. 335-339.

state might have been a different entity altogether, with an entirely new constitution. It is also possible that West German enthusiasm for unification could have eroded substantially as the costs of unity became clearer.

Above all, it is doubtful that Soviet policy on Germany would have remained constant as Gorbachev retreated from perestroika and new thinking in late 1990, a turn to the right that brought about the December resignation of a key figure -- Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze. In 1989 and 1990, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, leaders in both the West and the Soviet Union knew timing was crucial. The Soviet security establishment believed that their leverage was slipping away with the collapsing East German state. Similarly, policymakers in the West understood that their best chance for the peaceful unification of Germany on Western terms lay with a Gorbachev still committed to reform at home and cooperation abroad and strong enough to override his more traditional opponents. Western leaders sensed that Gorbachev's time was running out. Both Kohl and Bush talked about and acted upon the belief that they had a small "window of opportunity" in which they could achieve the particular outcome they desired.

Any of these actions then produce new reactions by individuals or governments. Since the reactions are not mechanical, they are not always predictable. Even in the natural world, many environmental policies can succeed in achieving their immediate objectives, only to find that "as a consequence of that success, each [ecosystem] evolved into a qualitatively different one."⁵⁹ This is not necessarily bad. Albert Hirschman recognized long ago that human ingenuity can often turn unexpected problems into unplanned successes.⁶⁰

Adaptation is a key source of innovation.

Look again at German unification. It is obvious that the unification of Germany would have some sort of impact on the European Community. But it was

⁵⁹ C.S. Holling, "The resilience of terrestrial ecosystems: local surprise and global change," in Clark & Munn, eds., Sustainable Development of the Biosphere, p. 310.

⁶⁰ Albert Hirschman, "The Principle of the Hiding Hand," The Public Interest, no.6 (Winter 1967): 10-23.

not inevitable that France and Germany, working with the European Commission, would undertake and successfully engineer not only a radical acceleration of the process of European monetary union but also the adoption of a new program for European political union as well. The movement toward German unification was so rapid and forceful that it catalyzed a particular political reaction from Mitterrand and Delors. Not only did they accelerate their ongoing plans to create a new European currency but they also sought and won agreement to an entirely new intergovernmental conference to draft a treaty for political union. These efforts, all put in motion during the first half of 1990, eventually bore fruit when the Maastricht treaty was signed at the end of 1991, replacing the European Community with the new European Union.

It is still too early to calculate the full effect of "Maastricht" upon European and world politics. The bumpy road to monetary union has caused many to question whether the treaty was prepared too hastily, and concluded before European governments and publics were prepared to accept the new union. But the significance of the Maastricht enterprise is undeniable, and the scope of this treaty and the manner of its preparation and adoption were vitally influenced by the way in which Germany was unified.

Note the reference to the "way" Germany was unified, not just the fact of unification. The result of one process -- German unification -- could reasonably have been expected to produce the reaction of an attempted move toward further European integration. Yet the evolution of the Maastricht treaty also reveals how the form of a cause (German unification) influences the opportunities to influence the form of the reaction (European integration moves), with the velocity of the first process transferring a great deal of political energy to the latter process as well.

The challenge of statecraft is deepened too by the interaction of different chains of events, different sequences that might originate on opposite ends of the earth. To illustrate such an interaction, consider the relationship between German unification and the Gulf crisis of 1990-1991.

The origins of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 are to be found

mainly in the history of the Persian Gulf region and Iraq itself. No government outside Iraq anticipated this invasion more than a week or two before it occurred, if then. But after the invasion the United States instantly and unexpectedly found itself seeking a crucial and unprecedented series of diplomatic understandings with the Soviet Union about how to respond to Iraq's conquest of its oil-rich neighbor.

The Soviet attitude toward such an American plea for diplomatic help was of course affected by the quality of American-Soviet relations in general. A month earlier the principal issue troubling that relationship was the future of Germany. The United States thus benefited enormously from the fact that, by August, the German issue was on its way to resolution. Even more important, though, was the manner of the resolution. Only a few months earlier practically no one, including Gorbachev himself, would have foreseen that the German issue would not only be defused, but handled in an atmosphere so congenial that American-Soviet relations actually improved. Only in such an amiable environment is it possible to imagine that Gorbachev would promptly agree to join the United States as a vital partner in the international coalition organized to defeat Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait.

Joining the anti-Iraq coalition was a difficult and painful decision for Moscow, since Iraq was the USSR's largest client in the Middle East. About 10,000 Soviet advisers were stationed in the country. Soviet cooperation with America against Iraq was bitterly opposed by almost all of the foreign and security bureaucracy in Moscow. It is difficult to imagine how an unprecedented level of cooperation with Washington could have been erected against one of the USSR's best (and few) friends in the Middle East if tensions over Germany had not already been eased in such a friendly way.

The lesson from this description of refraction, reaction, and interaction is that the process of cause and effect is uncertain, and subject to so many variables, that particular choices in statecraft can have very dramatic effects. In periods of transition, once major changes are underway, the range of possible outcomes is especially broad.

Periods like this, between the collapse of the old system and the emergence of

a new one, are poorly understood. If the reader resists the temptation to see the particular outcome of this big event -- German unification on Western terms -- just as the work of general causes, there is an interesting story to be told about how statecraft, an interaction of policy judgments and actions, contributed to the shape of a new Europe.

[PAGES 35-42 ARE BLANK; CHAPTER TWO BEGINS ON PAGE 43]

Chapter Two

FOREIGN POLICY ENGINEERING

Introduction

Decades of modern scholarship about foreign policies have actually produced relatively few suggestions about how such policies ought to be constructed. Many volumes discuss how the process works, from bureaucratic turf battles to the influence of television. More volumes suggest what should be done about some particular issue, from preventing military use of outer space to dividing property rights at the bottom of the sea. But few books offer explicit advice about just how policies should be crafted in general, divorced from opinions about a particular issue.

This is one reason why international policies are usually not very well understood, even by academic experts. Indeed many diplomats and officials do not themselves fully grasp the conceptual framework or pivotal choices implicit in their own country's policies. Lacking any common vocabulary about the building blocks of policies, practitioners have difficulty communicating to others what is going on, so they consciously and unconsciously simplify the policy into broad themes or vivid anecdotes, and regularly feel frustrated at the gulf in understanding between themselves and outsiders, whether these are academics or newspaper editors.

For their part, outsiders may sense that policies are going well or faring badly, but find it difficult to diagnose the cause of the success or the failures, especially if the matter cannot be reduced to a clash in personal values. The outsiders (and many insiders) usually have one of three responses. They may turn to caricatures of the people involved: Leaders have "vision" or they are "preoccupied;" an official is "canny" or he is "bookish;" the diplomats are "misguided" or they are "shrewd." Alternately, they may resort to caricatures of the policies involved, condensing several kinds of challenges together into "underestimation of those revolutionary forces" or "undue reliance on that dictator" or "back-room bargaining." Thirdly, they may write off the problem as unintellectual or "judgmental" and raise the study of international politics to a level of abstraction where the vagaries of particular policies episodes are eclipsed by the grander forces shaping the global "system."

This is not good enough. If citizens are to understand the choices being made by their government, and if more of the vast store of knowledge outside of government is to inform and improve public policy performance, officials and observers need a relatively simple, usable framework that helps them appraise the analytical components of a public policy.

This study utilizes such a framework. It can be outlined as follows: First think of three streams, constantly interacting with each other: problem recognition, politics (bureaucratic and otherwise), and policy "engineering." This chapter concentrates on just one of these streams, that of policy "engineering," defined as the application of knowledge, principles, and methods (including both policy analysis and institutional analysis) to the solution of specific public problems in a given political environment. The "engineering" task can then be deconstructed into seven parts: national interest, objectives, strategy, design, implementation, maintenance, and review. Particular descriptions of each of these parts, or policy components, are offered below.

This framework is prescriptive. Policies ought to include all these components but sometimes they do not. Yet though there are a few suggestions here and there, the essay does not try to say how good policies should be made. Its framework is just a tool for determining which analytical propositions are truly material to the success of a policy. Once the material propositions are forced into the open, it becomes easier for insiders and outsiders alike to see just what kinds of social science, what "if-then" generalizations, are relevant. The framework might also help policymakers draw up a checklist of questions they may ask themselves, or others.

The Questions Academics Ask

Unless explicit technical or scientific questions are at issue, policymakers tend to draw on academic knowledge principally in the form of historical study or familiarity with the culture and language of particular regions, leavened occasionally by a bit of economics or comparative political theory. As in domestic policymaking, "analysts not familiar with the government decisionmaking process are surprised and

often shocked by how small a direct contribution research makes."¹ "Only rarely have I witnessed serious governmental attention being given to serious social science research," said James Q. Wilson, adding: "I will make an even stronger statement: I have only rarely observed serious social science being presented to government agencies."²

Government officials in turn tend to have little regard for the research that is presented to them. Paul Nitze recently reflected that "most of what has been written and taught under the heading of 'political science' by Americans since World War II has been contrary to experience and to common sense. It has also been of limited value, if not counterproductive, as a guide to the actual conduct of policy."³ Nitze helped build one of the major graduate schools devoted to international affairs and knows a good deal about the academic world, and thus his comment is an especially arresting example of a view quite widely held among long-time veterans of public service.

Yet it does seem that government must benefit if the vast stores of outside knowledge could somehow be brought to bear on daily policy challenges. A young student joined the great economist John Maynard Keynes for lunch one summer day in 1922. He remembered how Keynes and his French counterparts could turn from "the latest gossip about Continental statesmen, their mistresses, their neuroses, as well as their political manoeuvres" to "the international movement of money." Most astonishing, the men "seemed able and ready to relate their items of financial interest

¹ Henry J. Aaron, Politics and the Professors: The Great Society in Perspective (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1978), p. 165. This intuitive impression is reinforced by the writings of many perceptive practitioners who, after having quite significant foreign policymaking experiences in government, later joined or rejoined the world of scholarship, including George Kennan, Raymond Garthoff, Henry Kissinger, William Hyland, Leslie Gelb, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Robert Blackwill, William Quandt, Robert Pastor, and Gregory Treverton. Careful narrative history is the dominant analytical discipline.

² James Q. Wilson, "Social Science and Public Policy: A Personal Note," in Laurence E. Lynn, Jr., ed., Knowledge and Policy: The Uncertain Connection (Washington, DC: National Academy of Sciences, 1978), pp. 82-83.

³ Paul H. Nitze, Tension Between Opposites: Reflections on the Practice and Theory of Politics (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1993), p. 3.

to theoretical doctrine" with "subtle points of criticism." Realizing that he "was in the presence of something quite unusual -- this mixture of expertise in the latest theories with inside knowledge of day-to-day events," the student recalled that "the excitement was unbearable."⁴

So what is the problem? Much of the problem in the dialogue between policymakers and academic experts stem, as Adam Yarmolinsky noted long ago, from the inability of officials to formulate the kind of questions that academics can usefully answer.⁵

Many observers have noted, of course, that social scientists or historians pursue fields of intellectual inquiry that ask quite different kinds of questions than those which interest policymakers. There is a striking resemblance to the dichotomy between the sciences, such as physics and mathematics, and the profession of engineering.

Former aerospace engineer and current Stanford professor James Adams has pointed out how "the motivations of pure scientists are markedly different from those of practicing engineers" because, "Pure scientists desire to understand phenomena. Their product is published knowledge, and their audience and judges are their colleagues. They are not necessarily concerned with the application of their knowledge." On the other hand, "engineers are motivated to solve their problem successfully within a given schedule and budget. They would prefer to understand the microscopic phenomena that cause macroscopic behavior, but they must complete their work whether they do or not."⁶

⁴ Roy Harrod describing a lunch on July 27, 1922, quoted in Robert Skidelsky, John Maynard Keynes: The Economist as Saviour 1920-1937 (London: Macmillan, 1992), pp. 114-15.

⁵ See his excellent essay, "How Good Was the Answer? How Good Was the Question?", in Charles Frankel, ed., Controversies and Decisions: The Social Sciences and Public Policy (New York: Sage Foundation, 1976), pp. 259-72.

⁶ James L. Adams, Flying Buttresses, Entropy, and O-Rings: The World of an Engineer (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), pp. 40-41. For comparable descriptions in the public policy area see Seymour J. Deitchman, The Best-Laid Schemes: A Tale of Social Research and Bureaucracy (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1976), pp. 440-41; Alexander L. George, Bridging the Gap: Theory and Practice in Foreign

Two distinct problems are presented in applying "outside" knowledge to "inside" problems. The first is to develop knowledge that can readily be applied by practitioners in the development of public policy.⁷ But a second problem is to understand the ingredients of policy development well enough to see how to use academic stores of knowledge to help answer material questions.⁸

Much of the study of public policy is concerned with developing theories about why nations, governments, or officials act the way they do, rather than theories about how they should do better. Many of the theories about national behavior have such a determinist cast that the effort to improve policymaking performance can even seem to be intellectually vain or uninteresting. After all, if one has painstakingly developed propositions about patterns of behavior of nation-states over centuries, the attempt to apply such theories to a particular bilateral policy in a given month must seem appallingly reductionist.⁹ One result, as Alexander George has observed, is that "not

Policy (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 1993), pp. 3-18; and Yarmolinsky, "How Good Was the Answer? How Good Was the Question?", pp. 262-63. Thus Philip Heymann commented that the literature on managing public policy was "often brilliant but always addressed to a somewhat different set of questions," so that even the most well-known treatises have "much to teach," but their "purpose is explaining not prescribing." Philip B. Heymann, The Politics of Public Management (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987).

⁷ For some examples of how this can be done, see Richard E. Neustadt & Ernest R. May, Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision-Makers (New York: Free Press, 1986); Richard E. Neustadt, Presidential Power: The Politics of Leadership from FDR to Reagan (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1988); Robert L. Rothstein, Planning, Prediction, and Policymaking in Foreign Affairs: Theory and Practice (Boston: Little, Brown, 1972); and Alexander George's own work, alone and with his various co-authors and co-editors.

⁸ American legal rules of evidence draw a nice distinction between the concepts of materiality and relevance. "In the courtroom the terms relevancy and materiality are often used interchangeably, but materiality in its more precise meaning looks to the relation between the proposition for which the evidence is offered and the issues in the case. If the evidence is offered to prove a proposition which is not a matter of issue or probative of a matter at issue, the evidence is properly said to be immaterial. ... Relevancy in logic is the tendency of evidence to establish a proposition which it is offered to prove. Relevancy, as employed by judges and lawyers, however, is the tendency of the evidence to establish a material proposition." Edward W. Cleary, ed., McCormick's Handbook of the Law of Evidence (St. Paul: West Publishing Co., 1972), pp. 434-35. The goal, then, should be to draw out those propositions which are "material" to the development of foreign policies.

⁹ On the divide between the tasks of providing information useful in making policy choices and the task of studying social processes, see Mark H. Moore, "Social Science and Policy Analysis: Some Fundamental Differences," in Daniel Callahan & Bruce Jennings, eds., Ethics, the Social Sciences, and

a few policy specialists exposed to the scholarly literature have concluded that most university professors seem to write largely for one another and have little inclination or ability to communicate their knowledge in terms comprehensible to policymakers.¹⁰

The kinds of questions academics ask have influenced the methodology they employ in answering them. The dominant methods of scientific inquiry into foreign policymaking compare the inputs into policymaking and the outputs from it, or just observe outputs, so as to postulate the patterns of behavior which validate or disprove theory. Another version is to use historical case studies to develop axioms about the way nations, particular governments, or officials tend to behave.¹¹

The literature on inputs into policymaking is certainly extensive. Such inputs can be traced back to the culture of a nation or society,¹² extend to the role of public opinion,¹³ and encompass prevailing intellectual currents and ideas, including the way

Policy Analysis (New York: Plenum Publishing, 1983), pp. 271-91.

¹⁰ George, Bridging the Gap, p. 7.

¹¹ On the underlying limitations of this method in studying politics, and the often false view that techniques for the scientific study of natural phenomena can readily be applied to human subject matter, see Gabriel A. Almond and Stephen J. Genco, "Clouds, Clocks, and the Study of Politics," World Politics 30 (1977): 489-522.

George himself helped develop the methodology for using historical cases to distill valuable axioms, or conditional generalizations. See Alexander L. George, "Case Studies and Theory Development: The Method of Structured, Focused Comparison," in Paul Gordon Lauren, Diplomacy: New Approaches in History, Theory, and Policy (New York: Free Press, 1979).

¹² Contrast, for example, the magisterial distillations of Raymond Aron, Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations, tr. Richard Howard & Annette Baker (Garden City: Doubleday, 1966);, Part Two; or Stanley Hoffmann, Gulliver's Troubles, Or the Setting of American Foreign Policy (New York: McGraw Hill, 1968), Parts Two and Three; with the more scientific approach exemplified in Ronald Inglehart, "The Renaissance of Political Culture," American Political Science Review, vol. 82, no. 4 (December 1988): 1203-30; Harry Eckstein, "A Culturalist Theory of Political Change," American Political Science Review 82 (September 1988): 789-804.

¹³ Public opinion as, of course, mediated through the various institutions found in quite different democracies. See, e.g., Richard Eichenberg, Public Opinion and National Security in Western Europe (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989); Bruce Russett, Controlling the Sword: The Democratic Governance of National Security (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990); and Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Public Opinion, Domestic Structure, and Foreign Policy in Liberal Democracies," World Politics, 43 (July 1991): 479-512.

sets of ideas are selected and promoted by communities of experts.¹⁴ The individual backgrounds and psychological motivations of officials have not been neglected either.¹⁵ All of these factors can sometimes be brought together to create a compelling picture of the setting in which a nation's foreign policy is made.¹⁶

Yet many scholars do try to probe more deeply into the way in which policies are made. They tend to do this in two ways. First, they look at the organization of the policymaking process. Second, they turn their microscopes on "decision making."

The policymaking process is undoubtedly important.¹⁷ Organizations within it

¹⁴ On the general role of ideas, using the example of persistent American commitment to free trade and how it has been filtered through state structures created with particular purposes in mind, see Judith Goldstein, "Ideas, institutions, and American trade policy," International Organization, 42 (Winter 1988): 179-218. An effort to calibrate systematically the relationship of goals to policy strategies and execution is John P. Lovell, Foreign Policy in Perspective: Strategy, Adaptation, Decision Making (Hinsdale, IL: Dryden Press, 1970).

On the role of transnational networks of experts, or epistemic communities, see Peter M. Haas, "Introduction: epistemic communities and international policy coordination," International Organization, 46 (Winter 1992): 1-35; idem, "Do regimes matter? Epistemic communities and Mediterranean pollution control," International Organization, 43 (Summer 1989): 377-404; and Emanuel Adler, "The emergence of cooperation: national epistemic communities and the international evolution of the idea of nuclear arms control," International Organization, 46 (Winter 1992): 101-45.

For an interesting synthesis of how ideas, epistemic communities, and political structures interact to reshape a national agenda, see Sarah E. Mendelson, "Internal Battles and External Wars: Politics, Learning, and the Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan," World Politics, 45 (April 1993): 327-60.

¹⁵ On general psychological theories of motivation, a fine summary of the literature is in James Dougherty & Robert Pfaltzgraff, Contending Theories of International Relations: A Comprehensive Survey (New York: HarperCollins, 3rd ed., 1990), pp. 272-310; and on general psychological theories of perception (which apply to background motivation, cognition of information, and analytical processes) see Robert Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976); see also Richard Ned Lebow, Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis (New York: Free Press, 1981); Thomas Wiegele, Gordon Hilton, Kent Layne Oots & Susan Kiesell, Leaders Under Stress: A Psychophysiological Analysis of International Crisis (Durham: Duke University Press, 1985).

¹⁶ E.g., Hoffmann, Gulliver's Troubles; and Michael Brecher, The Foreign Policy System of Israel: Setting, Images, Process (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972).

¹⁷ The best album of images, whatever their relative explanatory power, is still Graham T. Allison, Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971) (explanation of Models II and III). See also Graham Allison & Morton H. Halperin, "Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implications," World Politics, 24 (Spring 1972): 40-79; Graham Allison & Peter Szanton, Remaking Foreign Policy: The Organizational Connection (New York: Basic Books, 1976); I.M. Destler, Presidents, Bureaucrats, and Foreign Policy: The Politics of Organizational Reform (Princeton: Princeton University Press, rev. ed., 1974); Morton H. Halperin, National Security Policy-Making: Analyses, Cases.

vie with one another for dominance and autonomy. Meanwhile they establish important capacities and routines for policy implementation.¹⁸

It is striking, though, how often the craft of policymaking is routinely equated simply with the organization of this process.¹⁹ This is true for practitioners and academics alike. "How can United States foreign policy be improved?", Roger Hilsman asked, and then answered: "Whenever the question comes up, attention turns first to the question of organization...."²⁰ The other usual method for dissecting policymaking is to dissect the process of "decision making." The implicit image in most writing is of a host of factors which converge upon some climactic moment or period when a great decision, or compact set of decisions, is made.²¹ In a

and Proposals (Lexington: D.C. Heath, 1975); Morton Halperin with Priscilla Clapp and Arnold Kanter, Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1974); and Francis Rourke, Bureaucracy and Foreign Policy (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972).

¹⁸ See James Q. Wilson, Bureaucracy (New York: Basic Books, 1989), p. 221; See also Samuel R. Williamson, Jr., "Theories of Organizational Process and Foreign Policy Outcomes," in Lauren, Diplomacy, pp. 137-61.

¹⁹ See, e.g., Charles F. Hermann, "Decision Structure and Process Influences on American Foreign Policy," in Maurice East, Stephen Salmore & Charles Hermann, eds., Why Nations Act: Theoretical Perspectives for Comparative Foreign Policy Studies (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1978), pp. 69-102; Margaret G. Hermann & Charles F. Hermann, "Who Makes Foreign Policy Decisions and How: An Empirical Inquiry," International Studies Quarterly, 33 (December 1989): 361-88; Henry M. Jackson, ed., The National Security Council: Jackson Subcommittee Papers on Policy-Making at the Presidential Level (New York: Praeger, 1965); Amos Jordan, William L. Taylor, Jr. & Lawrence Korb, eds., American National Security: Policy and Process (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 3rd ed., 1989), Part Two; Roy Macridis, ed., Foreign Policy in World Politics (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 3rd ed., 1967); and John F. Reichart & Steven R. Sturm, American Defense Policy (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 5th ed., 1982), chapter 6.

²⁰ Roger Hilsman, The Politics of Policy Making in Defense and Foreign Affairs (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), p. 151. Zbigniew Brzezinski, recounting his years as national security adviser to President Carter, entitled a section of his memoirs, "Making Policy." This promising title is then followed by the words: "Coordination is predominance." The section speaks only of how the process was organized and who tended to talk to whom, and how often, affirming -- naturally enough -- that Brzezinski's coordinating role conferred dominance. No mention was made of the substance of how policies were crafted. Zbigniew Brzezinski, Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Adviser 1977-1981 (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, ppk, 1985), pp. 63, 63-74.

²¹ Literature on negotiations also focuses on a key event -- the agreement -- and sometimes follows patterns recognizable in the writings on decisionmaking. See, e.g., the descriptions of the "diagnostic phase," "formula phase," and "detail phase," in I. William Zartman & Maureen R. Berman, The Practical

moment or period when a great decision, or compact set of decisions, is made.²¹ In a discipline dominated by concerns about conflict, the tendency naturally is to focus upon "crisis decisionmaking," episodes that are at once laden with the potential for conflict and compressed in space and time. These episodes are then taken apart, to see how the policy machinery actually works.²²

Experts have concluded that the machinery does not work mechanically. Theorists long ago showed that decision making processes do not match stylized or economic models of synoptic, efficient, and utilitarian choice.²³ The next stage was to show how, given the inherent flaws in human perception and cognitive assimilation of information as well as the constrained decision environment, officials could grope for months, even years, down paths that might well seem quite irrational, even

²¹ Literature on negotiations also focuses on a key event -- the agreement -- and sometimes follows patterns recognizable in the writings on decisionmaking. See, e.g., the descriptions of the "diagnostic phase," "formula phase," and "detail phase," in I. William Zartman & Maureen R. Berman, The Practical Negotiator (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982); but also see Linda P. Brady, The Politics of Negotiation: America's Dealings with Allies, Adversaries, and Friends (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991).

²² They have been taken apart in almost every conceivable way. Analyses range from perceptions of information, to patterns of bargaining, to measurements of interaction between decisionmaking units, the effects of stress and surprise, and styles of "crisis management." Leading examples of this voluminous literature are Allison, Essence of Decision; Alexander George, ed., Avoiding War: Problems of Crisis Management (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991); Charles Hermann, ed., International Crises: Insights from Behavioral Research (New York: Free Press, 1972); Ole Holsti, Crisis, Escalation, and War (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1972); Richard Ned Lebow, Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981); Glenn D. Paige, The Korean Decision, June 24-30, 1950 (New York: Free Press, 1958); J. David Singer, ed., Quantitative International Politics (New York: Free Press, 1968) (especially cases on 1914 by Holsti, North & Brody and Berlin by McClelland); and Oran Young, The Politics of Force: Bargaining During International Crises (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968).

²³ The groundbreaking studies were Herbert A. Simon, Administrative Behavior (New York: Macmillan, 1958); Richard C. Snyder, H.W. Bruck, & Burton Sapin, eds., Foreign Policy Decision Making: An Approach to the Study of International Politics (New York: Free Press, 1962) and David Braybrooke & Charles E. Lindblom, A Strategy of Decision: Policy Evaluation as a Social Process (New York: Free Press, 1963). For a more nuanced definition of decision makers' "rationality," see also Paul Diesing, Reason in Society: Five Types of Decisions and Their Social Conditions (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1962). This work formed much of the basis for Allison, Essence of Decision, and Glenn H. Snyder & Paul Diesing, Conflict Among Nations: Bargaining, Decision-Making and System Structure in International Crises (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977).

"bizarre," to an outsider.²⁴

The net result is a better understanding of why policies come out the way they do, though adding surprisingly little to the insights which can be gleaned from direct perusal of the better works of diplomatic history. But describing or even explaining outcomes is still quite different from prescribing how policies ought to be constructed. One can understand how a political scientist could confess that "the policy-making process has been like a black box to many of us since we see what comes out but not much of what happens inside.... [O]ur habits of inquiry have imprisoned us."²⁵

The Seven Components of Policymaking

If policies are the settled course of action to be followed by a government then policymaking is more than the political processes that determine how choices are made. Writing about domestic governance, John Kingdon has pointed out that the "three major process streams in the federal government are (1) problem recognition, (2) the formation and refining of policy proposals, and (3) politics." Politics includes bureaucratic politics.²⁶ Though much of the time these streams may flow

²⁴ John Steinbruner, The Cybernetic Theory of Decision: New Dimensions of Political Analysis (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), p. 332; see also Yaacov Y. I. Vertzberger, The World in Their Minds: Information Processing, Cognition, and Perception in Foreign Policy Decisionmaking (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990); and the introduction of the concept of "disjointed incrementalism" in Braybrooke & Lindblom, A Strategy of Decision, pp. 81-146. Much of this work in the field of public policy has relied heavily on organization theory postulated to explain and describe the behavior of private firms. An excellent distillation of this body of work by one of its deans is James G. March, Decisions and Organizations (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988).

²⁵ Charles W. Kegley, Jr., "Decision Regimes and the Comparative Study of Foreign Policy," in Charles F. Hermann, Charles W. Kegley, Jr., & James N. Rosenau, eds., New Directions in the Study of Foreign Policy (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1987), p. 248.

²⁶ John Kingdon, Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies (New York: HarperCollins, 1984), p. 92. Politics, as used here, includes the factors in Allison's Model III, such as the channel for producing action on the problem, the procedures for reconciling agency views, the players who are centrally involved, the histories and personalities of the players, and the external deadlines forcing the issue to resolution. See, e.g., Allison, Essence of Decision, p. 257. Allison's Model II concerns about organizational responsibilities and routines apply here as well, but some Model II points also feature in the policymaking process itself -- constraining design choices, and in the separate dimension of policy analysis -- as in the way organizational capacities constrain availability of information or evaluative criteria.

independently from each other, they can interact, or be coupled together, at any point in ways that determine the final outcome.

Policymaking is also different from policy analysis. The policy analyst's classic approach to policy analysis is to identify a problem, specify alternatives, evaluate them according to some explicit criteria, select the best one, and implement the decision. The components of policymaking described here may be more disorderly and more fine-grained. While using a diagram of policymaking to help frame his analysis and formulate the right questions, the analyst should not substitute that framework for the more formal methodologies he has developed for answering them -- whether his goal is "quick analysis" for immediate, practical application or longer-term "researched analysis" to probe the answers to deeper but still material questions.²⁷

Finally, policymaking is more than just a decision. Choices may be presented to a president, but his or her decision will only be one aspect of policymaking, a process which began before the decision memorandum reached his desk and continue after it has gone into his out-box.

Policymaking thus bears little resemblance to the commonly encountered model of options percolating up through contending bureaucracies to a culminating decision. During the year of American diplomacy associated with German unification, for example, President Bush never received an options paper. But this did not mean that options were not considered, or that Bush did not know about it.

²⁷ There is a large literature on the purposes, nature, and utility of policy analysis. For variations on the "classic" elements of policy analysis, see Percy H. Hill, ed., Making Decisions: A Multidisciplinary Introduction (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1978), p. 22; Duncan MacRae & James A. Wilde, Policy Analysis for Public Decisions (North Scituate: Duxbury Press, 1979), pp. 7-12; Carl V. Patton & David S. Sawicki, Basic Methods of Policy Analysis and Planning (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 2d ed., 1993), p. 3, Fig. 1-1; Edward S. Quade, Analysis for Public Decisions (New York: Elsevier, 2d ed., 1982), pp. 47-62; and Edith Stokey & Richard Zeckhauser, A Primer for Policy Analysis (New York: W.W. Norton, 1978), pp. 5-6. On the distinction between "quick analysis" and "researched analysis" see Robert D. Behn & James W. Vaupel, Quick Analysis for Busy Decision Makers (New York: Basic Books, 1982), pp. 3-7. On the legitimacy of accepting "political" parameters as part of the framework for valid policy analysis, see Arnold J. Meltsner, Policy Analysts in the Bureaucracy (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), pp. 307-09. See generally Giandomenico Majone, Evidence, Argument, and Persuasion in the Policy Process (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).

ingredients in the policy.²⁸

There have been a few efforts to itemize the components of national security or foreign policymaking.²⁹ Building on elements of prior scholarship on both domestic and foreign policy, I suggest that "policy engineering" can be seen as one of three streams, each of which interact constantly with the other. The other two are "problem recognition" and "politics" (defined as the way choices are made).

In addition to its interaction with the evolving perceptions or assessments of the problem and the constraints imposed by the realities of politics, the stream of "policy engineering" is informed by two major analytic methods: policy analysis and institutional analysis. A multilateral intervention in Somalia, for example, would need to analyze both the efficacy of certain competing approaches as well as the culture, capacities, personalities, and routines of relevant institutions, such as the United Nations. The policy would then, ideally, be developed to take due advantage

²⁸ See William Quandt, Camp David: Peacemaking and Politics (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1986); for other good narratives of policymaking see, e.g., Leslie Gelb with Richard K. Betts, The Irony of Vietnam: The System Worked (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1979); I.M. Destler, Making Foreign Economic Policy (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1980).

²⁹ Charles Hermann has divided the "decision process," for example, into "(1) initial policy expectations; (2) external actor/environmental stimuli; (3) recognition of discrepant information; (4) postulation of a connection between problem and policy; (5) development of alternatives; (6) building authoritative consensus for choice; and (7) implementation of new policy." This taxonomy focuses on a particular decision situation and is broken into categories of theoretical inquiry rather than stages in policymaking. "Changing Course: When Governments Choose to Redirect Foreign Policy," International Studies Quarterly, 34 (March 1990): 3, 14. For a better, but too elaborate, list of thirteen steps in the policymaking process, see Elmer Plischke, Foreign Relations: Analysis of its Anatomy (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1988), p. 257. Or, for a list of five stages of the "decision-making process" culminating in a decision, see Paul A. Anderson, "What Do Decision Makers Do When They Make a Foreign Policy Decision?," in Hermann, Kegley & Rosenau, New Directions in the Study of Foreign Policy, p. 304. Among practitioners, Dean Rusk listed seven items in a 1965 address to the American Political Science Association, "Anatomy of Foreign Policy Decisions," Department of State Bulletin, 53 (September 27, 1965), pp. 502-09 and Theodore Sorensen offered a list of eight steps in Decision-Making in the White House (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), pp. 18-19.

To resolve disputes about the nature of arms races, Matthew Evangelista had to categorize the actual stages of policymaking in cases of weapons innovation in both the United States and the Soviet Union. He outlines five stages in both countries, ranging from technocratic initiative to high-level endorsement in the US and from stifled initiative to mass production in the USSR. His outline is specific to the process of weapons innovation. But the diagnostic power of the technique was revealing. Innovation and the Arms Race: How the United States and the Soviet Union Develop New Military Technologies (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), p. 52, Table 3; or idem, "Issue-area and foreign policy revisited," International Organization, 43 (Winter 1989): 147, 156.

need to analyze both the efficacy of certain competing approaches as well as the culture, capacities, personalities, and routines of relevant institutions, such as the United Nations. The policy would then, ideally, be developed to take due advantage of both kinds of analysis.³⁰

The "problem recognition" stream is fairly well understood, though the literature is thinner on the critical challenge of assessing foreign governments. The roles of both experts and the media have been repeatedly examined and the bulk of "researched analysis" in the academic community can already be brought to bear on the recognition of problems.³¹ As mentioned earlier, the processes in the "politics" stream have also been studied intensively.

So this essay concentrates on the "policy engineering" stream, whose components are as follows:

1. National interest
2. Objectives
3. Strategy
4. Design -- preliminary and detailed
5. Implementation
6. Maintenance
7. Review

³⁰ Policy analysis is what George calls "substantive theory," which provides knowledge about standard foreign policy undertakings, instruments of policy, and strategies. At the same time the politics stream should ideally be informed by what George calls "process theory," which suggests how to structure the management of information and make the choices in the manner dictated by the politics stream. See George, Bridging the Gap, pp. 20-21.

³¹ On participants in problem recognition and how it occurs, see Kingdon, Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies, pp. 23-121. For insights into a central dimension of foreign problem recognition -- foreign assessment -- good starting places are Aaron Friedberg, The Weary Titan: Britain and the Experience of Relative Decline 1895-1905 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), an extended case study in the assessment of global power and adaptation to the changed recognition of Britain's "problem"; for the synthesis of a number of cases of military assessment, Ernest R. May, "Conclusions: Capabilities and Proclivities," in May, ed., Knowing One's Enemies: Intelligence Assessment Before the Two World Wars (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 503-42; and the template for assessment offered in May, The Making of the Monroe Doctrine (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975).

critical design features might, for example, cause the policymaker to amend the policy's objectives. "Strategy" and "design" also turn out to be practically inseparable since each shapes the other. The components are treated separately here in order to distinguish the conceptual relationship between ends and means from the assorted questions that always arise about the particular designs to carry forward any chosen strategy.³²

The "level of analysis" is also important. This essay assumes that the level of analysis is a national government -- not particular agencies or officials.

National Interest

The national interest is a "nonoperational goal" which is too often used as a rationalization for whatever preferences actually undergird a policy.³³ A nation "never admits it is doing violence to its moral instincts."³⁴

Hence every American administration in at least this century has voiced its solemn regard for world peace, the nation's defenses, America's growing prosperity, and the progress of democracy around the world. In September 1993, in a much-heralded address, President Clinton's national security adviser recently said that the

³² This set of components can also be contrasted with Herbert Simon's three-phase division of intelligence, design, and choice or Mintzberg, Raisinghani & Theoret's parallel consideration of identification, development, and selection. Both conceptions are oriented to a decision setting, not the process of policymaking as a whole. They also try to be descriptive and explanatory, not normative. Their schemes apply best to understanding only the first three components in the outline presented here. See Herbert A. Simon, *The Shape of Automation* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), p. 54; Henry Mintzberg, Duru Raisinghani & Andre Theoret, "The Structure of 'Unstructured' Decision Processes," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 21 (June 1976): 246, 252.

³³ Alexander George & Robert Keohane, "The Concept of National Interests: Uses and Limitations," in George, *Presidential Decision Making in Foreign Policy*, p. 219. See also Arnold Wolfers, "National Security as an Ambiguous Symbol," in *Discord and Collaboration* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1962), pp. 147-65; Thomas Robinson, "National Interests," in James N. Rosenau, ed., *International Politics and Foreign Policy: A Reader in Research and Theory* (New York: The Free Press, 1969), pp. 182-90.

³⁴ Albert K. Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1935), p. 73. "According to certain diplomatic officials, the abstract formulation of national goals is the easiest and least demanding step in the conduct of foreign affairs." Plischke, *Foreign Relations: Analysis of its Anatomy*, p. 98.

United States would support the "enlargement of the world's free community of market democracies." One can assume the administration did not linger long over the alternative of "shrinkage."³⁵

Effective statements of national interest separate more important interests from less important ones. It is therefore somewhat surprising that academics have tended to neglect the important task of formulating hierarchies of national interest that can support such judgments.³⁶

Expressions of national interest thus only become a meaningful component of policymaking when the pronouncement tells people something significant that they did not already know about the future direction and commitments of the government.

Washington's Farewell Address, the Monroe Doctrine, Wilson's Fourteen Points, Truman's address to Congress seeking aid for Greece and Turkey, the 1950 NSC-68 directive, Carter's January 1980 statement that the security of the Persian Gulf ranked among America's vital interests are all examples of declarations which marked out new reference points for the formation of policies.

Statements need not be historical landmarks to communicate important guidance. Bush's unqualified and unequivocal endorsements of German unification in May, September, and October 1989, before the fall of the Berlin Wall were statements about America's national interest which disappointed some allies while they

³⁵ Anthony Lake, "From Containment to Enlargement," address at Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, Washington, DC, September 21, 1993, in Department of State Dispatch, 4 (September 27, 1993), pp. 658-64. The explanation of "enlargement" was equally amorphous. The first of four strategies to achieve the goal is to "strengthen the community of major market democracies." Probing further, one finds the only policy content to be a call for "the major market democracies [to] act together -- updating international economic institutions, coordinating macro-economic policies, and striking hard but fair bargains on the ground rules of open trade." No guiding principles for these efforts can be discerned. A possible inference is in the use of the code phrase "open trade" instead of "free trade," yet even this fragile inference appears belied by the free trade tone of this section of Lake's speech.

³⁶ For two exceptions, see Robert Blackwill, "A Taxonomy for Defining U.S. National Security Interests in the 1990s and Beyond," in Werner Weidenfeld and Josef Jannings, eds., Europe in Global Change (Gutersloh: Bertelsmann Foundation, 1993), pp. 100-19; Donald Nuechterlein, America Recommitted: United States National Interests in a Restructured World (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1991), pp. 13-33.

guidance. Bush's unqualified and unequivocal endorsements of German unification in May, September, and October 1989, before the fall of the Berlin Wall were statements about America's national interest which disappointed some allies while they emboldened another.

When the Bush administration took office in 1989, it questioned the Reagan administration's first efforts to move from detente to rapprochement in its relations with the Soviet Union.³⁷ Then the Bush administration rapidly shifted gears, beginning with a May 1989 statement that the United States would move "beyond containment;" with subsequent arms control initiatives, this confirmed the shift to rapprochement while hinting vaguely at the possibility for even greater change.³⁸ Secretary of State Baker's October 1989 speech on "points of mutual advantage" indicated for the first time that Washington was prepared to look beyond rapprochement toward a genuine entente with the Soviet Union.³⁹ This entente was a reality by the end of 1990, as treaties settled the fate of Germany and Soviet conventional arms in Europe, and active cooperation was undertaken in the confrontation with Iraq.

President Clinton has also chosen to emphasize certain goals and priorities, such as the world economy, nonproliferation and the global environment. It is still too early to tell how these declarations of interest will fare as they are turned into policies, because none of these statements about national interest were operational. They did not, standing alone, establish new policies. To do that more was needed, starting with the specification of the objectives for such policies.

Objectives

The formulation of policy objectives should convert a general sense of the

³⁷ These and the following terms for the stages in improvement of relations are drawn from George, Bridging the Gap, but drawn in turn from Craig & George, Force and Statecraft, p. 250, Fig. 8.

³⁸ President Bush, commencement address at Texas A&M University, May 12, 1989.

³⁹ Secretary Baker, address to the Foreign Policy Association, New York, NY, October 16, 1989.

the phase which often gives such expressions of interest their real content.⁴⁰ They objectives say what the policy is supposed to accomplish. They are concrete and give operational guidance.⁴¹

Specifying objectives goes beyond mere identification of a problem. It forces policymakers to define what the problem really is by imagining the problem's solution. In trying to define "success" policymakers and analysts redefine the problem and at the same time open up the specific tradeoffs between certain objectives and the obstacles likely to be encountered in achieving them.

Objectives are therefore different from mere desires. I may want a new Ferrari automobile and encourage others to buy one for me. That does not mean I have actually set myself the objective of purchasing one. Desires and objectives are frequently confused. During the conflict with Iraq in 1990-91, the United States deliberately considered whether to extend American and UN policy objectives to include getting rid of Saddam Hussein by moving on to Baghdad and installing a new government. Many observers felt the failure to remove Saddam meant that "an important political objective" was "not accomplished."⁴² But when desires are confused with objectives, the result is a brew called "problematic preferences."⁴³

⁴⁰ "From the Monroe Doctrine to the Carter Doctrine, students of American foreign relations have been puzzled about the meaning of particular doctrines and perhaps the cumulative impact of them collectively for the conduct of foreign affairs. A common feature of these doctrines has been their highly ambivalent and flexible character." Cecil V. Crabb, The Doctrines of American Foreign Policy: Their Meaning, Role, and Future (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982), p. 394.

⁴¹ See Plischke, Foreign Relations: Analysis of its Anatomy, p. 111: "Foreign policy objectives are the concrete and actionable aims of the nation, decided upon by governments, in the pursuance of national interests ... for the attainment of which foreign policies ... are formulated and implemented."

⁴² George, Bridging the Gap, p. 91. George later notes though that the Bush administration's "refusal to escalate its political and military objectives" was the result of a deliberate decision to "strictly limit its objectives." *Ibid.*, p. 95.

⁴³ On "problematic preferences" see Michael Cohen, James March, and Johan Olsen, "A Garbage Can Model of Organizational Choice," Administrative Science Quarterly, 17 (March 1972), pp. 1-25; Charles Lindblom, "The Science of Muddling Through," Public Administration Review, 14 (Spring 1959), pp. 79-88; Kingdon, Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies, p. 89. For more on the distinction between aspirations and policy objectives see Wolfers, Discord and Collaboration, p. 71.

The Bush administration chose not to set the removal of Saddam as one of the concrete requirements of war or peace. Officials undoubtedly hoped Saddam would fall from power. When asked, they admitted this. They encouraged others to bring him down. That did not make it an "objective." If any American president of the last thirty years was asked whether he hoped Castro's dictatorship could be brought down, the answer would be yes. They have regularly encouraged the Cuban people to give the same answer. But no president since Kennedy has set in motion a policy with the operational objective of securing the overthrow of Castro's dictatorship.

Such opportunities for confusion underscore the need for precision in formulating objectives. Precision forces real preferences into the open for timely debate. When the Kennedy administration persuaded Khrushchev to remove nuclear missiles from Cuba in 1962 they were vague about whether nuclear-capable IL-28 bombers were included in the deal. The subsequent clash over removal of the IL-28s almost caused another major crisis in November 1962.⁴⁴

Precision also clarifies the true scope of a policy. Somalia is an obvious example. The original policy objectives set for American intervention in December 1992 were "to establish a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations."⁴⁵ Yet when the UN peacekeeping force was created in March 1993, its policy objectives were breathtaking. The force would "assume responsibility for the consolidation, expansion and maintenance of a secure environment throughout Somalia." The forces would implement an arms embargo on the parties "from within Somalia" and help enforce UN "demands" that all Somali parties, "including movements and factions,"

between aspirations and policy objectives see Wolfers, Discord and Collaboration, p. 71.

⁴⁴ Raymond L. Garthoff, Reflections on the Cuban Missile Crisis (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, rev. ed., 1989), pp. 104-15.

⁴⁵ U.S. forces would "address a major humanitarian calamity, avert related threats to international peace and security, and protect the safety of Americans and others engaged in relief operations." Letter from President Bush to congressional leaders, December 10, 1992, in Department of State Dispatch, vol. 3, no. 50 (December 14, 1992), p. 877; see also United Nations Security Council Resolution 794 (December 3, 1992), para 10.

disarm and comply with the political promises they had made to each other.⁴⁶

Close attention to the precise formulation of policy objectives could have opened the way to expert analysis, asking questions such as: What is the past experience with multinational undertakings with similar objectives in a country torn by civil strife? What variables are likely to determine the success or failure in attaining such objectives? Do these warrant renewed attention to other components of the policy, such as coercive strategy and military force design?

The questioner would have quickly noticed that American policy objectives in, for example, Lebanon in 1983, were strikingly similar to those adopted for the multinational force in Somalia ten years later. Other analyses of UN peace enforcement experience could have helped in identifying some key variables.⁴⁷ But even subcabinet officials reportedly did not bother to deliberate about the March reformulation of objectives; nor did outside experts appear to appreciate the vital significance of this new policy component.⁴⁸

Some might argue with this call for precision and praise instead the virtues of vagueness in avoiding unwanted controversy. Vagueness can indeed serve to deflect both controversy and attention from a passive policy. Leaders may also not care

⁴⁶ United Nations Security Council Resolution No. 814 (March 26, 1993). The "hunt" for Somali National Alliance leader Aideed, ordered in June by the UN Security Council, was simply the logical corollary of the objectives established in March, as the Council noted in its June declaration, Resolution No. 837 (June 6, 1993), which affirmed the force's duty to disarm all parties and "establish the effective authority of UNOSOM II throughout Somalia." These objectives were held up as a "model worth promoting" by under secretary of state Peter Tarnoff before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on July 29, 1993. Department of State Dispatch, 4 (August 9, 1993), p. 567.

⁴⁷ U.S. objectives for the multinational force in Lebanon were to facilitate the withdrawal of foreign forces "and to assist the Lebanese Central Government in reestablishing its control throughout Lebanon." Department of State press statement, March 15, 1983, in American Foreign Policy: Current Documents (Washington, DC: GPO, 1983), p. 747. Fine case studies of UN peacekeeping, including the peace enforcement operation in the Congo, were and are available in William J. Durch, ed., The Evolution of UN Peacekeeping: Case Studies and Comparative Analysis (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993).

⁴⁸ "Asked if there were any Cabinet or deputy-level meetings devoted to discussing the March 'nation-building' resolution, or the implications it would have on the ground in Somalia, three senior administration officials could recall none." Thomas W. Lippman & Barton Gellman, "How Somalia Started Biting the Hand That Fed It," Washington Post National Weekly Edition, October 18-24, 1993, p. 14.

enough about the problem to define its solution, or have not made up their minds just what problem it is they want to solve. But active policies are endangered whenever governments, at least in their private councils, substitute problematic preferences for concrete, explicit objectives.

Strategy

Strategies are those mechanisms, those theories of the relation between government action and the behavior of others, by which it is hoped that the policy will act upon its object to produce the desired result. They are theories of persuasion. Each strategy, then, is an analytically distinctive pathway toward the policy objectives being sought.

The strategies can include appeasement, deterrence, payoffs or reassurances, tit for tat trades of rewards and punishments, marshaling "world opinion" for diplomatic isolation, using economic or other forms of coercive diplomacy, and extend to military compellence or even punitive action. One scholar has catalogued twenty-five different "programs" or "procedures" for international conflict resolution.⁴⁹ The menu of diplomatic strategies also includes the choice of which international norms or decision rules will apply. Though the operation of these channels will then fall into the "politics stream," officials can use institutional analysis

⁴⁹ No one has done more to conceptualize these alternatives than Alexander George. In addition to Bridging the Gap, see George, Forceful Persuasion: Coercive Diplomacy as an Alternative to War (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 1991); George, David K. Hall & William E. Simons, The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971; 2d ed. forthcoming); George & Richard Smoke, Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974); and Gordon A. Craig & Alexander George, Force and Statecraft: Diplomatic Problems of Our Time (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), Part Two. For the "twenty-five" approaches, see Lynn Wagner, "Processes for Impasse Resolution," paper cited in George, Bridging the Gap, pp. 161-62 n. 12. For examples of lucid conceptualizations of other types of strategies, see also Ariel E. Levite, Bruce W. Jentleson & Larry Berman, eds., Foreign Military Intervention: The Dynamics of Protracted Conflict (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992); Durch, The Evolution of UN Peacekeeping; J.L. Richardson, "New Perspectives on Appeasement: Some Implications for International Relations," World Politics, 40 (April 1988): 312; Stephen Rock, Why Peace Breaks Out: Great Power Rapprochement in Historical Perspective (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989); and Janice Gross Stein, "Reassurance in International Conflict Management," Political Science Quarterly, 106 (Fall 1991): 431-451.

to decide which kinds of political processes are most likely to attain their objectives.⁵⁰

The existing literature demonstrates that conceptualizing strategies can illuminate the logic and key variables associated with their success. Progress has therefore been made in devising a "basic framework for understanding the nature and general requirements for designing an effective strategy."⁵¹ Both generic knowledge and analysis of the actors involved can then be brought to bear to improve this component of policymaking. Unfortunately, "adequate scholarly knowledge of the conceptual and generic types does not yet exist for many of the standard strategies and instruments of policy."⁵²

Designing a policy to carry forward a strategy -- e.g., determining the scope and enforcement of economic sanctions -- is a different task from the analytical conceptualization of the strategy. Though design and strategic effectiveness are interdependent, separating them analytically allows the expert to ask more fundamental questions about the strategic concept, distinct from critiques about the particular way a strategy's potential is being realized.

Design

With objectives set and a notion of the path the policy should follow toward

⁵⁰ On the influence of international norms and institutions in shaping strategic choices, see Friedrich Kratochwil, Rules, Norms, and Decisions: On the conditions of practical and legal reasoning in international relations and domestic affairs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 10-11.

On the manipulation of decision settings, see Zeev Maoz, "Framing the National Interest: The Manipulation of Foreign Policy Decisions in Group Settings," World Politics, 43 (October 1990): 77-110. Maoz looks at how manipulation of domestic political processes explains national decisions, but his argument can be exported to international diplomacy as well. Examples are the January-February 1990 choice to negotiate German unification through the Two Plus Four process rather than Four Power talks (the preference of the USSR and some West Europeans) or a CSCE conference (Genscher's proposal) or the American decision to bypass the Geneva multilateral forum for negotiating Arab-Israeli peace in favor of reliance on US-Egyptian cooperation and trilateral diplomacy, culminating in the September 1978 Camp David summit. See Quandt, Peace Process; Janice Gross Stein, ed., Getting to the Table: The Process of International Prenegotiation (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989); and William H. Riker, The Art of Political Manipulation (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986).

⁵¹ George, Bridging the Gap, p. 137.

⁵² Ibid., p. 138.

these goals, the policymaker must decide just what the government is going to do. Design occurs when a strategy is converted into operational plans that specify just what should happen in the real world.

In the case of U.S. policy toward Iraq in 1989-90, the diplomatic strategy for moderating Iraqi behavior through constructive engagement rested almost entirely on a particular design, the extension of credit guarantees for agricultural purchases (CCC). But when an Agriculture Department investigation turned up possible minor irregularities in Iraqi transactions backed by CCC guarantees, the result was that in May 1990 the CCC design foundered in the wake thrown up by the investigations and the turbulence caused by other questionable Iraqi behavior. No alternative design was available that could have carried forward the old strategy of constructive engagement. The Bush administration therefore found itself, during the next two months, standing inertly by an empty strategy.

Thus, the details of design matter. It is no wonder that, in the field of engineering, a large portion of available talent works on the preliminary and detailed design of products. It is surprising, though, that no equivalent recognition exists for the nature of policy design, a challenge which obviously encompasses but extends well beyond the empirical and economic tools highlighted in the policy analysis literature.

The significance of design work is illustrated in the story of the U.S. deployment of intermediate-range nuclear forces to Europe. Responding to the threat perceived from Soviet nuclear forces in Europe, in 1978 U.S. and NATO defense officials had chosen a strategy of deterrence of the USSR and reassurance of America's allies through deployment of new American military forces to Europe. The preliminary design for this deployment was U.S. long-range theater nuclear forces.⁵³

Then detailed design began. This phase of work settled, by April 1979, the

⁵³ The best accounts are Raymond L. Garthoff, Detente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1985), pp. 849-59; and David N. Schwartz, NATO's Nuclear Dilemmas (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1983), pp. 194-225.

general nature of the modernization, the kinds of missiles which would be deployed (using both cruise and ground-launched not sea-launched systems, and ballistic missiles), the number of missiles to be deployed (200-600), and that a number of allied countries had to accept deployment (not just the Germans).

All NATO allies, and especially the deploying countries, had to approve the final design because they were indispensable to implementing it, given the norms and rules governing NATO as an institution and US deployments in allied countries. The Europeans, led by Helmut Schmidt, persuaded the Americans early in 1979 to modify the original strategy and include an additional concept: parallel arms control efforts.

The new arms control strategy then also had to be filled out with a specific design. The Americans used ad hoc NATO institutions which they chaired as settings for refining and then consolidating allied agreement behind both the deployment and arms control elements of the policy design.⁵⁴ They were then able to use the forcing event of a special December 1979 meeting of NATO foreign and defense ministers in order to cement agreement to a complete, integrated, design: the "dual-track" policy.

The arms control element of the design had another design layer beneath it: five principles to guide the US negotiating position in talks with the Soviets to specify the procedures and appropriate outcome for these talks. Each one of these principles, in turn, required detailed designs of its own.

Thus policy design, like other policymaking components, can have several layers, just as a general blueprint for a product can be followed by more detailed blueprints of its individual parts. The components of a primary policy can also spawn secondary or tertiary policies each of which include all the components of policymaking but on a smaller scale. For example, as it sought to win allied agreement to the overall policy design for deployment of new US nuclear forces, the US had to craft subordinate policies to deal with the concerns of some of the countries

⁵⁴ These were the High Level Group, chaired by a US assistant secretary of defense (David McGiffert), and the Special Group, chaired by a US assistant secretary of state (Leslie Gelb, then Reginald Bartholomew). See Garthoff, Detente and Confrontation, pp. 860-63; Schwartz, NATO's Nuclear Dilemmas, pp. 225-32.

accepting the deployment. One of these was the promise to remove 1,000 existing nuclear systems from the NATO stockpile in Europe, in order to hold fragile Belgian and Dutch support.⁵⁵

Not all policy designs are so elaborate. The presentation of designs offered here, with layers laid out so neatly one beneath another, also imposes an appearance of order on a much messier reality. Others might define the layers differently or not even see them at all. Thinking about design, and layers, is no more than an analytical tool to help one see the structure of the policy and the relationship between its parts. It also becomes easier to compare a policy against its rivals or its predecessors.

Implementation, Maintenance, and Review

Products must be produced, maintained, and eventually either replaced or discarded. The policymaking cycle follows an analogous pattern. Policies are usually made to be implemented. Design ends and implementation begins when those specifying the content of the policy actually begin doing, or delegate the task of doing, what is to be done. Implementation can only begin when all parties who must carry out a policy have agreed to the design -- the workplan.

"One of the oldest topics in the study of organizations" is that "policy as implemented often seems different from policy as adopted."⁵⁶ In 1980 the White House decided to use a military strategy of direct action to end the Iranian hostage crisis. The President and his advisers carefully designed the elements of the "rescue"

⁵⁵ Garthoff, Detente and Confrontation, p. 866 and note 34; Schwartz, NATO's Nuclear Dilemmas, p. 238. A generic diagram of just such a multilayered "foreign policy complex" is offered in Plischke, Foreign Relations: Analysis of its Anatomy, p. 136.

⁵⁶ Vicki Eaton Baier, James G. March & Harald Saetren, "Implementation and Ambiguity," in March, Decisions and Organizations, p. 150. The general point is covered well in Jeffrey L. Pressman and Aaron Wildavsky, Implementation (Berkeley: University of California Press, 3rd ed., 1984); James Q. Wilson, Bureaucracy and an extensive literature in the domestic policy arena. The comparable literature on foreign policy implementation is modest, though Allison and others highlighted the issue decades ago. See Steve Smith & Michael Clarke, eds., Foreign Policy Implementation (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1985).

policy, specifying numerous requirements. Even so, "the decision to attempt the rescue is not the same thing as the plan to employ eight helicopters, train in a certain way, decentralize command, and so on. Decisions on such key aspects of the plan that was to be 'carried out' were themselves decided in the process of implementation."⁵⁷ Similarly, organizational routines led Soviet forces deploying to Cuba in 1962 to bring along tactical nuclear weapons may not have been part of Khrushchev's policy design, but these operating procedures could have had fateful consequences for the entire world.⁵⁸

Once it is recognized as a distinct component of policymaking, implementation too can be opened to systematic analysis. Students of domestic policy have already observed that obstacles in implementation tend to arise from: (1) the operational demands implied by a particular design; (2) the nature and availability of the resources used in implementing the design; and (3) the need to share authority with or retain the support of the other actors involved in implementation.⁵⁹

Where implementation fails, the failure may oblige the parties to develop a new design. For example, in implementing the Egypt-Israel peace treaty the planned United Nations peacekeeping force for Sinai could not be created. So the United States established its own peacekeeping force to take the UN's place.

Once a policy has been put in place, it needs to be maintained. For example, as the war against Iraq ended in 1991, coalition policies continued to evolve. A new set of objectives was formulated for postwar supervision of Iraq and a strategy was selected for winning Iraqi agreement -- namely the coercive use of ultimata credibly

⁵⁷ Michael Clarke & Steve Smith, "Conclusion," in Smith & Clarke, eds., Foreign Policy Implementation, p. 168.

⁵⁸ Bruce J. Allyn & James G. Blight, "Closer Than We Knew," (letter) New York Times, October 29, 1992, p. A24. There is still some dispute about whether the weapons were there, and about what authority local commanders had to use them.

⁵⁹ This list is adapted from Gordon Chase, "Implementing a Human Services Program: How Hard Will It Be?," Public Policy, 27 (Fall 1979), pp. 385-435. Chase also identifies fifteen areas to receive special attention and 44 "factors for consideration" in a model meant to enable relatively powerful predictions to be made about the prospects for implementation of a given program.

threatening the renewal of hostilities. The design for the supervision of Iraq went forward, including the creation of a new UN organization, and then the design was implemented. As of mid-1994 this design was still being maintained with money, manpower, and the political will and military readiness to keep the coercive strategy credible and effective.

Most activity in bilateral relations or in international organizations falls into the component of maintenance. It is the stuff of routine diplomacy, with the hope of keeping a policy comfortably settled in the "maintenance" mode. Policies that are not effectively maintained might turn into problems that stir national policymakers into developing a new policy. Naturally, top officials hope to avoid such exertions. This is the concept former Secretary of State George Shultz refers to as "gardening." It is, he explains, "one of the most underrated aspects of diplomacy" because "the way to keep weeds from overwhelming you is to deal with them constantly and in their early stages."⁶⁰

The final step in a sound policy is periodic review. Problems in implementation, for example, can lead to the development of entirely new policies. The failure to implement the comprehensive peace settlement dimension of the Camp David Accords led to the Reagan administration's development of a new policy to deal with the issue of Palestinian autonomy in the late summer and fall of 1982, with a different formulation of national objectives, a different diplomatic strategy, and a new policy design.

Though the need to review policies from time to time is intellectually irreproachable, government policy reviews have a sad reputation. They are usually perceived as either picking up the pieces after a policy disaster or a plodding way for bureaucracies to assure new political leaders that they are indeed doing the right thing. Kissinger even used "policy reviews" as a way of keeping bureaucracies busy while the "real" policies were being made elsewhere.

⁶⁰ George P. Shultz, *Turmoil and Triumph: My Years as Secretary of State* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1993), p. 128.

There is obviously some need to be able to review policies without waiting for a severe crisis. Policy toward Iraq was reviewed in 1989 and again in the spring of 1990, but the fundamental objectives and strategic concept were not strongly challenged. Yet there are cases of success. Again, disaggregating this component allows for more systematic analysis. An obvious question is: What are the criteria for evaluation?

The characteristic policy review simultaneously reviews the extent of any problems, reflects on the national interest, and considers policy objectives, strategy, and design, in what amounts to a large, almost indigestible, lump. Breaking out all the possible questions only makes matters worse. Review documents containing lists of scores of questions under numerous different headings, usually circulated at the beginning of new administrations, are viewed by bureaucracies (and indeed by the harried new appointees) with varying mixtures of disgust and horror. This is as much because of concern about the inefficient expenditure of scarce energy as fear that cherished policies will be lost. Analysis can therefore help, in this instance, by narrowing the issues to be reviewed, selecting key criteria for evaluation, and giving the policy review a clear set of focal points.

A Checklist

The challenge to "insiders" and "outsiders" alike is: Can they find a common and informative medium of communication? It is hard, in the best of circumstances, for policymakers to step back and think analytically about their work. The number of officials involved in any given foreign policy, from top to bottom, can be surprisingly small. For example, fewer than a dozen people below the cabinet level were deeply involved in managing the U.S. diplomacy associated with German unification. Even if they had known how to ask good analytical questions, none of them would have had the time to write detailed conceptual papers trying to answer them. Analysts of the intelligence community shun such work too, because they see their main job as lying mainly in the stream of "problem recognition," not "policy engineering."

The comparative advantage of academics is that they have the general

knowledge, disciplinary training, and opportunity to provide the needed analysis. They may have to be look for ways to offer help. "If policy makers are unclear about what they expect from research, researchers have to ferret, guess, and improvise."⁶¹ But this potential comparative advantage has not been adequately realized in foreign policymaking. Career officials have found too often that: "Good social scientists, unless watched carefully, will offer guesses, personal opinions, and political ideology under the guise of 'expert advice.'"⁶²

A comprehensive picture of the components of foreign policymaking helps one to spot the opportunities for analytical improvement. Once both officials and academics have internalized these patterns of thinking, they might ask better questions and receive more useful answers. Dean Rusk once spoke wistfully of the idea of a checklist of questions, like the checklists pilots run through before launching a plane on its flight. Even combat pilots under pressure for immediate take-off go through at least a dozen questions; commercial fliers have lists with hundreds of items and formal procedures for being sure they are asked. This study will use the framework outlined here as a checklist for understanding the competing policies coming from Washington, from Bonn, or from Moscow. But it may also be possible to internalize such ideas into more systematic thinking about the components of policies for the future. Surely it is not too much to ask that policymakers display equal caution before a country "takes off on a policy."⁶³

⁶¹ Carol H. Weiss, "Improving the Linkage Between Social Research and Public Policy," in Lynn, Knowledge and Policy, p. 44.

⁶² Wilson, "Social Science and Public Policy: A Personal Note," p. 91.

⁶³ Dean Rusk, "The Formulation of Foreign Policy," remarks to officers of the Department of State, February 20, 1961, in American Foreign Policy: Current Documents (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1961), p. 29.

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Chapter Three

THE OLD BATTLEFIELDS

Out of the Past

The crowds surging through the Berlin Wall on the night of the 9th and 10th of November 1989 had broken through a barrier walling off a part of their city, a part of their country, and a part of their own lives. But they did much more. They burst through a cap that had long sealed off a well of controversy at the heart of European politics: the partition of Germany and, with it, the division of Europe.

As speculation took off about the recreation of a united German state, leaders East and West began wondering once again just what a "new Germany" might look like and how it might come into being. Yet the questions were not new ones. The affected governments had considered them before. The future of Germany had, after all, been a principal topic for East-West diplomacy in the first decade after the Second World War.

The older struggle over Germany had ended in stalemate. Two German states were established, each aligned with opposing ideologies and military alliances. They sat in the middle of a divided continent, at the epicenter of the Cold War. As decades passed without any real movement, the old diplomatic positions hardened and petrified. The scars of these diplomatic battles remained, like old earthworks on past battlefields. A few officials or historians learned the lore of these old battles, studied the ancient positions, but almost none of them wanted to refight the engagements.

As the leaders of 1989 returned to the fate of Germany, they quickly encountered these old positions of the 1940s and 1950s, as a visitor might stumble upon stone memorials placed to mark where this or that regiment made its stand. They reacted to this sense of *deja vu* in a variety of ways. Some were inspired by the positions of those years; others were motivated to avoid a renewal of cold warfare; and still others used the new attention as a reminder of the legal and diplomatic legacies that still had to be taken into account.

Though it is useful to see the origins of the renewed debate over German unity by tracing the earlier debate over German division, readers should be wary of

drawing ready analogies, assuming that past experience would be repeated in the present. Some officials, East and West, were tempted by such analogies to the past. But in 1989 a stable and democratic West German state existed as a potential resting place for the dying East Germany. The German Democratic Republic's protector, the Soviet Union, was led not by a victorious and ruthless dictator determined to consolidate and build upon the gains of socialism, but by an increasingly desperate reformer who thought the USSR urgently needed salvation from its inner demons.

In May 1945 there was no German state to serve as a foundation for reconstruction. The old one had been smashed to pieces and the weary victors were not urgently interested in figuring out how to create a new one. By the time Allied governments began to concentrate on the creation of a new Germany, placed its political recovery high on their policy agenda, and had worked out possible model structures for such a state, their ability to work together on even minor problems -- never solid to begin with -- had all but disappeared. By that time the question of how to establish a unified German state was already obscured and partly prejudged by the early battles over the postwar military administration of a ruined and dismembered country.

Drifting Toward Confrontation, 1945-1946

None of the victorious powers in 1945 had a clear vision of what they thought should happen to Germany. They knew that their armies would occupy and govern it for a time. During this occupation some sort of peace treaty would be carefully prepared and then concluded with some sort of reconstituted German political authority. There was little beyond that dim image.

The Soviet Union had one clear, immediate goal. Moscow wanted more territory for the USSR, expanding to the West. They occupied about half of 1937 Germany, the Germany that existed before Hitler began annexing new territory. They divided this half into two parts, so that about a quarter of prewar Germany remained under Soviet military rule. The remaining quarter of prewar Germany was incorporated directly into the Soviet Union and Poland. With the blessing of Britain

and America the Soviet Union thus annexed about half of what had been east Prussia as well as the old German city of Koenigsberg (remained Kaliningrad).

Without waiting for such formal British and American consent the Soviets also simply gave the rest of German territory east of the Oder and western Neisse rivers to new communist rulers of Poland, including provinces of Lower Silesia that had been inhabited entirely by German-speakers for centuries.¹ The Soviets felt obliged to do this as compensation to Poland for the loss of those parts of Poland marked for absorption into the USSR. In effect the USSR was picking up the old Polish boundaries and moving them about one hundred fifty miles to the west. In this way Stalin regained the vast swath of eastern Poland he had received when he had divided up with Poland with Hitler in 1939. Most of the more than ten million Germans who lived in the regions being annexed by the USSR and Poland were forcibly expelled from their plundered land and property, starved to death, or were killed outright.²

The Soviets wavered at first about whether to divide up the rest of occupied Germany into separate states. But Stalin apparently concluded that Moscow could have a say in the future of all of Germany and access to all of Germany's industrial production, if all the occupation zones were under a unified administration by the Four Powers (the USSR, United States, Great Britain, and France).³

¹ See R.C. Raack, "Stalin Fixes the Oder-Neisse Line," *Journal of Contemporary History*, 25 (1990): 467-88. See generally Sara Meiklejohn Terry, *Poland's Place in Europe: General Sikorski and the Origin of the Oder-Neisse Line 1939-43* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983); Piotr Wandycz, *Polish Diplomacy 1914-45: Aims and Achievements* (London: Orbis, 1988); John Wheeler-Bennett & Anthony Nicholls, *The Semblance of Peace: The Political Settlement After the Second World War* (London: Macmillan, 1972).

² See Alfred M. de Zayas, *Nemesis at Potsdam: The Anglo-Americans and the Expulsion of the Germans* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, rev. ed., 1979). The Germans had already lost some long-German territories to the Poles as a result of the Versailles treaty of 1919. To get some sense of what the Poles lost at German hands, during the horrifying occupation years of 1939-44 and earlier, see Martin Broszat, *Zweihundert Jahre Polenpolitik* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1972); and Michael Burleigh, *Germany Turns Eastwards: A Study of Ostforschung in the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

³ In March 1945 the Soviet representative to the European Advisory Commission formally declared that the Yalta plan for German dismemberment should be seen not "as a binding plan but as a possible prospect of exerting pressure on Germany to prevent it from posing a threat should other means prove insufficient." Quoted in Alexei Roshchin (a member of the Soviet EAC delegation), "The ECC [Russian

The Americans and British doubted at first whether a reunified Germany would ever be a good idea. At the Teheran conference in 1943, both Churchill and Roosevelt had leaned toward breaking up Germany into several states, and the general view favored dismemberment. As the end of the war came closer, the debate began in earnest as the American government argued during the summer and fall of 1944 over how to treat Germany after the war was over.

Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau, backed by President Roosevelt, called for a harsh occupation that would divide and dismember Germany, summarily execute war criminals, and turn the Ruhr into a pastoral region. Roosevelt himself believed that: "We have got to be tough with Germany, and I mean the German people not just Nazis. We either have to castrate the German people or you have got to treat them in such manner so they can't just go on reproducing people who want to continue the way they have in the past."⁴

The 'Morgenthau Plan' was approved by Roosevelt and presented to the British at the Quebec Conference in September 1944 and Churchill endorsed it, though he worried about whether Britain was chaining itself "to a dead Hun."⁵ There had been debates in London similar to those in Washington. Still, many in the British

transliteration of EAC] and the German Problem at the End of the War," International Affairs [Moscow], January 1992, p. 94. See Walter Laqueur, Russia and Germany: A Century of Conflict (Boston: Little, Brown, 1965), pp. 271, 274-75; Vojtech Mastny, Russia's Road to the Cold War: Diplomacy, Warfare and the Politics of Communism (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), pp. 150, 233-37; Walrab von Buttlar, Ziele und Zielkonflikte der sowjetischen Deutschlandpolitik 1945-1947 (Stuttgart: Klett Cotta, 1980); Adam Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence: Soviet Foreign Policy 1917-73 (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 2d ed., 1974), p. 370.

⁴ On the debate over the Morgenthau Plan, see John Morton Blum, From the Morgenthau Diaries: Years of War, 1941-1945 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967), pp. 343-69; Warren Kimball, Swords or Ploughshares?: The Morgenthau Plan for Defeated Nazi Germany, 1943-1946 (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1976), pp. 25-34. The term "pastoral" or "pastoralization" actually came later from Churchill, according to Morgenthau. Kimball, Swords or Ploughshares?, p. 40. The Roosevelt quotation is from Robert Dallek, Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 472. For the State Department's interpretation of Roosevelt's views, see Hull to Roosevelt, 20 Sep 44, in Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States [hereinafter FRUS] 1944, vol. 1, pp. 344-46; SecState to London, 10 Oct 44, in *ibid.*, pp. 352-54.

⁵ On treatment of postwar Germany at the Quebec conference, see FRUS, The Quebec Conference, 1944, pp. 48-159; the Churchill quote is from Dallek, Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, pp. 474-77.

government favored dismembering Germany, including both the future prime minister (Attlee) and the future foreign minister (Bevin) as both joined the debate inside Churchill's national unity government.⁶

Dividing Germany into military zones of occupation put off a final decision about dismemberment without precluding this solution. These plans for temporary occupation zones, drawn up by working-level officials in a European Advisory Commission, were generally approved by Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin at the Yalta conference in February 1945. The Yalta Protocols included a section entitled "Dismemberment of Germany," establishing a committee to study the intended vivisection.⁷

Behind the scenes at Yalta all the Allied leaders at Yalta were growing more uneasy about the goal of "dismemberment." Churchill still supported the principle but, like his foreign secretary, Anthony Eden, thought German strength would be needed as a counterweight to Soviet power. Roosevelt said he still thought the division of Germany into five or seven states was a good idea, but did not pursue the idea with any enthusiasm. Stalin was reticent.⁸ After elements of the Morgenthau Plan leaked to the press and aroused a strong negative public reaction in America and

⁶ Anne Deighton, The Impossible Peace: Britain, the Division of Germany and the Origins of the Cold War (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), pp. 18-23; see also Josef Foschepoth, "British Interest in the Division of Germany after the Second World War," Journal of Contemporary History, 21 (July 1986): 391-411.

⁷ Yalta conference, Protocol of Proceedings, Section III, reprinted in Department of State, A Decade of American Foreign Policy: Basic Documents, 1941-1949 (Revised Edition) (Washington, DC: Department of State, 1985), p. 25. Though there is still controversy about Roosevelt's policies at Yalta, there is less dispute about the tentative intentions still being formed for postwar Germany. Among the more recent literature see generally Russell D. Buhite, Decisions at Yalta: An Appraisal of Summit Diplomacy (Wilmington, Del.: 1986); Robin Edmonds, The Big Three: Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin in Peace and War (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1991); Hermann Graml, Die Alliierten und die Teilung Deutschlands: Konflikte und Entscheidungen, 1941-1948 (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch, 1985).

⁸ See Charles E. Bohlen, Witness to History 1929-1969 (New York: W.W. Norton, 1973), p. 183; Bohlen minutes of 2d plenary meeting, 5 Feb 45, Livadia Palace, in FRUS, The Conferences at Malta and Yalta, 1945, pp. 612-16 and Matthews minutes for same meeting, ibid., pp. 624-30. On Soviet motivations see also Grew to Stettinius, 7 Feb 45, in ibid., pp. 956-57. Summarizing how Yalta put off rather than resolved key questions about Germany is Wilfried Loth, "Alternativen zum Kalten Krieg? - Rueckblick auf den Beginn des Ost-West Konfliktes nach diesem Ende," Leviathan, 18 (1990): 65-79.

as FDR became more concerned about Soviet actions in Eastern Europe, Roosevelt began backing away from seeking a Carthaginian peace with Germany.⁹

After Roosevelt's death in April 1945, absent any clear guidance from the new president, Harry Truman, the goal of dismemberment dropped out of the formal directive guiding the American military occupation. The tone of the directive remained harsh, however. It sharply limited any German political activity, ordered the decentralization of German political structures, and only hinted at the possibility of some "eventual reconstruction of German political life on a democratic basis."¹⁰

After Germany surrendered unconditionally, the United States, Great Britain, France, and the Soviet Union (the "Four Powers") formally announced in June 1945 that they had assumed "supreme authority with respect to Germany, including all the powers possessed by the German government"¹¹ In assuming supreme authority the victors said nothing about Germany's future. Leaders of three of the Four Powers (France was left out) soon gathered in the defeated nation at the city of Potsdam, on the outskirts of Berlin, to consider Germany's fate.

Once again, however, the victors put off any decision about the future political shape or territory of a German state. There was little discussion of Germany's political future at Potsdam beyond the question of how to extirpate Nazism. The

⁹ See Blum, From the Morgenthau Diaries, pp. 375-83; Division of Central European Affairs for Hull, 26 Dec 44, in FRUS 1944, vol. I, pp. 425-26.

¹⁰ JCS 1067 [actually JCS 1067/8], "Directive to the Commander-in-Chief of the United States Forces of Occupation Regarding the Military Government of Germany," May 10, 1945, reprinted in Department of State, Documents on Germany 1944-1985 (Washington, DC: Department of State, 4th ed., 1986), p. 18. For more on JCS 1067 see Robert Murphy (political adviser to the American military government), Diplomat Among Warriors (New York: Pyramid Books, 1965), pp. 317-20; and Blum, From the Morgenthau Diaries, pp. 383-90; John Gimbel, The American Occupation of Germany: Politics and the Military, 1945-1949 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1968), pp. 1-16; Kimball, Swords or Ploughshares?, pp. 44-50.

¹¹ Declaration Regarding the Defeat of Germany and the Assumption of Supreme Authority with Respect to Germany, 60 Stat. 1649, TIAS No. 1520, 68 UNTS 189 (June 5, 1945). This assumption of supreme authority was suspended in October 1990, when Germany unified, but was finally relinquished only when the Final Settlement on Germany entered into force with deposit of the Soviet Union's instrument of ratification, in March 1991.

communiqué simply said that the German people should "be given the opportunity to prepare for the eventual reconstruction of their life on a democratic and peaceful basis." The Foreign Ministers' protocol at the Conference added that this reconstruction could be aided by encouraging decentralization of the political structure and the development of local responsibility.¹²

The United States and Great Britain told the Soviets they could not agree to Polish annexation of the Soviet-occupied portion of Germany east of the Oder-western Neisse line. But they reluctantly went along with provisional Polish administration of this territory with the understanding that "the final delimitation of the western frontier of Poland should await the peace settlement."¹³ This peace conference was never convened. The absence of any formal approval for the Polish annexation of these territories festered, but the elimination of most German settlement and repopulation of the region with Poles created a fait accompli. Stalin was offering both a chilling assessment and a prophecy when he bluntly answered British foreign minister Ernest Bevin's complaints by saying "there were not many Germans left in the territories which had been taken from Germany." To Stalin the territorial issue was settled, and any German effort attempt to reopen it would be forcibly repelled.¹⁴

After Potsdam the four occupying powers in Germany planned to work on a draft peace treaty they would present to the Germans. The process, the 1945 predecessor for the Two Plus Four negotiating forum created in 1990, was called the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM). While the CFM worked on the treaty the occupiers would work together in administering Germany through an Allied Control Council made up of their military governors. The Council's work would have been

¹² See Communique of the Tripartite Conference of Berlin [Potsdam], August 1, 1945, in Department of State, FRUS, The Conference of Berlin, 1945, vol. 2, pp. 1482-83. See generally Herbert Feis, Between War and Peace: The Potsdam Conference (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960); Charles L. Mee, Jr., Meeting At Potsdam (New York: 1975).

¹³ Communique of the Tripartite Conference of Berlin, article VIII(B), in FRUS, The Conference of Berlin, 1945.

¹⁴ British memorandum of conversation from Bevin's March 24, 1947 meeting with Stalin, reprinted in FRUS 1947, vol. 3, p. 279.

Council made up of their military governors. The Council's work would have been difficult under the best of circumstances. But the victors not only suffered from indecision about the shape of a future German state. They could not agree on how the occupation should be run. Their disputes stemmed, first and foremost, from disagreements about how to rebuild and exploit the German economy.

At Potsdam the interest in dismembering Germany took second place to economic necessities. The Germans needed food, shelter, and fuel. Everyone could see an interest in working together on economic administration. The Soviets and French wanted to be able to extract reparations from any zone which could yield them. So it was agreed at Potsdam that Germany would be administered as a "single economic unit."¹⁵

The need for this economic coordination, rather than political generosity, finally drove the Americans and British decisively away from their earlier flirtation with a dismemberment of Germany. Though initial occupation policy had expressly prohibited any economic rehabilitation of Germany or any measures to "maintain or strengthen the German economy,"¹⁶ necessity drove the occupation authorities and also convinced Truman to seek some restoration of German economic viability, if just to ease the burden on their own resources. American officials were receiving frequent warnings of impending starvation, people freezing for lack of fuel, and a Europe-wide danger of economic collapse and political chaos.¹⁷

¹⁵ Tripartite Communiqué, Article II(B)(14), FRUS, The Berlin Conference, 1945, vol. 2, p. 1504.

¹⁶ JCS 1067/8, paras 5(a), 16, in Documents on Germany, p. 23.

¹⁷ On this issue and the overall approach of the American military government in Germany, see John Backer, Winds of History: The German Years of Lucius DuBignon Clay (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1983), pp. 54-55, 64-68; John Lewis Gaddis, The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), pp. 121-25; Paul Hammond, "Directives for the Occupation of Germany: The Washington Controversy," in Harold Stein, ed., American Civil-Military Decisions: A Book of Case Studies (Birmingham: University of Alabama Press, 1963); Elisabeth Kraus, Ministerien fuer ganz Deutschland? Der Allierte Kontrollrat und die Frage gesamtdeutscher Zentralverwaltungen (Muenchen: 1990); Wolfgang Krieger, General Lucius D. Clay und die amerikanische Deutschlandpolitik 1945-1949 (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1987); Melvyn P. Leffler, A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), pp. 63-67; Steven Rearden, "American Policy Toward Germany, 1944-1946," (Ph.D. diss., Harvard

At the Potsdam conference Secretary of War Henry Stimson advised President Truman that, aside from the conclusion of the Pacific war, Germany's economic health should be his top priority.¹⁸ This faction favoring reconstruction of the German economy helped convince Truman to reject proposals made at Potsdam for detaching the Ruhr and Rhineland from Germany.¹⁹ When Britain's new foreign minister, Ernest Bevin, arrived at Potsdam in the middle of the discussions and was briefed on the state of affairs, he was told that "whatever the de facto result of dividing Germany into zones of occupation will be, the idea of planned and deliberate dismemberment is dead."²⁰

The same concerns about sheltering some German coal production for German use also led the Americans to begin resisting Soviet and French pressure to demand greater reparations from the Germans. But the Americans were not against reparations per se, they thought they were just being practical in trying to limit the size of these claims. By the spring of 1946 the Americans were also willing to transfer the industrial wealth of the Saar to France if that would only insure French cooperation in other issues of economic management. The French opposed centralized economic coordination and wanted to detach the Ruhr, the Rhineland, and

University, 1974); Thilo Vogelsang, "Die Bemuehungen um eine deutsche Zentralverwaltung 1945-46," Vierteljahrsschafte fuer Zeitgeschichte, 18 (October 1970).

¹⁸ See, e.g., Stimson to Truman, 16 Jul 45, in FRUS, The Conference of Berlin, vol. 2, p. 754. Stimson drafted this memo with help from then assistant secretary of war John McCloy and argued it personally with Truman's new Secretary of State, James Byrnes.

¹⁹ The French (with some support from Britain and within the U.S. government) had taken the lead in suggesting that the Ruhr be detached from Germany. See generally Rolf Steininger, ed., Die Ruhrfrage 1945-1946 und die Entstehung des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen: Britische, franzoesische und amerikanische Akten (Duesseldorf: Droste, 1988). Stalin urged instead that the Ruhr be kept with Germany but under Allied occupation control. The Soviets made it clear at Potsdam that in this way they expected the Ruhr to be reserved for exploitation in the form of German reparations to the Soviet Union. Stalin would have known that, once detached from Germany, the Ruhr would be separated from Germany's moral liabilities and thus be unavailable for such exploitation. Truman, advised to consider the entirely different priority of protecting Germany's future economic health, was therefore able to join with Stalin in a plenary session on July 31 to resist the British proposal (made in part on behalf of the French, who were not present at Potsdam) to split the Ruhr or Rhineland off from Germany. See, e.g., FRUS, Conference of Berlin, vol. 2, pp. 535-536, 990-1000.

²⁰ Harrison to Bevin, July 30, 1945, quoted in Deighton, The Impossible Peace, p. 33.

the Saar from Germany, annexing them if possible directly into France.²¹

Given the divisions over economic policy, compounding problems of divergent attitudes toward politics and the organization of society in their zones, the Allied Control Council of military governors could not agree upon even basic measures for the political, economic, or social reorganization of occupied Germany. It certainly could not implement the Potsdam mandate to administer Germany as a "single economic unit."²² In May 1946, frustrated (especially with the French) and lacking guidance from above on how to break the stalemate, General Clay suspended all reparations shipments out of the US zone of occupation in order to "force a decision on German economic unity."²³

²¹ See Backer, Winds of Change, pp. 64-68, 109-111; Ulrich Pohlmann, Die Saarfrage und die Allierten 1942-1948 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1993), pp. 71-154; Vogelsang, "Die Bemühungen um eine deutsche Zentralverwaltung," pp. 514, 517. See, e.g., message from Paris (Caffery), 3 Nov 45, in FRUS 1945, vol. 3, pp. 890-91; and exchanges in FRUS 1945, vol. 3, pp. 861-925. War Department officials who, like General Clay, were increasingly preoccupied with the viability of the occupation zone it was their responsibility to administer and frustrated with the French began to clash with the State Department. State's officials had no desire to apply pressure against DeGaulle's government which faced a Communist Party that, in October 1945, had won 26% of the vote and become France's largest political party. The problem became even harder when De Gaulle resigned in January 1946, replaced by a coalition government which gave a third of its ministries to the Communists. See Heike Bunger, "A New Perspective on French-American Relations during the Occupation of Germany, 1945-1948: Behind-the-Scenes Diplomatic Bargaining and the Zonal Merger," Diplomatic History, 18 (Summer 1994): 333, 335-341.

²² Good historical surveys of the occupation period include Theodor Eschenburg, Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, vol. 1, Jahre der Besatzung (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1983); Backer, Winds of Change; John H. Backer, The Decision to Divide Germany: American Foreign Policy in Transition (Durham: Duke University Press, 1978); Michael Balfour & John Mair, Four Power Control in Germany and Austria, 1945-1946 (London: Oxford University Press, 1956); John Gimbel, The American Occupation of Germany: Politics and the Military, 1945-1949 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1968); Hans-Peter Schwarz, Vom Reich zur Bundesrepublik: Deutschland im Widerstreit der aussenpolitischen Konzeptionen in den Jahren der Besatzungsherrschaft 1945-1949 (Berlin: 1966); Rolf Steininger & Josef Foschepoth, Die Britische Deutschland und Besatzungspolitik 1945-1949, tr. Scott Langhorst (London: German Historical Institute, 1984); Ian Turner, ed., Reconstruction in Post-War Germany: British Occupation Policy in the Western Zones, 1945-55 (Oxford: Berg, 1989); Roy Willis, The French in Germany, 1945-1949 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962); Harold Zink (official historian of the US military government), The United States in Germany 1944-1955 (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1957); and, for major memoirs, Lucius D. Clay, Decision in Germany (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1950); Murphy, Diplomat Among Warriors.

²³ See FRUS 1946, vol. 5, pp. 547-549; Clay, Decision in Germany, p. 122; Gimbel, The American Occupation of Germany, pp. 52-70; Backer, Winds of Change, pp. 122-128; John Gimbel, "On the Implementation of the Potsdam Agreement," Political Science Quarterly, 87 (June 1972): 242-269.

political or security issues. The Americans were indeed ready to go very far to accommodate Soviet and French fears of a revival of German military power. In the fall of 1945 Secretary of State James Byrnes adopted the strategy of trying to strengthen US-Soviet cooperation on Germany by offering to trade security assurances for economic cooperation. The State Department even considered offering to divide Europe openly into Soviet and Western spheres of influence, thus conceding Soviet primacy in Eastern Europe. This idea seemed unappealing because, as a practical matter, this would help Moscow consolidate control over Eastern Europe while offering no guarantee against Communist subversion of Europe's western half too.²⁴ But one alternative was to offer to cooperate in keeping Germany disarmed and weak.

At the London CFM meeting in 1945, Byrnes suggested a Four Power treaty to keep Germany disarmed for twenty-five years. He presented this idea again, directly to Stalin, in December 1945. Stalin welcomed the idea. So Byrnes tabled a formal draft treaty at the Paris CFM meeting in May 1946. The treaty provided for quadripartite (i.e., Four Power) control over and enforcement of total German disarmament. The Treaty of Versailles after World War I had permitted the Germans to maintain a small army of 100,000 troops. The American draft was even harsher. Its terms were clear: "No German military or para-military organization in any form or guise shall be permitted in Germany." (Article I(c)) The treaty did not require German assent, and would come into force once the Four Powers had ratified their agreement to it.²⁵

The British went along grudgingly with the Byrnes disarmament proposal, hoping the idea might at least become a device to keep American troops in Germany to enforce the plan. The Soviets, however, displayed little interest in the treaty.

²⁴ See John Lewis Gaddis, "The United States and the Question of a Sphere of Influence in Europe, 1945-1949," in Olav Riste, ed., Western Security: The Formative Years (Oslo: Norwegian University Press, 1985), p. 63-65.

²⁵ Draft Treaty on the Disarmament and Demilitarization of Germany, submitted by the U.S. to the CFM, April 29, 1946, in Documents on Germany, pp. 79-82. See also John Gimbel, "Die Vereinigten Staaten, Frankreich und der amerikanische Vertragssentwurf zur Entmilitarisierung Deutschlands," Vierteljahrsschfe fuer Zeitgeschichte, 22 (July 1974): 258-286.

They were certainly unwilling to offer any economic concessions in exchange for it. Byrnes, advised to seek a showdown over economic management of Germany, vacillated. The first session of the Paris talks, plagued by poor consultations between the Western allies, collapsed amid bickering principally between the British and the Russians.²⁶ Then came Clay's unilateral cutoff of reparations deliveries out of the U.S. zone.

According to new evidence from the Soviet archives, Soviet officials thought the Byrnes treaty did not go far enough. The disarmament positions themselves were too narrow for them since they dealt only with military disarmament and demilitarization. Soviet authorities in Germany warned their foreign ministry that only the complete political reorganization of Germany in accordance with Moscow's preferences. The treaty might be an excuse to end the military occupation of Germany before Germany had thus been properly "democratized." "We cannot," the Soviet marshals and their political adviser reported, "allow the matter of genuine disarmament and democratization of Germany to stop half-way."²⁷

Stalin indeed seemed to have a clearer idea of what he wanted than any of his counterparts, except possibly the French. The Soviets had gained the partial dismemberment of Germany they sought. Their position in their own zone was unchallenged, with complete autonomy to take what they wished and organize the society they preferred.²⁸ They meanwhile retained a good deal of influence over the

²⁶ See Report of Secretary Byrnes on the First Part of the Second CFM Meeting, Paris, May 20, 1946, in Documents on Germany, pp. 85-86; James F. Byrnes, Speaking Frankly (New York: Harper, 1947), pp. 125, 171-76; see also FRUS 1946, vol. II (Council of Foreign Ministers); Clay, Decision in Germany, pp. 122-32; Gimbel, The American Occupation of Germany, pp. 71-74; Murphy, Diplomat Among Warriors, p. 340. On the British view of the Byrnes proposal, the poor consultations, and the animosity toward the Soviets (colored by the personal loathing Bevin felt for Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov), see Deighton, The Impossible Peace, pp. 84-89.

²⁷ Message from Marshals Zhukov and Sokolovsky and political adviser V. Semenov to Moscow, quoted in Mikhail Narinsky, "Soviet Foreign Policy and the Origins of the Cold War," in Gabriel Gorodetsky, Soviet Foreign Policy 1917-1991: A Retrospective (London: Frank Cass, 1994), p. 106.

²⁸ See Martin McCauley, "Deutsche Politik unter sowjetischer Besatzung," (tr. Josef Foschepoth), in Josef Foschepoth, ed., Kalter Krieg und Deutsche Frage: Deutschland im Widerstreit der Mächte 1945-1952 (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985), p. 291.

society they preferred.²⁸ They meanwhile retained a good deal of influence over the Western zones too, including partial control over the Ruhr and a Western obligation to supply prodigious reparations, a Soviet lien on all German industrial growth. The Allied Control Council was breaking down, true, but the French -- not the Soviets -- were getting most of the blame. The Western allies were quarreling with each other. The Germans in the Western zones were starving.²⁹ The Communists in France were close to winning full power.

As for security, what more did Moscow need? German disarmament had already been promised at Potsdam; the possibility of some new German army seemed remote. Roosevelt had said at Yalta that American troops would be withdrawn from Europe within two years after the war's end. The pace of U.S. withdrawals seemed to match this prediction. Certainly the British feared the Americans might withdraw their forces soon.³⁰ So the Soviets may have believed that they only needed to wait cautiously and they would watch Western control over its half of Germany unravel without bothering to make deals with Byrnes or Bevin.³¹

²⁸ See Martin McCauley, "Deutsche Politik unter sowjetischer Besatzung," (tr. Josef Foschepoth), in Josef Foschepoth, ed., Kalter Krieg und Deutsche Frage: Deutschland im Widerstreit der Mächte 1945-1952 (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985), p. 291.

²⁹ "In the middle of 1946 the average weight for men in the American zone of occupation -- where food was the most plentiful -- was 112 pounds." Dennis L. Bark & David R. Gress, From Shadow to Substance 1945-1963 (Oxford: Blackwell, 2d ed., 1993), p. 130.

³⁰ On British fears see, e.g., Deighton, The Impossible Peace, p. 85. The Soviets, through their well-placed agents in London, would have known of these British fears. *Ibid.*

³¹ This speculative portrait of Soviet motivations during 1945-46 draws upon the hypotheses offered in Timothy Dunmore, Soviet Politics, 1945-1953 (London: Macmillan, 1983); Charles Gati, Hungary and the Soviet Bloc (Durham: Duke University Press, 1986), pp. 14-23; Mastny, Russia's Road to the Cold War, esp. pp. 305-313; Gavriel Ra'anana, International Policy Formation in the U.S.S.R.: Factional "Debates" During the Zhdanovschina (Hamden: Archon, 1983); Albert Resis, Stalin, the Politburo, and the Onset of the Cold War, 1945-1946 (Pittsburgh: Center for Russian and East European Studies, 1988); William Taubman, Stalin's American Policy: From Entente to Detente to Cold War (New York: Norton, 1982), pp. 99-165; Adam Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence: Soviet Foreign Policy 1917-73 (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 2d ed., 1974), p. 391; and Thomas Wolfe, Soviet Power and Europe 1945-1970 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970), pp. 14-15. For a close look at the apparent all-German aspirations embodied in the Communist-front political party (the SED) created in the Soviet zone of occupation, see Dietrich Geyer, "Deutschland als Problem der sowjetischen Europapolitik am Ende des Zweiten Weltkriegs," in Josef Foschepoth, ed., Kalter Krieg und Deutsche Frage: Deutschland im Widerstreit der Mächte, 1945-1952 (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985), pp. 50-65.

Neither the Americans nor the British, by contrast, had been able to define their national interests with respect to Germany's future. So neither government had formulated clear operational objectives or developed suitable policy designs to achieve them. They were drifting. An official historian with the American military government recalled that "for about a year following the German capitulation it was virtually impossible to get the White House to give attention to policy matters relating to Germany." This neglect, he added, mirrored the "almost complete indifference on the part of the American people or of American political leaders to the problem of the occupation of Germany."³² The Truman administration itself was not doing well during its first year. As Melvyn Leffler has observed, "officials in Washington could not sort out priorities among their foreign policy goals and could not choose between domestic and international objectives."³³

The West Finally Develops a German Policy, 1946-1948

One reason Washington could not make up its mind about Germany was because it had not made up its mind about the Soviet Union. By the middle of 1946,

conflict with England over the Anglo-American "division of the world," and American reliance on intimidation of Moscow through world capital and the saber rattling rather than a direct threat of war. The message strongly reinforces interpretations (such as Ra'anan, International Policy Formation) that see Soviet foreign policy as driven by internal ideological debates more than by external events, and sees the dominant line in 1945-46 as being one of consolidation and relative caution. A year later, with the party line having changed to a more aggressive effort to destabilize the West, Novikov and this message were being condemned for having been too moderate. See Kenneth M. Jensen, ed., Origins of the Cold War: The Novikov, Kennan, and Roberts 'Long Telegrams' of 1946 (Washington: U.S. Institute of Peace, 2d ed., 1993), pp. 3-16 and the commentaries by Viktor L. Mal'kov (pp. 75-77), Melvyn Leffler (pp. 81-87) and Steven Miner. Miner points out how little Soviet diplomats at this time attended to or even understood the outside world (pp. 93-94). Mal'kov, who had access to the Soviet archives, observes that, "ideology was rapidly becoming the dominant factor shaping Soviet thinking in the years following the end of the war. A preconceived ideological schema began to imprison the Soviet diplomatic service This 'blinkering' of thought guided even the hand of Molotov, and is shown by the series of underlinings he made in the text of Novikov's dispatch." Ibid., p. 75.

³² Zink, The United States in Germany, p. 89.

³³ Leffler, A Preponderance of Power, p. 104. The British were only slightly better off (again with a government in its first year of office). Though the British had little confidence in American diplomacy, officials in London knew that "Britain had not put up a good performance" at the Paris CFM meeting. Deighton, The Impossible Peace, p. 89.

though, an anti-Soviet consensus began to take shape among top officials, starting with the President himself. Truman had been growing more angry and frustrated with Soviet behavior for months. The May 1946 failure of the CFM meeting in Paris and Soviet disinterest in Byrnes' disarmament proposal seemed to confirm the warnings of those who were pessimistic about possibilities for cooperation with the Soviets. In the summer of 1946 a consensus began to emerge within the administration that began to interpret Soviet behavior as part of an opportunistic plan to bring about communist control throughout Europe, and the world. An outright Soviet invasion was not feared, but communist political subversion was, given the economic deprivation and political unrest found throughout the continent.³⁴

The British government needed no convincing about the Soviet threat. Officials in London had been wary of the Soviet danger since the end of the war and

³⁴ The consensus was reflected in an interagency report prepared for Truman in July 1946 by two of his staffers, Clark Clifford and George Elsey, reprinted in Arthur Krock, Memoirs: Sixty Years on the Firing Line (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1968), pp. 417-82. The report was strongly influenced by an analysis sent earlier in the year from Moscow by American diplomat George Kennan. Kennan's famous "long telegram" is reprinted as an appendix in Kennan's, Memoirs 1925-1950 (New York: Random House, 1967). On the evolution of American policy and the perception of the Soviets in the first half of 1946, see John Lewis Gaddis, The Long Peace: Inquiries Into the History of the Cold War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 20-47; Fraser Harbutt, The Iron Curtain: Churchill, America and the Origins of the Cold War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 179-223; Bruce R. Kuniholm, The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East: Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Turkey, and Greece (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980); Deborah Welch Larson, Origins of Containment: A Psychological Explanation (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985); Leffler, A Preponderance of Power, pp. 106-11, 130-38; Hugh Thomas, Armed Truce: The Beginnings of the Cold War, 1945-6 (New York: Athenaeum, 1987); and Daniel Yergin, Shattered Peace: The Origins of the Cold War and the National Security State (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977), pp. 174-92.

The most recent major interpretation of U.S. behavior, by Melvyn Leffler, argues that the fearful American assessment of Soviet intentions was too simplistic. Whether or not this conclusion is fair, Leffler goes a sentence too far in arguing that the emerging anti-Soviet consensus helped decisionmakers decide that economic recovery for Europe and Germany was more important "than catering to Soviet demands for reparations or allaying its concerns about its security. So cognitive dissonance was reduced and choices made easier by attributing to the Russians the most malevolent of motives and the most sinister of goals and by denying that their grievances had any legitimacy." A Preponderance of Power, p. 121. This final conclusion simply cannot be reconciled with the origins or content of the proposed treaty for German disarmament which Byrnes repeatedly offered in 1945 and 1946. Nor does Leffler offer any economic analysis of the "legitimacy" of the particular Soviet reparations demands being made in 1946. In 1945-46 it is hard to identify any significant Soviet security concern in Germany that the Americans were not willing to address.

thought the Americans were too slow to see it.³⁵ The British, like the Americans, also worried about economic chaos and even mass starvation. The British Joint Planning Staff anticipated a complete breakdown of law and order in the British zone of occupation in Germany if food rations were cut again.³⁶ Both governments now recognized that their national interests plainly required German economic recovery, even if this preference cut against the Potsdam mandate to seek Four Power cooperation with the Soviets.

When the Paris CFM meeting resumed in July 1946 the British were first off the mark with proposals to develop a coherent policy on Germany. They had concrete operational objectives and a strategic theory. The objectives were to achieve the fullest possible interzonal distribution of available goods, with any surplus being exported for hard currency. Reparations were out. Their theory of persuasion was to warn that if others could not join in these objectives then Britain would abandon cooperative economic planning and adopt a new unilateral approach, organizing its own zone economically to achieve the new targets. In a hasty response to this ultimatum, U.S. Secretary of State Byrnes offered joint economic administration of the American zone with any other zone that was prepared for real integration for treatment as a "single economic unit."³⁷

The British and American zones were thereafter combined for economic

³⁵ See Peter G. Boyle, "The British Foreign Office View of Soviet-American Relations, 1945-46," Diplomatic History, 3 (Summer 1979): 307-320.

³⁶ On the American fears, see Leffler, A Policy of Preponderance, p. 101; for the British ones see Deighton, The Impossible Peace, p. 91.

³⁷ See U.S. Delegation Record, CFM, 2d session, 40th mtg, Paris, 11 Jul 46, FRUS 1946, vol. II, pp. 897-98; Deighton, The Impossible Peace, pp. 92-102; John Gimbel, The Origins of the Marshall Plan (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976), p. 109; Sean Greenwood, "Bevin, the Ruhr, and the Division of Germany: August 1945-December 1946," Historical Journal, 29 (March 1986): 203-12. American officials, like British ones, had been toying with this idea for months. The War Department wanted joint economic administration with the British; so did parts of the State Department. But other officials at State, including Acheson and Clayton, were more cautious. In Paris, Byrnes had still not made a decision about how to proceed. But, increasingly angry about Molotov's reparations demands, Byrnes was ready to react when Bevin threw down the gauntlet. On the internal debates within Washington, see Walt W. Rostow, The Division of Europe After World War II: 1946 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), pp. 38-62, 94-133.

administration into the "Bizone." This shift in strategy from Four Power cooperation to Western collaboration was a turning point in the eventual division of Germany.³⁸

Byrnes then gave a clear explanation of America's new policy toward Germany. Speaking in Stuttgart in September 1946 he explained that the Four Power Allied Control Council was "neither governing Germany nor allowing Germany to govern itself." Now America sought the "maximum possible" economic unification to allow Germany to achieve self-sustaining economic recovery. Germans should also, he announced, "now be given the primary responsibility for the running of their own affairs" with "proper safeguards." Further, he reassured Germans and America's allies that "as long as there is an occupation army in Germany [i.e., Soviet forces], American armed forces will be part of that occupation army."³⁹ As Byrnes was replaced by General George Marshall at the beginning of 1947, American foreign policy acquired even more vigor, and Marshall surrounded himself with an outstanding group of subordinates.⁴⁰

Marshall himself was not yet ready to abandon the strategy of Four Power cooperation in economic administration. He journeyed to the next CFM meeting, in

³⁸ See Statement by the American Military Governor [General Clay] Before the Allied Control Council Respecting Economic Unity Among the Four Zones of Occupation, July 20, 1946; Memorandum of Agreement between the U.S. and U.K. on Economic Fusion of Their Respective Zones of Occupation in Germany, December 2, 1946, both in Documents on Germany, pp. 90-91, 110-13. See also Clay, Decision in Germany, pp. 163-83; Gimbel, The American Occupation of Germany, pp. 80-85, 111-29; John Gimbel, "Byrnes und die Bizone: Eine amerikanische Entscheidung zur Teilung Deutschlands?", in Wolfgang Benz & Hermann Graml, eds., Aspekte deutscher Außenpolitik im 20. Jahrhundert (Stuttgart: 1976).

³⁹ Address by Secretary Byrnes, Stuttgart, September 6, 1946, in Documents on Germany, pp. 94-96. The address was strongly influenced by the views of General Clay, who reacted quickly to the opening offered by the Anglo-American convergence in Paris. See Backer, Winds of History, pp. 114-36; Hans-Dieter Kreikamp, "Die amerikanische Deutschlandpolitik im Herbst 1946 und die Byrnes Rede in Stuttgart," Vierteljahrsschritte fuer Zeitgeschichte, 29 (April 1981): 269-285.

⁴⁰ See Leffler, A Preponderance of Power, pp. 174-76, 178-79. The Truman administration replaced its disorganized structures for interdepartmental decisionmaking with a new statutory system of coordination capped by a National Security Council. Given Truman's leadership style, the new system still depended on leadership from cabinet officials. Here the personality of Marshall and his deputy, Robert Lovett, were critical to fashioning coherent government-wide policies during 1947 and 1948, passing a radical and expensive turnaround in policy on the American commitment to Europe through a Republican-controlled Congress, and empowering their talented subcabinet officials within the Executive Branch. See, e.g., Richard E. Neustadt, Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents: The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan (New York: Free Press, rev. ed., 1990), pp. 41-49.

Moscow during March and April of 1947, determined to insure German economic recovery but willing to renew the offer of a German disarmament treaty and suggest a plan for international control of the Ruhr.⁴¹ He hoped the same combination of ideas would finally bring the French along too and Marshall stopped in Paris en route to make his case.⁴²

In Moscow the Soviets were interested only in a deal that would take immediate reparations out of Germany's paltry current industrial production. Having probably uprooted at least a third of all the capital equipment they had found in their own zone by the spring of 1946, the Russians had chosen to stop plundering their own zone and preferred now to concentrate on getting reparations from Western Germany.⁴³

In Moscow Marshall slowly and reluctantly came to the view the British had held at the start of the conference, a view that the Soviets would not allow any solution that would let Germany become economically viable. A Germany propped up by American emergency relief would be sending reparations to Moscow. Marshall advised Truman that "we cannot accept a unified Germany under a procedure which in effect would mean that the American people would pay reparations to an ally." Marshall was, his biographer noted, "the last of the top Americans to abandon hope

⁴¹ This international control plan, developed in large part by Col. Charles Bonesteel at the War Department (Lovett later brought Bonesteel to the State Department), differed in its design and procedures from Four Power control mechanisms. Participation would not be limited to the Four Powers and it would have greater autonomy. These ideas foreshadowed the Monnet Plan developed later in the year and the subsequent creation of the European Coal and Steel Community. On U.S. discussions with French over the Ruhr issue, see FRUS 1947, vol. 2, pp. 154-55, 208-09, 682-85, 737-39. On general U.S. policy toward the fate of the Ruhr and the Saar, see *ibid.*, pp. 977-1103.

⁴² On the Moscow conference, see FRUS 1947, vol. 2, pp. 139-576.

⁴³ No hard data on the extent of Russian removals are available. Charles Kindleberger's estimates then and later of removals on a scale of at least 35-45% of capital equipment remain persuasive. The Russian policy appears to have been fruitless, however, as much of the German equipment was unusable to them from the start or was unusable by the time it was delivered back home. See Charles P. Kindleberger, "Toward the Marshall Plan: A Memoir of Policy Development in Germany (1945-1947)," in Charles Maier with Guenter Bischof, eds., The Marshall Plan and Germany: West German Development within the Framework of the European Recovery Program (New York: Berg, 1991), pp. 77-80. See generally Bruce Kuklick, American Policy and the Division of Germany: The Clash with Russia over Reparations (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972).

of being able to negotiate with the Russians."⁴⁴

Marshall seems to have thought that the Soviets were just stringing him along, trying to keep the CFM and Allied Control Council in operation but insuring that these institutions would not work. Plans for economic recovery would be confounded and political unrest would grow among the Germans in the Western zones. This was undoubtedly Bevin's view of Soviet intentions.⁴⁵ The Moscow CFM and the "offensive" Soviet behavior there also cemented the French government's conclusion that it must align itself more closely with the Americans and British, convincing French Foreign Minister Georges Bidault that "it was pointless to think of basing foreign policy on friendship with the Soviet Union."⁴⁶

On the surface it may seem puzzling why the Soviets were willing to force an East-West rupture and ignore Marshall's renewed offer of both a German disarmament treaty and long-term Soviet participation in the international control of the Ruhr, all over reparations demands that, however calculated, would have had only modest value for their economy. Perhaps they were just being foolishly obstinate. Michael Howard has observed that, "One of the most remarkable aspects of this

⁴⁴ Marshall to Truman and Lovett, 17 Mar 47, in FRUS 1947, vol. 2, pp. 256-57; Forrest Pogue, "George C. Marshall and the Marshall Plan," in Maier with Bischof, eds., The Marshall Plan and Germany, p. 49. See also Marshall to Lovett, 1 Apr 47; President Truman to Marshall, 1 Apr 47; Marshall to Acheson, 2 Apr 47; FRUS 1947, vol. 2, pp. 302, 304, 306; Kindleberger, "Toward the Marshall Plan," in Maier with Bischof, eds., The Marshall Plan and Germany, pp. 104-114. Clay, and the historians who have been persuaded by him, believed Marshall could have offered more to the Soviets on the reparations issue as the price for restoring effective Four Power administration of Germany. Though Kindleberger's economic analysis seems more persuasive (and was apparently more persuasive to Marshall at the time) see Backer, Winds of History, pp. 170-189; John H. Backer, The Decision to Divide Germany: American Foreign Policy in Transition (Durham: Duke University Press, 1978), pp. 146-70; Clay, Decision in Germany, pp. 145-54; Yergin, Shattered Peace, pp. 296-301. The British, as indicated in the text, thought Marshall was already being too patient with the Soviet demands. See Deighton, The Impossible Peace, pp. 140-57. For the text of Molotov's major statements at the Moscow CFM meeting, see V.M. Molotov, Problems of Foreign Policy: Speeches and Statements, April 1945-November 1948 (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1949), pp. 425-50.

⁴⁵ Alan Bullock, The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin: Foreign Secretary, 1945-1951 (New York: Norton, 1983), p. 391.

⁴⁶ Jacques Fremeaux & Andre Martel, "French Defense Policy 1947-1949," in Riste, Western Security, p. 94. See also Caffery (US ambassador to France) to SecState, 7 Feb 47, FRUS 1947, vol. 2, pp. 154-55; Bungert, "French-American Relations," pp. 347-348; Gimbel, The American Occupation of Germany, pp. 114, 122, 154-58.

whole period is the astonishing stupidity of Soviet policy. All the cards were in the Soviet hands if they had only cared to play them. What is more, their opponents were playing with marked cards [because of Soviet espionage].⁴⁷

Yet Soviet policy can also be explained by reference to Stalin's implacably hostile, even paranoid, view of the international system. Stalin had considered World War II and the wartime Grand Alliance to be only the first phase in the coming war between capitalism and communism. In this view the capitalist states would fight among themselves for supremacy and then turn their fire upon the Soviet Union. This was at least one reason why Stalin thought he could make a deal with Hitler in 1939, to stay on the sidelines during the first phase of the cataclysm. The German attack on the USSR exploded that illusion. Then, flushed with victory over the Nazi enemy in 1945, Stalin proceeded cautiously, unready to trigger a war with the victorious capitalists until the Soviet Union had consolidated its gains.⁴⁸

It is known that from late 1946 until 1948, during the period associated with the ascendancy of Andrei Zhdanov, Soviet anti-Western rhetoric became markedly more xenophobic. Historians admit they "know less about what went on in the Soviet Union during this period of the cold war than during any other period of Soviet history."⁴⁹

What is clear is that, perhaps for reasons motivated principally by domestic political struggles, the Soviet government began abandoning its prior caution and pressing harder to weaken Western governments. In May 1947, for example, the French communists resigned from the government and began calling for general strikes in order to destabilize the Fourth Republic. These more aggressive policies went hand in hand with new economic analyses in Moscow predicting that capitalism

⁴⁷ "Introduction," in Riste, Western Security, p. 14 (emphasis in original).

⁴⁸ See Mastny, Russia's Road to the Cold War, pp. 310-311; and, for his comments on Soviet diplomacy, Vladimir V. Shustov, "A View on the Origins of the Cold War and Some Lessons Thereof," in Geir Lundestad & Odd Arne Westad, eds., Beyond the Cold War: New Dimensions in International Relations (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1993), pp. 28-29, 32.

⁴⁹ Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence, pp. 402-03.

was about to experience a major economic crisis, and thus was vulnerable, along with an ideological line, promoted by Zhdanov, declaring that the West was readying an imminent war against the Soviet Union and so Moscow must urgently prepare for the coming conflict. East European communists have recorded their own dismay at the growing militarization of their economies in order to support large armies that could buttress Soviet defenses.⁵⁰

Within Central Europe only the East German communists could find cause for real satisfaction in this new line. By the spring of 1947 they saw that their only hope of retaining political control in the Soviet zone would be through creation of a separate East German state fully integrated into the Soviet bloc. Stalin held off on supporting their wish for this separate state as long as he could use the prospect of German unification as a bargaining chip with the West on larger issues. But when Marshall came to Moscow it is no surprise that his attempt at accommodation was seen off by Stalin and his foreign minister, Vyacheslav Molotov. According to a Russian historian with access to relevant archives, the prevailing line would have seen any American compromise or accommodation as "merely a tactical maneuver," somehow part of the West's plan for war.⁵¹

The Americans returned from Moscow determined to proceed with bizonal economic administration. The State Department then developed the Marshall Plan initiative for a comprehensive European Recovery Program. Both the Americans and British sought to give the Germans the ability to participate in the use of Marshall Plan aid. The Germans organized an Economic Council to take responsibility for economic administration in the "Bizone." This Economic Council, which met for the

⁵⁰ On the ideological rivalry as exemplified in the debate over capitalist economies and played out in policy on Germany, a picture reinforced by the fragmentary archival material to emerge from Moscow, see Gavriel Ra'anana, International Policy Formation in the USSR, pp. 62-74, 85-100. On the implications for Eastern Europe see Condoleezza Rice, The Soviet Union and the Czechoslovak Army (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984); Karel Kaplan, Der kurze Marsch: Kommunistische Machtübernahme in der Tschechoslowakei 1945-1948 (Muenchen: R. Oldenbourg, 1981).

⁵¹ Mal'kov, "Commentary," in Jensen, Origins of the Cold War, pp. 76-77. On the East German communist attitudes see Dietrich Staritz, "The SED, Stalin, and the German Question: Interests and Decision-Making in the Light of New Sources," German History, 10 (October 1992): 274, 276-278.

first time in June 1947, prefigured the future West German government.⁵²

The American decision to announce the Marshall Plan reflected a basic judgment of national interest, that a much more substantial commitment of U.S. resources was appropriate for the cause of European renewal. Decisions on the specific objectives, strategy, and design of the European Recovery Program dominated the U.S. government's attention during the rest of 1947. Two decisions in particular were important for Germany: (1) to incorporate the objective of German recovery into the Marshall Plan program (at the risk of both Soviet and French opposition) and (2) to insist on direct German participation in the program's decisionmaking structures, building on the Economic Council the Germans had created to help administer the Bizonie.⁵³

The Soviets denounced the Marshall Plan. Inside the government Molotov had been tempted to agree to the Marshall Plan offer for a few days before Stalin, backed by arguments from Zhdanov's faction, enforced the new line. The Marshall Plan was to be seen as an effort to weaken socialism and make it more vulnerable to Western attack.⁵⁴ Western policy on Germany was of course rejected as well. The next CFM meeting, held in London at the end of 1947, was a complete failure. The Soviets

⁵² See Wolfgang Benz, "Vorform des 'Weststaats': die Bizonie 1946-1949," in Eschenburg, Jahre der Besatzung, pp. 384-90; see generally Wolfgang Benz, Die Gruendung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Von der Bizonie zum souveraenen Staat (Muenchen: Deutscher Taschenbuch, 3rd ed., 1989); and the analysis of how the Economic Council and Marshall Plan later forced a political consensus upon the nascent West German political parties in Klaus Schwabe, "German Policy Responses to the Marshall Plan," in Maier with Bischof, eds., The Marshall Plan and Germany, pp. 225-281. The military government's occupation directive, JCS 1067, was formally rescinded in July 1947 and replaced with a new directive, JCS 1779, in line with the new American policy. For the text see Documents on Germany, pp. 124-35.

⁵³ Among the key strategic decisions were to pursue a European-wide program, to allocate significant roles for macroeconomic assistance as well as sectoral and humanitarian aid, to place it in a new European multilateral forum rather than the existing UN Economic Commission for Europe, and to give the Europeans significant latitude and autonomy in both defining their requirements and using the aid. See Michael J. Hogan, "European Integration and German Reintegration: Marshall Planners and the Search for Recovery and Security in Western Europe," in Maier with Bischof, eds., The Marshall Plan and Germany, pp. 115-170; and the more general accounts in Michael J. Hogan, The Marshall Plan: America, Britain and the Reconstruction of Western Europe, 1947-1952 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Joseph M. Jones, The Fifteen Weeks (New York: Harcourt, 1957); Leffler, A Preponderance of Power, pp. 159-64; Alan S. Milward, The Reconstruction of Western Europe, 1945-51 (London: Methuen, 1987).

⁵⁴ Shustov, "A View on the Origins of the Cold War," pp. 25-26.

watered down their positions on reparations and other subjects in order to tempt the West back into a Four Power process. This time the Americans, like the British, had no use for anything but a straightforward Soviet decision to cooperate in the new economic administration of Germany.⁵⁵

The Soviets sidestepped economic administration and pressed instead for joint work directly on the creation of a West German government. The Soviets treated the future political organization of Germany as a form of "genuine disarmament," in contrast to the mere military disarmament of Germany envisioned by the Byrnes/Marshall treaty. "Genuine disarmament" had to include, in this view, Four Power regulation of Germany's political and economic life, including denazification, breaking up economic cartels, and putting an end "to the Junker landowner caste." American diplomats thought the Soviet political proposals would give Moscow a unilateral veto over the character of a provisional government and were meant to open the way to communist domination of an all-German government. Recent evidence from East German archives appears to confirm that these suspicions were well founded.⁵⁶ But in any case, to Marshall, the "establishment -- even discussion of the establishment -- of a German government or other related matters is entirely unreal"

⁵⁵ On the London meeting see FRUS 1947, vol. II, pp. 676-830.

⁵⁶ Quotation is from broadcast of Izvestia article responding to Marshall report on Moscow CFM meeting, 5 May 47, reprinted in Margaret Carlyle, ed., Documents on International Affairs 1947-1948 (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 487. The Soviet treaty draft therefore included provisions to destroy or remove as reparations all industry not needed for a "peace-time economy;" liquidation of German cartels, syndicates, "and the banking monopolies controlling them" with the remaining concerns transferred to state control; democratic governance "with proper guarantees of the rights and interests of the toiling population;" land reform to transfer "to the peasants" all large landholdings; and continued military occupation of Germany until all the treaty's obligations were unanimously deemed to have been carried out. Draft treaty proposed by Molotov, 14 Apr 47, in ibid., pp. 445-49. The East Germans were pessimistic about ever being able to win a free election or hold power in an area not ruled by Soviet troops, but Stalin's proposals for an all-German government did echo some of the procedures used to communize the Soviet zone. In December 1948 Stalin told an East German party leader (Wilhelm Pieck) that it was "still too soon" for large-scale expropriations. He chided his East German colleagues about wanting to fight with "bare chests" like "Teutons." He said they should avoid "direct attacks" but "instead zigzag -- opportunistic politics toward socialism." Why? Stalin's key phrase, in the notetaker's shorthand, was, "Not yet a unified state, nor in power." Ruthless communization would complicate Soviet-sponsored agitation for a "national front" to oppose Western plans for creation of the FRG. Staritz, "The SED, Stalin, and the German Question," p. 281.

until Germany could achieve an economic recovery unhampered by the barriers of the military occupation zones.⁵⁷

Four Power cooperation in running Germany formally ended when the Soviets walked out of the Allied Control Council in March 1948. In early 1948 the Americans, British, and French (joined by the Belgians, Dutch, and Luxembourg) began negotiating, in London, the arrangements for German economic administration in all three Western zones of occupation. The West Germans saw that the administration developing from the zonal mergers would become a new state, but that this "pseudo-state" would embrace only part of Germany.⁵⁸

Operating within the general democratic principles prescribed by the Allied rulers, the new German republic took shape, led by a Christian Democrat party decisively influenced by the strongly pro-Western views of Konrad Adenauer. Adenauer's emergence was determined mainly by the Germans themselves, not by the occupation authorities.⁵⁹

The Germans similarly had a crucial role in the most important policy initiative launched in Germany during 1948. This was the June 1948 reform of the German currency, replacing the practically worthless Reichsmarks with new Deutschmarks. This event, more than any other, cleared the way for rapid German economic recovery. "No event since the capitulation of the German armies," the American occupation authorities later concluded, "has had such an impact on every

⁵⁷ Martel 77 (Marshall eyes only for Lovett to pass eyes only for Truman), 13 Dec 47, in FRUS 1947, vol. 3, pp. 769-70. For more on the contrasting American and Soviet views on the character of a future German government, see FRUS 1947, vol. II, pp. 162, 183, 201-04, 277, 305; and Backer, The Decision to Divide Germany, pp. 139-41, 147-48; Clay, Decision in Germany, pp. 84-103, 151; Gimbel, The American Occupation of Germany, pp. 36-51, 87-110, 130-46; Murphy, Diplomat Among Warriors, pp. 331-32.

⁵⁸ Theodor Eschenburg & Wolfgang Benz, "Der Weg zum Grundgesetz," in Eschenburg, Jahre der Besatzung, p. 459.

⁵⁹ See Eschenburg, Jahre der Besatzung, pp. 229-64; Benz, "Vorform des 'Weststaats,'" in ibid., pp. 413-20; Eschenburg & Benz, "Der Weg zum Grundgesetz," in ibid., pp. 459-78; Benz, Die Gruendung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland; Bark & Greiss, From Shadow to Substance, pp. 93-118. On Adenauer, see Hans-Peter Schwarz, Adenauer: Der Aufstieg, 1876-1952 (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1986). On Adenauer's version of Christian Democracy, see also Walter Laqueur, Europe In Our Time: A History 1945-1992 (New York: Penguin, 1993), pp. 133-36.

sector of German life as did the currency reform.⁶⁰

The reform also proved to be the catalyst prompting the Soviets to close off their zone to Western traffic, beginning the Berlin Blockade. The dramatic U.S.-led airlift of food, fuel and other supplies into besieged Berlin ended even the veneer of Four Power cooperation and marked a turn toward open Cold War. The blockade and airlift sealed the division of Germany and spurred the establishment of separate West German and East German states.⁶¹ Soviet policies between 1946 and 1948 cannot be judged, however, to have been a complete failure. Western objectives were defensive -- to protect their own zones of occupation. The Western policies never posed any danger to continuing Soviet control over conditions in its own zone of occupation. Soviet gains were consolidated; but they were not extended.

The Soviets could have kept Four Power control mechanisms for all of Germany alive if they had abandoned their demand for more reparations from the Western zones and cooperated in economic administration. Four Power cooperation in economic administration would not have reversed the Communist domination of politics and society in the Soviet zone. It would not have brought the free market to eastern Germany. A Soviet move at the Moscow CFM in April 1947 to allow state-

⁶⁰ July 1948 report quoted in Bark & Gress, From Shadow to Substance, p. 202. On the currency reform, and how it was a prerequisite for the success of the Marshall Plan in Germany, see Christoph Buchheim, "Marshall Plan and Currency Reform," in Jeffry M. Diefendorf, Axel Frohn, and Hermann-Josef Rupieper, eds., American Policy and the Reconstruction of West Germany, 1945-1955 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 69-84; Christoph Buchheim, "Die Währungsreform 1948 in Westdeutschland," Vierteljahrsschfe fuer Zeitgeschichte, 36 (1988). The design of the currency reform was strongly influenced by the then somewhat radical monetarist macroeconomics endorsed by Ludwig Erhard, the liberal Free Democratic Party's choice for director of the interzonal Economic Council. On Erhard's "Entscheidungsmonopol" and the currency reform, see Eschenburg, Jahre der Besatzung, pp. 439, 421-39; Bark & Gress, From Shadow to Substance, pp. 191-209. Erhard was influenced by a school of German economists led by Alfred Mueller-Armack, Wilhelm Roepke, Walter Eucken, Alexander Ruestow, and Franz Boehm. Their ideas strongly influenced the Mont Pelerin Society founded by Friedrich von Hayek in 1947 which included the American economists Milton Friedman and George Stigler. See Bark & Gress, From Shadow to Substance, pp. 206-09.

⁶¹ On the currency reform and the Berlin blockade, see Clay, Decision in Germany, pp. 355-92; Murphy, Diplomat Among Warriors, pp. 349-60; Uwe Prell & Lothar Wilker, Berlin-Blockade und Luftbrucke 1948/49: Analyse und Dokumentation (Berlin: Berlin Verlag, 1987); Avi Shlaim, The United States and the Berlin Blockade, 1948-1949: A Study in Crisis Decisionmaking (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983); Ann & John Tusa, The Berlin Airlift (New York: Athenaeum, 1988).

controlled barter transactions with the Western zones, along with abandonment of the demand for more reparations from the West, might well have renewed American support for the strategy of Four Power cooperation. The impasse instead caused the Soviets to lose both their share of Four Power control over all of Germany and any hope of more reparations from the West.

Thus, whether one considers the Soviet economic positions reasonable or unreasonable, Moscow's sense of priorities seems complacent, a complacency induced perhaps by the experience of the immediate postwar period. There would have been little risk for the Soviets in going along with the Western position on economic administration, and the Soviets could have strengthened their grip on all of Germany by accepting the Byrnes-Marshall plan for Four Power policing of German disarmament.

Perhaps Stalin thought in 1947 that by being patient the Western position would eventually erode from within (the Soviet version of Kennan's theory of "containment"). Perhaps Stalin was even more optimistic and thought that Communists might soon seize power in France, Italy, or the distressed Western zones of Germany. If Stalin held this latter view, influenced by its most prominent exponent -- Andrei Zhdanov, then he may have come to regret both the judgment and its symbol. Zhdanov died mysteriously in August 1948 and Zhdanov's associates were murdered at Stalin's orders during the following year.⁶² By 1949 Stalin might have grabbed for the Byrnes-Marshall proposal he spurned in 1946-47. Yet by then the proposal was no longer on the table.

"Security," German Self-Determination, and the Issue of Trust

We now reach an important turning point in the story of postwar Germany. By the beginning of 1948 any hope of Four Power cooperation in administering

⁶² On Soviet policies during the Zhdanovschina, see Franz Borkenau, European Communism (New York: Harper, 1953), pp. 519-42; Dunmore, Soviet Politics; Ra'anan, International Policy Formation; Shulman, Stalin's Foreign Policy Reappraised, pp. 14-20; Taubman, Stalin's American Policy. On Soviet calculations during the 1948-49 Berlin blockade, see Hannes Adomeit, Soviet Risk-Taking and Crisis Behavior (London: Allen and Unwin, 1982), pp. 67-182.

Germany as a single economic unit was gone. The arguments over Four Power administration, though shadowed by growing hostility between the Western countries and the USSR, had mostly concerned the problems of Germany itself. Once open East-West confrontation took center stage, all issues relating to Germany were just factors to be calculated against the broader contest for Europe, and much of the world.

British, French, and Soviet policies were clear. All three of these countries were firmly convinced that a united Germany should not come into existence unless they could be sure of two things: (1) that the united Germany would not take sides with the opposing side in the East-West split; and (2) that the united Germany would not grow again into a powerful and dangerous force in Central Europe, repeating the experience of the two world wars. If these two conditions meant that there would be no united Germany, so be it. Indeed, at least some leading figures in all three governments positively welcomed the dilution of German power through division into at least two different states.

Opinion in the American and new West German governments was less settled. Both the Americans and West Germans were only sure at first that they wanted the new German state to recover full economic and political health. The main theme of events between 1948 and 1955 is how these two governments decided that keeping West Germany in the Western bloc was more important than the search for unification. Then, having made this judgment, both governments had to decide how much they were willing to trust the German people to make the right choice (i.e., for the West) if they were ever allowed to choose their own destiny. As they made these decisions Washington and Bonn had to keep in mind that other Europeans, especially the French, believed that any revival of German power had to go hand in hand with structures that would keep this state from endangering France.

Wolfram Hanrieder has referred to the policy that emerged in these years as one of "double containment: the containment of the Soviet Union at arm's length,

and of West Germany with an embrace."⁶³ It is a fair description. But the secret to understanding the evolving nature of this American-West German embrace is by focusing on trust. The crucial questions were:

1. Do we trust the Germans enough to let them become unified again?
2. Do we trust the Germans enough to let them freely determine their own political-military alignment?
3. Do we trust the Germans enough to feel confident that their national aspirations will not threaten European peace?

These three questions were all fundamental as governments determined their national interests with respect to Germany. At any time between 1948 and 1955 the French, British, and Soviet governments would have answered all three of these questions with a firm "No." But the American and West German responses were harder to predict. On several occasions the Americans had genuine internal debates about these questions. In the German case these questions prompted wrenching self-examination about whether they could trust themselves.

The Americans struggled with these questions of trust in 1948 and 1949, as a group of officials led by George Kennan posed a basic question: Should the United States and the West Germans accept a neutral, but unified, Germany?

Kennan's 'Program A', 1948-1949

In 1948 the British and French took the first steps to ease fears about Soviet or German power by concluding new alliances. The British government sponsored creation of a Western Union, a regional mutual defense treaty that would include France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg. By the spring of 1948, after the Communist Party had seized power in Czechoslovakia in February, American leaders agreed that they would join in providing some form of military reassurance to Western Europe if the Republican Congress could be persuaded to agree. The

⁶³ Wolfram F. Hanrieder, Germany, America, Europe: Forty Years of German Foreign Policy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), p. 6.

eventual result was the North Atlantic Treaty establishing the NATO Alliance, signed in Washington in April 1949.⁶⁴

The previous summer, during the Berlin blockade, the State Department's Policy Planning Staff and its director, George Kennan, suggested that the United States make a last effort to win agreement to a unified Germany. Kennan was chairing an NSC subcommittee charged with considering Germany's future relations with its European neighbors. Rather than continuing the fruitless efforts to unify Germany under Four-Power control, Kennan suggested that the Four Powers just relinquish their control of Germany. Under his proposal, occupying forces would withdraw in phases from almost all of Germany, so that the Germans in all the former occupation zones could hold all-German elections and unify free of any Four Power (especially Soviet) coercion. Limited quadripartite garrisons would remain in place only to insure the demilitarization of Germany along the lines of the old Byrnes-Marshall disarmament treaty.⁶⁵

Only three years after the end of the war, Kennan was willing to risk allowing the German people free choice over their destiny, believing they would probably create a peaceful democracy and choose alignment with the West. But there would be no guarantee. This was a turnaround in Kennan's own thinking. For years he had thought the idea of a Germany run jointly with the Russians was "a chimera;" but until 1948 his answer was that, "we have no choice but to lead our section of Germany -- the section of which we and the British have accepted responsibility -- to a form of independence so prosperous, so secure, so superior, that the East cannot

⁶⁴ On the development of American policy toward military guarantees to Western Europe, see Timothy P. Ireland, Creating the Entangling Alliance: The Origins of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (Westport: Greenwood, 1981); Lawrence S. Kaplan, The United States and NATO: The Formative Years (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1984); Leffler, A Preponderance of Power, pp. 182-218, 280-82.

⁶⁵ See Memo from Kennan to Marshall and Lovett, "Policy Questions Concerning a Possible German Settlement," 12 Aug 48, in FRUS 1948, vol. II, pp. 1287-97. On the development of this proposal see the excellent study by Wilson D. Miscamble of George F. Kennan and the Making of American Foreign Policy, 1947-1950 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), pp. 145-47 and Anders Stephanson, Kennan and the Art of Foreign Policy (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), pp. 130-45.

a form of independence so prosperous, so secure, so superior, that the East cannot threaten it."⁶⁶

Now, in 1948, Kennan thought that letting the Germans choose their own destiny free of Four Power control was less risky than proceeding with the status quo. The status quo meant a permanent Soviet military presence in the heart of Europe amid an unstable division of the German nation. The West German government, he feared, would "become the spokesman of a resentful and defiant nationalism."⁶⁷

The remainder of the State Department disagreed with Kennan's idea when he first presented it in August 1948. The European division (Hickerson) thought Germany was not yet ready for self-government, the potential for Communist-sponsored instability was great, and the Soviet military presence -- even in the background -- would be too intimidating. Hickerson told Kennan it "would be highly dangerous to agree to unite Germany along the lines you propose until Western Europe is stronger, both economically and militarily." Other divisions of the State Department had their own worries. But Marshall urged Kennan to pursue his idea further, getting advice from outside consultants.⁶⁸

Kennan and the Policy Planning Staff convened a working group to refine 'Program A'. Backed by a prestigious group of outside consultants, Kennan then presented the refined version to Secretary Marshall in November 1948 as a contingency plan to be deployed if the US decided to "reveal plainly the terms on which we would be prepared to consent to the establishment of a German government for all of Germany and to the withdrawal of forces from most of Germany."⁶⁹

⁶⁶ George F. Kennan, Memoirs 1925-1950 (New York: Random House, 1967), p. 258; see also David Mayers, "Nazi Germany and the Future of Europe: George Kennan's Views, 1939-1945," International History Review, 3 (November 1986): 550-72.

⁶⁷ Kennan paper, untitled, 8 Mar 49, in FRUS 1949, vol. III, pp. 96-98.

⁶⁸ On departmental reaction to Kennan's proposal see FRUS 1948, vol. II, pp. 1287-88 n. 1; on Marshall's view, see Mischamble, Kennan and the Making of American Foreign Policy, p. 148.

⁶⁹ See Report by the Policy Planning Staff, "Position To Be Taken by the U.S. at a CFM Meeting," 15 Nov 48, FRUS 1948, vol. II, p. 1324; see generally Kennan, Memoirs, pp. 418-46. The consultants who backed the plan included Dean Acheson, James Conant (president of Harvard), Sarah

When Kennan presented his proposal again to Marshall, the European and Occupied Territories divisions strongly dissented, just as they had in August. Another top diplomat, Kennan's close friend Charles Bohlen, privately advised him against letting the Germans try to unify themselves. In Germany, General Clay and his political adviser, Robert Murphy, thought the idea would derail the momentum built up behind the program for creating a West German state. They also worried about the British and French reactions. Acting secretary Robert Lovett, acting in Marshall's absence, informed Kennan that his proposal should be reconsidered in light of the non-concurrences.⁷⁰

Then Kennan's plan got a new hearing. In January 1949 President Truman began a new term of office and Dean Acheson replaced Marshall as Secretary of State in the new administration. As part of the negotiations to end the Berlin blockade the United States, Britain, and France agreed to join the Soviets for another meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM), the first such session in a year and a half. As preparations for this meeting advanced, Kennan resubmitted his plan to Acheson, knowing that the new secretary had been one of the consultants who had endorsed 'Program A' the previous year.

Acheson first suggested that Kennan visit Germany, study the situation, and report his recommendations. Kennan returned and pleaded that all but the most essential occupation controls must be dropped or Germans would turn away from the West. He had some support from other officials who also thought German unification was vital to European stability, so long as Germany kept moving toward democracy and continued to join with its neighbors in the Marshall Plan's European Recovery

(treasurer of Eastman Kodak), John Hancock (of Lehman Brothers), and Charles Taft (president of the federal council of Churches of Christ). Hamilton Fish Armstrong (editor of Foreign Affairs) and Father Edmund Walsh (regent at Georgetown's School of Foreign Service) had been the only dissenters. See Miscamble, Kennan and the Making of American Foreign Policy, p. 148.

⁷⁰ See FRUS 1948, vol. II, pp. 1324, 1320 n. 1. Kennan was not entirely isolated. Paul Nitze, now heading State's Economic Affairs division, now also supported Kennan's proposal. Miscamble, Kennan and the Making of Foreign Policy, p. 154.

Program.⁷¹

Acheson was sympathetic. With Kennan's plan in mind, Acheson warned British and French ministers in Washington to complete work on the North Atlantic Treaty that the U.S. "might be preparing a model for the treatment of Germany as a whole, dim as that prospect might seem," that would keep any occupying power from paralyzing action by the others or by the Germans. Acheson recalled later, with a certain understatement, that his foreign counterparts found this "a sobering and useful thought."⁷²

After the ministers left Acheson turned again to Kennan's 'Program A.' He chaired a lengthy discussion of the idea on April 18, 1949. Two basic viewpoints emerged during this meeting, which Philip Jessup (Ambassador-at-large dealing with German issues) summarized to Acheson as:

1. It would be to our advantage to maintain the split in Germany for a rather long period of time. This would be true because Western Germany is a more manageable unit which might be integrated in Western Europe. It would not be a viable entity in itself and the attraction from the West would therefore be more potent.
2. It would be to our advantage to end the division of Germany provided that the division of Europe could be ended at the same time. This would be true because it would involve the withdrawal of the Red Army to the East.

Jessup, like Kennan, sided with proposition #2. He therefore joined Kennan in recommending that America propose 'Program A' at the CFM.⁷³

Meanwhile Charge d'Affairs Foy Kohler at the American Embassy in Moscow

⁷¹ Leffler, A Preponderance of Power, pp. 279-80.

⁷² See Dean Acheson, Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department (New York: W.W. Norton, 1969), p. 288.

⁷³ Memo from Jessup to Acheson, "Formulation of Policy for a Meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers," 19 Apr 49, in FRUS 1949, vol. III, pp. 859-60. The meeting with Acheson appears to have been attended by James Webb (Acheson's deputy), Charles Bohlen (Counselor), Kennan, Dean Rusk (Assistant Secretary for UN Affairs), and Llewellyn Thompson (deputy director of EUR). See also Miscamble, Kennan and the Making of American Foreign Policy, pp. 161-62.

influenced the Washington debate by warning that the Soviets were likely to make a dramatic move at the upcoming CFM meeting, a move that sounded a good deal like 'Program A.' The move might include substantial withdrawal of occupation forces and revival of the Byrnes/Marshall disarmament proposal. Such a Soviet plan would have the aim, it was thought, of trying to slow the development of NATO, German involvement in the Marshall Plan, and German integration in Western institutions. Kohler thought such a Soviet initiative "would clearly shake Western foreign policies to very bottom, disorient developing West public opinion and present practical problems of first magnitude."⁷⁴

The British heard about 'Program A' and were appalled. They were alarmed at the thought that America might withdraw its occupation troops from Germany, or back to a small staging area on the north German coast. Bevin wrote Acheson that West German leaders would also be gravely worried about "any arrangement for Germany as a whole which might leave the Germans at the mercy of the Soviet-organized police in the Eastern Zones and the Communists in the Western Zones, who they said had arms and were ready for a coup if the opportunity occurred." These leaders, according to Bevin, opposed withdrawal of Western occupying troops until a proper democratic state was well established and the danger from the East had abated.⁷⁵

Secretary Acheson registered the British concern but remained unconvinced. He replied to Bevin that complete withdrawal of all Four Power occupation troops would do more harm than good. But he urged that the "most careful study" be given to the possibility of regrouping occupation troops with the effect of moving Russians

⁷⁴ Moscow 1154, 6 May 49, in FRUS 1949, vol. III, pp. 864-67. The British disagreed. Their ambassador in Moscow thought the Kremlin would not risk trading its grip on East Germany for a weaker position throughout Germany. *Ibid.*, p. 867 n. 1 referring to Moscow 1214, 14 May 49. For more background on British perspectives, see Foschepoth, "British Interest in the Division of Germany after the Second World War," pp. 391-411.

⁷⁵ Letter from Bevin to Acheson (recounting a trip Bevin had just made to Berlin and the British Zone), delivered, 10 May 49, in FRUS 1949, vol. III, pp. 870-71; see also Foreign Office telegram to UK Embassy in Washington, also passed by the Embassy to the US on 10 May 10, at *ibid.*, pp. 867-69.

eastward, as "essential to any further unification of Germany and of Germany with the West." Although Acheson doubted the CFM could possibly achieve much, "our hope and purpose would be to accomplish more."⁷⁶

Acheson's departure for the CFM meeting was now just a few days away. But the day after Acheson sent his message to Bevin, the ideas contained in 'Program A' were leaked to the press, probably by one of its enemies within the U.S. government. On page one of the New York Times, James Reston described Kennan's ideas as an approach "not yet" adopted by the administration. The news story discomfited top officials, who were not yet ready to defend such a radical policy departure to the public.

Bevin, replying immediately to Acheson's latest letter, alluded to the "unfortunate" press reports and then vehemently rejected Acheson's notion of regrouping occupation forces, listing both political and military objections.⁷⁷ The American defense establishment then threw in its full weight against 'Program A.'

The American commander in Europe and military governor of the American zone, General Lucius Clay, had long thought 'Program A' would be "suicidal to our objectives" and was a prescription for handing Germany over to the Soviets.⁷⁸ Now Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson emphasized that his views reflected the position of the entire "National Military Establishment," including the Joint Chiefs of Staff chaired by General Omar Bradley. Both Acheson and Bohlen later recalled that Bradley's opposition was decisive. The JCS argued that the Russians would be left

⁷⁶ State 1605, 11 May 49, in *ibid.*, pp. 872-73. Acheson had already discussed these views in a May 10 meeting with Jessup, Murphy, Rusk, Kennan, Bohlen, David Bruce (Amb-designate to France), Hickerson (director of EUR), and Jacob Beam (from GER, the recently created division for German and Austrian affairs). Acheson told his officials on May 12 that his paper had been approved by President Truman and the Cabinet. *Ibid.*, p. 874 n. 2.

⁷⁷ Bevin letter to Acheson, May 13, 1949, in *ibid.*, pp. 874-75. On the leak to Reston, see James Reston, "U.S. Plan Weighed: Big 3 Would Withdraw to Ports in the North Under Proposal," New York Times, May 12, 1949, p. 1; Kennan, Memoirs 1925-1950, pp. 444-45.

⁷⁸ See Miscamble, Kennan and the Making of American Foreign Policy, p. 168.

far better off by the envisioned mutual withdrawals.⁷⁹ The arguments were serious and Kennan and Jessup had not developed detailed, persuasive answers to them.

Acheson gave up. The National Security Council met on May 18 to consider the American position at the CFM meeting, two days before Acheson was to depart for Paris to attend the talks. By that time Acheson had come to conclude that "there would be fewer and less painful difficulties by going ahead with the Western German government than by attempting to unite Germany first." Unification would just have to grow out of first creating a West German state.⁸⁰ The British and French were duly reassured.⁸¹

Instead the Americans, British, and French agreed to stand by the goal of simply extending the Bonn constitution to all of Germany through all-German elections, without the prior withdrawal or redeployment of Four Power forces. Jessup wrote to Kennan that "one thing which has stood out in my mind in our conversations with the French and the British is that they are not yet ready to think in the broad European terms which have been behind your planning. Had we come here with 'Program A' (even if unhampered by the really serious effects of the Reston article), I do not think we could have secured tripartite agreement on it."⁸²

Years later, Kennan came to believe that his advocacy of 'Program A' had been colored by his "almost neurotic" distaste for the American occupation establishment in Germany and by too much pessimism about whether the Germans could make the transition to civilian rule. There is also ample evidence that the

⁷⁹ See letter from Johnson to Acheson, 14 May 49, in FRUS 1949, vol. III, pp. 875-76. See also Acheson, Present At The Creation, pp. 291-92; and Charles E. Bohlen, Witness to History 1929-1969 (New York: W.W. Norton, 1973), p. 285.

⁸⁰ Memo from Acheson to Truman (summarizing NSC discussion), 18 May 49, 1949, quoted in Miscamble, Kennan and the Making of American Foreign Policy, p. 171 n. 126. See also Leffler, A Preponderance of Power, pp. 283-84.

⁸¹ Paris 1984 (from Jessup), 14 May 49, in FRUS 1949, vol. III, p. 878; see also Bohlen, Witness to History, pp. 285-86 ("It took a few hours of soothing conversation to explain to these governments that the Kennan plan had not been floated as a trial balloon by the United States government.")

⁸² Letter from Jessup to Kennan, 24 May 49, quoted in Miscamble, Kennan and the Making of American Foreign Policy, p. 171.

Soviets had no interest in giving up the advantages and reassurance they felt from continued military occupation of eastern Germany. Paul Nitze tells the intriguing story in his memoirs that, en route to the CFM meeting in Paris, Acheson authorized Charles Bohlen to sound out the Soviets informally for any interest in a Program A-style general withdrawal of all occupation forces. On the first day of the conference (May 23) Bohlen met with the Soviet military governor in eastern Germany, General Vasily Chuikov. Chuikov reportedly said, "The Germans hate us. It is necessary that we maintain our forces in Germany." That, Nitze believes, "put an end to any further discussion of Plan A."⁸³

The debate over Kennan's proposal revealed the ambivalence within the US government and among its allies about whether to favor German unification if it meant risking the outcome of a free choice by the German people. Kennan believed in 1949, and remained convinced later, that the ongoing creation of the FRG and the North Atlantic Alliance had "been achieved by the steady and progressive discarding of all possibilities which might really have led to something like a unification of Germany under allied blessing." Writing to Acheson on May 20, Kennan added that refusing to consider a withdrawal of occupation forces meant "that we do not really want to see Germany unified at this time, and that there are no conditions on which we would really find such a solution satisfactory."⁸⁴

Yet Kennan underestimated Acheson's attachment to the idea of somehow trying to restore German unity based on a withdrawal or massive redeployment of occupying troops. Acheson kept toying with the idea in 1950, a year after Kennan had left the government. Even in February 1951, after the outbreak of war in Korea

⁸³ Paul H. Nitze with Ann M. Smith & Steven L. Rearden, From Hiroshima to Glasnost: At the Center of Decision, A Memoir (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1989), pp. 71-72.

⁸⁴ Kennan to Acheson, 20 May 49, in FRUS 1949, vol. 3, pp. 888-89 (emphasis in original). Kennan noted the contradiction between the new US position and the position which had been cabled to Bevin only nine days earlier with the approval of the President. He was right, there was a contradiction. Acheson had changed his mind. For more on the background to the 'Program A' controversy, see also Axel Frohn, Neutralisierung als Alternative zur Westintegration: Die Deutschlandpolitik der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika 1945-1949 (Frankfurt am Main: 1985).

and as both East and West began working on rearming their parts of Germany, Acheson mused with Marshall, then the defense secretary, about "the possibility of withdrawal of troops in Germany." He "recalled that the Military had been against this sometime back and he wondered if there was any change in their attitude at this time." Marshall and others soon convinced Acheson that this idea had been completely overtaken by events.⁸⁵

McCloy and the "Elections" Initiative, 1950

At the CFM meeting the Soviets did not present any dramatic new initiatives. They "sought only to recover the power to block progress in Germany."⁸⁶ The West proceeded with establishment of the new Federal Republic (the Basic Law was adopted on May 8) and in June the Western allies agreed to replace their military governors with High Commissioners.

After the Berlin blockade and the successful Western airlift which overcame it (and did much to endear America to a generation of Germans), the Western powers followed up unified economic administration with a plan for political unification of their zones, leading to creation of the Federal Republic of Germany. During this process America deliberately assumed the responsibility of leading, even pressuring, Britain and France to join in creating the conditions for German prosperity and self-government. Those countries, in turn, sought reassurance that America would protect them against some future revival of German military power or a more direct military threat from the Soviet Union. It was no coincidence that signature of the North Atlantic Treaty took place within a few days of the final agreement among America, Britain, and France to replace the military occupation of Germany with a civilian

⁸⁵ The exchange is recounted in Hermann-Josef Rupieper, "American Policy toward German Unification, 1949-1955," in Diefendorf, Frohn, and Rupieper, eds., American Policy and the Reconstruction of West Germany, pp. 55-56.

⁸⁶ Acheson, Present at the Creation, p. 297.

High Commission to deal with the new government of a German federal republic.⁸⁷

When the Federal Republic of Germany was created as a state in the international legal order, with authority to make law without outside vetoes or approvals and to act independently on international affairs (subject to its treaty commitments and the other limitations on state authority applicable to all states in the international legal order), the occupying powers reserved the ultimate power over Germany's future which they had assumed in 1945. In 1952 the new German state agreed with America, Britain, and France that:

In view of the international situation, which has so far prevented the reunification of Germany and the conclusion of a peace settlement, the Three Powers retain the rights and the responsibilities, heretofore exercised or held by them, relating to Berlin and to Germany as a whole, including the reunification of Germany and a peace settlement.

Article 7 of the same Convention added that:

1. The Signatory States are agreed that an essential aim of their common policy is a peace settlement for the whole of Germany, freely negotiated between Germany and her former enemies, which should lay the foundation for a lasting peace. They further agree that the final determination of the boundaries of Germany must await such a settlement.

2. Pending the peace settlement, the Signatory States will cooperate to achieve, by peaceful means, their common aim of a reunified Germany enjoying a liberal-democratic constitution, like that of the Federal Republic, and integrated within the European community.⁸⁸

An essential point was that the prewar entity called "Germany" continued to exist, as a state which had passed under Four Power military control with the conquest of

⁸⁷ See Ireland, Creating the Entangling Alliance, pp. 4-8, 137-41.

⁸⁸ Convention on Relations between the Three Powers and the Federal Republic of Germany, May 26, 1952, 6 UST 4251, TIAS No. 3425, 331 UNTS 327, as modified by the Paris Accords of October 1954, in Documents on Germany, pp. 425-30. The term "European community" is meant as a general idea. The European Community as an institution was still decades in the future.

"Germany" in 1945.

In the view of the Western Allies, Berlin remained under this direct Four Power control after the creation of the Federal Republic. The sovereignty of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) was subject to limitations stemming from the direct Four Power position in Berlin and the Four Powers' vestigial responsibility "relating to Berlin and to Germany as a whole, including the reunification of Germany and a peace settlement."

The West thus considered the FRG, in a legal sense, to be an interim state whose final structure and boundaries would be determined in a "peace settlement." The Four Powers remained legally indispensable to the reestablishment and determination of the boundaries of "Germany as a whole."

Soviet views of Four Power rights varied over the years, but tended to differ from Western positions. The Soviets frequently argued that "Germany" had ceased to exist. Two new states had replaced it. They therefore asserted that the "state" they created out of their own occupation zone, the German Democratic Republic (GDR), was fully sovereign both in its own territory and in East Berlin, subject of course to the limits on state authority implicit in the international legal order and the GDR's separate, constitutional obligations to the USSR.

In 1949 the West Germans gave the first decisive indications of how they would govern themselves. They adopted a constitution, the Basic Law, that provided a durable basis for democratic governance. West German voters also gave a slim plurality to Adenauer's Christian Democrat party (the CDU) and the newly elected Bundestag elected the 73-year old Adenauer as the FRG's first Chancellor with a majority of one vote.

The election of Adenauer, who remained Chancellor for the next 14 years, was an event of the first importance. Adenauer was a strong defender of neoliberal "social market" economic philosophies which were challenged even within his own party. His own sense of national priorities placed alignment with the West, and reassurance of the West, ahead of the unification of the German nation. In both these respects Adenauer differed from his major political opponents.

Adenauer's narrow election in 1949, and his decisive reelection in 1953, were choices which vitally shaped the outlook and political economy of the new German state. Adenauer would never let the temptation of unification swerve him from a commitment to integration of the FRG with the West, including a close relationship with the United States. Adenauer became the anchor for all subsequent policies toward Germany developed in America, Britain, or France.⁸⁹ "Without the voluntary cooperation of the Germans themselves, the concept of integration into the [Western] bloc could not have been realized."⁹⁰ In November 1949 the new FRG signed its first international agreement with the Allies, the Petersberg Agreement, which confirmed its full participation in the OEEC (the multilateral organization created to support the Marshall Plan) and the Council of Europe, another newly created forum dedicated to the ideals of a united Europe.

By early 1950 the US government doubted that it could obtain a unified Germany on terms acceptable both to the West (including the FRG) and to the Soviet Union. Its main objective now was to back Adenauer's pro-Western political and economic course. Security policies were not the immediate issue; in early 1950 there was little serious political discussion of allowing Germany to be rearmed in the immediate future.⁹¹ NATO itself was still just the NAT, a treaty of alliance, not a

⁸⁹ For surveys of the relationship between Germany's founding year, its subsequent foreign policy, and the positions of Germany's allies, see Hermann-Josef Rupieper, Der besetzte Verbuendete: Die amerikanische Deutschlandpolitik 1949-1955 (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1991), pp. 41-139; Bark & Gress, From Shadow to Substance, pp. 231-60; Josef Foschepoth, "Westintegration statt Wiedervereinigung: Adenauers Deutschlandpolitik 1949-1955," in Foschepoth, ed., Adenauer und die Deutsche Frage (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1988), pp. 29-60; Christian Hacke, Weltmacht wider Willen: Die Aussenpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1988), pp. 19-46; Wilfried Loth, "Adenauers Ort in der deutschen Geschichte," in Foschepoth, Adenauer und die Deutsche Frage, pp. 271-88; and Hans-Peter Schwarz, Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, vol. 2, Die Aera Adenauer: Granderjahre der Republik, 1949-1957 (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1981), pp. 27-103. On Adenauer himself, see Konrad Adenauer, Memoirs 1945-1953, tr. Beate Ruhm von Oppen (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1966); and Hans-Peter Schwarz, Adenauer: Der Aufstieg, 1876-1952 (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1986).

⁹⁰ Josef Foschepoth, "Einleitung," in idem, Adenauer und die deutsche Frage, p. 13.

⁹¹ In November 1949 General Clay and British Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery publicly suggested that a German contribution would be essential to Western security. In December 1949 Adenauer had publicly declared that he was against any rearmament of Germany and he hoped that the North Atlantic

full-fledged military organization.⁹²

The greatest threat to Adenauer, politically, seemed to be the continued yearning for unity shared by many Germans, and played upon by the SPD opposition. The strong West German SPD, led by Kurt Schumacher, called for Germany to remain free of close ties to a capitalist West that wanted to keep Germany down. Though a courageous opponent of Nazism and Communism, Schumacher urged the Germans to concentrate not on ties to the West but on efforts to find common ground for seeking unity with the more socialist (and Protestant) East.⁹³

Both the Americans and the Adenauer government hoped to head off a West German search for accommodation with the Soviets in two ways. First there were redoubled efforts to unite Europe with structures in which the FRG could find a place, led off by an important French initiative: the May 1950 Schuman Plan for the integration of French and German coal and steel production.⁹⁴ Second, by working

alliance would extend its security guarantee to the FRG. Adenauer was privately musing about the possibility of contributing a German contingent to a European army and reading papers prepared by two sympathetic former Wehrmacht generals, Hans Speidel and Adolf Heusinger, but no real policies had been developed. The issue did not ripen for action until the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950. See Bark & Gress, From Shadow to Substance, pp. 272-78; Christian Greiner, "The Defence of Western Europe and the Rearmament of West Germany, 1947-1950," in Riste, Western Security, pp. 159-60; Schwarz, Die Aera Adenauer, p. 88; Norbert Wiggershaus, "The Decision for a West German Defence Contribution," in Riste, Western Security, pp. 199-200.

⁹² Acheson began warming to ideas for institutionalizing NATO and the American military commitment during the spring of 1950. See Leffler, A Preponderance of Power, pp. 345-46; Ernest May, "The American Commitment to Germany, 1949-1955," in Lawrence S. Kaplan, ed., American Historians and the Atlantic Alliance (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1991), pp. 52-80.

⁹³ See Klaus Erdmenger, "Adenauer, die Deutsche Frage und die sozial-demokratische Opposition," in Foschepoth, Adenauer und die Deutsche Frage, pp. 169-82.

⁹⁴ The most visible such structure in 1949-50 was the Schuman Plan which would link both the French and German coal and steel industries in common management and a common market. At a stroke Schuman's bold proposal put aside the older quarrels over the fate of the Ruhr and the issue of an international authority while opening the way to a new era of Franco-German cooperation in a European framework. The initiative came from France (named for Prime Minister Robert Schuman), and it was welcomed enthusiastically in both West Germany and the United States. See William Diebold, Jr., The Schuman Plan: A Study in Economic Cooperation, 1950-1959 (New York: Praeger, 1959); Milward, Reconstruction of Western Europe, pp. 362-407; Thomas Alan Schwartz, America's Germany: John J. McCloy and the Federal Republic of Germany (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), pp. 84-112; Schwarz, Die Aera Adenauer, pp. 96-104. Adenauer wrote to Schuman accepting his plan within six hours after hearing of it, even before Schuman had presented the plan to his own council of ministers. Ibid., p.

harder to convince the German public that the West supported the goal of national unity. So when the Soviets began calling for the withdrawal of occupation forces and immediate unification, John McCloy, the U.S. High Commissioner for Germany, asked in February 1950 for permission to propose holding fully free all-German elections to create an assembly that would prepare the way for an all-German constitution, without first requiring the East to accept West Germany's own new constitution. The State Department approved, agreeing that the US needed "to seize [the] initiative" from the Soviets.⁹⁵

The operational objective for McCloy's elections plan was to take the propaganda initiative away from the Soviets, finding a way for the West to play the 'national card.' McCloy wrote back to Washington that he hoped "the portion of Germany now held or controlled by the Soviets (including the Polish-administered territories) should be converted into an 'irredenta,'" associating the West with "the deep-seated desire of the German people to unite their country." But McCloy expressed a longer-term orientation for U.S. policy, one that seems quite prescient today. He described four broad goals: "a) Convert West Germany into the positive pole of attraction in respect of German unification, b) enlist the psychological support of the German people against Soviet objectives, c) convince them of the advantages of association with the West, and d) dissuade them that integration with the West connotes a writing-off of the East."⁹⁶

Though cautious at first, the Adenauer government publicly welcomed McCloy's initiative in March 1950. The FRG then developed procedures for elections to pick a National Assembly which could draft a new constitution for Germany. The Soviets and their East German clients backtracked, insisting on

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⁹⁵ See HICOG 1644, 24 Feb 50, in FRUS 1950, vol. 4, pp. 602-05 & n. 4 (McCloy made his statement on Feb 28); Office of German Political Affairs (Cox), "German Unity and East-West Political Relations Within Germany," 13 Mar 50, in *ibid.*, pp. 608-11.

⁹⁶ Quoted in Rupieper, "American Policy toward German Unification," p. 50. On the context for McCloy's initiative, see Rupieper, Der besetzte Verbundene, pp. 208-213.

numerous preconditions before all-German elections could be held. Urged on by McCloy, the US, UK, and French Foreign Ministers pressed the issue of all-German elections with a May 1950 tripartite declaration endorsing Adenauer's proposal.⁹⁷

Stalin's March 1952 Note

The idea of German rearmament began to receive serious diplomatic consideration during the spring of 1950. In April McCloy recommended a review of the entire US approach to Germany, to include involvement of the FRG in Western security (though not rearmament) so as to "treat Germany as an asset and vital to success of any effort to readjust permanently the lost European balance."⁹⁸ The outbreak of the Korean War galvanized consideration of a German defense contribution and both the FRG and the Allies had agreed on the fundamental goal of German rearmament and membership in NATO by the fall of 1950. The U.S. followed with its own historic decision to deploy substantial combat forces in Germany to help deter the threat of aggression.⁹⁹

Until 1954 the rearmament of Germany was seen only as a future German contribution to a multinational army embedded in a proposed European Defense Community. Even before the West Germans turned to rearmament the Soviet

⁹⁷ See editorial note on Adenauer statement of March 22; HICOG Berlin 562, 1 Apr 50; State 2252, 3 Apr 50; HICOG 3014, 10 Apr 50; State 2512, 12 Apr 50 all in FRUS 1950, vol. 4, pp. 615-627; editorial note, in ibid., pp. 632-33; and Department of State Bulletin, June 5, 1950, p. 885 (text of tripartite declaration on German unification issued on May 13). See also Rupieper, Der besetzte Verbündete, pp. 213-217; Schwartz, America's Germany, p. 89.

⁹⁸ HICOG 3485 (sent eyes only to the head of GER, Byroade), 25 Apr 50, in FRUS 1950, vol. 4, pp. 633-35.

⁹⁹ "No political issue since the Second World War had stirred up the West Germans as much as the debate over rearmament." Schwarz, Die Aera Adenauer, p. 119; see ibid., pp. 104-26; see also Greiner, "The Defence of Western Europe and the Rearmament of West Germany,"; Wilfried Loth, "Der Koreakrieg und die Staatswerdung der Bundesrepublik," in Foschepoth, Kalter Krieg und Deutsche Frage, pp. 335-61; May, "The American Commitment to Germany,"; Schwartz, America's Germany, pp. 113-55; and Wiggerhaus, "The Decision for a West German Defense Contribution." Though not as divided on the issue as the French, the British government supported proposals for German rearmament only with considerable reluctance. See Saki Dockrill, Britain's Policy For West German Rearmament, 1950-1955 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 12-15, 24-26, 41.

government had begun building up an East German paramilitary force that looked a good deal like an army. Nevertheless the debate over rearmament in West Germany was so intense, and its relation to NATO's military plans was so great, that Stalin decided to deploy an important new policy initiative. In the spring of 1952 the Soviet government dispatched a diplomatic note that, like the West, supported convening a German peace conference, with participation of an all-German government "expressing the will of the German people." It reversed Moscow's prior views by allowing for Germany's national rearmament. The note promised that a unified Germany could enjoy full democratic rights. But Germany would need to renounce participation in any military alliance directed against the Soviet Union. In addition, all foreign forces and bases would have to be withdrawn.¹⁰⁰

The U.S., UK, and France were not sure whether the Soviet proposal was made in good faith. They thought it was a ploy to derail adoption of their proposed European Defense Community (EDC).¹⁰¹ The Western plan would become swallowed up in a peace conference where the Soviets would pose as the defenders of German unity. Yet McCloy worried that Stalin's note would appeal "to everybody -- the Nazis, the Generals, the Neutralists, the Ruhr Industrialists, the Unificationists, and the do-gooders."¹⁰² The East German communists appear privately to have shared this view, as their archives reveal little worry that Stalin's move might somehow threaten their hold on power.¹⁰³

Adenauer, however, was firm. He would not compromise West Germany's

¹⁰⁰ Soviet Note of March 10, 1952, in FRUS 1952-1954, vol. VII, pp. 169-72. On West German reaction to this note see Rolf Steininger, Eine vertane Chance: Die Stalin-Note vom 10. Maerz 1952 und die Wiedervereinigung (Bonn: Dietz, 1985), pp. 30-42. By no coincidence Steininger's book was translated into English as the debate over German unification reigned in 1989-1990 as The German Question: The Stalin Note of 1952 and the Problem of Reunification, trans. Jane T. Hedges, ed. Mark Cioc (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990).

¹⁰¹ On EDC, see Edward Furdon, The European Defense Community: A History (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980); and Schwartz, America's Germany, pp. 210-34, 253-60.

¹⁰² Letter to Robert Bowie, March 13, 1952, quoted in Schwartz, America's Germany, p. 380 n. 54.

¹⁰³ See Staritz, "The SED, Stalin, and the German Question," pp. 284-289.

integration into Western institutions in order to chase a Soviet mirage of unification. The Western reply took the Soviet note at face value and chose to focus on the way in which the new German government would be elected. The joint Western demarche called for such elections to be held under the supervision of a UN Commission which had already been created for just such a purpose. The reply also stressed the right of Germany "to enter into associations compatible with the principles and purposes of the UN," i.e., a Western alliance.¹⁰⁴

American officials were nervous about this stance. Since 1950 they had adopted the gambit of calling for all-German elections. Now that it appeared the Soviets might actually accept them, State Department officers wondered if they were really trusted the Germans enough to risk the outcome of such elections. These latent concerns are well illustrated by the record of a wide-ranging discussion hosted by deputy under secretary of state H. Freeman Matthews on April 1, 1952.

Paul Nitze, who had replaced Kennan as director of Policy Planning, and Charles Bohlen, serving again as Counselor of the Department, agreed that the US would prefer a unified Germany within the EDC, but they were skeptical about whether the French could accept a fully unified Germany inside or outside of the organization. The director and deputy director of the German bureau at State (Perry Laukhuff and Geoffrey Lewis) were more pessimistic. They did not trust the Germans to choose unification within the EDC. They therefore argued it was better not to have a unified Germany or free elections at all.

Nitze preferred to press for German unification in order to accelerate the

¹⁰⁴ State 2209, 22 Mar 52, in *FRUS 1952-1954*, vol. VII, pp. 189-90; see Rupieper, *Der besetzte Verbündete*, pp. 240-300. West German accounts do not differ in ascribing importance to Adenauer's views, but differ widely in their judgment of his priorities. See, e.g., Steininger, *Eine vertane Chance*, pp. 47-70; Wilhelm Grewe, *Die deutsche Frage in der Ost-West Spannung: Zeitgeschichtliche Kontroversen der achtziger Jahre* (Herford: Busse-Seewald, 1987), p. 143; Hacke, *Weltmacht wider Willen*, pp. 62-68 (citing to 1988 edition not colored by later events); Schwarz, *Die Ära Adenauer*, pp. 149-165. Steininger, having faulted Adenauer for sacrificing the East German people to his desire for intergration with the West, warned in 1985 that "it remains to be seen whether history in this case will not indeed repeat itself, whether a West German government will not one day find itself in a situation similar to that in which Adenauer found himself in 1952. Then we shall see what decision will be made." Steininger, *The German Question*, p. 121. Steininger's prediction, at least, was right.

unification of Europe as a whole. But he and his deputy (John Ferguson) also worried that the Germans would choose unity over alignment with the EDC, if faced with a stark choice. Nitze and others therefore hoped the choice would not be presented so clearly. The only chance was to argue that integration with the West still held out some hope of unification later.

Bohlen, Ferguson, and Laukhuff were still skeptical. They feared that Germany, even if unified within the EDC, might at some future point choose to discontinue its integration in Western security institutions. Yet these officials had to admit that America had already agreed that a future German government ought to have the right to back out of a Western alliance, if that was its wish. The U.S. believed in self-determination. So, officially at least, Washington had to trust the Germans.

Therefore Bohlen suggested and won general agreement to a two point line of policy: (1) We are going ahead on integration. (2) If the Soviet Union is genuinely prepared to permit free elections and the consequent establishment of a unified Germany, we are prepared to let the ultimate all-German government decide whether it wishes to continue its adherence to the integration program [meaning both the EDC and economic integration].¹⁰⁵

The Soviets, however, did not try to present the Germans with the stark choice between unity and Western integration that Western officials and Chancellor Adenauer feared. They balked at setting up procedures that might allow genuinely free elections. Rather than let the voting be held under UN supervision they proposed instead to give the East German regime veto power over any procedures for organizing all-German elections. Adenauer and the West German government were steadfast in their rejection of the Soviet plan.

Both in tone and substance the Soviets' next note degenerated to public

¹⁰⁵ Pollak to Jessup, "Departmental Views on Germany," 2 Apr 52, in FRUS 1952-1954, vol. 7, pp. 194-96. Jessup in turn prepared a shorter summary of these conclusions for Matthews. Though Steininger also discusses these deliberations, he believes they show that the State Department decided that it was opposed to reunification. In fact Bohlen had reluctantly summarized just the opposite conclusion. See Steininger, The German Question, pp. 63-65, Eine vertane Chance, pp. 72-75.

posturing. Their reply struck Kennan, who then represented the United States in Moscow, as one that had "been prepared by hacks supplied only with grudging, cryptic and guarded instructions and told to make [the] best of it."¹⁰⁶ The exchanges finally concluded with an American note of September 23, 1952, wholly devoted to the problem of how to organize fair and free all-German elections, to which the Soviets did not reply.

Onward with Two German States

In America a new administration took office in 1953, headed by Dwight Eisenhower, but there was little change in direction toward Germany. The administration agreed that eventual German unification would have to be part of an overall settlement of differences in Europe but observed that "a 'neutralized', unified Germany, with or without armed forces, would entail sacrifices and risks to the West incommensurate with any possible gains. ... Unity on these terms should therefore be opposed by the West."¹⁰⁷

Still, as they had since 1950, American officials remained willing, at least in principle, to let the Germans decide their own future through free elections. The ruthless suppression of the East German popular revolt in June 1953 helped show up the contrast between the two political systems. In July Eisenhower promised Adenauer, in a letter made public to help Adenauer in his 1953 election campaign, that the U.S. would lend "the full force of its political, diplomatic, and moral support" to all-German elections.

"While a future all-German Government must obviously be free to choose the degree to which it wishes to enter into defensive and other arrangements compatible with the principles of the United Nations," Eisenhower wrote, "I can hardly imagine that it would seek the path of complete and premature disarmament in the presence of

¹⁰⁶ Kennan to State, 25 May 52, in FRUS 1952-1954, vol. VII, p. 253. See also Schwartz, America's Germany, pp. 267-69.

¹⁰⁷ NSC 160/1, "United States Position with Respect to Germany," August 1953, in FRUS 1952-1954, vol. VII, pp. 514-15.

other nations still heavily armed."¹⁰⁸

This public American faith in the good judgment of the German people masked, as before, lingering private qualms. The Americans were preoccupied with trying to get the French to approve the plan for a multinational European army, the EDC. They learned that the Germans were already thinking about the possibility of building a national army if the EDC idea failed and feared that leakage of such news would destroy the chances of French agreement to the EDC. The Americans were willing to agree to another Four Power conference in early 1954 to discuss Germany with Moscow, hoping this sign of Western openness would help win passage for the EDC in Paris. Adenauer, meanwhile, was worried about Four Power bargains about their future and feared, with cause, that the budget-cutting Eisenhower administration might be tempted to use German troops to replace American ones and withdraw U.S. ground forces from the continent.¹⁰⁹

Stalin died in 1953. Immediately after his death the dreaded head of the KGB, Lavrenti Beria, made a bid to succeed the dictator. In this effort he promoted himself as a man of new thinking, ready for example to reevaluate the future of socialism in East Germany in exchange for a unified and "peaceful" Germany. It is unclear precisely what Beria meant and the proposal was rejected anyway.¹¹⁰ Beria, having lost the succession struggle, was promptly put to death by the victors. His execution was justified, at least in part, by his supposed heretical stance on the German question. The story about Beria's German initiative was passed down over the years

¹⁰⁸ Eisenhower letter to Adenauer, 23 Jul 53, in FRUS 1952-1954, vol. VII, pp. 493-94.

¹⁰⁹ See Detlef Felken, Dulles und Deutschland: Die amerikanische Deutschlandpolitik 1953-1959 (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag, 1993), pp. 93-187 (emphasizing Dulles' role in shaping policy); Hans-Jurgen Grabbe, "Konrad Adenauer, John Foster Dulles, and West German-American Relations," in Richard Immerman, ed., John Foster Dulles and the Diplomacy of the Cold War (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 109-132; James G. Hershberg, "'Explosion in the Offing': German Rearmament and American Diplomacy, 1953-1955," Diplomatic History, 17 (1993): 511-49; Rupieper, Der besetzte Verbündete, pp. 306-333; Rolf Steininger, "John Foster Dulles, the European Defense Community, and the German Question," in Immerman, John Foster Dulles and the Diplomacy of the Cold War, pp. 79-108.

¹¹⁰ See James Richter, "Reexamining Soviet Policy Towards Germany during the Beria Interregnum," paper for the Cold War International History Project, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, June 1992.

and became a cautionary tale to future Soviet officials.

The death of Stalin heralded a thaw in East-West diplomacy. Foreign ministers of the Four Powers gathered in Berlin at the beginning of 1954, the first such gathering in five years. Five years earlier Kennan had urged Acheson to propose the withdrawal of foreign forces and unification of Germany through truly free elections. The West was not ready for the proposal then, and before this conference Western governments feared that the Soviets themselves might propose it in order to derail EDC. They need not have worried. The Soviets proposed a pan-European collective security arrangement that was readily brushed aside and procedures for elections that mirrored the East German model. Western leaders and Adenauer, "nervously twiddling his thumbs outside the conference" were relieved.¹¹¹

The EDC was rejected by the French National Assembly in May 1954. But the Western states, aided by a new policy design proposed by British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, quickly reconciled themselves to establishment of a German national army, subject to limitations imposed by treaty. Eisenhower also remained committed to the deployment of American ground forces in defense of West Germany. Britain joined in agreeing to deploy substantial ground forces on the mainland of Europe.¹¹²

The same agreements allowing the recreation of a German army also provided for the restoration of the FRG's sovereign power and its formal accession to the NATO alliance. The Four Powers (in the Western view) retained their rights in Berlin and their responsibility for approving the eventual recreation of "Germany as a

¹¹¹ Heraberg, "'Explosion in the Offing,'" p. 544; see also Felken, Dulles und Deutschland, pp. 188-221; Rupieper, Der besetzte Verbündete, pp. 333-380; Schwarz, Die Ära Adenauer, pp. 211-21; John Van Oudenaren, Detente in Europe: The Soviet Union and the West since 1953 (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991), pp. 26-31. The West's own plan for free elections (the "Eden plan") allowed for electoral laws to be prepared by the Four Powers, with various specified guarantees and a Four Power supervisory commission. "British (Eden) Plan for German Reunification Through Free Elections, Berlin, 29 Jan 54, in Documents on Germany, pp. 408-11.

¹¹² See Dockrill, Britain's Policy, pp. 133-50; Brian Duchin, "The 'Agonizing Reappraisal': Eisenhower, Dulles, and the EDC," Diplomatic History, vol. 16 (Spring 1992), pp. 201-21; Felken, Dulles und Deutschland, pp. 222-277; May, "The American Commitment to Germany"; Rupieper, Der besetzte Verbündete, pp. 381-446.

whole.^{*113}

The heads of government of the Four Powers met at Geneva in July 1955 for the first time since Potsdam, ten years earlier. The Western position on Germany was unchanged: reunification should be sought through free all-German elections. The Soviet approach was different, however. The USSR no longer presented itself as the spokesman of German unity. Khrushchev argued that Germany could only be unified after the confrontation between the two alliances had been erased by creation of an all-European collective security system. In this way the German Question became secondary to general issues of European security, and the Soviets no longer wished to negotiate about the issue of unification. Eisenhower was able to claim publicly that, "the principal point of difference" between the US and Soviet delegations "is the urgency with which we view the need for a reunified Germany."^{*114}

Returning home, Dulles concluded that "the Russians did not really fear German rearmament or German military power." Instead they had dropped even the pretense of seeking all-German elections because they were "afraid that any course of action leading to the eventual liquidation of the East German Government would upset their satellite system",^{*115} in other words -- the entire Soviet position in Central and Eastern Europe.

Threatening a breakdown of the Geneva conference, the US, Britain, and France had forced the Soviets to go along with issuance of a directive from Geneva from the heads of government, instructing their ministers to carry out "the settlement of the German question and the reunification of Germany by means of free elections" in conformity "with the national interests of the German people and the interests of

^{*113} See Note on the Paris Agreements of October 23, 1954 and succeeding conventions, agreements, and protocols, and letters reprinted in Documents on Germany, pp. 424-37; Schwartz, America's Germany, pp. 269-78.

^{*114} Statement by President Eisenhower at the Geneva Conference of Heads of Government, July 20, 1955, in Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1955, pp. 211-12, 225-26.

^{*115} Memcon of NSC meeting, 28 Jul 55, in FRUS 1955-1957, vol. V, p. 531.

European security.¹¹⁶

Dulles' commitment to German unification seems to have been quite sincere. In 1947 he had been as suspicious of Germany as French policymakers, and had supported French views when he joined the U.S. delegation to the 1947 Moscow CFM to represent the views of the Republican Party (that then controlled the Congress). Now Dulles had developed an exceptionally close relationship to Adenauer and, with German admission to NATO settled, felt confident that the FRG was ready to move to unification. After Geneva Dulles even thought the Soviets might give way, speculating that "we might get a unification in the next two years." The territory of such a unified Germany was by that time envisioned as including no more than the territory of the existing FRG, GDR, and Berlin. Even in Bonn, very privately, the territories under Polish control were being written off.¹¹⁷

Both Adenauer and Eisenhower were less optimistic and, by the fall of 1955, it became obvious that the Soviets were no longer interested in even discussing the reunification of Germany. The British and French wanted the matter kept on the agenda for ministers following up the Geneva summit, not because they were interested in seeing unification happen, but because they wanted to be sure that if the matter was considered it was dealt with only in the Geneva forum where they could influence the outcome. London and Paris were both anxious that the Soviets might attempt to work the issue directly with the West Germans during Adenauer's September 1955 trip to Moscow, the first ever by a West German leader. Eisenhower and Dulles trusted Adenauer and his confidence turned out to be justified, but the division of Germany and of Europe seemed increasingly final.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ Directive Concerning Future Negotiations on European Security and Germany Issued by the Four Heads of Government, Geneva, 23 Jul 55, in Documents on Germany, p. 455.

¹¹⁷ Memcon for NSC meeting, 28 Jul 55, in FRUS 1955-1957, vol. 5, p. 531. See Felken, Dulles und Deutschland, pp. 278-312; Rupieper, "American Policy toward German Unification," pp. 45-46, 62-66.

¹¹⁸ See Felken, Dulles und Deutschland, pp. 313-340. On the motives of the Geneva summit participants, see Van Oudenaren, Detente in Europe, pp. 37-38. On Adenauer's attitude toward the Geneva agenda and his trip to Moscow, see Hacke, Weltmacht wider Willen, pp. 75-88; Schwarz, Die Aera Adenauer, pp. 265-282.

The formal Western position remained wrapped around German self-determination, built around the call for free all-German elections supervised either by the United Nations or by the Four Powers. As we have seen, this policy was seen as risky by both the Americans because they had to trust the Germans to make the "right" choices about their political and security alignment. But the Eisenhower administration felt comfortable about extending this trust after Germany had joined NATO in 1955, and even in Britain the Conservative government headed by Anthony Eden was inclined to take a chance on the Germans. In some ways Adenauer was more skeptical than either Washington or London, both about the prospects for unification and about whether the Germans were really ready for it.¹¹⁹ All the Western allies (including the West Germans) considered the continued presence of Western forces essential to any election design so that the Germans would not be intimidated by the shadow of East German forces or Soviet military power.

As even serious discussion of unification faded after 1955, and East-West tensions grew in the late 1950s and early 1960s this readiness to trust the Germans, forced or sincere, seemed to fade with it. Once the West German opposition party, the SPD, began reconciling itself to some acceptance of Germany's division in the early 1960s,¹²⁰ Adenauer was under less pressure to show he was pursuing

¹¹⁹ After the 1955 Geneva conference Ivone Kirkpatrick, a top official in Britain's Foreign Office, told the German ambassador to Britain, Hans-Heinrich von Bittenfeld, that London might be willing to be more flexible than the Americans on signing any reasonable treaty with the Russians that would let the Germans decide their future with free elections and free choice of foreign and domestic policies. Von Bittenfeld later informed Kirkpatrick, very privately, that he had discussed this idea with Chancellor Adenauer and that Adenauer hoped London would not take such a position. Kirkpatrick noted that Von Bittenfeld had explained that "the bald reason was that Dr. Adenauer had no confidence in the German people. He was terrified that when he disappeared from the scene a future German government might do a deal with Russia at the German expense. Consequently he felt that the integration of Western Germany with the West was more important than the unification of Germany." The then Foreign Secretary, Harold Macmillan, noted that he agreed with Adenauer. Declassified document reprinted in Foschepoth, Adenauer und die Deutsche Frage, pp. 288-89. It is possible, of course, that Adenauer and Von Bittenfeld were telling the British what they wanted to hear. But the purpose was still to maintain Western discipline on the stringent requirements to be met by any design for bringing about German unity.

¹²⁰ On the shifting SPD attitude toward German unification in 1959-60, see Mark Cioc, Pax Atomica: The Nuclear Defense Debate in West Germany During the Adenauer Era (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), pp. 142-60; Kurt Klotzbach, Der Weg zur Staatspartei: Programmatik, praktische Politik und Organisation der deutschen Sozialdemokratie, 1945 bis 1965 (Berlin: Dietz, 1982), pp. 482-500;

reunification. Therefore there was correspondingly less need for America to put on a show of striving for the nominal objective of pursuing German unification in order to attain America's real policy objective: helping Adenauer defeat his domestic political opponents.¹²¹

The East-West confrontation had grown into a global thermonuclear standoff on a scale that seemed to eclipse the old disputes over the governance of Germany. The search for some East-West understanding and Germany's role in maintaining the balance of power both seemed far too important to be hazarded by devising new ways to give the Germans freedom of action, especially when Adenauer -- the old reliable anchor -- finally lost power in 1963. After the 1961 Berlin crisis and erection of the Berlin Wall, when the Kennedy administration let its diplomatic agenda for German unification become inactive, few officials within the U.S. government thought an important policy objective was being abandoned. In November 1961 Kennedy publicly conceded, "Now we recognize that today the Soviet Union does not intend to permit reunification, and that as long as the Soviet Union has that policy, Germany will not be reunified."¹²²

"I Have Stopped Speaking about Reunification"¹²³

By 1955 the major powers in Europe were focused principally on building up their separate international systems. The Western side strengthened NATO and began contemplating further economic integration within Western Europe. The Treaty of

Hans-Peter Schwarz, Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, vol. 3, Die Ära Adenauer, 1957-1963 (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1983), p. 42.

¹²¹ By the time of Macmillan's 1959 trip to Moscow the British government led by Macmillan had already made clear that it was prepared to seal Germany's division if that might help defuse the threat of East-West conflict. See Harold Macmillan, Riding the Storm (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), p. 592.

¹²² Interview of President Kennedy by Alexei Adzhubei, editor of Izvestia, Hyannis Port, 25 Nov 61, in Documents on Germany, p. 802.

¹²³ "I must confess that I have stopped speaking about reunification." Willy Brandt, interviewed in U.S. News and World Report, 29 Dec 69, quoted in Timothy Garton Ash, In Europe's Name: Germany and the Divided Continent (New York: Random House, 1993), p. 134.

Rome creating the Common Market, eventually known as the European Community, was signed in 1957. Nikita Khrushchev had emerged as the leader of the Soviet Union. He wanted to place the socialist alternative on a firmer footing, turning away from Stalin's reliance on brute force and personal diktat. There were limits, of course. Shortly after Stalin's death, in June 1953, East German workers had led a brief uprising against socialist rule that was crushed. Hungary's attempt to defect from the socialist system in 1956 was bloodily suppressed. Still, Khrushchev needed more support from East European communist leaders, both to strengthen his own legitimacy (especially against the growing challenge from Mao's China) and to widen the base of socialist power. So the Soviet Union worked on the institutions of the Warsaw Pact, created an institution for economic coordination (COMECON), and sponsored the buildup of national East European armies (under firm Soviet direction).

Both German states worried that their concerns about the future of Germany would be subordinated to the broader East-West agenda. Adenauer's government grew more and more suspicious that the United States and other allies might put aside the issue of German unification in order to ease tensions with the Soviet Union. The East German government wanted international recognition and clear sovereign control over all of eastern Germany, including all of Berlin.

The issue of Berlin was an issue where the Soviet and East German governments could find common ground. Four Power control over Berlin was a constant reminder that the German Question remained open, that any settlement was only provisional. In 1958 the Soviet government triggered the second Berlin crisis by saying, in effect: The German question is settled. Four Power rights are an anachronism. We will give them up and sign a peace treaty with the GDR, turning over to the East Germans this vestigial pocket of wartime occupation authority -- Berlin.

The East German government, led by Walter Ulbricht, played a major part in egging on the Soviets. The reasoning differed but the recommendations converged. After exploring newly opened Soviet and East German archives Hope Harrison has

commented that their differences "can be boiled down to the following: Khrushchev always saw and used West Berlin more as a lever to compel the West to recognize the post-war status quo and the existence of East Germany, and Ulbricht always saw West Berlin more as a prize, although he was certainly willing to exploit it as a lever until he got it as a prize. . . . So, if the West did not want to fall victim to the whims of the GDR, risk its access to and perhaps lose West Berlin, it was supposed to come to terms with the Soviets on a German peace settlement."¹²⁴ In 1958 the Soviet government formally declared all Four Power rights, including the Allied rights in Berlin, to be "null and void."¹²⁵

The West Germans understood that the Berlin crisis would test whether the West was really committed to defending Berlin and keeping the German question open. Eisenhower and Dulles emphasized solidarity with Europe and took a tough stand against Khrushchev, including a clear readiness to risk general war.¹²⁶ Though relatively confident that the Americans and British would accept war with the USSR rather than surrender West Berlin, bringing NATO with them (though the French were hesitant), the West Germans could see the pressures pushing toward sealing off the partition of their country. They felt "an almost desperate sense of suspicion (directed toward the West as well as the East), a growing fear of diplomatic isolation, and a realistic premonition of things to come." So Bonn was constantly working to link the two objectives, defending Berlin and sustaining the commitment to Germany's eventual unification.¹²⁷

¹²⁴ Hope M. Harrison, "Ulbricht and the Concrete 'Rose': New Archival Evidence on the Dynamics of Soviet-East German Relations and the Berlin Crisis, 1958-1961," Working Paper No. 5, Cold War International History Project, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, May 1993, p. 7. On both this crisis and the earlier 1948-49 Berlin blockade, see generally the still valuable Hannes Adomeit, Soviet Risk-Taking and Crisis Behavior.

¹²⁵ Note from the Soviet Union to the United States, 27 Nov 58, in Documents on Germany, p. 555; see also address by Khrushchev, Moscow, 10 Nov 58, in *ibid.*, pp. 542-46.

¹²⁶ See William Burr, "Avoiding the Slippery Slope: The Eisenhower Administration and the Berlin Crisis, November 1958 - January 1959," Diplomatic History, 18 (Spring 1994): 177-205.

¹²⁷ Hanrieder, Germany, America, and Europe, p. 166.

The Soviet leaders were indeed targeting just these national aspirations, hoping to defeat and put them to rest. They found talk of unification especially obnoxious in combination with talk among some West German politicians about possible West German acquisition of nuclear weapons.¹²⁸

The ensuing crisis lasted for four years, from 1958 to 1961, and culminated in the 1961 construction of the Berlin Wall. The promise to defend West Berlin was kept. But the link between the defense of West Berlin and sustaining commitment to unification frayed once the Berlin Wall was erected. The construction of the Berlin Wall changed the diplomatic situation completely, effectively shifting the initiative for changing the status quo from the East to the West. The West had no intention of posing a military challenge to the status quo. The Western powers certainly felt they had to put aside whatever vestigial hopes they might have harbored for achieving German unification through diplomacy anytime in the immediate future. This is why Khrushchev congratulated himself, in his memoirs, for having "forced Kennedy and the Western allies to swallow a bitter pill."¹²⁹

The pill was especially bitter to Adenauer, and the old chancellor was angry at the new, young American president, John F. Kennedy, who seemed so ready to

¹²⁸ Former Soviet foreign minister Andrei Gromyko thus later gloated that, "Adenauer probably did not abandon the idea of a united Germany until the night of 13 August 1961, when measures [the erection of the Berlin Wall] were taken to strengthen the state borders and sovereignty of the German Democratic Republic." Andrei Gromyko, Memories, trans. Harold Shukman (London: Hutchinson, 1989), pp. 196-97. On the connection between the unification issue and Soviet worries about West German nuclear aspirations, see Marc Trachtenberg, History & Strategy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), pp. 169-234.

¹²⁹ Nikita S. Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers: The Last Testament, trans. & ed., Strobe Talbott (Boston: Little Brown, 1974), pp. 501-09. But Kennedy's escalation of the military confrontation in 1961 seems also to have cowed Khrushchev into taking a more defensive stance, which he did by authorizing construction of the Berlin Wall. See Trachtenberg, History & Strategy, pp. 218-22. On Soviet and East German behavior, see Harrison, "Ulbricht and the Concrete 'Rose'"; Adomeit, Soviet Risk-Taking and Crisis Behavior; and the older account by Robert M. Slusser, The Berlin Crisis of 1961: Soviet-American Relations and the Struggle for Power in the Kremlin, June-November 1961 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973). See also Jack M. Schick, The Berlin Crisis, 1958-62 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971). On the construction of the Berlin Wall and international reactions, see also Curtis Cate, The Ides of August: The Berlin Wall Crisis, 1961 (New York: M. Evans & Co., 1978); John W. Keller, Germany, the Wall, and Berlin: International Politics During an International Crisis (New York: Vantage Press, 1964).

accept it. "The Americans are no longer the Americans they were years ago," he told one of his advisers. "They want an understanding, and the only way to get that is at the expense of the Germans." Kennedy, for his part, had long underestimated Adenauer's importance within West German politics and thought of the old man as a relic of the Cold War.¹³⁰

Adenauer knew that the road to unity lay through Moscow. But Adenauer thought the East would ultimately have to bend before the benign but enduring pressure of a solid West German position backed by the power of the FRG's Western allies.¹³¹

Instead Adenauer's successors judged that it was the Germans who must bend. In the short-term, some reconciliation with the Soviets seemed essential, especially since Germany's Western allies also sought some understanding. Seeing the FRG becoming isolated they gave way to the new conventional wisdom that placed a relaxation of East-West tensions ahead of a quixotic effort to unify Germany. In the long-term, it was believed that better relations with the Soviet Union and reduced tensions might ease the way toward renewed discussion of German unity. Yet in the short-term, acceptance of Germany's division seemed the only way to revitalize West

¹³⁰ Adenauer quotation from diary of Heinrich Krone, quoted in Daniel Koerfer, Kampf ums Kanzleramt: Erhard und Adenauer (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags Anstalt, 1987), p. 636. On Kennedy's attitude, see the well documented but unflattering portrait of the president in Frank Mayer, "Adenauer and Kennedy: Distrust in German-American Relations?", German Studies Review, 17 (February 1994): 83-104. See also Adrian Schertz, Die Deutschlandpolitik Kennedys und Johnson: Unterschiedliche Ansätze innerhalb der amerikanischen Regierung (Koeln: Boehlau Verlag, 1992); Hanrieder, Germany, America, and Europe, pp. 170-177.

¹³¹ See Bark & Gress, From Shadow to Substance, pp. 479-83, 484-87; Waldemar Besson, Die Aussenpolitik der Bundesrepublik (Muenchen: Piper, 1970), pp. 287-364; Hacke, Weltmacht wider Willen, pp. 91-94. Adenauer was therefore deeply alarmed about the policies of the Kennedy administration. "The Americans are no longer the Americans they were years ago," he told one of his advisers. "They want an understanding, and the only way to get that is at the expense of the Germans." Diary of Heinrich Krone quoted in Daniel Koerfer, Kampf ums Kanzleramt: Erhard und Adenauer (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1987), p. 636. On the erosion of U.S.-German relations, see Wolfram Hanrieder, Germany, America, Europe: Forty Years of German Foreign Policy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), pp. 171-77.

German diplomacy.¹³²

The SPD Chancellor Willy Brandt, after liberating himself from the 'Grand Coalition' with the CDU by forming a governing coalition with the liberal, centrist Free Democrats (FDP), embarked on a new Ostpolitik. This policy sought "change through rapprochement" by recognizing the postwar status quo, accepting the existence of two German states and the territorial changes of 1945.¹³³

Brandt still honored the goal of German unity, but he accepted the original Eastern view that unification must take a backseat to relaxation of general East-West tensions. Brandt won East German acceptance for the formula of "two states within one German nation" and the two Germanies signed a treaty recognizing each other in December 1972. The FRG also signed treaties with Poland and the Soviet Union. All of these treaties recognized the existing European borders as "inviolable." All of these treaties skirted the fact that, according to the West Germans, the U.S., Britain, and France, the Four Powers retained all their reserved rights and responsibility for 'Germany as a whole' and the ultimate disposition of Germany's final borders.¹³⁴

¹³² On this transition in West German thinking, see Arnulf Baring (with Manfred Goertemaker), Machtwechsel: Die Ära Brandt-Scheel (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1982), esp. pp. 197-236; and Peter Bender, Neue Ostpolitik: Vom Mauerbau bis zum Moskauer Vertrag (Muenchen: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1986).

¹³³ The actual phrase "change through rapprochement" (Wandel durch Annäherung) was first used by Egon Bahr, then SPD leader Willy Brandt's press spokesman, in remarks which accompanied a formal address delivered by Brandt at the Protestant Academy in Tutzing in June 1963. See Ash, In Europe's Name, pp. 65-67. It was therefore no coincidence that more than 26 years later, in January 1990, Foreign Minister Genscher chose this same venue in Tutzing to explain his views about the path to German unity.

Two recent works drawing on newly available German archival material are now the standard works in English on the course of Ostpolitik: Ash, In Europe's Name; and A. James McAdams, Germany Divided: From the Wall to Reunification (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993). A valuable perspective on the CDU's evolving attitudes is provided by Clay Clemens, Reluctant Realists: The Christian Democrats and West German Ostpolitik (Durham: Duke University Press, 1989). Older but still valuable secondary works are William Griffith, The Ostpolitik of the Federal Republic of Germany (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1978); and Lawrence Whetten, Germany's Ostpolitik: Relations Between the Federal Republic and the Warsaw Pact Countries (London: Oxford University Press, 1971). Important primary sources include Baring, Macht-Wechsel; Bender, Neue Ostpolitik; Willy Brandt, People and Politics: The Years 1960-1975 (Boston: Little, Brown, 1978); and Henry Kissinger, The White House Years (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979), pp. 405-11, 529-33, 823-32.

¹³⁴ See Treaty between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Soviet Union, signed in Moscow, 12 Aug 70, in Documents on Germany, pp. 1103-05. This treaty included an exchange of notes from the FRG to the U.S., UK, and France and from the U.S., UK, and France to the FRG reiterating the

Paralleling Bonn's diplomatic moves, the U.S. led the way in negotiating a Quadripartite Agreement with the Soviets to regularize the status of Berlin. The FRG was not a formal participant in these talks, although they were constantly consulted (in part through a back channel from Kissinger through Egon Bahr to Brandt). The change back to a Republican administration in the United States, led by Richard Nixon and his national security adviser, Henry Kissinger, had not caused any return to the German policies of Eisenhower or Dulles. The new conventional wisdom was now firmly bipartisan. For years Kissinger had thought the German question should be pushed into the background. His main concern was to insure that America remained central to the overall management of the all-important relationship with the Soviet Union.¹³⁵

Since ratification of the postwar status quo had long been a Soviet aim, Moscow found the overall thrust of Ostpolitik quite congenial, after some debate

"immutability" of quadripartite rights. *Ibid.*, pp. 1100-01. Similar sets of notes were exchanged in connection with the Treaty between the Federal Republic of Germany and Poland concerning the basis for normalizing their mutual relations, signed in Warsaw, 7 Dec 70, in *ibid.*, pp. 1125-27; and the Treaty on the Basis of Relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic, signed in Berlin, 21 Dec 72, in *ibid.*, pp. 1215-31. On the negotiation of these treaties, see Claus Arndt, Die Verträge von Moskau und Warschau: Politische, verfassungsrechtliche und völkerrechtliche Aspekte (Bonn: Verlag Neue Gesellschaft, 2d ed., 1982); Baring, Machtwechsel, pp. 314-54; Guenther Schmid, Entscheidung in Bonn: Die Entstehung der Ost- und Deutschlandpolitik 1969-70 (Koeln: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1979); Benno Zuendorf [Antonius Eitel], Die Ostverträge: Die Verträge von Moskau, Warschau, Prag, das Berlin-Abkommen und die Verträge mit der DDR (Muenchen: Beck, 1979). On the domestic politics of ratification, see Baring, Machtwechsel, pp. 440-47.

The use of the word "inviolable" to describe the borders was significant. The Russians originally preferred the term, "unalterable." The West Germans, to hold open the possibility that borders could peacefully be altered were able to win agreement to the word "inviolable." Griffith, Ostpolitik of the Federal Republic of Germany, p. 191 (Griffith explains the relevant German and Russian usages). The West Germans also later published Soviet foreign minister Gromyko's statement, in talks with FRG foreign minister Walter Scheel, that, "If two states agree of their own free will to unite, or correct frontiers, as we ourselves have done with Norway, Afghanistan and Poland — there indeed several times — or when two states want, for example, to give up their common frontier and to unite, like Syria and Egypt, it would not occur to us to criticize, for this is an expression of sovereignty and belongs to the inalienable rights of states and peoples." Quoted in Ash, In Europe's Name, p. 74. The discussion about possible peaceful alteration of borders occurred again during the Helsinki conference in 1974-75, and was a critical part of the record drawn upon during 1989-90.

¹³⁵ See Kissinger, White House Years, pp. 530-33, 828-33. In 1961 Kissinger had privately advised President Kennedy to view Willy Brandt as an attractive alternative to Adenauer, writing that "a gain in Socialist strength would be favorable for us in the long run." Mayer, "Adenauer and Kennedy," p. 85.

about whether friendly relations with West Germany were desirable at all. East German desires to press for more, to keep open their claim to all of Berlin, took second place. Less is known about Soviet-East German consultations, but it is obvious that the Soviet government helped engineer the 1971 dismissal of Ulbricht, a staunch opponent of better relations with West Germany, once they had decided to pursue a different course. Honecker was soon echoing the Soviet view that the two German states should just learn to live with each other.¹³⁶

The Quadripartite Agreement (or QA) solidified and stabilized the postwar status quo for Berlin. The Western Allies agreed that Berlin would not be considered a constituent part of the Federal Republic and would not be governed directly by Bonn. New limits were placed on West German political activities in the city. The Parties also agreed that this situation should not be changed unilaterally by any signatory. The Soviets in turn accepted responsibility for guaranteeing Western access to Berlin. Practical measures for ground access and inner-German administrative arrangements were put in place.¹³⁷

The Soviets and East Germans justifiably looked upon the QA, and the whole network of Ostpolitik treaties, as cementing the partition of Germany. The QA itself simply acknowledged the continuing difference in the legal positions of the parties. "It was thus in essence an agreement that ambiguously reaffirmed rights that already belonged to the Western powers, unambiguously denied West Germany certain other

¹³⁶ See McAdams, Germany Divided, pp. 92-93; Michael Sodaro, Moscow, Germany, and the West from Khrushchev to Gorbachev (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp. 207-213. Timothy Garton Ash quotes from Honecker's notes of a one-on-one conversation with Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev in July 1970 about what they would do to deal with the resistance of then East German leader Walter Ulbricht. The East German's notes record Brezhnev bluntly saying, "I tell you quite openly it will not be possible for him [Ulbricht] to rule without us, to take ill-considered steps against you [Honecker] or other comrades in the [East German] Politburo. After all, we have troops in your country." Quoted in Ash, In Europe's Name, p. 77.

¹³⁷ Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin, signed in Berlin, 3 Sep 71, and related documents in Documents on Germany, pp. 1135-49.

rights, and did so in exchange for substantial concessions on unrelated issues.¹³⁸

The old battlelines over German unification were visited again during the negotiation of the Helsinki Final Act in 1974-75. The Helsinki conference was the European security conference Moscow had sought since 1955, in which the Soviets hoped to gain both firmer recognition for the postwar status quo and at the same time build up a pan-European collective security alternative to the NATO alliance (and the Warsaw Pact).

The Helsinki Final Act repeated the formulation used in the 1970 Soviet-West German treaty, that existing European frontiers were "inviolable." The West German government of Helmut Schmidt, under pressure from conservatives at home, did bargain hard to hold open a theoretical possibility of unification. The thirty-five participating states agreed that "their frontiers can be changed, in accordance with international law, by peaceful means and by agreement." The U.S. did much of the work in getting this sentence into the document, with the language settled only after difficult negotiations directly between Kissinger and Soviet foreign minister Andrei Gromyko. Residual Four Power rights over Germany's ultimate destiny were also protected by the customary provision that "the present Declaration does not affect" the signatories' other "rights and obligations."¹³⁹

This language in the Helsinki Final Act became quite important fifteen years later. The Soviet government had signed a document that appeared to permit the peaceful unification of Germany. At the time they signed it the issue seemed moot, but Moscow was now boxed in by its nominal support for the principle. In addition, Principle I of the Declaration on Principles Guiding Relations between Participating States provided that the participants would respect each state's "right to belong or not

¹³⁸ Van Oudenaren, Detente in Europe, p. 61. One irritant for the GDR was that the QA was part of a process by which the Soviets began reclaiming some of the Four Power rights they had given up so ostentatiously in 1958.

¹³⁹ See Section 1(A), principles I and X of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Helsinki, 1 Aug 75, in Documents on Germany, pp. 1287-88, 1291; on the negotiation see John J. Maresca, To Helsinki: The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, 1973-1975 (Durham: Duke University Press, 1983), pp. 110-16.

to belong to international organizations, to be or not to be a party to bilateral or multilateral treaties including the right to be or not to be a party to treaties of alliance; they also have the right to neutrality."¹⁴⁰

The Helsinki Final Act did not affect the assumptions underpinning the new West German consensus behind Ostpolitik. West Germans continued to believe that one had to accept the status quo in order to someday change it. But, as the years passed, the West German timetable for effecting the greatest change, to achieve German unity, seemed to be measured on the time scale of a geologist rather than a politician.

In the 1970s and 1980s West German conceptions of how unity might actually come to pass, typically expressed as some "normalization" of all relationships or the "coming together of the European people" in the setting of a "European peace order," took on a misty, utopian quality. The term "unity" itself was freed of its traditional political meaning. As FRG President Richard von Weizsaecker put it in 1985: "The subject of unity confronting us today primarily relates to the whole of Europe. It no longer revolves around national frontiers and territories. It is not a matter of shifting frontiers, but of depriving them of their divisive impact on people."¹⁴¹

The reader must pause a moment to grasp this notion of unification as a matter of culture and human contacts, not of "territory." Writing in 1989 Wolfram Hanrieder eloquently summarized the widely shared critique of the old CDU policies of the early 1960s. "By clinging to the territoriality of the German question, Bonn was fundamentally at odds with developments in Europe. . . . it was precisely the general acceptance in both parts of Europe of the territorial status quo that was the irreducible precondition for political change . . . By refusing to accept this precondition, Bonn undercut from the beginning its initiatives in Eastern Europe and

¹⁴⁰ Helsinki Final Act, in Documents on Germany, p. 1288.

¹⁴¹ Address by President von Weizsaecker, Duesseldorf, 8 Jun 85, in Documents on Germany, p. 1415. On "the coming together of the European people," see the explanation of Kohl's "all-European vision" in Hacke, Weltmarkt wider Willen, pp. 379-80; on the "European peace order" see, e.g., address by Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Potsdam, 11 Jun 88, reprinted in idem, Unterwegs zur Einheit: Reden und Dokumente aus bewegter Zeit (Berlin: Siedler Verlag, 1991), pp. 151-69.

condemned them to political irrelevance." Or, as another writer put it, the improved atmosphere in German-German relations did "not represent a movement toward reunification, but a movement away from it."¹⁴² By the mid-1980s this new wisdom commanded broad bipartisan support in West Germany. When the CDU regained the chancellorship in 1982 Helmut Kohl stayed by the popular Ostpolitik legacy, associated with stability and cooperation. Continuity was reinforced by Kohl now had the FDP as his coalition partner and Helmut Schmidt's foreign minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, became Kohl's foreign minister too.¹⁴³

Though West German and American officials agreed on Ostpolitik's basic treatment of the German question and putting aside the "territorial" aspect of unification, there were differences in the way the two countries thought about relations with the East German state. For the West Germans, improved relations with the GDR were an objective in its own right. The Americans were only interested in better relations with East Germany if the East Germans actually did something they liked, such as demonstrating independence from Soviet guidance.

For the West Germans, their strategic theory for how to persuade East Germans to do good things (treating their citizens better, letting them travel) can be summarized as: Reassure and stabilize the GDR government. Bad East German behavior indicates the leaders feel insecure, meaning that more reassurance is needed.¹⁴⁴ The American government, to the extent it had a conscious strategy in its relations with the GDR, tended to reward good behavior and penalize bad through economic measures.

¹⁴² Hanrieder, Germany, America, and Europe, pp. 179-180; Eric Frey, Division and Detente: The Germans and their Alliances (New York: Praeger, 1987), p. xv. Egon Bahr, who in 1963 had first offered the "change through rapprochement" conception for the Ostpolitik he later helped put in place, was arguing by the 1980s that even paying lip service to the goal of reunification had become "hypocritical." Quoted in David Marsh, The Germans: A People at the Crossroads (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), p. 58.

¹⁴³ See Hacke, Weltmarkt wider Willen, pp. 365-73; Hanrieder, Germany, America, Europe, pp. 357-63.

¹⁴⁴ See Ash, In Europe's Name, pp. 176-81.

Timothy Garton Ash has characterized the competing "detente-hypotheses" this way:

The governing metaphor of [the American policy of] differentiation was that of 'carrots and sticks.' East European rulers were thus considered to be, at heart, donkeys. In the behavioural psychology of the German idea of detente, by contrast, East European rulers would appear to be, at heart, rabbits. The rabbit will freeze if you fix him in your headlights. If you frighten him too much, he may even bite. But speak to him gently, offer him carrots -- above all, lots of carrots -- and he will relax, loosen his grip.¹⁴⁵

Two such different strategies produced two very different policy designs.

West German policies to carry forward their strategy consisted mainly of symbolic gestures and hard cash. The Americans had little interest in either set of measures. By their standards the East Germans had done nothing to merit much positive attention. The GDR was so deeply entrenched in the Soviet bloc that the path to any meaningful change would have to go through Moscow. As a result the West Germans held their first summit meeting with an East German leader in 1981, and informal meetings between heads of government and other top officials had already been taking place.¹⁴⁶ The American practice was quite different. The first meeting between an American president and his East German counterpart was in June 1990, after the East German government had already agreed to go out of existence.

Neither set of policies had achieved much within East Germany by 1988. The West German case is especially problematical because expectations were higher, and because the West German government did so much to sustain the Communist government. To be sure, relations were improved. Some political prisoners were allowed to leave the GDR. More East Germans could visit family members in the West. Yet prospects for political change in the GDR had not improved. For East Germans there was little 'relaxation' in government policies. West German money, especially in the early 1980s, in fact probably helped the East German

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 178.

¹⁴⁶ On the transactions in currency and symbolic recognition, see ibid., pp. 152-76.

government avert economic and political unrest and maintain one of the most centralized and oppressive political systems in the Eastern bloc. Also, Ash notes, "the opening to the West was accompanied by redoubled efforts to maintain the [Communist] Party's political control and ideological rigour. ... The escalation of 'Abgrenzung' [sharply defining East Germany as a separate nation and society] was the ugly twin sister of the opening to West Germany."¹⁴⁷ So it seemed that, as James McAdams observed, "the more FRG authorities grew accustomed to the existence of a second German state and accepted the need to emphasize their respect for their adversaries' equality and independence, the harder it was for them to take the East German regime to task when [it] failed to live up to their hopes for internal reform."¹⁴⁸

In other words, the strategy of reassurance did not produce any noticeable movement in the GDR toward eventual unity, and may actually have reinforced the already strong conventional wisdom ruling out any "territorial" solution by downplaying any sense of common identity between the two states. The original concept, that Ostpolitik or "change through rapprochement" might somehow lead to political unification, was practically discarded. Out of power, the SPD tried to show that it could be even friendlier to the East German communists than Kohl, building a record that would prove embarrassing after 1989. But by 1987 the tenets of Ostpolitik dominated West German, and fashionable Western, political culture.¹⁴⁹

The West German strategy of reassurance paid much greater dividends, however, when applied to Bonn's relations with the Soviet Union. Years of West German reassurance plainly softened Soviet attitudes about the West German state and built up a reservoir of trust, at least among some Soviet officials, toward both the FRG and the Germans as a new nation that had genuinely broken with its past. The

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 188-89. On the value of West German financial aid, see pp. 158-60.

¹⁴⁸ McAdams, Germany Divided, p. 176.

¹⁴⁹ On current political reverberations from this legacy, see A. James McAdams, "Revisiting the Ostpolitik in the 1990's," German Politics and Society, no. 30 (Fall 1993): 49-60.

Soviet government had its own list of demands for the relationship with Bonn, concerns quite separate and independent from the relations between the FRG and the GDR, on matters ranging from better economic relations to greater sympathy with arms control positions. By 1980 the Soviets were carefully regulating the development of further inter-German relations, which tended to make the Russians uncomfortable, not reassured.¹⁵⁰

The net result was that the prospect for unification had become distant, almost inconceivable. The two German states turned to the business of making their division work and left the German question to intellectuals and Berlin experts. What did Four Power rights and responsibilities mean when, as Gorbachev often said, history had created two Germanies? Why would anyone challenge the postwar status quo once the Helsinki Final Act had seemed to recognize that the postwar borders were "inviolable?" Certainly it seemed that the Germans themselves would be cautious, burdened by their history. Either they might prefer to be "oblivious" to the unpleasantness of power politics or they might look anxiously for ways to bridge East-West differences. In any case everyone felt they could rely on West Germans to be extremely sensitive to the way others perceived their behavior.¹⁵¹

"All fruitless discussion about how open the German question is should be ended," Willy Brandt advised his countrymen in 1984. "It doesn't bring us anything."¹⁵² As the 1980s were drawing to a close it seemed obvious that "the Germans themselves, in the East and West alike, had largely given up any realistic

¹⁵⁰ On Soviet anxiety see, e.g., McAdams, Germany Divided, pp. 161-64.

¹⁵¹ Compare, for example, the spectrum of views presented by Arnulf Baring, Unser neuer Groessenwahn: Deutschland zwischen Ost und West (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlag Anstalt, 2d ed., 1989) and Hans-Peter Schwarz, Die gezaehmten Deutschen: Von der Machtbessenheit zur Machtvergessenheit (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlag Anstalt, 1985).

¹⁵² From remarks collected in Brandt's, Reden ueber das eigene Land, quoted in McAdams, Germany Divided, p. 134.

hopes of reunifying their nation."¹⁵³

In 1987, for the first time, the East German head of state was given a red carpet welcome to the Federal Republic. Erich Honecker, returning to Essen where in the 1920s he had distributed anti-Nazi leaflets to embattled workers, was now wined and dined in the ancestral mansion of those workers' bosses, the Krupp family's Villa Huegel. Honecker was feted in Munich by the ardent conservative premier of Bavaria, Franz-Josef Strauss.

By 1988 Manfred Rommel, the CDU mayor of Stuttgart, aroused no controversy in telling a journalist that "the idea of reunification is completely hopeless." Helmut Schmidt spoke of unity as a question for the century to come, noting that he had not used the term "reunification" in public life for over thirty years.

Clearly Helmut Kohl did not think that he would have to revisit the old battlefields of the Cold War. Asked in October 1988, after visiting Moscow, whether the new reformist Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, might someday offer unity to the Germans, Kohl was scornful. "I do not write futuristic novels like [H.G.] Wells. What you ask now, that is in the realm of fantasy."¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³ McAdams, Germany Divided, p. xi; see also Hacke, Weltmacht wider Willen, pp. 462-63 (published in 1988). See also Renate Fritsch-Bournazel, Confronting the German Question: Germans on the East/West Divide, tr. Caroline Bray (Oxford: Berg, 1988), pp. 101-21. By 1984, only 17% of West Germans told pollsters that they considered reunification "possible" within the next thirty years. Gebhard Schweigler, "German Questions or the Shrinking of Germany," in F. Stephen Larrabee, ed., The Two German States and European Security (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), p. 94. A fine essay capturing such German attitudes on their national question was penned in 1985 by Timothy Garton Ash, collected in his The Uses of Adversity: Essays on the Fate of Central Europe (New York: Random House, 1989), pp. 71-104.

¹⁵⁴ Interviews conducted by and press conference remarks quoted in Marsh, The Germans, pp. 55, 115-18.

Chapter Four
DANCING AROUND THE GERMAN QUESTION
(January - July 1989)

The Status Quo

In February 1989 the head of the West German Chancellery, Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble, mused publicly that in the 1950s "most people had believed that the unity of Germany could be achieved through the reunification of both German states in the not-too-distant future. We know today," he continued, "that these hopes were illusory." It was clear by 1961 at the latest that for the time being there was "no way to overcome the German division." What was left must primarily be the preservation of the "substance of the nation," the "commonality of the Germans," which meant keeping open the "communication between the people." Hence the FRG's minister for inner-German relations stressed that the government's approach was: "Continuation of the previous, successful, pragmatic policies that take account of the interests of both sides and seek practical solutions to the needs of people in both of the states in Germany."¹

These were not controversial statements. Inside and outside Germany it was generally believed that the Germans had given up "an unpromising and dangerous pursuit of reunification."² The standard work in English on the West German political system concluded as early as 1982 that: "[I]t appears to be only a matter of time before the Federal Republic's national and cultural relationship to East Germany

¹ Schaeuble quoted from his address to the Evangelical Academy, Bad Boll, 25 Feb 89, in Bundesministerium fuer innerdeutsche Beziehungen, ed., Texte zur Deutschlandpolitik, series 3, volume 7 - 1989 (Bonn: Deutscher Bundes-Verlag, 1990), p. 47; FRG inner-German minister Dorothee Wilms (CDU), quoted from her address to the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, Bonn, 24 Jan 89, in *ibid.*, p. 28.

² A.W. DePorte, Europe Between the Superpowers: The Enduring Balance (New Haven: Yale University Press 1979), p. 244. Even those who considered the division of Germany more regrettable saw little way out. David Calleo, for example, believed that "even if increasing tensions make preservation of the postwar status quo more and more difficult, West Germany has no clear alternative." David Calleo, The German Problem Reconsidered: Germany and the World Order, 1870 to the Present (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1978), p. 202.

will be similar to its ties with Austria and perhaps Switzerland - a historical-cultural and linguistic relationship without any implication as to political unification.³ In the spring of 1988 leaders of the largest West German political party, the conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU) almost amended their formal party platform to put aside, as one of them put it, "the old continuing assumption that the German question [had] to be on the agenda." Kohl's two top advisers on these issues in the Chancellery, Schaeuble and Horst Teltschik, and the inner-German minister, Wilms, were prime movers behind this effort.⁴

In early 1989 few, if any, observers thought the East German state, the German Democratic Republic, was threatened by serious instability. Indeed, East Germany seemed the most solid of the East European states. It had only once -- briefly in 1953 -- experienced the kind of upheaval that had tormented communist leaders in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. David Childs, one of the leading Western experts on the GDR, in the standard English text on the country, could judge in 1988 that East Germany "is apparently one of the world's most stable regimes."⁵

Bolstered by relatively greater affluence than its Eastern European neighbors and a fantastically elaborate system of internal controls, the position of East Germany's longtime leader, Erich Honecker, seemed secure. His government was experienced in managing dissent through a mixture of brutal repression, forced emigration, and the vent of allowing limited, occasional travel to the West for a substantial part of the population.⁶

³ David P. Conradt, The German Polity (New York: Longman, 2d ed., 1982), p. 233.

⁴ Unnamed "key author" of draft CDU policy statement quoted from 1988 interview with A. James McAdams, Germany Divided: From the Wall to Reunification (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 191 n. 36. The original discussion paper produced by the CDU party commission would have downplayed the goal of political reunification, but the document finally adopted at the June 1988 Wiesbaden CDU party conference was battled back to language mirroring the time-honored usage of the FRG's Basic Law. See Timothy Garton Ash, In Europe's Name (New York:: Random House, 1993), pp. 446-47.

⁵ David Childs, The GDR: Moscow's German Ally (London: Unwin Hyman, 2d ed., 1988), p. xii.

⁶ On the government's use of forced "exit" as a tool of control, see Albert O. Hirschman, "Exit, Voice, and the Fate of the German Democratic Republic," World Politics, 45 (January 1993): 183-85. On

Western observers had long guessed or sensed that many East Germans probably despised or even hated the regime, but this bitterness seemed to have lapsed into passive, cynical resignation. A tiny number of citizens were openly critical of the regime: representatives of the counterculture such as the leaders of peace, feminist, or ecological groups; a few figures in East Germany's sheltered literary establishment; and a handful of dissident Marxist intellectuals. These individuals could find some shelter for their activities in the Protestant Church, which had secured an uneasy independence from direct state control.

Yet all these dissenters remained a fringe element in East German society. Demonstrations had been dealt with severely, in 1987 and 1988. Again in March of 1989 a small demonstration of about 60 churchgoers in Leipzig was suppressed by security forces. The East German security chief, Erich Mielke, having been in the business of arresting or killing communist opponents for more than half a century, readily assured his government colleagues that only the presence of Western media had inspired the demonstrators to act.⁷

If there was a threat to the regime in East Berlin, it appeared to come from reformist elements within the ruling SED. These reformers, led by the Dresden party chief Hans Modrow, took their cue from Gorbachev and wanted to launch an East

the loosening of general travel restrictions, note that "it is conceivable that between one-fifth and one-quarter of the total East German population found itself in the Federal Republic at one time or another [just] in 1987." McAdams, Germany Divided, p. 167. The following discussion also draws on the following additional sources for the internal political environment of the GDR in the 1980s: the account of Bonn's representative in East Berlin during much of the decade, Hans-Otto Braeutigam, in "Die deutsche Geschichte ist voller Spaltung," Die Zeit, January 13, 1989; Childs, The GDR; Daniel Hamilton, "Dateline East Germany: The Wall Behind the Wall," Foreign Policy, no. 76 (Fall 1989), pp. 176-97; Manfred Loetsch (a sociologist in the GDR), "From Stagnation to Transformation: The Sociology of the 'GDR Revolution,'" in Gert-Joachim Glaesner & Ian Wallace, eds., The German Revolution of 1989: Causes and Consequences (Oxford: Berg, 1992), esp. pp. 43-50; McAdams, Germany Divided, pp. 175-93; and generally A. James McAdams, East Germany and Detente: Building Authority after the Wall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

⁷ See Armin Mitter & Stefan Wolfe, eds., Ich liebe euch doch alle!: Befehle und Lageberichtedes MfS Januar-November 1989 (Berlin: BasisDruck, 1990), p. 28. The 82 year-old Mielke had helped purge non-communist republicans in the international brigades in Spain in the 1930s. He had worked for the East German security apparatus from its inception, before the GDR became a state, and had headed the security ministry for thirty-two years. Childs, The GDR, pp. 355-56.

German 'perestroika' (Russian for renewal). But the GDR's rulers held fast through the spring and summer of 1989, certain that they could isolate themselves from the turmoil gripping the rest of the Soviet bloc. After all, as one member of the East German politburo had earlier remarked to reporters, "If your neighbor renewed the wallpaper in his flat, would you feel obliged to do the same?"⁸

In 1988-89 the regime began quarantining itself against infectious perestroika. The government banned importation of more heretical Soviet journals. Honecker held a summit with kindred spirit Nicolae Ceausescu, Romania's dictator. The Polish government might agree, as it did in April 1989, to discuss the procedures for freer elections to parliament with the democratic opposition, Solidarity. But the East German government had its own election plans. In May the government followed its usual practice of rigging local elections and announced it had earned the support of 98.85% of the electorate. Protests from activists and Church poll watchers were ignored.⁹ The contrast with democratic reform was sharp, though, and the small circle of popular unrest widened. The police made more arrests and increased their harassment of the Church. In June the East German parliament applauded Beijing's crackdown on dissidents in Tiananmen Square and the Politburo pointedly criticized Hans Modrow. Still, even in August, the well-informed East German security police privately warned the Party leadership that membership in dissident citizens' groups, though it had grown, but the total number of people involved was estimated at only 2,500 (in a population of 17 million).¹⁰

Even if the East German government seemed invincible, it was not at ease. In May 1989 U.S. Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney, caught off guard in an

⁸ Kurt Hager, chief ideologue and minister for culture and science, to Stern, April 10, 1987, quoted in Childs, The GDR, p. 326.

⁹ For an insider account of the "touch of shame" felt about the "manipulated and falsified" May 1989 election from a member of the East German politburo, see Guenter Schabowski, Der Absturz (Berlin: Rowohlt, 1991), pp. 172-77.

¹⁰ Estimate from now-public Stasi report described in Gert-Joachim Glaessner, "Political Structures in Transition," in Glaessner & Wallace, The German Revolution of 1989, p. 13.

interview with a television reporter with a question about unification, first said, "We're not at the point where we can even talk about that." Then, asked if he was scared to talk about it, said no, not scared, "it is a kind of development that will occur perhaps many years down the road" if the West was "successful in obtaining our objectives." This cautious statement worried East German experts on America. An American diplomat serving in East Berlin noted at the time that "unification is taboo for the GDR, which frets that the Bush administration is signaling a desire to put the topic back on the East-West agenda." The diplomat was not worried. America might be more relaxed about the German question, but nothing suggested his government was "abandoning the consensus" that all must live "with the reality of two German states for the foreseeable future." Still, he reflected, "in the fourth year of the Gorbachev era, so many verities are under attack that the GDR is nervous."¹¹

Personalities

Before we explore how the consensus was abandoned and the verities came undone, it is worth pausing to introduce the leading officials who faced the task of molding policy into new forms in the months ahead. "It is crucial," as Richard Neustadt and Ernest May have pointed out, "to anticipate and take into account the different ways in which different actors see the world and their roles in it -- not only organizationally but also humanly as individuals."¹² This introduction will focus on key personalities in the three most important governments: the United States, the Federal Republic of Germany, and the Soviet Union.

¹¹ From the "reconstructed diary" of the U.S. political counselor in East Berlin, G. Jonathan Greenwald, Berlin Witness: An American Diplomat's Chronicle of East Germany's Revolution (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), p. 14 (entry for 10 May 89). When Cheney had tried to duck the German unity question the reporter had suggested "it's extraordinary that you are not willing to say flatly that the eventual goal of our policy is reunification of Germany." Then Cheney explained that this would be a "natural outcome" of U.S. efforts. Quoted in *ibid.*

¹² Richard E. Neustadt & Ernest R. May, Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision-Makers (New York: Free Press, 1986), p. 157.

UNITED STATES

In the United States, the administration of President George Bush was just taking office, replacing the senior policymakers of the second Reagan administration. Without exception, the top cabinet and subcabinet officials of the new national security team were veterans of government service, picked more for personal and professional qualities than for their ideological convictions.¹³ Those most important to the course of German unification were:

George Bush, President. Raised in an affluent New England family with one foot in the world of establishment Republican politics, Bush had also been shaped by his years of service as a young Navy pilot serving in the Pacific during World War II and by his later decision to break from the East Coast world and seek his fortune in the desolate oil fields of West Texas during the 1940s and 1950s. Bush returned to politics in the early 1960s, having moved to Houston, and spent the next twenty-five years in and out of public office. In 1989 he had just completed eight years of loyal service on Reagan's vice president.

Bush came into the Oval Office with a clear conception of style of leadership he would adopt in international affairs.¹⁴ First, he took a strong interest in foreign policy and national security issues. He had served in the 1970s as ambassador to the United Nations, emissary to China, and director of the CIA, and had traveled extensively and worked on the problem of terrorism while vice-president, so Bush was no stranger to international issues. He felt comfortable with both the personalities and the problems and was willing to devote time to them.

Second, in Bush's dealings with people, from staff members to foreign leaders, he projected a combination of easy relaxation and careful reserve. His personal style

¹³ For some contemporary perspectives on and glimpses of the Bush foreign policy team, see Maureen Dowd & Thomas Friedman, "The Fabulous Bush and Baker Boys," New York Times Magazine, May 6, 1990, p. 34; John Newhouse, "Profiles," New Yorker, May 7, 1990, p. 50; Andrew Rosenthal, "For Bush, Life on the Run Catches Up," New York Times, July 6, 1990, p. A5.

¹⁴ Unless otherwise noted, the comments on American officials are drawn from the author's own observations.

was restless but unassuming. He was highly sensitive to the concerns of people around him or officials with whom he met, ever attentive to small niceties and little acts of courtesy. He knew many other statesmen, and took a genuine interest in their families. In dealing with dignitaries he tended to make his points in a light, somewhat self-deprecating, that his counterparts seemed to find very appealing. On the other hand, Bush rarely said anything in such private encounters that he did not mean to say. In briefings he would have read the papers and then listen to the experts, asking a few questions, and revealing few of his own views, keeping his own counsel. In presentations of a U.S. position Bush was highly disciplined, staying by his brief or departing from it only if he had thought beforehand about what he wished to accomplish. He would rarely talk at great length or draw on personal anecdotes. A characteristic Bush story is one he has told about the baseball manager, Yogi Berra, who when asked why he had won a baseball game, had replied: 'I didn't make the wrong mistakes.'¹⁵

Third, Bush balanced his strong interest in international issues with a restrained managerial style. He rarely intervened directly in the day-to-day development of policy. Though not a deeply reflective or introspective person, over the years Bush had developed some deeply held convictions about America and the world. Though Bush's restlessness, his hearty demeanor could give some the impression that his thoughts on issues were just superficial bonhomie, it was easy to be misled. Bush sometimes did not have particular views on one or another issue. But sometimes he did. The outward appearance might be the same in either case, as he put out a smokescreen of platitudes. In this respect, Bush's public persona sometimes resembled that of Eisenhower. In Bush's case this tactic was also a practiced way of dealing with his inability to articulate thoughts as quickly as he could form them. Bush's private thoughts or opinions were often completely invisible to those outside a tiny circle of relatives, friends or advisors.

¹⁵ The author heard Bush tell this story, for example, as a way of responding to praises offered over lunch by the Irish prime minister in February 1990.

Part of Bush's restraint was also reflected in his conscious delegation of day-to-day foreign policy management to his carefully chosen subordinates -- Baker, Scowcroft, Cheney, and Powell. He trusted these men to follow through and do what needed to be done. Yet Bush constantly kept himself informed about daily developments, usually through Scowcroft and the deputy national security adviser, Robert Gates. Bush would also convey his views on the line of march directly to his key cabinet officials, usually in informal talks, rather than giving guidance at formal interdepartmental meetings.

Therefore Bush never chaired a meeting to consider policy toward Germany or the North Atlantic alliance. He presided over one briefing session on Germany (in November 1989) and another day-long briefing on the upcoming NATO summit (in July 1990). Other than conversations with foreign leaders or statements to the press or occasional notations on memos he had read, Bush rarely communicated his views on these issues to anyone except a few top officials. Yet, as will be seen, Bush's fundamental convictions about Germany shaped the direction of American policy from the very beginning.

At the White House, Bush was advised first and foremost by:

Brent Scowcroft, assistant to the President for national security affairs.

Scowcroft, a retired USAF Lieutenant General, had made his way through the service from the ground rather than the air after being injured in a crash early in his career. His formative period as a strategist had been on Henry Kissinger's NSC staff and, during Kissinger's last year and a half as Gerald Ford's secretary of state, Scowcroft became Ford's national security adviser. He is the only person to have served as national security adviser for two different presidents. Bush and Scowcroft in particular were extraordinarily close, personally and professionally, to the point that whenever an issue might arise Scowcroft could genuinely be said to know Bush's mind.

Known for his past writings on the US-Soviet nuclear balance and arms control issues, Scowcroft's style was hard-working, discreet and cautious. He thought that doing nothing was often better than doing something hasty. Slow to reach

conclusions, Scowcroft would adhere firmly, even stubbornly, to them once he felt sure he had the right course. He was never a competitor for the limelight, and managed a national security decisionmaking process with fewer internal squabbles than any other American administration of the previous thirty years.¹⁶ Though Baker's primacy in managing foreign policy as secretary of state was unquestioned, Scowcroft was a strong national security adviser and the NSC staff's role in policymaking on Germany was substantial.

Scowcroft received invaluable help from Robert Gates, his deputy, a career intelligence analyst who had been deputy director of CIA in the second Reagan administration. Gates kept the paper flow moving, read everything put in front of him, and could digest everything important from it. To this astonishing capacity to process information, Gates also brought a highly disciplined management of the policymaking process.

Robert Blackwill, special assistant to the President for European and Soviet affairs. Blackwill managed the NSC staff office responsible for Europe, and Germany, and was the critical subcabinet official shaping Germany policy for the White House. A career foreign service officer, Blackwill's energetic, aggressive and even abrasive operating style hardly fit the mold of a professional diplomat. Yet Blackwill was one of the most effective strategists and tacticians in the US government. He had worked on Kissinger's staff in the 1970s, then after overseas

¹⁶ For early contemporary comment on Scowcroft and his organization of the NSC, see, e.g., Michael Gordon, "A Sentinel of Security," New York Times, November 24, 1988, p. A1; Don Oberdorfer, "Scowcroft Provides Policy Anchor," Washington Post, November 24, 1988, p. A25; Jim Hoagland, "A Key Role for Scowcroft," Washington Post, January 5, 1989, p. A25; Ronald Shafer, "Scowcroft's Strategy for Running the NSC Raises Doubts," Wall Street Journal, January 27, 1989, p. A1; Robert Hunter, "Slow Start at State, Defense Leaves Strategic Planning to Scowcroft of White House," Los Angeles Times, February 14, 1989, p. 7; Charlotte Saikowski, "Brent Scowcroft: Quiet Adviser," Christian Science Monitor, February 14, 1989, p. 8; Henry Trewitt, "The Quiet Sage Steering Bush's Foreign Policy," U.S. News and World Report, February 20, 1989, p. 22; John Barry, "Mr. Inside, Mr. Outside: The Jim and Brent Show," Newsweek, February 27, 1989, p. 28; Elizabeth Drew, "Letter from Washington," New Yorker, June 26, 1989, p. 72; Gerald Seib, "White House Wonders If Downsizing Has Hurt National Security Council," Wall Street Journal, October 23, 1989, p. A11; Andrew Rosenthal, "National Security Adviser Redefines the Role, Drawing Barrage of Criticism," New York Times, November 3, 1989, p. A12.

duty in London and Tel Aviv, returned to work for Brzezinski on Carter's NSC staff. A senior State Department official in the first Reagan administration, Blackwill had been the ambassador to conventional arms control talks in Vienna before going on leave to teach at Harvard's Kennedy School.¹⁷

Blackwill was assisted on Germany principally by Condoleezza Rice, the NSC's top Soviet expert on leave who had served in government before at the Pentagon and was again on leave from her post on the faculty of Stanford University,¹⁸ and Philip Zelikow, a career foreign service officer and former trial lawyer who had worked for Blackwill in Vienna.

After President Bush himself, the leading figure on foreign policy in Washington was undoubtedly:

James Baker, secretary of state. Though Scowcroft and Bush were close, Baker had been one of Bush's best friends for more than twenty-five years. The two men had worked together from the earliest days of Bush's political career. Baker always had access to Bush, alone if he wished. He did not feel threatened by Scowcroft's constant contact with Bush. When Bush, Baker, and Scowcroft were meeting together the usual atmosphere was one of constant, friendly bantering. Yet Baker always seemed to retain a core of formality. He spoke as if there was a separation in his mind between two George Bushes, one the long-time friend, and the other the person Baker would address, even in small meetings, as "Mr. President."

If, for example, Baker had decided to meet with Bush to discuss policy toward Germany, he would typically first ask one of his own advisers, like Zoellick, to draft a three or four page outline on the direction and plan of policy. Baker would then go over the outline line by line and word by word, underscoring points of particular importance, writing in comments he would make, and numbering key sets of issues.

¹⁷ On Blackwill, see Don Oberdorfer & Ann Devroy, "Blackwill Gets NSC Post," Washington Post, January 25, 1989, p. A19; Robert Pear, "Scowcroft Names Diplomats and Intelligence Officers to Top National Security Posts," New York Times, January 25, 1989, p. A9.

¹⁸ For an example of her work see Condoleezza Rice, The Soviet Union and the Czechoslovak Army (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).

Baker would thus internalize the material, analyze it critically, and make tactical judgments about how he wished to present it. All this effort might be for a 5 minute discussion of the topic with his old friend.

Baker, a Texan from one of Houston's oldest and best-known families, had been schooled on the East Coast before returning to Texas to study and practice law. He was a veteran of the Marine Corps and had served in Korea. He was a veteran of Washington and of political campaigns. In the first Reagan administration Baker had been a successful chief of staff and had served as Secretary of the Treasury during Reagan's second term. Though Baker spoke with a Texas drawl and constantly displayed a quick, wry poker-faced wit, he was rarely amiable. Whether briefing foreign ministers or kneeling in the aisle of an airplane briefing reporters on background, Baker was intense, articulate, and careful. He took great pains to be precise. The overall effect was formidable.¹⁹

Lacking Bush's formed convictions about many foreign policy issues, other than those he had encountered at Treasury, Baker also tended to be suspicious of visionary conceptions that could not readily be connected to operational concerns. Intelligent but not an intellectual, Baker was often labeled a pragmatist. Yet that term implies a willingness, even the desire, to accept business as usual. This was not the case. Though he tended to see policies on their own merits rather than in the context of an elaborate world view, Baker often set quite ambitious objectives, but they were usually concrete, with a preconceived strategy for how they would be achieved. This approach, harnessed to Baker's usually sure instinct for the heart of a problem and complete mastery of his policy brief, accounts for some of Baker's notable success as a Secretary of State.

Baker relied heavily on a small group of hand-picked, loyal subordinates in

¹⁹ Among the numerous contemporary appraisals of Secretary Baker, see Don Oberdorfer, "Ultimate Pragmatist' at State; Baker Likely to Focus on a Few Key Issues," Washington Post, November 10, 1988, p. A39; Joseph Harsch, "In a Changing World, Inexperience Is An Asset for New Secretary of State," Christian Science Monitor, December 30, 1988, p. 7; Elaine Sciolino, "Bush Selections Signal Focus on Foreign Policy," New York Times, January 17, 1989, p. A1; R.W. Apple, "In the Senate Forum: All Hail, Baker!," New York Times, January 18, 1989, p. A17.

what some called his "inner circle." Leaving aside Baker's press and political adviser, Margaret Tutwiler, the key members of the inner circle on German issues were:

Robert Zoellick, counselor. Raised in the Midwest near Chicago, Zoellick had earned joint graduate degrees from Harvard's Law School and Kennedy School of Government. After a brief period practicing law in Washington he was brought into the government by Richard Darman and, through Darman, met Baker. Baker had an eye for talent and took Zoellick with him to the Treasury Department during the second Reagan administration. Zoellick rose there to senior policy ranks and acquired substantial experience with international financial issues. In 1988 he had coordinated the positions taken on policy issues during the Bush election campaign and then had become a key figure in Baker's transition to State. Zoellick had been placed in the Counselor's job to sit astride the paper flow to and from Baker and serve as Baker's troubleshooter. He became the top subcabinet official managing policy on German unification.

In 1989 Zoellick was 38 years old. Bespectacled and intense, he was most comfortable in the world of ideas. He excelled in conceptualizing problems and linking those conceptions to courses of action while maintaining a lawyer's attention to details.

Dennis Ross, head of the Policy Planning staff. Though technically reporting to Zoellick, it is more accurate to think of Ross as Zoellick's partner in advising Baker. The two men were constant companions, intellectually and professionally. Well liked for his patience, earnest nature, and unpretentious manner, Ross had first earned an academic reputation at Berkeley for his work on Soviet foreign policy, especially Moscow's involvement in the Middle East. He had joined the government in the 1970s, working at the Pentagon's in-house think-tank, had spent time on State's Policy Planning staff with responsibility for the Middle East, and had moved to the NSC staff in the second Reagan administration -- still working on the Middle East. He had worked on foreign policy issues for Zoellick in the 1988 Bush campaign and then became a key part of Baker's transition team.

Ross, like Zoellick, was a master at conceptualizing strategies. Though he headed a large Policy Planning staff, Ross was oriented more toward personally supporting Baker's efforts than toward the management of this team. Papers could stack up, unread, on his desk for weeks. Meanwhile Ross would be refining key speeches, rewriting talking points for important meetings, and serving as Baker's principal adviser on both the Soviet Union and the Arab-Israeli peace process.²⁰

Raymond Seitz, assistant secretary of state for European and Canadian affairs. Though outside of Baker's inner circle, Seitz, a career foreign service officer, headed the bureau had line responsibility for Germany and the USSR. Organizational necessity combined with Seitz's personal qualities to give him significant influence over the course of policy toward Germany. Seitz epitomized some of the finest attributes of a professional diplomat. Graceful and witty, he had also served in a grindingly difficult senior advisory role for Baker's predecessor, George Shultz, in the job of Executive Secretary. Seitz knew Europe well, especially Great Britain, where he had served as Deputy Chief of Mission (deputy to the ambassador).²¹

James Dobbins, principal deputy assistant secretary of state for European and Canadian affairs. Seitz had recruited Dobbins, then Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Bonn, to become his top deputy. Aside from his expertise on Germany, Dobbins was known as one of the brightest foreign service officers of his generation. Lacking Seitz's deft touch with people, Dobbins was nevertheless invaluable because of his operational skill, insights into German politics, and well-formed convictions about the course of American foreign policy. Dobbins became the day-to-day manager of most State Department bureaucratic support for the diplomacy on Germany.

²⁰ On Zoellick, see Elaine Sciolino, "Guardian of Baker's Door at State: A Quick Study Who Rose Rapidly," New York Times, February 23, 1990, p. A10. On Ross, see Bill Javetski, "Foggy Bottom's New Bright Light," Business Week, February 20, 1989, p. 66; Robert Pear, "Wordsmiths of the Mideast Move: State Department," New York Times, January 13, 1989, p. A12.

²¹ On Seitz, see Maralee Schwartz, Don Oberdorfer & Dale Russakoff, "Career Officer Seitz Seen As Choice for European Bureau," Washington Post, March 21, 1989, p. A17.

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

Helmut Kohl, chancellor, had led the Federal Republic since 1982. At the end of 1994 only Bismarck and Adenauer will have held longer tenures as a German leader.²²

Kohl was 59 years old in 1989. He had spent his entire adult life in politics after having studied history, politics, and law. Hailing from the Rhineland-Palatinate, he came to political maturity under the shadow of the Rhineland's great statesman, Konrad Adenauer. Adenauer's picture sat prominently on Kohl's desk when Kohl became minister-president of Rhineland-Pfalz.

During these formative years first in CDU youth groups and then in the CDU itself, Kohl undoubtedly internalized Adenauer's vision of "change through strength." When history gave him the opportunity to search for a plan for unifying Germany, these memories are undoubtedly where he began to look -- not in the theology of Ostpolitik that dominated a younger generation of German, even CDU, politicians. Kohl was the first chancellor of the FRG who had not been of military age or older during the Second World War. He instead represented the first postwar generation which remembered both the pain of German division and the Berlin Airlift as formative experiences. This generation, especially in the Rhineland, has been inclined to be strongly pro-American and friendly towards France.²³

Never known as a charismatic speaker or party visionary, Kohl has been underestimated throughout his career. Two characteristics have consistently brought him political success against the odds. The first is consummate mastery of CDU party politics and shrewd political judgment. Never the ideological standard-bearer, Kohl's instincts were almost always for the middle ground on an issue even before

²² There is no outstanding biography of Kohl. But the following description draws from Werner Filmer & Heribert Schwan, Helmut Kohl (Duesseldorf: Econ Verlag, 1985); and Ruediger Altmann, ed., Kohl: Im Spiegel seiner Macht (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag, 1990).

²³ Peter Merkl, German Unification in the European Context (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), pp. 42-43.

others could discern what the middle ground would be. Once they found it, Kohl would already be standing there.

Secondly, Kohl's personal style is more distinctive than his ideology. He projects a solid, common touch for the beliefs of many ordinary people. Rarely conveying even the veneer of cosmopolitan sophistication, Kohl instead revealed, in private as well as in public, a dedication to traditional family values and a deeply felt but often defensive pride in his German nation. This pride and defensiveness can emerge at the slightest provocation, with Kohl usually grabbing for a historical metaphor to illustrate his point, metaphors that sometimes gave offense (as when he roiled relations with the USSR by comparing the public relations of Gorbachev with those of Nazi propaganda minister Josef Goebbels in 1986).

Kohl was like Bush in the sense that underlying principles or convictions were more important to him than the particulars of policy disputes. He was entirely comfortable in leading the conservative Tendenzwende (an intellectual "change in the trend") during the 1980s at the time of the Euromissile debate, declaring that East and West were not equivalent systems, and firmly aligning himself and West Germany with Western institutions like NATO.²⁴

Yet in his political career Kohl had often trimmed his principles to suit what seemed to be possible. Having denounced Ostpolitik for years, he accepted its legacy when he became chancellor because he knew most West Germans associated Ostpolitik with the SPD coalition's reputation for being better managers of foreign policy. He also knew he would be keeping the same foreign minister, since the FDP's Hans-Dietrich Genscher was now his coalition partner.

Horst Teltschik, ministry-director in the office of the chancellor with responsibility for foreign and security policy and inner-German relations. Teltschik, 49 years old in 1989, was Kohl's brilliant and influential advisor throughout the period of German unification. With Genscher and the foreign ministry cut out of the

²⁴ On the conservative Tendenzwende, see Jeffrey Herf, War by Other Means: Soviet Power, West German Resistance, and the Battle of the Euromissiles (New York: Free Press, 1991).

inter-German unity negotiations with the GDR and some of the key high-level diplomacy, Kohl was unequivocally the central figure for the FRG and Teltschik was his key diplomatic aide, with Wolfgang Schaeuble handling the negotiations on inner-German issues.²⁵

Teltschik had suffered personally from Germany's defeat and division. At the age of 6 he fled to Bavaria with his family, refugees from Czechoslovakia's Sudetenland. The family had a difficult time building a new life. But Teltschik earned an officer's commission in his Bundeswehr service and began to find new civilian opportunities, building an academic career as a political scientist. His dissertation, for Richard Loewenthal, was on the interdependence between the GDR and the Soviet Union. He learned both Russian and English.

Teltschik had begun looking for ways to influence policy early in his career and in 1972 began working for the Rhenish minister-president in Mainz, a little-known regional politician named Helmut Kohl. He stayed with Kohl through electoral ups and downs until, in 1982, he became the new Chancellor's chief foreign and security policy adviser. Though Schaeuble headed the Chancellor's office, Teltschik was generally considered its "ace," with his acute analytical ability and first-class political instincts.²⁶

Hans Dietrich Genscher, foreign minister. As foreign minister for an unprecedented eighteen years (1974-92), Genscher was one of the most enduring and popular figures on the West German political scene. Genscher grew to adulthood during the Hitler period and the Second World War. He joined the Hitler Youth in 1937 when he was 10 years old and, as a youth of 16, joined Luftwaffe auxiliary air defense batteries, then served in a military construction unit. He was taken prisoner

²⁵ Schaeuble, both as head of Kohl's Chancellery and as a chief architect of the inner-German unification treaties, has become a well-known public figure. He was recently seriously injured by an assassination attempt but remains a possible candidate to become Kohl's successor as chancellor. See Werner Filmer & Heribert Schwan, Wolfgang Schaeuble: Politik als Lebensaufgabe (Muenchen: C. Bertelsmann, 1992).

²⁶ Filmer & Schwan, Helmut Kohl, pp. 204-08. The section on Teltschik is entitled, "The Ace."

by American forces as the war ended. Genscher then returned east to rejoin his mother, in their hometown of Halle, in the Soviet zone of occupation.

After the war Genscher returned to his study of law, but found the prospect of life under communism increasingly unbearable. In 1952, after living for seven years under communist rule, Genscher -- then a young man of 25 -- decided to flee to the West. After a battle against tuberculosis that almost cost his life, he settled into Free Democrat party politics in Bremen, then Bonn. Witty and shrewd, Genscher entered the Bundestag and rose to become interior minister in 1969, then foreign minister in the 1974 coalition formed by the SPD chancellor Helmut Schmidt.

As the SPD turned leftward in the early 1980s, Genscher -- firmly pro-Western -- led the FDP breakup of the government. Then, as foreign minister under Kohl he carved out a niche as the centrist spokesman for dialogue and negotiation with the East, a man suited by his background and ideology to be a bridge between East and West. This stance was popular, as was Genscher's globe-trotting energetic style. By 1989 Genscher had come to personify German foreign policy to an entire generation that could barely remember a time when someone else was foreign minister.

Genscher was not an organization man. Though he relied on several key aides over the years, one observer noted that "as friendly as he looks in the TV cameras, he can be as unpleasant, demanding and even rude to his close colleagues."²⁷ Genscher nevertheless relied on two key aides in handling German unification issues. They were:

Frank Elbe, chief of Genscher's private office, had a central position in Genscher's inner circle. He was both chief of Genscher's personal staff and probably the closest to being a confidant of the minister. A good English-speaker who dealt easily with Americans, Elbe was younger and more flamboyant diplomat than many of his high-ranking peers in the ministry.

²⁷ Hans Kepper, "Mitarbeiter," in Werner Filmer & Heribert Schwan, eds., Hans-Dietrich Genscher (Duesseldorf: Econ Verlag, 1988), p. 307.

Dieter Kastrup, political director of the foreign ministry. Kastrup was a career diplomat responsible for East-West and inner-German relations. Though not a brilliant intellectual, Kastrup was renowned for his cool analytical ability and professionalism. Patient and attentive to nuance, Kastrup had grown up in Bielefeld, studied law at the European Community headquarters in Brussels and joined the diplomatic service in 1965. He had less experience in Western security issues than in his extensive dealings during the 1980s with the Soviets and East Germans in the management of Ostpolitik. Having headed the department responsible for the external dimension of Berlin and German issues, he was well qualified to deal with the problems that arose so soon after his appointment as political director in December 1988.²⁸

SOVIET UNION

Mikhail Gorbachev, president. The son of an agricultural worker from Russia's Caucasus region, Gorbachev had come far. A child during the Second World War, he could nevertheless remember the five months during which his home region was occupied by German troops. Gorbachev, then a youth of 11 or 12, did not, however, develop powerful anti-German feelings from this experience. The German occupation in his region was relatively benign, especially compared with the ferocious Stalinist deportations which followed the retreat of the Germans. Gorbachev's family had suffered hardship and famine as a result of Stalin's collectivization policies and Gorbachev's paternal grandfather had been sent to Siberia by Stalin's secret police.²⁹

²⁸ See Udo Bergoff, "Im Profil," *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, March 15, 1990, p. 4; *Who's Who in Germany*, 1992, p. 1088.

²⁹ An outstanding portrait of Gorbachev is offered in Robert G. Kaiser, *Why Gorbachev Happened: His Triumphs, His Failure, and His Fall* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2d ed., 1992), pp. 21-92. See also Dusko Doder & Laurie Brannon, *Gorbachev: Heretic in the Kremlin* (New York: Viking, 1990); Zhores Medvedev, *Gorbachev* (London: Basil Blackwell, 1986); Michel Tatu, *Mikhail Gorbachev: The Origins of Perestroika*, tr. A.P.M. Bradley (Boulder: Eastern European Monographs, 1991); Christian Schmidt-Hauer, *Gorbachev: The Path to Power* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1986); Jeanne Vronskaya & Vladimir Chuguev, *The Biographical Dictionary of the Former Soviet Union* (London: Bowker-Saul, 1992), pp. 162-

Singled out for unusual praise as a teenager, Gorbachev early displayed his high intelligence and a taste for acting in school theatricals. At times assertive in challenging authority, Gorbachev could also switch instantly into the character and vocabulary of the "tough party man." In either role Gorbachev always exhibited remarkable shrewdness and self-confidence. His local party organization sent this unusual young communist to Moscow to study law. But he returned promptly to Stavropol, in the Caucasus, and made his way up the ranks of party officialdom for 23 years until he was the area's top official.

Gorbachev's reputation as an incorruptibly honest but unpretentious and direct first secretary attracted the attention of powerful patrons in Moscow, like Andropov and Kulikov, who recognized the need for fresh blood in those Brezhnev years. Gorbachev became a member of the ruling politburo within ten years in 1980. After the deaths of both Andropov and Chernenko, Gorbachev was one of the only top figures who had wide support and was untarnished by allegations of corruption. He became general secretary in 1985.

Gorbachev soon initiated a policy of domestic reform, beginning with greater openness (*glasnost*) a year later. As his efforts gathered speed Gorbachev saw that more reforms were needed, but he kept trying to find a centrist position, firing Yeltsin after the Moscow party leader had attacked the privileges of the ruling class. Faced by rising social disorder and national claims, including a massacre of demonstrators in the Georgian capital of Tbilisi, Gorbachev had assumed the formal title of president and head of state in October 1988. By 1989 the reform process was beginning to acquire a momentum that Gorbachev could no longer control. He seemed to be like the lady in the story of the lady riding the tiger, who could not control her mount but did not dare risk trying to get off. At the end of 1990 Gorbachev was to turn decisively to the hardliners in an effort to regain control.

Gorbachev, 58 years old in 1989, was clearly highly intelligent, possessing

64. Gorbachev's family background is murky. See Schmidt-Hauer, Gorbachev, pp. 43-44. On the German occupation and the deportations of the Karatchay, Kalmyks and other peoples which followed the German retreat, see Tatu, Mikhail Gorbachev, pp. 6-10.

apparently boundless self-confidence and great courage. Western leaders found him much more engaging than his predecessors. But he seldom let slip an unguarded remark. Gorbachev could also still switch easily into formulaic sets of arguments that shielded him from the give and take Westerners were used to in their dealings with each other. He plainly did not understand market economics or fully grasp the social and political forces being unleashed by his reforms, especially openness about the Soviet past and society as well as giving up the party's claim to hold a monopoly on political truth. He had dealt a mortal blow to the legitimacy and coercive power of the one force which held the Soviet empire together. But when Bush, in their first meeting, asked Gorbachev what he thought the Soviet Union would be like in three, four, or five years, Gorbachev answered with a quip: "Even Jesus Christ couldn't answer that question!"³⁰

Charming, yet only occasionally candid, Gorbachev was constantly 'self-aware,' calculating -- in communist parlance -- 'the objective significance' of his remarks. In meetings he could switch from an angry, indignant tone to conciliation in the blink of an eye. These were not the mood swings of a leader struggling with his emotions. They were a sign of Gorbachev's ability to project different sides of his persona for calculated effect.

Gorbachev did not have a Kremlin national security staff of his own, analogous to the NSC staff in Washington or the Chancellery foreign policy staff in Bonn. When he wanted expertise outside of the line ministries he tended to look to experts working in the party's own apparatus, the international department of the CPSU's Central Committee. Here he found his top foreign policy aide, Alexander Yakovlev, a veteran diplomat and party ideologue known for his unconventional thinking, and Anatoly Chernyayev, a veteran party theorist and top foreign policy aide who had served as a propagandist in the international department of the party's

³⁰ George Shultz, Turmoil and Triumph: My Years as Secretary of State (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1993), p. 1108.

central committee.³¹

Gorbachev's chief military adviser was Sergei Akhromeyev, who had fought the Germans near Leningrad, on the Stalingrad Front, and continuing until the war was over, rising from platoon leader to tank battalion commander. "By far the most intellectually commanding figure on the Soviet military team," according to Paul Nitze,³² Akhromeyev opposed far-reaching military cuts and, by 1989, was increasingly uneasy with the direction of reform. This unease would culminate in the depression that led to Akhromeyev's suicide after the failure of the August 1991 coup.

Eduard Shevardnadze, foreign minister, was a very different character. Too young to serve in World War II, his elder brother was killed defending Brest-Litovsk in the first days after the German invasion of the USSR. For Shevardnadze "the war with fascism became a personal battle for me" and "the victory in that war became the victory of Communism." The war, he remembers, "formed my convictions and purpose in life."³³ Yet, growing up in Georgia, much closer to Iran than to Germany, Shevardnadze never fully shared the deep emotions Russians felt about Germany, though he understood their political significance.³⁴

Shevardnadze had risen through the ranks of the party in Georgia to the leadership of his republic. He first met Gorbachev during the 1950s and the two men

³¹ On Yakovlev and the Central Committee, see Jeffrey Gedmin, The Hidden Hand: Gorbachev and the Collapse of East Germany (Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute Press, 1992), pp. 13-14. On Chernyayev, see Alexander Rahr, A Biographical Dictionary of 100 Leading Soviet Officials (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), pp. 39-40. The central committee's international department had lost influence as power transferred away from the party organization back to the government. But within the international department were two of the most well-known experts on Germany in the USSR, Valentin Falin and Nikolai Portugalov. Portugalov reported to Falin and Falin reported to Yakovlev. Falin had been the Soviet ambassador to West Germany from 1971 to 1978. He was not known as a 'new thinker,' and had sponsored an August 1988 Pravda article renewing the charge that America was solely responsible for the Cold War. Gedmin, The Hidden Hand, p. 13. On Portugalov, see *ibid.*, pp. 46-47.

³² Quoted in Rahr, Biographical Dictionary, p. 12.

³³ Eduard Shevardnadze, The Future Belongs to Freedom, tr. Catherine Fitzpatrick (New York: The Free Press, 1991), p. 13.

³⁴ This, at least, is the view of Shevardnadze's closest confidant in the Foreign Ministry, Sergei Tarasenko. Author interview, Providence, June 1993.

became friends, seeing each other frequently through Party activities in Georgia, Gorbachev's nearby Caucasus homeland, or in Moscow. Shevardnadze had replaced an notoriously corrupt party boss in the more free-wheeling Georgian republic and, in the 1970s, acquired a reputation for his irrepressible vigilance in stamping out official corruption. Gorbachev had come to know Shevardnadze as a kindred spirit and thought of his old friend when he needed to bring a breath of fresh air to Soviet foreign policy.³⁵

Shevardnadze once told an American journalist that Gorbachev's July 1985 invitation to become foreign minister in July 1985 was "the greatest surprise of my life."³⁶ Shevardnadze replaced Andrei Gromyko, a rigid figure of the past who had been involved in high-level Soviet diplomacy since the time of Stalin. He spoke Russian with a Georgian accent, had absolutely no background in diplomacy, and brought a sharp change in both perspective and style. His ancestry, his inexperience, and the close relationship he developed with George Shultz all made Shevardnadze suspect to many career bureaucrats in the Soviet security establishment.

White-haired and 61 years old in 1989, Shevardnadze had developed good relationship with Western statesmen through a habitually candid (in private) and voluble, direct, even emotional, approach to problem-solving. Shevardnadze became a true believer in the need for "new thinking" in Soviet foreign policy. Yet Shevardnadze could never feel secure about his political backing at home and was keenly aware how much he depended on Gorbachev to rally the needed support.

Reliance on Gorbachev was a double-edged sword, since Shevardnadze recognized Gorbachev's more ambivalent position on the directions of reform. The resulting tensions had brought Shevardnadze nearly to the point of resignation before. In April 1989 Shevardnadze had undertaken "the most difficult mission in my life" to investigate how the military had crushed civil unrest in the Georgian capital, Tbilisi.

³⁵ See *ibid.*, pp. 22-31.

³⁶ Don Oberdorfer, The Turn: From the Cold War to a New Era, The United States and the Soviet Union 1983-1990 (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991), p. 119.

Shevardnadze's outrage over what he found was redoubled by the state coverup. As we shall see, his preoccupation with Moscow's handling of the Tbilisi investigation came to a head in December 1989, at a delicate point in the development of the Soviet response to events in Germany, when Shevardnadze decided to resign his office. Gorbachev persuaded Shevardnadze to stay on.³⁷ Within the foreign ministry, Shevardnadze's closest adviser was Sergei Tarasenko, head of the ministry's general secretariat. Tarasenko was Shevardnadze's constant companion and drafter of alternative positions to supplant those the bureaucracy might offer. Tarasenko was truly Shevardnadze's right-hand man, privy as no one else was to the positions and thoughts of the foreign minister.

A career diplomat, Tarasenko's overseas service had been in Cairo and in Washington. His intellectual passion remained caught up in the politics of the Middle East, not Europe, as was the case with his usual American counterpart, Dennis Ross. He was therefore more casual than others in his attitude toward the Soviet position in Europe.³⁸ The 52 year-old Tarasenko had been pulled up from more junior ranks into a staff position that brought him unusual power and influence. Though his demeanor remained relatively unassuming, Tarasenko was not intimidated by his new role and he did not shrink from writing alternative position papers that challenged the entrenched positions of his more senior colleagues.

Among these colleagues were Yuly Kvitsinsky, ambassador to the FRG and soon to be deputy foreign minister. Kvitsinsky had spent much of his career in East or West Germany or working on German issues and had risen quickly (he was only a year older than Tarasenko). Kvitsinsky had led the Soviet delegation to the talks on

³⁷ Shevardnadze, The Future Belongs to Freedom, pp. 192-97; author interview with Sergei Tarasenko; Michael Beschloss & Strobe Talbott, At the Highest Levels: The Inside Story of the End of the Cold War (Boston: Little, Brown, 1993), p. 52.

³⁸ Tarasenko later has said, for example, that in a May 1989 meeting of the 'Krakow' study group of Soviet German specialists, he told the experts that unification might be the outcome if the GDR did not reform, because he thought the Soviet Union could not stop it. It would be necessary, though, to assuage domestic opposition within the USSR. Rice interview with Tarasenko, Moscow, October 1991, related to the author. If Tarasenko's recollection is accurate his colleagues around the table probably were stunned or horrified at his cavalier attitude toward such a vital question.

intermediate-range nuclear forces in the early 1980s and had joined Paul Nitze on the famous "walk in the woods." Inclined to polemics and an energetically hardline approach, Kvitsinsky was a consistent spokesman for traditional postwar Russian views of the German question.

So was Alexander Bondarenko, chief of the foreign ministry's Third European Department, which included the FRG. A decorated veteran of the "Great Patriotic War" against Germany, Bondarenko, at 67 in 1989, embodied the sentiments of an older generation of Russians. Having acquired almost legendary status as an expert on Germany for years under Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, Shevardnadze respected Bondarenko. Bondarenko had headed the German department and been a member of the foreign ministry's collegium of senior diplomats for nearly twenty years.³⁹

These then were some of the individuals in Washington, Bonn, and Moscow charged with wondering, in the summer of 1989, whether new policies were needed for Germany and Europe.

When Is the Cold War Over?

Gorbachev's leadership of the Soviet Union since 1985 had revolutionized Soviet domestic and foreign policy. His reforms seemed to vindicate the hopes of postwar Western leaders for an eventual mellowing of Soviet power. In Europe, Gorbachev had preached the gospel of reform and renewal to Communist colleagues in both the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. His December 1988 speech to the United Nations General Assembly was perhaps the high point for Gorbachev's championship of 'new thinking' on the global stage.

The December 1988 speech was historic, first, because it confirmed

³⁹ On Kvitsinsky, see J.L. Scherer, Soviet Biographical Service, 1 (April 1985), p. 31; 2 (June 1986), p. 56. The description of Bondarenko is based on observation; author's interview with Tarasenko; and The Tauris Soviet Dictionary: The Elite of the USSR Today (London: I.B. Tauris & Co., 1989), p. 421.

Gorbachev's readiness to allow the states of Eastern Europe to decide their own destiny, promising that the Soviet Union would not interfere with their "freedom of choice." The speech was significant, second, because it announced a unilateral reduction of the Soviet armed forces and the withdrawal of 50,000 troops from Eastern Europe. The move added credibility to Moscow's renunciation of the Brezhnev Doctrine.

Though the Soviet military moves were not as significant as they appeared to journalists, Gorbachev was setting in motion a profoundly important shift in the doctrine guiding the Soviet armed forces. The process of military reform and downsizing might lead to leaner, more capable, forces (as advisers like Akhromeyev probably hoped) but they would also let Moscow take into account Western concerns about the size of Soviet power.⁴⁰

As 1988 drew to a close and 1989 began, Western leaders in Washington, London, and Bonn all believed the Cold War was effectively over, and that the West had won. They believed this because of the way they conceived of their national interests. At the end of the second Reagan administration, success in the Cold War was defined by three general goals. These were:

1. Stabilize and eliminate any danger from US-Soviet rivalry in development and deployment of nuclear forces.
2. Ameliorate and resolve any major areas of tension in the US-Soviet competition for influence or advantage in the Third World.
3. Persuade Moscow to respect the fundamental human rights of its citizens as the basis for full Soviet participation in the international community.

⁴⁰ The planned cuts, at least in the European USSR, were eclipsed by the proposed reductions envisioned by both sides' proposals in the new conventional arms control (CFE) negotiations that began in March 1989. But the Soviet plan implied that the leadership took CFE seriously and also, without waiting for the treaty, would begin a process of military reform and restructuring that they thought was needed regardless of the results of the CFE negotiation. See Coit D. Blacker, Hostage to Revolution: Gorbachev and Soviet Security Policy, 1985-1991 (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1993), pp. 77-82, 124-26, 158-61.

The United States government and its allies had good reason believed that 1987 signature of the treaty eliminating intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) and progress on drafting of a strategic arms reduction treaty had substantially accomplished the first objective. Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan and negotiated settlements in southern Africa had shown a new willingness to eliminate sources of East-West conflict in the less developed world. And there had been substantial, though still uneven, progress in persuading the Soviet government to accept an international dialogue about its domestic regard for human rights.

This conception of the Cold War explains why Margaret Thatcher, in November 1988, could tell journalists that, "We're not in a Cold War now."⁴¹ It also explains why George Shultz wrote in his memoirs that at the end of 1988 the Cold War "was all over but the shouting." Shultz left office in January 1989 worried mainly that his successors in the Bush administration "did not understand or accept that the cold war is over."⁴²

Shultz was right. The Bush administration was indeed unsure that the cold war was over. At the beginning of May 1989, as Bush's first major address on U.S.-Soviet relations was being prepared, Robert Blackwill suggested that Bush declare firmly that "the Cold War is over." Bush and Scowcroft removed the line from the draft.⁴³ They were more skeptical about the scope and intent of Gorbachev's reforms and they were less sure that the three goals listed above had largely been achieved.

It is also possible, however, that Bush and Scowcroft had a different conception of America's national interest. In addition to the three goals mentioned earlier they may have harbored a fourth one: an end to the division of Europe. Bush

⁴¹ Don Oberdorfer, "Thatcher: Gorbachev has ended Cold War," Boston Globe, November 18, 1988, p. 7.

⁴² Shultz, Turmoil and Triumph, pp. 1131, 1138.

⁴³ This was the speech subsequently delivered by Bush at Texas A&M University, 12 May 89, in Public Papers of the Presidents: George Bush, 1989, Book I (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1990), pp. 540-43. The drafting episode is based on the author's recollection, confirmed by Robert Blackwill and Condoleezza Rice.

president, Bush had made an emotional visit to Poland in 1987. Bush closely followed the movement toward free elections in Poland and Hungary. One of his first public significant foreign policy speeches, in April 1989, had been a pathbreaking offer to extend American economic aid across the Iron Curtain to support Polish democracy, the first major offer of such aid since the Marshall Plan in 1947.⁴⁴ In the spring Bush also decided that he would travel to Poland and Hungary soon after the first elections were held in the two countries, and he journeyed there in July 1989.⁴⁵

The Cold War had not originated, of course, with nuclear rivalries or East-West competition in the Third World. The Cold War was being waged before the Soviet Union had even exploded its first nuclear device. Its first and most important battlefields of the Cold War were in Poland and Germany. One of its most visible and enduring legacies was the division of Europe. The East-West understandings in the 1980s had not challenged the Soviet definition of national security interests in Europe. Chief among these since 1948 had been the forward extension of Soviet political and military influence into central Europe, a sphere of influence in neighboring states of Eastern Europe, and firm control over the fate and military potential of Germany, guaranteed by the country's division and the presence of over 350,000 Soviet troops.

Thus a crucial policy question in Europe for Western leaders in 1989 was to decide whether their national interests now allowed them to declare the Cold War at an end and accept the political division of Europe and the Soviet place in that division. In other words, did the West seek a modus vivendi with the Soviet Union

⁴⁴ The speech on Poland was delivered in Hamtramck, Michigan, 17 Apr 89. See Public Papers of President George Bush, 1989, vol. I, pp. 430-33.

⁴⁵ In April 1989 the Polish government, led by General Jaruzelski, agreed to schedule new parliamentary elections to be held quickly, in June. A "Round Table" was created to fix the procedures for these elections with full participation by the dominant opposition organization, Solidarity. The Hungarians created a "Round Table" process of their own in June 1989 that effectively created a multi-party system before fully free elections were held for the first time in March 1990. See Timothy Garton Ash, The Magic Lantern: The Revolution of 89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin and Prague (New York: Random House, 1990), pp. 25-60; Bernard Gwertzman & Michael T. Kaufman, eds., The Collapse of Communism (New York: Random House, rev. ed., 1991), pp. 3-40, 110-37, 161-63, 253-54.

that defused points of tension and accepted existing geopolitical realities? Or did the West seek to work actively to end the Cold War where it began, by developing new policies designed to end the division of Europe?

Of course, many Western pronouncements called for "overcoming" Europe's division. Ronald Reagan, in a memorable 1987 speech in Berlin, stood at the Brandenburg Gate and challenged Gorbachev, that if he really sought peace, prosperity, and liberalization he should "open this gate" and "tear down this wall!" But the plea was symbolic, not a call to return to the old policy battlefields of the 1940s and 1950s. Willy Brandt, in his memoirs, sharply commented that, "To be sure, Reagan publicly called on Gorbachev to get rid of the Wall. But in negotiations with the Russians he set other priorities and certainly did not put in question the division of Germany...."⁴⁶

In the spring of 1989 Bush was the first Western leader to redefine national interests by directly linking an end to the division of Europe with an end of the Cold War. Yet Bush came to this point by a halting, circuitous route. When Bush took office, he and his advisors did not ask whether the United States should redefine its fundamental objectives in Europe. Instead the question was whether the Reagan administration had met its own standards of success. Baker, and especially Scowcroft and Gates, wondered whether or how much the Soviet strategic challenge had really diminished and speculated about ways to "test" Soviet intentions.

Bush thought Reagan had oscillated too much in his attitudes toward the Soviet Union, first being too strident about the Soviet Union, then too conciliatory. Scowcroft, another skeptic, had even opposed the INF Treaty. Baker and his advisors thought Shultz had allowed his personal relationship with Shevardnadze and

⁴⁶ Address by Ronald Reagan, Berlin, 12 Jun 87, Public Papers: Reagan, 1987, Book I, pp. 634-37. For Brandt's comment see Willy Brandt, Erinnerungen (Frankfurt: Propylaeen, 1989), p. 11. Brandt's comment, though accurate, may be slightly unfair to Reagan personally. Reagan himself appears to have taken his rhetoric seriously. When he went to Moscow at the end of May 1988, the first American president to visit the USSR in fourteen years, Reagan privately asked Gorbachev to remove the Berlin Wall. Gorbachev brushed the plea aside. See Ronald Reagan, An American Life (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1990), pp. 705-07. Shultz's detailed memoirs do not even mention either Reagan's Brandenburg Gate speech or any discussion at all of the Berlin Wall at the Moscow summit.

admiration for Gorbachev's accomplishments to color his judgment. It was this different perspective on the Reagan accomplishments, not a new definition of objectives, which in 1988 led Bush and his top advisers to question whether the Cold War was really over.⁴⁷

Strategic reviews were commissioned on policy toward the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and Western Europe. As these churned on, both Soviet and West European leaders joined the American media in a chorus of impatient criticism, both public and private. In almost all cases the main critique was that the administration ought to ignore those hardliners who seemed overly suspicious of Gorbachev (such as Gates and defense secretary Dick Cheney), recognize that the Cold War was over, and get on with business, such as the unfinished START treaty.⁴⁸

Fragments of a new approach began to emerge in Washington under the pressure of events in the spring of 1989. Poland led the way. Testing Gorbachev's willingness to permit genuine self-determination, Warsaw actually held free elections and created a roundtable to set the future of the country which included the Solidarity opposition (although President Jaruzelski remained in place as a sign of continuity). In Washington the NSC staff and the State Department combined to overcome Treasury objections and win Bush's agreement to the promise of economic aid as a reward for Polish political and economic reform.

The White House sensed the need to show more vigorous American leadership within the NATO alliance. In part this was to establish the new president's role within NATO, in part it was to offset the damage from the ongoing quarrel with the West Germans over the modernization of short-range nuclear forces in the FRG, and in part it was to win a public relations battle with Gorbachev for the support of West European publics. Still lacking, in March 1989, any significant policy initiatives to use in launching such a diplomatic offensive, the bureaucratic strategy was to plan

⁴⁷ Interviews with Scowcroft, Blackwill, Rice, and Zoellick.

⁴⁸ Impressions of this period between January and mid-May 1989 are reflected well in Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, pp. 17-68.

presidential activities that would force the government to develop some new policies. Scowcroft and Blackwill, working with top officials at State, mapped out a plan for two major trips by the President to Europe in 1989. The first, in the late spring, would be to Western Europe and include a NATO Summit to consider the future of the Alliance in this period of dramatic change. The second trip, in the summer, would concentrate on Eastern Europe and culminate in the G-7 Economic Summit, held that year in Paris. The White House also decided to deploy its new ideas about the direction of policy in a series of speeches that the President would give at college commencements in May and on his trip to Europe.

As these trip plans progressed, the policy review on Western Europe, NSR-5, also went forward, producing a paper for interagency review in March 1989. The paper was prepared by the Policy Coordinating Committee for Europe, then chaired by Assistant Secretary of State Rozanne Ridgway. Ridgway, a career diplomat who had been an ambassador to East Germany, was a holdover from the Reagan Administration who had been Shultz's chief aide in the development of a new era in U.S.-Soviet relations.

During this NSR-5 review the first differences emerged in Washington over policy toward Germany. From the NSC staff both Blackwill and Zelikow began arguing that U.S. policy had to tackle the German question anew if the Cold War was really to enter a final phase.

Zelikow pressed this case during the government's deliberations on NSR-5 in late February and early March. He was completely unsuccessful. The State Department, represented by Assistant Secretary Ridgway and Avis Bohlen (then heading the NATO office in the European Bureau) strongly disagreed. Ridgway believed the existing situation was stable and a source of peace. In her view, renewed debate about the German Question would be premature and unwise. One senior State official, Robert Zoellick, recalled that his early 1989 discussion with a visiting West German general about real German attitudes toward unification elicited Ridgway's sharp comment that unification was "the subject that all Americans are

interested in and no German cares about."⁴⁹

The final version of the NSR-5 policy paper, as prepared by State, reflected Ridgway's views and represented the dominant view among the European experts at State. In especially strong language for a bureaucratic document (reacting to the NSC staff's provocation), the paper warned:

Inner-German ties will continue to develop and the issue of German reunification is never far below the surface. However, the Germans themselves do not wish to increase the salience of this issue at this time. Nor do the other Europeans. There is no more inflammatory and divisive issue, and it serves no U.S. interest for us to take the initiative to raise it. We should adhere to long-standing U.S. policy formulas that we support self-determination of the German people and support the reunification of Germany in freedom by peaceful means.⁵⁰

This paper was reviewed at a meeting of the NSC Deputies Committee on March 20, 1989. Both the deputy director of the CIA and the deputy chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff criticized the State paper and urged that more attention be given to U.S. policy on German reunification. But there the issue was left.⁵¹

The policy reviews did little to help the Bush administration's policies coalesce. Baker's closest advisers, such as Zoellick and Ross, had paid little attention to the review process, considering it largely a waste of time. Scowcroft, Gates, and Blackwill had also judged that the policy reviews would not produce the initiatives needed for the President's upcoming trips, especially the NATO Summit and the President's visit to West Germany. Scowcroft was groping for a major step. He recalled later that, "We thought we should change our sights from managing the Cold War on the ground in Europe and stabilizing the situation to look beyond, to

⁴⁹ Author interview with Zoellick, Washington, April 1991.

⁵⁰ Final version of State paper responding to NSR-5, as conveyed in transmittal memo from Levitsky to Scowcroft, 11 Mar 89.

⁵¹ Summary of Conclusions for Deputies Committee Meeting on NSR 5, US Relations with Western Europe (Political and Security Aspects), 20 Mar 89 [prepared by Zelikow and distributed to all participating agencies].

resolution of the basic issue."⁵²

Blackwill and Zelikow distilled their own set of policy ideas for Europe and the NATO Summit in a March 1989 memo which, on March 20, Scowcroft signed forward to President Bush. Bush read it carefully.⁵³ The memo included a significant discussion of policy toward Germany.

It opened by declaring that: "Today, the top priority for American foreign policy in Europe should be the fate of the Federal Republic of Germany." In this decisive phase of the Cold War the position of the FRG was pivotal, especially given the FRG's unique position in Western defense. Bush was advised to help keep Kohl in power because his "government is now lagging in the polls behind an opposition that, as currently constituted, has too little regard either for nuclear deterrence or for conventional defense."

The memo then suggested how to apply the goal of overcoming Europe's division to the case of Germany.

Even if we make strides in overcoming the division of Europe through greater openness and pluralism, we cannot have a vision for Europe's future that does not include an approach to the 'German question.' Here we cannot promise immediate political reunification, but we should offer some promise of change, of movement....The formal Allied position has long been that we want the German people to regain their unity through self-determination. I think we can, working with Bonn, improve on this formula, make it more pointed, and send a clear signal to the Germans that we are ready to do more if the political climate allows it. We can, for example, pledge our support for the right of the German people to self-determination and encourage

⁵² Author interview, June 1991. Scowcroft in March had even flirted privately with the idea of suggesting withdrawal of all US and Soviet troops from Europe. Blackwill dissuaded him from pursuing it, pointing out the geographical asymmetries the US would face in returning its troops and describing the powerful effect the US troop presence had as tangible assurance of America's commitment to European defense. Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, pp. 38-39. Scowcroft was persuaded to drop the idea, but the episode reveals his desire to find an idea that would have a profound political impact on Europe, especially Soviet control of Eastern Europe.

⁵³ Memo from Scowcroft to Bush, "The NATO Summit," 20 Mar 89. On March 26 the President noted to Scowcroft that he had "read this with interest!" The President marked up the memo, underscoring and checking the paragraph on the priority to be attached to policy toward Germany. The memo was originally drafted by Zelikow and edited by Blackwill.

Germans to take concrete steps to express that right. We can stress, at the same time, that the problem is not just one of borders. It is a problem of a nation divided by barriers that range from land mines to currency restrictions. Amidst all the enthusiasm about 'glasnost,' it is sobering to remember that, in February 1989, East German border guards again shot down and killed a youth for trying to cross the Wall.⁵⁴

The U.S. government was already on the record in support of the peaceful and democratic reunification of Germany. Bush was being urged to put this goal back on the active political agenda through public rhetoric, changing the standard rhetorical phrases just enough to get public attention.

"Europe Whole and Free"

President Bush had thus thought about the issue of German reunification when Washington Times editor Arnaud de Borchgrave raised the topic with him in a May 1989 interview. Bush declared he would "love to see" Germany reunified, adding that: "Anybody who looks back over his shoulder and then looks at the present and sees a country ripped asunder by division, a people ripped asunder by political division, should say: 'If you can get reunification on a proper basis, fine.'"⁵⁵

A few days before this interview, Blackwill had written another memorandum for Bush on dealing with the Germans urging again that America adopt this issue anew. In the context of new nuclear debates in NATO between Washington and Bonn, Blackwill argued that if the Western Allies identified their interests more closely with Germany's national aspirations, Blackwill thought it would be easier to persuade the German people to reciprocate by continuing to identify their nation's future with the Western alliance.⁵⁶ This argument was strikingly reminiscent of the

⁵⁴ Scowcroft to President Bush, "The NATO Summit," 20 Mar 89, p. 2.

⁵⁵ Arnaud de Borchgrave, "Bush 'would love' reunited Germany," Washington Times, May 16, 1989, p. A-1.

⁵⁶ Memo from Blackwill to Scowcroft attaching a draft "Memorandum for the President on Dealing with the Germans," May 11, 1989. The quoted passage is from the enclosed memo to the President.

reasons why, during the early 1950s, Washington offered such vocal U.S. support for German unification, while the FRG was debating the issue of rearmament and deciding whether to become a member of NATO.

While these memos about Germany were circulating in the White House, the NSC staff had also begun using Bush's upcoming trips and the planned series of foreign policy speeches as a device for pushing the bureaucracy to produce, or endorse, a group of initiatives for U.S. policy toward Europe and the Soviet Union. The press had poked fun at the policy reviews and top officials throughout the administration felt uneasy about the contrast between a NATO wrangling over nuclear missiles on the one hand, and Gorbachev on the other, who each day seemed to garner headlines with some new example of openness, 'glasnost.'

The result was that during April and May of 1989 the top levels of the NSC staff, State, and Defense Departments entered a period of intense policy development which soon produced some significant results. The earliest outcomes were mainly rhetorical, but they provided important information about how the administration would define national interests. In a speech at Texas A&M on May 12, 1989 Bush announced that it was time for policy toward the Soviet Union to go "beyond containment" and treat the Soviet Union as a full partner in the international community. As discussed in Chapter Two, Bush thereby signaled that he was prepared to continue the rapprochement achieved during the second Reagan administration, and might be prepared to go further than that -- though the ultimate

Months later, on August 7, General Scowcroft actually forwarded the memo to the President with minor changes to reflect the passage of time. The President read and initialed the memo on September 9, 1989, nine days before his significant statement on German unification in Helena, Montana -- discussed further in chapter five.

West German officials from the governing CDU party regularly called the unity issue "open," but they meant it mainly in the sense of unsettled humanitarian or cultural issues stemming from the division of the German people, not as a signal of agitation on the question of borders or for an end to the GDR. To the contrary, since 1985 at the latest, the CDU had made clear that "unity" was not to be understood in such territorial terms. See, e.g., the explanation of the "open German question" in Minister Schaeuble's address, 25 Feb 89, in Texte, p. 50.

intentions were still vague.⁵⁷

On May 21, with French president Francois Mitterrand at his side, Bush spoke at Boston University about policy toward Western Europe. He declared firmly that the United States would move beyond its characteristic ambivalence and strongly welcome more West European political and economic integration.⁵⁸

New ideas were also concocted, quite secretly, to defuse the dispute over short-range nuclear forces which then was the number one source of tension with West Germany and within the NATO alliance. This would allow the NATO summit to focus on a different agenda -- the conventional military balance in Europe. The United States planned to launch ambitious objectives and a fast timetable for concluding a treaty that would drastically reduce the size of conventional forces in Europe and force an especially significant reduction of Soviet military power west of the Urals. The Bush administration, particularly Scowcroft and his staff, had concluded that the conventional military balance had not received as much attention as the U.S.-Soviet strategic nuclear balance. They would give conventional arms control in Europe much more attention since they believed this was the fundamental source of European insecurity.⁵⁹

Scowcroft received crucial support for the idea of galvanizing conventional arms control talks when Secretary of State Baker returned from his first trip to Moscow in May 1989. This was Baker's first major encounter with the Soviet

⁵⁷ The text of the address by Bush is in Public Papers, Book I, pp. 540-43. The philosophy of the speech was still oriented to the need to "test" Soviet intentions. Its most important initiative, a revival of Eisenhower's 1955 "Open Skies" proposal in an expanded and multilateral form, was developed by Blackwill and Zelikow in order to test Gorbachev's commitment to "glasnost." An Open Skies treaty was eventually signed in 1992 and ratified in 1993.

⁵⁸ See Public Papers, Book I, pp. 583, 582-85.

⁵⁹ Scowcroft, as noted earlier, had already been flirting with radical ideas for U.S.-Soviet troop reductions in Europe. Blackwill and Zelikow, on the NSC staff, were both inclined to favor a push on conventional arms control. Blackwill had headed the U.S. delegation to the earlier generation of conventional arms control talks in the mid-1980s; Zelikow had worked for Blackwill on these negotiations and then had helped prepare the mandate for the new CFE (Negotiations on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe) talks during 1987 for U.S. ambassador Stephen Ledogar.

leadership. Baker found himself placed on the defensive in his meetings. When he met with Gorbachev the Soviet leader opened by stressing the reality of perestroika and then pressed for reinvigorating progress in arms control. There was a pointed discussion of the planned NATO modernization of short-range nuclear forces. Baker defended these plans as part of the West's defense strategy.⁶⁰

Coming away from this trip, Baker apparently concluded: (1) that Gorbachev was serious about wanting to improve European security, at least serious enough to be put to a real test; and (2) Gorbachev was winning headlines from announcements of Soviet military withdrawals that the U.S. considered just token in size. Baker became the catalyst for rallying support behind a major conventional arms control initiative, prepared in a matter of days during the second half of May.

The Pentagon had done some of the analysis to support these plans during the policy reviews, but they were hesitant about going forward with dramatic new conventional arms control ideas, with objections voiced by then-JCS chairman Admiral William Crowe. Bush, however, had made up his mind. "I want this [more radical CFE proposal] done," he said at a meeting of his top advisers. "Don't keep telling me why it can't be done. Tell me how it can be done." The NSC staff prepared the new proposal. Deputy secretary of state Lawrence Eagleburger and Scowcroft's deputy, Robert Gates, traveled secretly to Europe to persuade Thatcher, Mitterrand, and Kohl to support the idea. Even Baker's inner circle did not know about the details of this plan.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Baker had met with Shevardnadze in Vienna in March 1989. The trip to Moscow was the first occasion for lengthy talks with his Soviet counterpart. Soviet notes of what was said in Baker's meeting with Gorbachev, on May 11, are published in Mikhail S. Gorbachev, Gody Trudnykh Reshenii, 1985-1992: Izbrannye [Years of Difficult Decisions, 1985-1992: Collection] (Moscow: Al'fa Print, 1993), pp. 136-48.

⁶¹ For the Bush quote (from a participant in the meeting) and a good account of the May frenzy, see Oberdorfer, The Turn, pp. 347-51. For additional detail and impressions, though a bit disjointed, see Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, pp. 74-79.

The initiatives offered to put US troop strength on the table with a proposed ceiling that would cut US manpower in Europe by 10% (later to be expanded), move toward the Soviets by adding deep cuts in combat aircraft and helicopters to the CFE agenda, and radically accelerate the timetable for securing an agreement by urging that the treaty be completed in 6 to 12 months. Though many Soviet officials considered this timetable to be sheer propaganda and utterly unrealistic (see Beschloss & Talbott, At the

Decisions were also made about the broad rhetorical themes to be developed during the NATO summit and Bush's related visits to Italy, West Germany, and Great Britain. First, Bush decided that he would link the end of the Cold War explicitly to an end of the division of Europe. This theme had strong support from Baker and his chief advisers, and Baker had begun introducing it in his own public statements. Second, the President would hint at the implications of overcoming Europe's division for Germany's future.⁶²

The NATO summit on May 29-30, 1989, turned out to be a complete success for the United States, for West Germany, and for Bush personally. The vexing issue of nuclear modernization was adroitly put aside after a negotiation in which Baker and

Highest Levels, p. 80), the target was almost met. The CFE treaty was signed by twenty-three nations in Paris eighteen months after the U.S. initiative was announced. The previous conventional arms control talks (known by the acronym MBFR) had lasted from 1972 to 1989 without ever producing any agreement. As will be seen later, the United States used the diplomacy of German unification and the CSCE process in order to enforce its rapid timetable for conclusion of a CFE agreement.

Working from analysis done by a closeted group of Pentagon officials, the May 1989 CFE initiatives were prepared by Blackwill, Arnold Kanter (who headed the NSC staff's arms control office), and Zelikow, all working closely with Scowcroft. Bush, Scowcroft, Baker, Cheney, and Crowe then approved the NSC staff-prepared plans. Although Baker, advised by Ross, had led in putting pressure on the government to demand deep, rapid cuts in the forces, Ross and Zoellick did not learn the details of the CFE initiative until after Eagleburger and Gates had already left for Europe.

⁶² This formulation of American goals implicitly ruled out one alternative approach: a US-Soviet dialogue about mutual restraint in Eastern Europe. This alternative was suggested early in 1989 by Henry Kissinger. Before the Bush administration took office, officials had toyed Kissinger's proposal for a US-Soviet dialogue that would agree upon limits which would govern Soviet actions in Eastern Europe in exchange for a Western pledge to do nothing that would accelerate the pace of change in the East, especially actions — dealing with Germany for example — that might threaten Moscow's sense of security. In Moscow to deliver a courteous letter from Bush promising continued superpower cooperation, Kissinger had discussed his idea with Gorbachev's top policy adviser, Alexander Yakovlev, on January 16, then with Gorbachev on January 18. The Soviets were receptive.

Kissinger then presented the idea to Bush, Baker, and Scowcroft in Washington on January 28. There is no evidence that Bush was ever particularly interested. At State Baker's career advisers in the European Bureau, Ridgway and Thomas Simons, told him flatly that Kissinger's idea was a bad one. Ross, however, thought a dialogue about Eastern Europe might make sense. In late March Baker told the New York Times that the idea was being considered. But, he said, such a dialogue would have to be handled carefully in order to avoid the impression that America and the USSR were carving up Eastern Europe. A stormy reaction from foreign governments (and from Blackwill and Rice in the NSC staff) led to formal burial of the plan by deputy secretary of state Eagleburger. Rather than seeing the Baker interview as a trial balloon for his idea, an angry Kissinger reportedly thought Baker had used his plan as a clay pigeon, tossing it up in order to shoot it down. See Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, pp. 14-17, 19-21, 45-46.

Zoellick both played a key role. Kohl and Genscher were quite satisfied. Bush's conventional arms control initiative came as a complete surprise to the gathered journalists and was approved by NATO with enthusiasm. The episode had a dramatic and positive effect on the perception of Bush within Europe and, indeed, on Bush's confidence in his own handling of foreign affairs. For better or worse he tended to rely in the future on the improvised and secretive policymaking processes which had contributed to this success. A bit bemused by the acclaim which greeted the summit outcome, Bush reminded reporters three days later that, "I'm the same guy I was four days ago."⁶³

Bush also began deploying the new themes which emphasized the division of Europe and the quest for "unity." While the NATO Summit declaration itself simply repeated the standard formula on German unity which had been used for years, Bush immediately began repeating the new new thrust in policy toward Europe from the moment he opened his end-of-Summit news conference, with the announcement that "our overall aim is to overcome the division of Europe and to forge a unity based on Western values."⁶⁴

The next day Bush traveled to Germany. He delivered a major address in the Rheingoldhalle in Mainz, the Rheinland-Pfalz capital where Kohl had risen to national prominence. The West's goal now, Bush proclaimed, was to: "Let Europe be whole and free. To the founders of the Alliance, this aspiration was a distant dream, and

⁶³ On the "enthusiastic welcome" in Bonn to Bush's initiatives from both the government and the opposition SPD, see Bark & Gress, Democracy and Its Discontents, pp. 575-77. For the Bush quote see Oberdorfer, The Turn, p. 351. Oberdorfer thought Bush "seemed to understand that the cheers were transitory and perhaps to suggest, from his vantage point, that they were as undeserved as the catcalls." A sense of the press perception is conveyed by Oberdorfer's recollection of his interview: "Several days before, New York Times columnist William Safire had called Bush 'the first U.S. president since Richard Nixon to be in full intellectual command of his national security policy,' and the comment seemed apt as I watched Bush answer questions about his new policies in almost perfect paragraphs, without looking at a note and only rarely asking for a detail from Scowcroft, who was at the other end of the dining-room table." *Ibid.*, p. 351.

⁶⁴ Public Papers, Book I, p. 638. Paragraph 26 of the NATO Summit Declaration, adopted on May 30, 1989 stated: "We seek a state of peace in Europe in which the German people regains its unity through free self-determination." *Ibid.*, p. 625.

now it's the new mission of NATO." In other words, the United States was ready to press for overcoming Europe's division with real policies within the Atlantic Alliance.

Bush then made his definition of the end of the Cold War explicit: "The Cold War began with the division of Europe. It can only end when Europe is whole. Today it is this very concept of a divided Europe that is under siege." Gorbachev had presented the goal of a "common European home." Bush replied that, "there cannot be a common European home until all within it are free to move from room to room." He called for the Iron Curtain to come down -- "let Berlin be next."⁶⁵

Having introduced the volatile language of unity to his German audience, the speech then became more restrained. "We seek self-determination for all of Germany and all of Eastern Europe." More radical phrases referring directly to German unification had been in an earlier draft, but Scowcroft had removed them because he worried that Bush might be getting ahead of what Chancellor Kohl himself felt able to say about the national question. During Bush's visit, on a boat trip down the Rhine, Scowcroft raised the unification issue directly with defense minister Gerhard Stoltenberg (CDU). Stoltenberg offered polite encouragement. The U.S., he said, should keep raising this question in a calm, logical way, setting an agenda for change.⁶⁶

Bush went on in his Mainz address to propose that the pan-European political organization, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) could do more to promote pluralism and set guidelines for holding free elections in Eastern Europe. Norms of democratic governance, not just respect for human rights, were thus seen as a key to ending Europe's division.⁶⁷ Bush also called for pan-European

⁶⁵ Address by Bush, Mainz, 31 May 89, in Public Papers, Book I, pp. 650-54.

⁶⁶ Interview with author, June 1991. The Mainz speech, as originally drafted by Zelikow and the White House speechwriting staff before the trip and en route to Europe, directly referred to German unification in the manner suggested in the memo sent by Scowcroft to President Bush in March.

⁶⁷ This initiative, the seed which ultimately produced the CSCE's Office of Free Elections, came from Zelikow after Rice described the idea to him, attributing it to Stephen Sestanovich. On the broader philosophical question on the test of internal democratic norms, or whether a state is at war with its own

environmental cooperation, and reiterated the new moves to accelerate progress in conventional arms control. The speech had welcomed a new "partnership" in US-German relations.

Bush's remarks "delighted the Germans," who were quick to infer that Bush hoped "the seemingly frozen German question would begin to shift quite soon."⁶⁸ There is no doubt that Bush grasped the significance of the new concepts and was not just parroting words drafted by aides. Talking to Washington Post reporters on the final stop of his trip, in London, the journalists were struck by how Bush kept harping on the potential for change in Eastern Europe. Though the region was relatively quiet at the moment, a week before the Polish parliamentary election and before other states in the region had experienced serious unrest, Bush called it "'the most exciting area for change in the world'" and "came back to it time and again in response to questions on other subjects." What did 'beyond containment' mean?, the reporters asked. Bush answered, "It means a united Europe. It means a Europe without as many artificial boundaries."⁶⁹

The events of the spring had added importance for Secretary Baker. He had inherited an uneasy relationship with the West German Foreign Ministry. The Reagan Administration had distrusted Genscher, and the two foreign ministries were not close. The debate in early 1989 over modernization of short-range nuclear forces had been a source of new acrimony. But one consequence of the nuclear negotiations was that Secretary Baker and Foreign Minister Genscher became well acquainted and developed a strong mutual respect for each other's skills. The successful handling of the problem at the NATO Summit cleared the air and, with the CFE initiatives,

citizens, as a way of defining the division of Europe or the construction of a "peace order," and on West German hesitations in accepting such a philosophy in the CSCE process, see Timothy Garton Ash, In Europe's Name: Germany and the Divided Continent (New York: Random House, 1993), pp. 16-19, 263-64

⁶⁸ Dennis Bark & David Gress, A History of West Germany: Democracy and Its Discontents, 1963-1991 (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 2d ed., 1993), p. 581.

⁶⁹ Oberdorfer, The Turn, pp. 351-52.

brought a new spirit of goodwill between both the ministers and their staffs.⁷⁰

Gorbachev's Turn

Two weeks after Bush left the Federal Republic of Germany, Gorbachev arrived. It was the Soviet leader's first visit to the FRG and the West Germans received him like a hero. The Soviets too had been developing their vision of Europe's future, and good relations between Moscow and Bonn were at the center of this vision. Their attitude could hardly have been more welcome to the government of Helmut Kohl.

When Gorbachev took power in 1985, the ongoing dispute over deployment of American intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) in Germany had poisoned Soviet-FRG relations. The USSR had mounted a public relations campaign renewing fears about West German "revanchism." But by the end of 1987 a U.S.-Soviet treaty was putting the INF issue into the past and Kohl had received a renewed (though weaker) electoral mandate to remain Chancellor.

The Soviet government decided that West Germany would be a key to Soviet economic revival; they would have to deal with Kohl; and the time had come for a better relationship. Some of Moscow's German experts were also tempted by the thought of building up Europe and Japan as counterweights to American power. Kohl, embarrassed by the strong showing of Genscher's FDP in the 1987 elections, came to Moscow in October 1988 full of reassurances and good wishes. If the Soviets wanted to befriend the FRG despite its loyalty to NATO, Kohl would happily accept their friendship. The Soviets foresaw a June 1989 visit by Gorbachev to West Germany as a major event, capped by a joint declaration that would establish the basis for the new relationship.⁷¹

⁷⁰ See Richard Kiessler & Frank Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken: der diplomatische Weg zur deutschen Einheit (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1993), pp. 16-21.

⁷¹ On the evolving Soviet attitude toward Germany and Kohl's 1988 visit, see Ash, In Europe's Name, pp. 105-12; Gedmin, The Hidden Hand, pp. 46-47; F. Stephen Larrabee, "Moscow and the German Question," in Dirk Verheyen and Christian Soe, eds., The Germans and their Neighbors (Boulder:

Soviet reassessments of policy toward Germany also included some reflection on the German Question. Shevardnadze has said repeatedly that he and Gorbachev foresaw the unification of the two German states as early as 1986. Yakovlev and Chernyaev also, in retrospect, agree that Gorbachev was reconciled early to the possibility that Germany might reunite in some fashion. An outspoken but tolerated expert at one of the Soviet foreign policy institutes, Vyacheslav Dashichev, began calling in 1987 and 1988 for Soviet acceptance of a united Germany as part of the establishment of a more cooperative relationship with the West.⁷²

These statements must be evaluated carefully. A broad philosophical perspective on Germany's future is one thing; decisions with real consequences quite another. Gorbachev told FRG president Von Weiszaecker in 1987 that the current reality was two German states but "history would decide what would happen in a hundred years." Von Weisazaeker recalled to Timothy Garton Ash that he interjected, "or perhaps fifty?," and Gorbachev indicated his assent.⁷³ Since the Soviets had come, at least publicly, to view the division of Germany as immutable, Gorbachev's attitude struck West Germans as generous or far-sighted. Slightly more ambiguous phrases about the national question were allowed to creep into the public statements issued by Kohl and Gorbachev in Moscow during 1988 and the next year in Bonn.⁷⁴ Such Soviet flirtations with German national aspirations were some of the currency in which they could pay for a more profitable relationship. Gorbachev's domestic program implied the substitution of international cooperation, especially

Westview Press, 1993), pp. 212-15; and Michael Sodaro, Moscow, Germany and the West from Khrushchev to Gorbachev (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991). On the 1987 FRG election, the effect of the INF treaty, and the popular pressure to show more support for Gorbachev, see Bark & Gress, Democracy and Its Discontents, pp. 475-76, 481-84.

⁷² Interviews by Ash with Shevardnadze, Yakovlev, and Chernyaev quoted in Ash, In Europe's Name, pp. 108-09; on the views of Dashichev as well as Falin and Portugalov, see also Gedmin, The Hidden Hand, pp. 46-51.

⁷³ Ash, In Europe's Name, p. 108.

⁷⁴ The linguistic movement is traced well in Hannes Adomeit, "Gorbachev and German Unification: Revision of Thinking, Realignment of Power," Problems of Communism, July-August 1990, pp. 1-23.

economic cooperation, for international confrontation so he would have the freedom to reallocate domestic priorities and obtain some needed foreign support. Kohl's visit to Moscow was accompanied, for example, by the extension of DM 3 billion in credits for purchases of German machinery by Soviet producers of "consumer goods."⁷⁵

There is no evidence, however, that the Soviet government actually sought to set in motion some new momentum in the coming together of the two German states. Officials may have known they were playing with fire, but whenever they actually saw sparks begin to fly they moved quickly to stamp them out. Dashichev himself says that his views were roundly rejected by the entire Soviet foreign policy establishment. When the GDR leaders asked Moscow what Gorbachev had told Von Weiszaecker, East German records record that top Soviet officials recounted the exchange with the assurance that, "The USSR would allow no speculation about the 'German nation.' The defence of the interests of the GDR was a cornerstone of Soviet policy." During Kohl's visit to Moscow Gorbachev reiterated that history had divided Germany and that any attempt to change the situation with "unrealistic policies" would be "unpredictable and even dangerous." After his trip Kohl himself referred to talk of unification as a "fantasy."⁷⁶

So West German and Soviet perspectives seemed to converge when Gorbachev received his tumultuous, even euphoric, reception in West Germany during June 1989. Gorbachev and Kohl could agree that the history of the German nation might take its course. Gorbachev and Kohl could also agree that they did not need to devise some common policies that would give history a push. Kohl, for example, recalled to

⁷⁵ Bark & Gress, Democracy and Its Discontents, pp. 484-85. Other agreements were concluded on such subjects as space research, atomic energy development, incidents between navies on the high seas, cultural exchanges, and cooperation in food processing.

⁷⁶ On the reaction to Dashichev and the Soviet-GDR discussions, based on an interview with Dashichev and East German archives of the July 1987 discussions between Hermann Axen and Dobrynin quoted in Ash, In Europe's Name, pp. 109-10, 495. Ash's own conclusion is that despite high-level questioning and rethinking about German policy, "there is no evidence whatsoever that this was translated into operative policy." For Gorbachev's October 1988 comments, see Izvestiya, 16 Oct 88, quoted in Larrabee, "Moscow and the German Question," p. 214.

Garton Ash that he and Gorbachev had a long, private conversation overlooking the Rhine. Kohl said that the river of history was flowing toward German unity. It might be dammed long enough to keep Kohl himself from ever seeing it, but it would surely arrive someday. Kohl recalled that Gorbachev listened silently. Then, according to Kohl, Gorbachev asked whether he could rely on West German economic help if he ever urgently needed it. Kohl said yes. This, Kohl remembered, was "the decisive moment" on the road to German unity.⁷⁷

Gorbachev, for his part, may have thought he was continuing to a beneficial trade in which the readiness to hear soft rumination was exchanged for the readiness to give hard money. Economic interests were clearly uppermost in Gorbachev's mind, with numerous West German-Soviet joint ventures being announced and trade between the two states rising rapidly in 1989.⁷⁸ Had the Soviets actually feared some movement toward unity in Kohl's lifetime, the Soviets might immediately have focused on the circumstances under which this might occur. Faced with a real policy statement during the visit, the Soviets were very careful.

The Bonn Declaration issued by the two heads of government announced that henceforth Soviets would join West Germans in seeking to overcome the division of Europe. They would do this by "working on concepts." The "concepts" would treat how this goal could be achieved through the "building up of a Europe of peace and cooperation -- of a European peace order or of a common European home -- in which the USA and Canada also have a place." Specific steps would be arms control and various kinds of exchanges. The Soviets gave the Germans a symbolic concession by describing the FRG in language which, in Russian, indicated that it was now the "Federal Republic of Germany" rather than the past "German Federal Republic."⁷⁹ But nothing in the Bonn Declaration contradicted a key sentence: "Continuing

⁷⁷ Recounted to Ash in an October 1991 interview, see Ash, In Europe's Name, pp. 118, 498.

⁷⁸ Gedmin, The Hidden Hand, pp. 51-52; Sodaro, Moscow, Germany, and the West, pp. 355-62.

⁷⁹ Adomeit, "Gorbachev and German Unification," pp. 5-6.

differences in values and in political and social orders are no hindrance to future-shaping policy across the system-frontiers." Reminiscent of the language in the 1972 U.S.-Soviet Declaration of Basic Principles, it transferred those 1972 phrases meant to recognize a "modus vivendi" into a document outlining a framework for overcoming the division of Europe. Neither a unification of Germany nor fundamental political change in the East were, in this conception, prerequisites for overcoming the division of Europe. Though Kohl himself called the division of Germany "an open wound," this document, he said, would "set the course" for German-Soviet relations "in the perspective of the year 2000."⁸⁰

Gorbachev himself had no particular sympathy for Honecker and his hard-line comrades in the East German government. But he had absolutely no interest in undermining the GDR or in seeing the German national question become an international issue. Such a development would become an international distraction from his domestic tasks; just what Gorbachev did not want. Indeed, when he traveled from Bonn on to Paris, Gorbachev used a joint press conference with French president Francois Mitterrand to reiterate his support for the existing postwar order in Germany.⁸¹ Shevardnadze, visiting East Berlin in June, also went out of his way to

⁸⁰ For the text of the Bonn Declaration of Mikhail Gorbachev and Helmut Kohl, 13 Jun 89 (in German), see Texte, pp. 148-53. The original German-language text of the quoted sentences reads as follows: "Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland und die Sowjetunion betrachten es als vorrangige Aufgabe ihrer Politik, an die geschichtlich gewachsenen europaeischen Traditionen anzuknüpfen und so zur Ueberwindung der Trennung Europas beizutragen. Sie sind entschlossen, gemeinsam an Vorstellungen zu arbeiten, wie dieses Ziel durch den Aufbau eines Europas des Friedens und der Zusammenarbeit -- einer europaeischen Friedensordnung oder des gemeinsamen Europaeischen Hauses -- in dem auch die USA und Kanada ihren Platz haben, erreicht werden kann." Also: "Fortbestehende Unterschiede in den Wertvorstellungen und in den politischen und gesellschaftlichen Ordnungen bilden kein Hindernis fuer zukunftsgestaltende Politik ueber Systemgrenzen hinweg." For the Kohl quotation from his keynote public speech to the Soviet leader, as well as a persuasive analysis of the Bonn document, see Ash, In Europe's Name, pp. 113-17. For official Soviet accounts of the Gorbachev trip to the FRG see "Ofitsial'ny vizit M.S. Gorbachev v FRG," Vestnik Ministerstva Ispolnitel'nykh Del SSSR (hereinafter Vestnik), no. 12 (46), July 1, 1989, pp. 12-13.

⁸¹ See "Vystupleniye M.S. Gorbachev i otvety na voprosy na press-konferentsii," Vestnik, no. 14 (48), August 1, 1989, p. 17.

praise the "existing territorial and political realities."⁸² GDR premier Honecker traveled to Moscow two weeks after Gorbachev left Bonn and was duly reassured. After his fall from power Honecker himself remembered that the vast importance for peace in Europe of socialism's success in the GDR "was straightforward for Gorbachev, who emphasized it in all of our conversations." Honecker added that, "for all the differences in interpretation about this or that question," Gorbachev always gave first importance to improving Soviet-East German friendship. "That was so at the beginning and also at the end of the many unofficial talks we had."⁸³

The West Germans did not contest Soviet pronouncements about existing "realities." As late as July 1989 Teltschik repeated the point FRG President von Weizsaecker had made years earlier, namely that "for us, the German question is not primarily a matter of seeking a territorial solution." It was instead a matter of "harmonizing German goals and desires with developments throughout Europe."⁸⁴ More might be possible, someday, and the governing CDU was anxious to hold open the hope for some undefined but fundamental evolution of political conditions. This was on a time scale of many years, perhaps decades. In the meantime they had what they wanted, excellent relations with the reformist leadership of the Soviet Union alongside continuing West German allegiance to its Western values and its Western allies.⁸⁵

Conclusions

⁸² Honecker ritually praised the "peace, disarmament, and good-neighorliness" exhibited in the FRG-Soviet joint statement. "Vstrecha M.S. Gorbacheva s E. Honeckerom," Vestnik, no. 14 (48), August 1, 1989, p. 2; see also Greenwald, Berlin Witness, pp. 52-53. On Shevardnadze's trip and remarks, see "Ofitsial'nyy druzhestvennyy vizit E.A. Shevardnadze v GDR," Vestnik, no. 12 (46), July 1, 1989, p. 39.

⁸³ From interviews conducted with Honecker in the GDR during the spring of 1990 and published in Reinhold Andert & Wolfgang Herzberg, eds., Der Sturz: Erich Honecker in Kreuzverhoer (Berlin: Aufbau-Verlag, 1990), p. 62.

⁸⁴ Teltschik in General Anzeiger, July 6, 1989, quoted in McAdams, Germany Divided, pp. 191-92.

⁸⁵ On the timescale, author interview with Teltschik, Guetersloh, June 1992.

The first half of 1989 is important as a period during which national interests were being clarified against a new background of challenges and opportunities. U.S.-Soviet military rivalry and political competition within the less developed world had eased. Gorbachev's reforms in the Soviet Union interacted with preexisting conditions in Poland to cause substantial turbulence within the Communist governments of Eastern Europe. The permissive Soviet reaction to creation of the Polish Round Table in March-April 1989 and the pro-Solidarity outcome of Polish elections in June 1989 affected the pace of political change in Hungary. Yet the consequences for other states still seemed cloudy. The East German government's position seemed stable, at least to the West, though it was thought Honecker might have to give way to a more reformist Communist leadership.⁸⁶

In this setting the greatest continuity in policymaking was displayed by both German states. The FRG's "Deutschlandpolitik" in July 1989 could be diagrammed in this way:

National interest:	Strive for unity in human terms; downplay political solution to the national question. Seek better relations with Gorbachev's USSR, reassure GDR. Fate of other East European states less important.
Objectives:	Policy is in "implementation" and "maintenance" mode. Do not adopt stance toward developments in Poland or Hungary which offends Moscow.
Strategy:	Reassurance through political recognition; limited economic support for both USSR and GDR; security issues handled through multilateral fora.
Design:	Ostpolitik public-private networks with GDR; arms control and CSCE positions specified in multilateral negotiations; bilateral relations with USSR as set up in recently concluded FRG-Soviet bilateral agreements.
Implementation:	Put new FRG-Soviet bilateral agreements into operation.

⁸⁶ On Western views of the GDR see, e.g., Greenwald, Berlin Witness, pp. 19-21, 26-27, 33-35. On reported warnings within the Soviet government during the spring and summer of 1989 of possible instability in the GDR, see Ash, In Europe's Name, pp. 123-24..

Maintenance: Ostpolitik with GDR as in past; conduct multilateral negotiations.

Review: None needed. No compelling problems recognized.

Judged by its own standards, the Federal Republic's Deutschlandpolitik could be judged as quite successful in the early summer of 1989.

American policy could also be considered relatively successful in mid-1989, measured against the objectives of the past. But Washington was moving the goalposts. Bush had redefined the U.S. national interest in Europe to link an end of the Cold War to an end to the division of Europe. Presumably, absent this outcome, the Cold War would continue. More ambitious objectives had also been set in European security, with a short timetable set for a conventional arms control agreement that would dramatically reduce Soviet military power in Central-Eastern Europe as well as the western portion of the USSR itself. If the early U.S. rhetoric was to be believed, American policy would be more offensive in Europe, challenging traditional spheres of influence and political divisions, even as the nuclear and Third World rivalries abated.

The Soviet Union, in contrast, had adopted a conservative, defensive posture. Since 1987 Gorbachev had turned Soviet national interests from a posture of underlying hostility toward Germany to a successful quest for bilateral friendship. In the summer of 1989 he could consider this policy to have succeeded, with the emphasis now on implementation and realization of the fruits of this friendship. But the Soviet government could not rest easy. To be sure, the USSR's objectives in Germany appeared to be rather limited. Moscow sought to preserve a stable socialist government in the GDR, reduce political tensions and related requirements for defense expenditures, and use the same reduction in tension to break down those East-West barriers which impeded economic cooperation and assistance that could benefit the Soviet economy. Their strategy for improved relations included small, symbolic gestures toward German national aspirations. The sentiment behind such gestures was, from the Soviet perspective, safely contained when they were embedded

in actual policies, or even pronouncements such as the Bonn Declaration. As Stephen Larrabee commented, "even the advocates of more radical change such as Dashichev did not envisage unification in the near future. Rather they called for reforms in the GDR and a gradual rapprochement between the two German states as part of a gradual transformation of the two-bloc system into pan-European structures."⁸⁷

The Soviets recognized two problems, however, both of which could require a review of their policies toward Germany. First, the Soviet leadership, believing in the necessity of reform, could not help but worry whether the aging East German leaders could maintain a stable socialist government. Serious instability had not surfaced, but the Soviets -- even more than the West -- apparently sensed a possible danger.

Second, it was hard to calculate the consequences of allowing some East European governments (not the East Germans) the autonomy to find their own paths to socialism. The Soviets understood they had accepted certain risks by loosening their grip on both Poland and Hungary. The leaders appear to have calculated that the risks could be contained since neither government intended to break from the Warsaw Pact or challenge the fundamental security posture of the Soviet Union. The Soviets may, moreover, have been optimistic about the prospects of successful socialist reformers arising in Eastern Europe. After all, in mid-1989 Gorbachev still believed his own experiment in the USSR would be successful. Above all they thought the risks of military action to crush East European reformers were obvious. It would bring back confrontation abroad and a contradiction with the principles of reform at home. Such military measures would mean, as Shevardnadze told Baker, the "end of perestroika."⁸⁸ There is no evidence, though, that Moscow thought its policy in Eastern Europe would mean the end of the German Democratic Republic.

⁸⁷ Larrabee, "Moscow and the German Question," p. 215.

⁸⁸ Quoted in Oberdorfer, The Turn, p. 360.

Chapter Five

THE FALL OF OSTPOLITIK (AND THE BERLIN WALL) (August - November 1989)

Gaby and I recently saw a[n East German] film about young workers, Berlin Around the Corner. Shot during the 1965-66 cultural thaw but then banned.... In one scene, an old Communist who had probably marched in 1919 with Rosa and Karl demanded that the police be brought in to investigate slogans scribbled on the factory wall. When the plant's young Party secretary demurred and showed some sympathy for the workers, the old Communist exploded: 'Don't you realize how easily we can lose all this?'¹

First Tremors in East Germany

In the spring of 1989, whatever Americans might say, evidence of renewed German interest in pursuing unification was hard to find. An April 1989 poll showed that nearly half of all West Germans thought their country should give up the pretense of even wanting to unify the two Germanies.² There were few new developments to keep Germany at the forefront of world attention. In June Poland and Hungary dominated the news with Poland holding its first free parliamentary elections and Hungary preparing for its own elections with new concessions to the democratic opposition. Bush encouraged this progress by visiting those countries in July, going on to win European co-sponsorship at the G-7 summit meeting in Paris for a new multilateral structure based on the European Community, that would coordinate the

¹ G. Jonathan Greenwald, Berlin Witness: An American Diplomat's Chronicle of East Germany's Revolution (University Park:: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), p. 119 (reconstructed diary entry for August 30, 1989).

² The April 1989 poll, conducted by Emnid, was reported in Der Spiegel, April 10, 1989, p. 156. This poll showed that only 56% of West Germans thought unification should remain a goal of FRG policy. In 1987 80% of West Germans had backed this goal but, at that time, only 3% thought it would ever happen. Sulke Jansen, Meinungsbilder zur deutschen Frage (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1990), p. 98 (integrating data from Allensbach, Emnid, Forschungsgruppe Wahlen, Infas, and Infratest). In 1987 unification was ranked well below workers compensation, the economy, and internal security as issues of political concern to West Germans. Ibid., p. 116 (integrating data from Allensbach, Infas, Infratest, and Emnid polis).

provision of assistance to the new democracies (the Group of 24).³

The depth of popular unhappiness in East Germany first began making news when East Germans on summer holidays began seeking refuge in West German embassies rather than heading home. Hungary, a popular travel destination, had tempted East Germans with its public announcement in May that borders to the West (Austria) were now open. In fact the Hungarians intended the act symbolically. Their own citizens had long traveled with little hindrance and Budapest was only permitting East Germans with valid GDR exit stamps to cross the "open" border.⁴ A frustrated trickle of East German tourists began refusing to leave the West German embassy in Budapest by the end of June, with a few sit-ins also occurring at FRG posts in Warsaw, Prague, and East Berlin. The West Germans intended to keep handling the matter in the usual way, with the asylees going home with the understanding that their applications for emigration would be quietly granted later after secret negotiations between the two German states.⁵

Travel policies had always been one of the most important issues for the East German government. It was the number one topic in inner-German relations. The GDR had liberalized opportunities for travel to the West, allowed most of its population to watch West German television, even as the secret police, the Stasi, grew larger and larger, with 85,000 full-time staff, 100-200,000 paid informers on contract, and a million more citizens on the list of occasional, "free-lance," informers. Since there were only 16 million people in the country, no institution was larger or more pervasive than this system of internal espionage and control.

But the skilled young people making their way to Hungary in the summer of

³ On the G-24, see Stephen Haggard & Andrew Moravcsik, "The Political Economy of Financial Assistance to Eastern Europe, 1989-1991," in Robert O. Keohane, Joseph S. Nye, & Stanley Hoffmann, eds., After the Cold War: International Institutions and State Strategies in Europe, 1989-1991 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), p. 258.

⁴ The American embassy in East Berlin received just this explanation after checking with Hungarian diplomats. Greenwald, Berlin Witness, pp. 6, 22-23.

⁵ Ibid., p. 51.

1989 were not trying to travel, they were trying to leave. The East German leaders instantly recognized the significance of this development, which reminded them at once of the period before the erection of the Berlin Wall. As one politburo member, Guenter Schabowski, later remembered, there was a period:

of several months in which every individual [in the leadership], without coming to an understanding between us in any exchange, wrestled within himself, some more vigorously, some less so, over this unspeakable and unbearable manifestation of desertion by thousands and thousands of people day after day. There was no need for any special understanding among ourselves. When such a condition develops and its crisis character is communicated so directly to every individual in the leadership, then a situation can arise in which this concern and malaise and also the embarrassment are expressed spontaneously....⁶

This revelation of hidden discontent among the East German people galvanized the fringe opposition groups to begin organizing in larger numbers. By late summer, as the refugee crisis worsened and the Honecker regime's impotence became more evident, the opposition groups finally began to gain a broader popular following.⁷

By the beginning of August the U.S. Embassy in East Berlin, led by Ambassador Richard Barkley, alerted Washington that the growing refugee problem had become "a silent crisis" for the GDR. But the Embassy found it "hard to conceive" that this silent crisis would produce severe international tensions. Barkley and his staff instead advised that the losses of East German workers were a serious problem that might hasten changes in the aging leadership and the beginning at long

⁶ Schabowski in an interview with Elizabeth Pond, quoted in Pond, Beyond the Wall: Germany's Road to Unification (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1993), p. 90.

⁷ By mid-1989 there were approximately 500 opposition groups operating under the aegis of the Protestant Church (which included both Lutherans and Calvinists in a decentralized structure of lay synods). These groups were publishing small newsletters, intended officially for internal church use only but with a broader readership. After the rigged May elections the groups came out from under the church's umbrella and started demonstrating in Dresden and Leipzig. Six main groups emerged during the summer months, the most visible being "New Forum." See Politische Zielvorstellungen wichtiger Oppositionsgruppen in der DDR (Bonn: Gesamtdeutsches Institut, 1990), pp. 2-3. Demonstrators became bolder too. After police broke up a July 7 demonstration by detaining 97 people, for example, 140 more met at an alternative site and demonstrated for reform. Armin Mitter & Stefan Wolle, eds., Ich liebe euch doch alle!: Befehle und Lagebericht des MfS Januar-November 1989 (Berlin: BasisDruck, 1990), pp. 108-09.

last of real domestic reforms.⁸

Despite the White House rhetoric about a "Europe whole and free," back in Washington the U.S. government was slow to develop new policies to capitalize on the emerging refugee crisis.⁹ In August, the State Department as a whole tended to see the East German refugee crisis as an important development within Central and Eastern Europe, though not one which compelled an imminent reevaluation of US policy.¹⁰ Early in the month Dennis Ross, director of the State Department's policy planning staff, urged Secretary Baker to initiate a long-range political dialogue with the West Germans that would try to talk to Bonn about how to persuade the GDR to join in Gorbachev-type reforms. Yet this should be done, Ross argued, "without igniting instability or dangerous talk of reunification."¹¹

By mid-August the West German mission in East Berlin had more than 100 asylees and was closed to the public. More than 150 asylees were in the FRG's embassy in Budapest on August 11 but, as summer vacations ended, hundreds more

⁸ EmbBerlin 6311, "The GDR's Silent Crisis: A Commentary," 4 Aug 89.

⁹ The ambivalence is well reflected in Marc Fisher, "The Unanswered 'German Question,'" Washington Post, July 27, 1989, p. A25. State Department officials were quoted as taking a much more cautious line than might be indicated by Bush's rhetoric. Fisher quoted Karl Kaiser as commenting that, "You Americans have taken our reunification debate far more seriously than we have." The Soviets, he said, just would not allow a political union.

¹⁰ See, e.g., Eagleburger (Acting) to the President, 24 Aug 89 (for his evening reading); Eagleburger (Acting) to the President, 29 Aug 89 (for his evening reading).

¹¹ Ross to Baker, 9 Aug 89. Ross attached to his memo a longer analysis, written by Roger George on his staff, which dwelled on security issues and West German restlessness about ways in which they felt the status of Allied stationed forces infringed upon the FRG's sovereignty. The analysis argued that "we don't want to ignite a Western controversy over German 'unity.'" George in fact wanted to channel the FRG away from its "pre-occupation with Central Europe toward non-European, global responsibilities that Bonn should shoulder." If unrest in the GDR provoked a debate about German unification, George warned that the US would need to use its influence to "achieve outcomes that will promote German self-determination without sacrificing European stability." Since Western allies, "without exception, do not want to face the reunification issue," the US would need to think carefully about the "risky business" of encouraging reform in the GDR "without destabilizing both blocs." This would mean careful US assessment of "what forms a 'unification' process could take." There is no evidence that Baker read or acted on this paper.

began arriving each week.¹² The refugee exodus became a regular topic in the National Intelligence Daily and other estimates provided to senior US officials. The comments were largely factual, noting the dilemmas the refugee outflow posed for an old (and sick) East German leadership while contending that the problem added "to pressures on both German states to stop such travel."¹³ Note the language: "pressures on both German states" to stop the exodus. Bonn and East Berlin were both expected to do what Ostpolitik required.

The Subversion of Ostpolitik

Although Hungary had opened its border to Austria it still, as in the past, felt obligated by past agreements to detain and prevent East Germans from transiting through Hungary to the West. As more and more East Germans went to Hungary to try to escape to the West, some dodged police and made their way across the border to Austria, others showed up at the West German embassy and asked for asylum, and still more were detained by Hungarian authorities. The Hungarians were uncertain about how to proceed. Their understandings with the GDR required them to send the East Germans back home. But the West German government asked the Hungarians to stay their hand. The Hungarians, still under communist rule but in the midst of a transition to democratic government, paused.

On August 9 Hungary stopped forcing the GDR citizens it had caught trying to escape West to return to East Germany. Their border authorities kept turning back thousands of East Germans trying to cross to Austria. But hundreds were slipping through the net each week. News of the Hungarian leniency encouraged more East

¹² Greenwald, Berlin Witness, pp. 99, 105.

¹³ Item from National Intelligence Daily, 31 Aug 89. On September 2 the NID and other briefings for top officials reported the FRG's apparent deal with the Hungarians to allow tens of thousands of East German citizens to leave Hungary without East Berlin's permission, but there was little comment on the motives for Bonn's policy or on the consequences of the Hungarian decision for the GDR.

Germans to make the attempt.¹⁴

The West Germans were not trying to provoke a crisis. Ostpolitik dictated that they should not seek momentary advantage at the expense of lasting good relations between the two Germanies. Even the specific problem of East Germans seeking asylum in other countries as a way to get to the West was not a new one for Bonn. In 1984 the arrival of scores of East German asylum seekers had led Bonn to close its embassies temporarily in both East Berlin and Prague.

The way such problems had been dealt with in the past was for West German officials to persuade such asylum-seekers to back to the GDR and seek legal permission to emigrate with some guarantee of protection against reprisals. Then Bonn would work behind the scenes to smooth their ultimate departure from the GDR, usually after money changed hands between the two governments. The real solution to the problem, Bonn would argue, was for the GDR to adopt simpler and more predictable travel regulations.¹⁵

At the beginning of August the West Germans adopted this same line in dealing with the latest surge in asylum requests. The head of Kohl's chancellery, Rudolf Seiters, publicly appealed to would-be refugees to stay in the GDR, or at least not try to hide out in various embassies in Eastern Europe. He pointed out that 46,000 GDR citizens had been able to emigrate legally in just the first seven months of 1989. He counseled others who wished to leave to follow the legal channels available in East Germany.¹⁶ The West German posts were closed in East Berlin (August 8), Budapest (August 13), and Prague (August 22) rather than accept more asylum-seekers. On August 18 Kohl told reporters that both he and Honecker wanted

¹⁴ Dennis Bark & David Gress, A History of West Germany: Democracy and Its Discontents, 1963-1991 (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 2d ed., 1993), pp. 597-98.

¹⁵ See A. James McAdams, Germany Divided: From the Wall to Reunification (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 188.

¹⁶ Seiters made his appeal on August 9. See Deutschland Archiv, Chronik der Ereignisse in der DDR (Koeln: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1990), pp. 1-2; Antonius John, Rudolf Seiters: Einsichten in Amt, Person und Ereignisse (Bonn: Bouvier, 1991), p. 73.

to "continue a policy of good sense."¹⁷

Yet the old repertory of Ostpolitik-style measures did not check the East German exodus. Worse, the scenes of East German families struggling to come West were featured every day in West German newspapers. The government could not, constitutionally, forcibly repatriate East Germans seeking to live in the FRG.¹⁸

At some time in August, then, the Kohl government seemed to be changing the objectives governing its approach to East German emigration. The old objectives could be summarized this way:

1. Reassure East German government of good FRG intentions.
2. Encourage legal emigration of East Germans and GDR adoption of more liberal GDR travel policies to ease pressure.
3. Where obliged to do so, admit East German refugees.

During August and September Bonn slowly found itself taking steps which seemed to reflect movement toward a different set of policy objectives:

1. Help East Germans reach the West, even in defiance of East German laws.
2. Press GDR to respond to refugee exodus not just with reform of travel laws but also with far-reaching political and economic reforms.
3. Try not to publicly embarrass or provoke the GDR government.

Such objectives were moving away from the spirit of Ostpolitik. Ostpolitik's defenders noticed the apparent shift in policy. On August 15 the deputy chairman of the SPD opposition party, Horst Ehmke, attacked the government for having aggravated the crisis by welcoming the refugees. Throughout the summer of 1989

¹⁷ Quoted in Greenwald, Berlin Witness, p. 105.

¹⁸ Article 116 of the FRG's Basic Law conferred federal German citizenship on East Germans who could claim their right. The FRG could not expel its own citizens from the Federal Republic. On the application of this article to the August refugee crisis, see Friedrich Karl Fromme, "Die Bundesrepublik hat Deutschen aus der DDR Schutz zu gewaehren als deutschen Staatsangehoerigen," Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, August 21, 1989, p. 3.

West German intellectuals had actually been vigorously debating whether to renounce finally and formally even the nominal goal of seeking the unification of the two German states. A cover-story in Der Spiegel, the most widely read newsweekly in the country, asked sharply why the government had not closed its embassies to asylum seekers even sooner.¹⁹

These new objectives were evolving in reaction to events rather than from some deliberate decision to move in a new direction. Kohl's adviser, Teltschik, recalled later that the West German strategy was a traditional one, offering financial support to East Berlin if Honecker would clear the way for refugees to leave Hungary as a humanitarian gesture. Kohl wrote to Honecker in August, assuring him that his only wish was for the East German refugees to find a worthwhile life back in the German Democratic Republic.²⁰

On August 25 the Hungarian prime minister Miklos Nemeth and his foreign minister, Gyula Horn, held secret conversations with Kohl and Genscher at Schloss Gymnich in West Germany. Hungary secretly affirmed that it would not return East Germans to the GDR and may have secretly agreed not to stand in the way of eventual movement of East Germans to the West. In return the West German leaders reportedly promised to extend credits of at least 500 million Deutschmarks to support the Hungarian economy (accounts differ on the amount).

A week later Horn, in East Berlin, broke the bad news to East German foreign minister Oskar Fischer. According to Horn, Fischer spluttered, "That is treason! Are you aware that you are leaving the GDR in the lurch and joining the other side! This will have grave consequences for you!" Unmoved, on September 10 Hungary formally annulled its pact with the GDR and shrugging before the waves of refugees,

¹⁹ Konrad H. Jarausch, The Rush to German Unity (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 28; Bark & Gress, Democracy and Its Discontents, pp. 589-94, 608-13; "Das droht die DDR zu vernichten," Der Spiegel, August 14, 1989, p. 18.

²⁰ Author's interview with Teltschik; letter to Honecker, mid-August (probably August 19 or 20) 1989, in Peter Przybylski, Tatort Politbuero: Honecker, Mittag und Schalck-Golodkowski, vol. 2 (Berlin: Rowohlt, 1992), p. 110; see also Ralf Georg Reuth & Andreas Boente, Das Komplott: Wie es wirklich zur deutschen Einheit kam (Muenchen: Piper, 1993), pp. 56-58.

opened its border to Austria to East German transients. The Hungarians had hinted at these intentions to Soviet diplomats and received a passive response. By the end of September 40,000 more East Germans had fled to the West through Hungary.

Whatever the GDR-Hungary agreements may have been, the Hungarians admitted that they chose to violate them. The Hungarians offered a variety of explanations, including that the agreements never served Hungary's national interests and claiming that international human rights norms took precedence. As Alfred Rubin later commented, the Hungarian action could "be rationalized in so many ways" that it would be "almost capricious" to attach credence to the human rights claim amid all the other possible explanations for Hungary's decision. The East Germans were furious about this outcome, denounced as a "crusade of imperialism against socialism." The Soviet and Czech press joined the hostile chorus.²¹

To stem the flow of refugees to Hungary, East Berlin turned to the Czech government for help in stopping East Germans from passing through Czechoslovakia en route to Hungary. The Czechs obliged and the asylum seekers and detainees began to accumulate in their country during the month of September.

Thousands of East Germans climbed the walls into the West German embassy. The East Germans tried the old approach again: promise their people that if they came home they would be allowed to emigrate legally. This method worked for the first 250, but by late September over 5,000 had crowded themselves into the muddy

²¹ On the Hungarian phase of the refugee crisis in August and September 1989, see Richard Kiessler & Frank Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken: Der diplomatische Weg zur deutschen Einheit (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1993), p. 30; Gyula Horn, Freiheit, die ich meine: Erinnerungen des ungarischen Aussenministers, der den Eisernen Vorhang offnete, tr. Angelika & Peter Mate (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1991), pp. 312-26; Reuth & Boente, Das Komplott, pp. 59-61; John, Seiters, p. 82; Bark & Gress, Democracy and Its Discontents, pp. 598-99; Friedrich Kurz, "Ungarn 89," in Dieter Grosser, Stephan Bierling & Friedrich Kurz, eds., Die sieben Mythen der Wiedervereinigung: Fakten und Analysen zu einem Prozess ohne Alternative (Muenchen: Ehrenwirth, 1991), pp. 123-59; and Pond, Beyond the Wall, p. 96. It is unclear whether Bonn's offer of credits came at the August meeting or at a subsequent meeting with Hungarian ministers in September. Kiessler & Elbe, the most reliable first-hand source, indicate that the deal was struck in August. On Soviet acquiescence, Gorbachev was not formally consulted but low-level Soviet diplomats received strong hints of upcoming Hungarian action and did nothing to stop them. The best judgment is still Kurz's succinct conclusion: "Doch Moskau winkte ab, Gorbatshow hielt still!" "Ungarn 89," p. 161. For the Rubin comment see Alfred P. Rubin, "Are Human Rights Legal?," Israel Yearbook on Human Rights, 20 (1990): 45, 66.

grounds of the West German embassy.

The West German government now had little choice about how to proceed. It could not force East Germans in its embassy to go back to the GDR. Promises of legal emigration had failed. Bonn's ambassador in Prague cabled to Bonn that a "critical limit" had been reached for providing even basic sanitary measures. Genscher had to persuade the Czech government to let them leave.²² The Czech government, though still under the communist rule of party boss Milos Jakes, itself became increasingly alarmed at the spectacle of so many people trying to obtain freedom and the effect this might have on its own burgeoning dissident movement.

When foreign ministers gathered in New York late in September for the annual meeting of the United Nations General Assembly, Genscher worked frenziedly to break the impasse over the refugees in Czechoslovakia. East German foreign minister Oskar Fischer grudgingly conceded on the night of September 28 that the GDR might let refugees pass on trains through East German territory to the West. Genscher pressed him to win agreement from East Berlin for this idea.²³

Genscher received an alarming message from Bonn, warning of real dangers of a catastrophe at the embassy, including a possible fire or structural collapse. Genscher immediately asked for an emergency meeting with Soviet foreign minister Shevardnadze (also in New York for the UN meeting), had a New York City police car rush him to the Soviet mission with its lights flashing, and there urged the Soviet foreign minister to weigh in with the Czechs. Shevardnadze, touched by the plight of the 500 children encamped at the embassy, promised his support. Genscher then sought out Czech foreign minister Johannes, pulling him to the side at a reception. Johannes, stiff and bureaucratic, claimed that the Czech government had no responsibility for the situation. During the night Genscher spoke again with East German foreign minister Fischer. Fischer could only say that he had communicated

²² Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, pp. 30-31, 35-36.

²³ Ibid., p. 36.

the situation to East Berlin. Meeting his Western colleagues at a dinner of G-7 ministers, Genscher urged French foreign minister Dumas to join him in pressuring the Czechs. Baker came up and asked, "Hans-Dietrich, what can I do for you?" Baker was then enlisted in the push to pressure the Czechs.

The next day the East Germans passed the word that they had agreed to the arrangement worked out between Genscher and Fischer. Genscher flew back to Bonn and then, joined by Seiters, flew on to Prague where in dramatic scenes they spoke to the refugees and organized the movement of sealed trains bringing the refugees West.²⁴

On October 1 the East German government broke its official silence on the refugee crisis and declared defiantly that those citizens who fled had "removed themselves from our society" and so "no tears need be shed." Two days later the border between the GDR and Czechoslovakia was closed to free travel. The refugee crisis seemed to be over.

As October began, the dominant West German attitude was to see the refugee crisis as an episode which would press overdue political and economic reforms on an aging and sick East German communist leadership. (Honecker had been hospitalized with gall bladder problems during much of August and September, helping to ensure that policy direction in this highly centralized regime remained inert.) Reform in the GDR was the watchword; unification was still a fanciful mirage.²⁵

But tiny fissures seemed to be emerging within the governing coalition. Genscher made no mention of the broader national implications of the refugee issue when he met with US deputy secretary of state Eagleburger in early September or

²⁴ See *ibid.*, pp. 36-44; John, Seiters, pp. 82-104; Pond, Beyond the Wall, pp. 97-98.

²⁵ For a representative conservative view, believing that unification could not return to the international agenda until a host of unlikely events occurred as a result of a decades-long transformation of the GDR, see Friedrich Karl Fromme, "Fluechtlinge und deutsche Frage," Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, September 26, 1989, p. 1.

when he met with Baker on September 26.²⁶ On September 25, Der Spiegel published a lengthy interview with the foreign minister in which Genscher said the FRG should stay on course with its traditional inner-German policy and urge the GDR to reform itself as the Soviet Union was doing. He refused to use the words "reunification" or "unity," saying that the two Germanies could grow together only in the context of greater integration of all of Europe. "We should bring together growing European federalism with our German federalism."²⁷

The CDU members of the coalition were more restless. On August 22 Kohl caused a stir by announcing publicly that the German question was "back on the international agenda." Theo Waigel, head of the more conservative and Bavaria-based CSU, said his party would revive discussion of German unification. When Eagleburger met with inner-German affairs minister Seiters on September 7, Seiters said the GDR needed massive reform and, in a striking comment, said the FRG would not contribute more money to the East Germans "if they stay stubborn." No such strings had ever been attached before to Bonn's Ostpolitik of coexistence with the East.

In this volatile and uncertain political climate within West Germany, the United States delivered a strong push in favor of pursuing the goal of German unification. On September 7 Eagleburger told Seiters that:

One thing needed to be clear about US policy: although it does not make much sense for the US to talk a lot about the subject of reunification, when President Bush says that he favors reunification, he means it. The US private position on reunification is the same as our

²⁶ Baker's formal meeting with Genscher in New York at the time of the United Nations General Assembly session included only a brief discussion of East German developments and no mention of reunification. According to the report sent back to Washington on the meeting, Genscher discussed the refugee problem in Czechoslovakia and the need to engage East German opposition groups. He asked if Baker was planning to go to the GDR. Baker said he was not considering such a visit. Secto 14013, 28 Sep 89.

²⁷ For the U.S. embassy's report on the meeting between Genscher and Eagleburger, see Bonn 28695, 7 Sep 89. For the Genscher interview, see Der Spiegel, September 25, 1989.

public one -- we favor it.²⁸

Bush soon found the opportunity to reiterate this public position.

The United States had played little part in the refugee crisis diplomacy of August and September. Policymakers were preoccupied by political events in Poland and development of the economic aid package for Poland and Hungary. The East German crisis was seen as a challenge to the GDR's Communist leadership, not as a threat to the viability of the state itself. The issue of unification was rarely mentioned.²⁹

But unification was still on the mind of President Bush. The news media was commenting on the possibility, and the comments tended to be negative. Editorials pointed to the concerns of Germany's neighbors about having to deal once again with a united German nation. Bush had a different view.

On the morning of September 18 two columns appeared in the Washington Post and Wall Street Journal discussing German unification. The Post piece, by Jim Hoagland, had perceptively called attention to the fact that Ostpolitik was "no longer a credible alternative to reunification for Germans behind the Wall." With the question in the air, a reporter later that day asked Bush, during a presidential stop in Helena, Montana, whether the reunification of Germany would be stabilizing or destabilizing. Bush chose to give a direct answer. He said:

I would think it's a matter for the Germans to decide. But put it this way: if that was worked out between the Germanys, I do not think we should view that as bad for Western interests. I think there has been a dramatic change in post-World War II Germany. And so, I don't fear it. ... [T]here is in some quarters a feeling -- well, a reunified Germany would be detrimental to the peace of Europe, of Western Europe, some

²⁸ Bonn 29066, 11 Sep 89. Seiters urged the US to help knock down intellectual and spiritual walls between the two Germanies, supporting reform but remaining cautious.

²⁹ When Hungary annulled its agreement with the GDR and opened its border with Austria to departures by GDR citizens, Baker reported this development to President Bush. See Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 11 Sep 89. Baker estimated that up to 20,000 East Germans might utilize this escape route, thought the move would isolate Hungary from her Warsaw Pact neighbors, and believed Hungary expected a payoff from the West German government.

way; and I don't accept that at all, simply don't.³⁰

Bush apparently took America's postwar pledges of support for unity literally and seriously. The decades of cynicism that had enveloped and diminished the force of those pledges among the experts had made no impression on a man who, like Kohl, had probably formed his first view of the issue a generation earlier.

Bush continued to press the question of unification at every opportunity. When the President met with CSU Chairman Theo Waigel in Washington on September 26, he opened the discussion by asking how Waigel was handling the reunification issue. Waigel reacted by thanking Bush for having supported reunification. This support, Waigel said, was very important. Yet the conservative Waigel still couched his own vision of unification only in the context of some general transformation of European politics.³¹

Moscow Watches, Tensely

Soviet policy during the East German refugee crisis of August and September 1989 was essentially passive. Genscher had complained to Eagleburger in early September of Soviet obstruction in his efforts to get East Germans out of Hungary. But working-level Soviet officials had responded neutrally to Hungarian hints about their readiness to strike a deal with Bonn. Nor had the Soviets developed a considered policy to deal with the Czech phase of the crisis in September. The big foreign policy issue in August was the creation in Poland of the first non-communist government in Eastern Europe, with a coalition that included Solidarity and was headed by the new prime minister, Tadeusz Mazowiecki. Gorbachev had told the

³⁰ Public Papers of the Presidents: George Bush 1989, vol. II (1990), p. 1221. For that day's columns, see Jim Hoagland, "Honecker's Goetterdaemmerung," Washington Post, September 18, 1989, p. A19; Enno von Loewenstein, "German Unification Bobs Up in Refugee Flood," Wall Street Journal, September 18, 1989, p. 17. Flora Lewis had advised the administration the week before to "Go Slow on Germany," New York Times, September 12, 1989, p. A25.

³¹ Memcon from Meeting with Waigel in the Oval Office on September 26. Baker, White House chief of staff Sununu, Scowcroft, Gates, press spokesman Marlin Fitzwater, Blackwill, and Dobbins were present for the US. Waigel was accompanied by FRG Ambassador Ruhfus.

head of the Polish communist party that the Soviet Union would not interfere in the formation of such a government.

The Soviet leaders had other problems on their mind, problems closer to home. As the first stage in democratic reform, Gorbachev had established a new representative institution, the Congress of People's Deputies. This congress had selected new delegates to the ruling institution of the government, the Supreme Soviet. This new Supreme Soviet met for the first time in the summer of 1989. Immediately after this session ended, a series of crises broke out over nationality issues in Estonia, Azerbaijan, the Baltic republics, Moldavia, the Abkhaz region of Georgia, and in Ukraine.

Amid this background of domestic turmoil, it would have been difficult for Gorbachev to find the energy to develop an active policy to respond forcefully either to events in Poland or to the East German refugee crisis, even if he had wished to do so. In the foreign ministry the situation in the GDR was thought to be manageable if the East German leadership would react properly. Shevardnadze and his aides did not believe that pressures for unification had significantly increased. Instead, like most West Germans, they urged the East Germans to adopt a reform program. In discussions with the GDR foreign minister, 66 year-old Oskar Fischer, Shevardnadze encouraged more open travel policies and an agreement with West Germans on orderly population transfer. He thought that allowing large numbers of refugees to leave the GDR might actually ease pressure on the GDR's economy.

Shevardnadze, in parallel, sought to enlist West German help in trying to stabilize the situation in the GDR and thus keep the situation from taking a dangerous turn. During the ministerial meetings on the margins of the UN session in New York, Shevardnadze outlined the same ideas about liberalized travel to Genscher that he had suggested to East German foreign minister Fischer. Genscher reportedly assured Shevardnadze that the FRG would not try to undermine the stability of the

GDR but did not get into negotiation of detailed ideas.³²

The Soviets were, however, becoming worried about the direction reform in Eastern Europe was taking. They had wanted to push the communist governments toward changes that would make socialism more viable, not overthrow the system. By August 1989 there were signals that Moscow was trying to set limits on just how far reform could go in questioning the primacy of socialism or the Warsaw Pact alliance system.³³

So as the refugee crisis pressured the GDR and the US kept fostering discussion of the goal of unification, the Soviet Union became increasingly uneasy. When Thatcher stopped in Moscow in September, Bush asked her to pass along to Gorbachev his belief that change in Eastern Europe would not threaten Soviet security. When Thatcher communicated this assurance, Gorbachev was skeptical. He warned Thatcher that Soviet security interests included keeping the Warsaw Pact intact.³⁴

The Soviet press began attacking West German policy toward the refugee issue in September, denouncing FRG "propaganda campaigns" against the GDR and warning that talk of upsetting the postwar status quo would contradict past West German commitments to promote European cooperation and distorted the understandings reached during Gorbachev's June visit to Bonn.³⁵

Moscow was especially angered by the tone of the CDU party conference held

³² Account of Soviet foreign ministry thinking based on Rice interview with Tarasenko, Moscow, October 1991.

³³ See, e.g., Herbert Kremp, "A Gorbachev Doctrine for Eastern Europe," Die Welt am Sonntag (Hamburg), August 20, 1989, p. 2, translated in FBIS-SOV 89-161, August 22, 1989, pp. 20-21.

³⁴ Michael Beschloss & Strobe Talbott, At the Highest Levels: The Inside Story of the End of the Cold War (Boston: Little, Brown, 1992), pp. 107-08.

³⁵ See, e.g., TASS International Service (Moscow), "TASS Statement Supports GDR in FRG Campaign," 11 Sep 89, in FBIS-SOV 89-175, September 12, 1989, p. 32; Yevgeniy Grigoryev, "Reading the Script, or Something About Bonn's Predictability," Pravda, September 23, 1989 and A. Pavlov, "On the Wrong Track," Pravda, September 23, 1989, p. 5; Moscow Television Service (The World Today program), 27 Sep 89, all in FBIS-SOV 89-188, September 29, 1989, pp. 31-33.

in Bremen on September 11. There some delegates had spoken out about the restoration of Germany within its borders of 1937. The Soviet ambassador in Bonn, Kvitsinsky, cabled back that Kohl had done nothing to suppress such dangerous talk. Kohl had said instead that it was a time to celebrate the "realization of this vision" in which all Germans could enjoy "freedom and unity." Though Kohl was vague on specifics, he invited his audience to see the beginning of a historic process.

Kvitsinsky thought the USSR needed to send out signals of their growing alarm.³⁶

The Soviets first confided their concerns about West German behavior to the Americans. Though Gorbachev did not mention European politics when he sent a lengthy message on arms control issues to President Bush in September 1989, Shevardnadze raised Soviet anxieties when he arrived in the United States to join Baker for extended talks in the magnificent setting of Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

During the flight from Washington to Jackson Hole, in the midst of a long talk about domestic conditions in the USSR and developments in Eastern Europe, Shevardnadze drew Baker's attention to the CDU's party conference, saying he thought Kohl's remarks there were "very similar to statements made by German leaders in the 1930s." He was seriously concerned.

Baker replied that the US supported self-determination, not instability. Yet the US did want Eastern Europe to be part of a Europe whole and free, where the divisions had been ended in a peaceful fashion. He thought that was also the FRG's view.

Shevardnadze acknowledged that his government had supported the concept of a "common European home." Still, it was important to respect existing realities.

³⁶ Julij A. Kwizinski, Vor dem Sturm: Erinnerungen eines Diplomaten (Berlin, 1993), p. 14; on Kohl's remarks and the Bremen conference, see "Kohl: Freiheit und Einheit fuer alle Deutschen," Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, September 12, 1989, p. 6. Kohl's conservative CSU coalition partner Theo Waigel, in Munich, quickly made clear that all this talk was about human conditions, not about changing borders. "Wiedervereinigung und Aussenpolitik," Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, September 13, 1989, p. 4. Kohl was facing significant challenges within his party, many of whom thought he should not be their chancellor-candidate in the 1990 election. Out of 738 delegates, 147 voted publicly against his reelection as CDU chairman, the worst result since Kohl was first chosen to head the party in 1973. "Kohl in Bremen als CDU-Vorsitzender wiedergewaehlt," Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, September 12, 1989, p. 1.

Rather than respond to this assertion, Secretary Baker turned the discussion to the need for 'perestroika' in the GDR, and the exchange on Germany tailed off in friendly argument about the gravity of the internal crisis facing East Germany.³⁷

The concern Shevardnadze expressed privately to Secretary Baker on September 21 was aired in public five days later, in Shevardnadze's speech to the UN General Assembly. Officials in Moscow, including Falin at the Central Committee, drafted new, pointed language on Germany which was sent to the Soviet mission in New York for insertion into the speech. Shevardnadze delivered an extended criticism of the forms of nationalism "where the national idea is being opposed to the common interest." Though some of this critique could be explained as a defense of Moscow's nationalities policy, Shevardnadze was plainly referring to Germany when he said "it is to be deplored that fifty years after World War II some politicians have begun to forget its lessons."

The Soviet foreign minister then delivered a warning:

Now that the forces of revanchism are again becoming active and are seeking to revise and destroy the postwar realities in Europe, it is our duty to warn those who, willingly or unwillingly, encourage those forces. The revanchist movement is dangerous and hostile to the march of peace to which President Bush referred here yesterday.³⁸

With this warning, the Soviet government had said there were limits to the kinds of change in Europe it could tolerate. There was thus a fundamental tension, which the Soviets had not resolved, between their 'hands-off' policy toward Eastern Europe and

³⁷ Memcon for Meeting between Baker and Shevardnadze, September 21, 1989, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm, on plane to Jackson Hole, Wyoming. The only listed participants in the discussion were Baker and Shevardnadze. Dennis Ross was the US notetaker. Tarasenko joined Shevardnadze. Shevardnadze did not discuss the GDR crisis during his meeting in Washington with Bush or in larger plenary meetings between the two delegations.

³⁸ For Shevardnadze's speech, see "The Fate of the World is Inseparable from the Fate of Our Perestroika," *Pravda*, September 27, 1989, pp. 4-5 in *FBIS-SOV* 89-186, September 27, 1989, p. 9. Information about the dispatch of language from Moscow is from author interview, Pavel Palazchenko, Moscow, January 1994. The Soviet criticism of West German behavior was being brought to the attention of senior American officials. See, e.g., item in National Intelligence Daily, 30 Sep 89, on "USSR: Critical of Renewed German Reunification Debate."

the desire to head off any fundamental attack on the postwar order for Germany.

This potential contradiction is evident from a reported conversation in New York between Shevardnadze and the Hungarian foreign minister, Gyula Horn. According to Horn, Shevardnadze quietly asked, How many citizens of the GDR do you think want to flee to the FRG? No one can know exactly, Horn answered, but it could possibly be at least one or two million [out of a total population of 17 million].

Shevardnadze then said he thought one should just let them go. They could not be stopped by force.³⁹ So, on the one hand Shevardnadze was increasingly resigned to permitting East Germans to leave their country if they wished -- a development with fateful consequences -- while he had just delivered a speech to the United Nations warning ominously about any revision of the "postwar realities" by the "forces of revanchism." The Soviets had to count, then, on the capacity of some East German government to restore domestic stability even if East Germans were no longer prisoners in their own country.

The East German Political Crisis Comes Home

When the East German government closed its border to Czechoslovakia to free travel and Genscher led the Prague asylum-seekers to the West, the refugee crisis outside of the GDR seemed to have come to an end. Though the curtailment of practically all international travel was not sustainable over the long-term the immediate leak appeared to have been plugged.

But the refugee crisis had stimulated an outpouring of domestic dissent. October 1989 was a crucial month for the rise of popular unrest in the GDR. The refugee crisis and the reformist movements in the Soviet Union, Poland, and Hungary all encouraged initial groups of protesters to take to the streets in late September and early October. The East German regime, headed by a sick and aging leader, could not decide how to meet this first wave of protests. Once others saw that protesters could demonstrate without severe repercussions, a tipping point was quickly reached

³⁹ Horn, Freiheit, die ich meine, p. 327.

at which large numbers of students, then workers, joined the protests, more and more confident that the regime could not punish all of them. The regime was restrained in dealing with protests between September 25 and October 3. Tougher measures were used against protesters who gathered as the trains carrying refugees from Prague passed through Dresden en route to the FRG. The crucial turning point was between October 4 and October 9.

The episodic brutality had inspired larger protests, leading to a massive demonstration in Leipzig on October 9. Rather than escalate the use of arrests and physical violence to overawe the rising crowds, the regime shifted to a policy of accommodation. The ruling party's will was undermined by self-doubt and widespread internal frustration with the stagnant leadership headed by Honecker. Once the SED stepped back from the massive use of force, the "Chinese solution," Honecker's position quickly became untenable and he was toppled by reformist factions within the East German politburo on October 18 as the only factions who could credibly pursue the strategy of accommodation.⁴⁰

During this pivotal period in early October the most important outside influence upon the East German government was the Soviet Union. Controversy persists about the exact role the Soviets played in Honecker's downfall. Some authors have argued that the USSR actively plotted with East German reformists to unseat Honecker, and that the Soviets kept the East German security services from choosing the "Chinese solution" for crushing the protests. In these theories, the KGB is also

⁴⁰ Among the many accounts, see especially (in English) Bark & Gress, Democracy and Its Discontents, pp. 603-45; Jarausch, The Rush to German Unity, pp. 33-48; Rasma Karklins & Roger Petersen, "Decision Calculus of Protesters and Regimes: Eastern Europe 1989," Journal of Politics, 55 (August 1993): 588-614; Pond, Beyond the Wall, pp. 100-29. In Washington, Baker was attentive to developments in the GDR. When reading his briefing papers for an October 10 meeting with West German Defense Minister Gerhard Stoltenberg, the Secretary of State passed over the top four defense-related items on the agenda to underscore all the talking points prepared for him under the fifth and last item – inner-German affairs. Baker then turned his report to the President on the Stoltenberg meeting into an opportunity to comment that the East German regime was seemed to be at a turning point, choosing between reform and repression. Given what is now known about the decisions surrounding the October 9 demonstration, this judgment turned out to be right on target. See Seitz to Baker, for his October 10 Meeting with Stoltenberg, 6 Oct 89 (as marked up by Baker); Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 11 Oct 89.

believed to have worked closely with their old comrade, Markus Wolf, the brilliant spymaster of East German foreign intelligence from 1958 to 1987 who had positioned himself publicly as a prominent supporter of Gorbachev-style reforms.⁴¹

There is little room for doubt that from Gorbachev to Soviet diplomats in East Berlin, Honecker's leadership was viewed very critically. In the era of "perestroika" Soviet analysts were not inclined to excuse the "political sterility" of a regime which was obviously failing to manage a severe internal crisis. Many East German officials were undoubtedly aware that, privately, the Honecker regime's disdain for perestroika was reciprocated by even greater scorn in Moscow for the East German regime's internal policies.⁴² Yet Soviet policy throughout October was fundamentally passive.

A key event was Gorbachev's visit to East Berlin on October 7 for the festivities commemorating the 40th anniversary of the founding of the GDR. Gorbachev was reluctant to come, fearing he would be used to bolster Honecker's flagging prestige.⁴³ In addition to the public speeches, where Gorbachev's brief defense of perestroika contrasted with Honecker's lengthy repetition of the usual rhetoric, the two leaders had a private meeting, on which reliable accounts are not yet available.⁴⁴ Gorbachev then took care to meet with the entire East German politburo.

⁴¹ See, e.g., Ralf Georg Reuth & Andreas Boente, Das Komplott: Wie es wirklich zur deutschen Einheit kam (Muenchen: Piper, 1993); Lally Weymouth, "Germany's Urge to Merge," Washington Post, March 4, 1990, p. C1. Wolf had created a sensation by publishing a book, ostensibly about his brother's postwar experiences, but containing an unmistakable attack on the current East German leadership and a plea for reformist socialism. See Markus Wolf, Die Troika (Dusseldorf: Claassen, 1989); Franz Loeser, "Die Dreharbeiten sind in vollem Gange!: Gedanken zu Markus Wolfs Troika," Deutschland Archiv, no. 6 (1989), pp. 639-42; and, on both Wolf and the book, Jeffrey Gedmin, The Hidden Hand (Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute, 1992), pp. 82-84.

⁴² For the "sterility" phrase, see Igor Maximychev, "End of the Berlin Wall," International Affairs [Moscow], March 1991, pp. 100, 103. On contacts between East German SED officials (and Markus Wolf) with the views of disgruntled Soviet Germanists, including Falin, during the summer of 1989, see Reuth & Boente, Das Komplott, pp. 91-92; Gerhard Wettig, "Die sowjetische Rolle beim Umsturz in der DDR und bei der Einleitung des deutschen Einigungprozesses," in Juergen Elvert & Michael Salewski, eds., Der Umbruch in Osteuropa (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1993), pp. 44-45, 51.

⁴³ Author interview with Chernyayev, Moscow, January 1994.

⁴⁴ Chernyayev states that Honecker's versions of the meeting are inaccurate. Gorbachev's forthcoming memoirs will probably contain verbatim excerpts from Chernyayev's notes of the talks.

An essentially verbatim transcript of the meeting, from the notes of a member of the politburo, has been published. He told them that the party must find its own way, that if it remained behind, it would be punished by life. "Our experiences and the experiences of Poland and Hungary have convinced us: If a party does not respond to life, it is condemned." He did not, however, offer specific advice and the meeting had a friendly tone, with emphatic reassurances from Gorbachev about the GDR's importance in Europe and within the socialist community.⁴⁵ Though in his memoirs East German politburo member Krenz asserted that, as he left East Berlin, Gorbachev's parting words to a group of East German communists was to "take action," Chernyayev and others insist that Gorbachev -- though aware of the disputes within the SED -- did not take sides or interfere on the issue of who should lead the GDR.⁴⁶

The tenor of Gorbachev's presentation was low-key and Soviet policy throughout was to encourage reform on Gorbachev's model but not interfere in the GDR internal decisions. At the time of the crucial October 9 demonstration in Leipzig the Soviet ambassador to the GDR, Kochemasov, told Soviet commanders to keep their troops in garrison. Though there is no evidence that the Soviets prevented Mielke and the Stasi from cracking down hard on protesters, the Soviets apparently

⁴⁵ For the quoted passages from the transcript, see Guenter Mittag, Um Jeden Preis: Im Spannungsfeld zweier Systeme (Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 1991), pp. 367, 370. The phrase about life punishing those who fall behind has been frequently cited, usually inaccurately, in the press. The actual language used, in German, was: "Ich halte es fuer sehr wichtig, den Zeitpunkt nicht zu verpassen und keine Chance zu vertun. Die Partei muss ihre eigene Auffassung haben, ihr eigenes Herantreten vorschlagen. Wenn wir zurueckbleiben, bestraft uns das Leben sofort." For a short but acute comment noting that this language is not as harsh as is often assumed, see a letter to the editor, Heinz Geyr, "Originalton Gorbatschow," Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, December 5, 1991, p. 8. The sentence quoted in the text is clearer though, and is as straightforward in German as it is in English translation. On the Gorbachev's statements, see also the recollections in Egon Krenz with Hartmut Koenig & Gunter Rettner, Wenn Mauern Fallen: die friedliche Revolution - Vorgeschichte, Ablauf, Auswirkungen (Wien: Paul Neff, 1990), pp. 86-87; Guenter Schabowski, Das Politbuero: Ende eines Mythos, ed. Frank Sieren & Ludwig Soehne (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1990), pp. 73-75; Michael Sodaro, Moscow, Germany, and the West: From Khrushchev to Gorbachev (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp. 377-78; and Wettig, "Die sowjetische Rolle...," pp. 49-50.

⁴⁶ See Krenz, Wenn Mauern Fallen; Gedmin, The Hidden Hand, pp. 98-99; Chernyayev's views communicated in author interview, Moscow, January 1994.

made it clear that they would not intervene militarily in support of such a *Staatsstreich*. If Alexanderplatz was going to look like Tiananmen Square, the tanks would be East German, not Soviet.⁴⁷

Honecker had visibly lost Soviet protection, and non-interference was itself a noticeable change in the way Moscow usually did business in East Berlin. But the Soviets did not actually work to overthrow Honecker. They would have been happy to work with any GDR leader who could take the necessary steps to regain control of the situation. It appears that Gorbachev knew of the desires of some in the SED to mount a palace revolution and just did not step in.⁴⁸

One of the best sources is the account of Maximychev, who served as deputy chief of the Soviet embassy in East Berlin, a powerful post. Since the Soviet ambassador, Kochemasov, was not a fluent German speaker, Maximychev was a key interlocutor for the East Germans. He was generally regarded by Western diplomats as an honest and reliable professional and this is my impression of him as well. For him, a central question is why the Soviet Union, "whose influence in the GDR was decisive, did nothing (except for fruitless attempts by Gorbachev to 'sell' the advantages of perestroika to Honecker) to at least lift a little the lid of a cauldron in which pressure was close to the critical mark?"

He offers two answers: first, that Soviet officials were so accustomed to equating the "will of the party" with the "will of the people" that they could not

⁴⁷ Kochemasov's description of the episode was reported in Stanislav Kondrashov, "Our Place in the World, or Home Thoughts from Abroad," *Izvestiya*, April 30, 1990, p. 5, in FBIS-SOV 90-086, 3 May 90, pp. 20, 23.

⁴⁸ Author interviews with Chernayev and Igor Maximychev, Moscow, January 1994; Schabowski, Der Absturz, pp. 262-63; Schabowski, Das Politbüro, pp. 140-41; Gedmin, The Hidden Hand, pp. 104-05, 115; Pond, Beyond the Wall, pp. 106, 122-24. Pond has collected first-hand evidence from authoritative Soviet, East German, and West German sources to support this judgment. Maximychev concluded that "Moscow was neither the initiator of Honecker's resignation nor the force behind it. ... [Gorbachev] merely acknowledged the change of leadership in the GDR and signified his readiness to cooperate with Egon Krenz...." Maximychev, "Possible 'Impossibilities'," p. 109. On the decision by General Snetkov not to let his troops become involved in crushing the crucial Leipzig demonstration on October 9 and on Mielke's calculations, see Bierling, "Die sieben Mythen der Wiedervereinigung," in Grosser, et al, Die sieben Mythen, pp. 83-84.

adequately grasp the potential for popular overthrow of a socialist government. Second, he points out that the Soviet government was itself unable to resolve the dilemmas about how to deal with the East German crisis. His explanation is worth quoting at length.

All suggestions about giving expression to our disapproval of the suicidal line of the East German leadership were rejected on the logical ground that the situation in the republic was entirely the responsibility of its German leaders and that to impose anything upon them would mean taking over that responsibility with all that this implied. In less official terms, the refusal to influence Honecker was explained by claiming that to ensure the success of perestroika, we needed stability in the 'socialist community' and one of its key pillars, the GDR. And unofficially it was said that Honecker knew the situation in the GDR better than anybody else and would do his best to prevent an explosion on which his own destiny hinged.⁴⁹

A day after Gorbachev's departure, East German politburo members Krenz, Schabowski, and Mielke drafted an appeal to the people frankly deplored the loss of so many productive citizens and promising reform. On October 10 and 11 the politburo debated the domestic situation at length. Honecker thought radical change carried with it greater risks than trying to defend the status quo. But the position of Mielke, the chief of state security, was crucial. Heading the vast police apparatus, he argued that the unrest was becoming as uncontrollable as the instability which preceded the bloody crackdown of June 1953. Without a strong faction arguing for such violent measures, the original proposal for the appeal to the people was adopted, but its elements were buried under a "thick layer of the usual verbiage."⁵⁰

The East German security establishment had prepared plans for a massive use of force to suppress dissent, even to the point of shooting demonstrators and imprisoning thousands. The East German secret police, the Stasi, had developed

⁴⁹ "Possible 'Impossibilities'," p. 109.

⁵⁰ Maximychev, "End of the Berlin Wall," p. 104; see also Krenz, Wenn Mauer Fallen, pp. 88-89, 144-45; Schabowski, Das Politburo, pp. 110-11; Jarausch, The Rush to German Unity, p. 54; Gedmin, The Hidden Hand, p. 116.

extraordinarily elaborate plans for such a crackdown, was conscious of the June 1953 precedent of dealing bloodily with unrest, and might well have succeeded in crushing dissent, though at incalculable cost to the society and to the government's international position.⁵¹ But the aging security minister, Erich Mielke, balked at the brink of ordering such a violent crackdown. He appears to have judged at the eleventh hour that the situation might be manageable if Honecker were replaced, and Mielke was instrumental in the politburo decision to overthrow Honecker on October 17.

As of October 18 Egon Krenz hoped he could become East Germany's Gorbachev. Those East Germans who had fled to the West were welcomed back and promised there would be no repercussions. Krenz and his Politburo colleague, Gunter Schabowski, tried to display 'an SED with a human face.' But they did not know how. Krenz would read long, turgid Central Committee speeches on television. They found it difficult to stay ahead of escalating mass public protest demands. The opposition was calling for a full-fledged political and economic reform program, including a far broader housecleaning of the 'old guard' on the politburo, free elections with no guarantee of the Communist monopoly on power, and a reconsideration of travel restrictions to the West (i.e., the Berlin Wall).⁵²

⁵¹ "From 1967 on, the Stasi even maintained a series of internment camps to herd dissidents into on some future day of reckoning, along with lists of up to 200,000 intended victims. Periodically, it conducted exercises to prepare for this final defeat of 'counterrevolution,' and district administrators of the operation continued to meet and plan for it up through early October 1989. Heinz Eggert — Protestant pastor and then, after unification, Saxony's interior minister — discovered just how up-to-date these plans were kept when he found out that one of the detention centers was to have been located 150 yards from his own house. Eggert joked later to a former Stasi officer that he could have walked to the camp. The officer replied, 'You, Herr Eggert, would not have reached it alive.'" Pond, Beyond the Wall, pp. 80-81.

The scenario of some vast operation in which the state would crack down on its enemies across the nation may seem nightmarish to Westerners, but it has a long lineage in German history. Both fears of and preparations for such a "*Staatsstreich*" played an important part in the security policy of Wilhelmine Germany. See Volker R. Berghahn, Germany and the Approach of War in 1914 (London: Macmillan, 1973). And Germans could readily recall the example of Hitler's 'Night of the Long Knives' when he settled accounts with his old or potential adversaries in 1934.

⁵² On the offer to refugees, see interview with Wolfgang Meyer, Neues Deutschland, October 21/22, 1989, p. 1; on the dissatisfaction of the demonstrators with Krenz's first moves, see Maximychev, "End of the Berlin Wall," pp. 104-05; Jarausch, The Rush to German Unity, pp. 46-49, 51-52, 59-61.

It was plain that the feared East German security apparatus was not going to unleash its full might against the dissidents. Mielke, its chief, had supported Honecker's dismissal but now found that the new leaders turned on him, compelling his resignation as an offering to the dissidents. The Stasi was now without centralized direction.

Krenz soon made the requisite trip to Moscow for consultations, arriving on October 31. The Soviets told Krenz he could count on their complete support, but encouraged him to liberalize travel regulations and thereby vent some of the pressure on the regime. This should be done, they thought, in an orderly way. Krenz and the Soviets could also readily agree that talk of unification was completely impermissible. Gorbachev himself said any question of unification would be "explosive."⁵³ Armed with this advice, Krenz prepared a program of reform measures that he could present to a meeting of East German communist leaders on November 8.

Visiting America for political consultations at the State Department in late October, East German representatives of the new Krenz government acknowledged the need for reform. But they said such changes could occur only within the framework of the existing socialist system. The East German officials also told their American counterparts that the preservation of two distinct German states with differing social systems was fundamental to the preservation of peace and stability in Europe.

Opinions in the West differed about whether Krenz could take charge and restore the stability and credibility of the government. Estimates reaching Washington in late October and early November varied on whether Krenz could manage his internal crisis. Ambassador Barkley and his embassy thought Krenz might well succeed.⁵⁴ Yet both West Germany and America had already begun

⁵³ Reuth & Boennte, Das Komplott, pp. 137-38; Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, p. 134; "Druzheskaya vstrecha M.S. Gorbachev c E. Krentsem," Vestnik, no. 22 (56), December 1, 1989, pp. 15-16.

⁵⁴ On the East German views communicated to America, see Eagleburger to President Bush (for his evening reading) on Eagleburger's meeting with GDR Deputy Foreign Minister Kurt Nier, October 23,

reshaping their policy agenda for change in Central Europe.

Bonn and Washington Start Catching Up

The domestic unrest in the GDR presented different challenges for the United States and for West Germany. America had already moved toward defining its national interests to promote democratic upheaval in Eastern Europe and Bush himself had signaled that he was quite ready to accept the possible renewal of agitation for German unification. Washington had not, however, translated these rhetorical commitments into concrete objectives for policy.

The West Germans faced a more difficult problem. Their basic conception of national interests, embodied in Ostpolitik, supported stability in East Germany on the assumption that such stability and reassurance to East German leaders was the path to incremental change. But events in August and September had driven home the revulsion most of the East German people had for their government, guaranteed at least some instability in East Germany, and thus forced Bonn to rethink its assumptions. The divergent West German reactions to this challenge became clearer in September and October. Though Baker, in a note to Bush calling attention to the unrest in East Germany, said that West German leaders were uniting to encourage stability and reform within East Germany,⁵⁵ it soon became obvious that Kohl was

1989. On the American embassy in East Berlin's analysis of Krenz's prospects: "It is too early to say with confidence that he (Krenz) is sincere much less that he is likely to be successful, but a few more days like this most recent one will at least convince all observers that he has correctly identified his immediate challenge and that he is working at it." EmbBerlin 8568, 26 Oct 89; Krenz "has done a lot in a short time, but he has not yet much affected the tough odds against him." EmbBerlin 8683, 2 Nov 89; "The slogans on the banners and the mood of the marchers remain well in advance of where the new man yet says he is willing to lead the GDR, but he is showing far too much skill and adaptability to be written off prematurely." EmbBerlin 8734, 6 Nov 89. Both the West Germans and the Americans heard, however, that the Soviets themselves considered Krenz a transitional figure and discounted his prospects. For the West Germans, see Kiessler & Elbe, *Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken*, p. 45 (on what Falin told Willy Brandt during Brandt's October 1989 visit); for the Americans see Dobbins (Acting) to Acting Secretary Eagleburger, "Critical GDR Central Committee Plenum," 6 Nov 89.

⁵⁵ Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 10 Oct 89. This note provided State's first formal comment for the President on developments in the GDR. It pointed to the seriousness of the demonstrations, capped by the crucial turnout in Leipzig on October 9, as unprecedented since 1953. State thought West Germany was united, though, behind the Ostpolitik consensus: "All the parties agree that the

stepping outside the old consensus. Buffeted by events, Kohl began falling back to assumptions he would have harbored in his political youth, as the Rhineland disciple of Konrad Adenauer.

West German officials were worried about the difficulty of absorbing so many arriving East Germans. Kohl, however, had led his coalition into a firm position welcoming the immigrants and denying economic aid to the East German regime until it adopted fundamental political reforms. Therefore, at a time of major instability in the GDR, Kohl deliberately chose not to prop up the regime in East Berlin. Instead he allowed the SED to face the consequences, unaided, of the full force of popular unrest with communist rule.

Kohl cared deeply about foreign reactions to his conduct. American diplomats in Bonn reminded Washington that other countries' attitudes on the issue of German unity were the critical determinant of West German policy. "West Germans know in their heart of hearts that reunification can only come about when the FRG's European allies and the Soviet Union not only go along with the process of reunification, but also actively support it. West German leaders do not believe that is yet the case."⁵⁶

But Kohl was attentive to foreign reaction not just because of diplomatic calculations, but because foreign reactions reverberated in West German domestic politics. Consciousness of West Germany's special historical responsibility had

GDR must remain stable if it is to reform. Kohl and the SPD opposition thus appear to have buried the hatchet for now on what was becoming a divisive domestic issue." A week later the State Department (like most West Germans) still believed that after an initial flurry of debate, the FRG had "elected to continue its current policy of pursuing 'small steps' toward the GDR and calling on the GDR leadership to pursue a course of reform." Seitz to Kimmitt, for his October 24 Meeting with Ambassador Barkley, 17 Oct 89; see also EmbBerlin 8466, "GDR Crisis: The Honecker Era Fades Quickly," 20 Oct 89; Seitz to Eagleburger, for his October 20 Meeting with Ambassador Barkley, 19 Oct 89: "...it is not yet clear what course Krenz will follow.... It is not yet clear how the FRG will respond to the succession of Krenz to the leadership position." For even more uncertainty, see Mulholland (Assistant Secretary for Intelligence and Research) to Kimmitt, "The German Question Revidius," 19 Oct 89: "There is no way of divining just how the German debate will evolve in the medium term. There are too many possibilities We can not foresee exactly how all this will evolve, whether towards unification, confederation or some other form. Nor, in the present political environment, can we foreclose repression in the East or a sudden collapse of the GDR regime leading to its consolidation with the FRG. In a five year perspective these prospects may appear still more possible."

⁵⁶ Bonn 34271, "The German Question and Reunification," 25 Oct 89.

conditioned the West German public to be extraordinarily sensitive to perceptions of world opinion. International disapproval could be a big vote-getter for Kohl's political opponents. So while keeping a weather eye on foreign reaction, especially in Washington and Paris, Kohl was moving.

Contrast, for instance, the following sets of notional objectives and strategies associated with two policy approaches, one a continuation of the Ostpolitik consensus, the other a return to Adenauer's concept of "change through strength."

A Policy of Ostpolitik

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| National Interests: | (1) a GDR stable, secure, and confident enough to embrace peaceful policies abroad and reform at home;
(2) reassure Germany's neighbors, securing better relations |
| Operational Objectives: | (1) GDR displays little insecurity about FRG's intentions;
(2) material improvement in conditions of life for East German citizens -- especially travel;
(3) Soviets are sufficiently reassured to pursue friendlier relations with FRG |
| Strategic Theories: | If FRG avoids unsettling rhetoric and offers financial support <u>then</u> the new East German regime will seek a closer rapprochement between the two German states, including more liberal travel regulations. |

'Change through Strength'

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| National Interests: | (1) GDR is destabilized to produce radical political change;
(2) GDR allows its citizens to freely choose future, including possibility of unification |
| Operational Objectives: | (1) New GDR government adopts radical political reforms, including end of Communist monopoly on power and free elections;
(2) FRG retains solid Western support for more forward policy;
(3) Soviets do not force major East-West confrontation or threaten use of force |

Strategic Theories:

- (1) If GDR is isolated and FRG money is withheld then this pressure, combined with domestic unrest, will produce radical change;
- (2) If Western support for FRG is solid then Soviets are less likely to intervene decisively in FRG's German policy (preferring not to risk global rupture of East-West relations)

The overthrow of Ostpolitik would not begin with a push for unification. First the GDR would be pressured to abandon socialism and accept real democracy. Naturally, if East Germany lost socialism it would lose the main principled justification for its existence as a separate state. So as Communism came under attack, West Germans -- like so many others in the West -- naturally speculated about the possibility of German reunification. Still, as the American Embassy in Bonn advised Washington in late October, although the idea was on everyone's mind, "virtually no one believes reunification is the first order of business on the German-German agenda."⁵⁷

Leading centrist West German political figures such as Von Weizsaecker, Genscher, and the SPD moderates all were vague in their public statements about the prospect for German unity. Staying within the Ostpolitik consensus, they preferred to dampen public discussion of unification and work for more 'small steps' to normalize ties with the East German state. The West German SPD emphasized the need for internal reform of the GDR and therefore attacked CDU and CSU rhetoric on reunification. Some parts of the SPD went further and denounced even the principle of wanting to unify the two German states at all.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ In Washington, the National Intelligence Council (guided by the National Intelligence Officer for Western Europe, Martin van Heuven) believed that Bonn regarded the debate on German reunification mainly "as a factor complicating its more immediate commitment to a CSCE process and a European framework of detente." NIC, "Executive Brief: Outlook for East Germany," October 27, 1989. A member of State's policy planning staff, Roger George, traveled to the FRG and GDR in October. His report was read by Ross and Zoellick and provides a good summary of the spectrum of West German opinion on the national question at the time. He noted that Chancellery and Foreign Ministry officials in Bonn were discouraging speculation about changing the 'political map' of Europe. But George thought "we have only begun to see the renewed ferment on the 'German Question'" and worried about it. He noted that

Still Kohl, while not openly breaking with the consensus, did little to discourage speculation on the possibility of fundamental change in Germany's status. Kohl was clearly choosing the second track, starting with encouragement for political upheaval in the East. His adviser, Teltschik, remembers the direction as not being toward "a goal of territorial unification but the struggle for political changes in the GDR -- economic reforms and movement toward democracy."⁵⁹ Bush's September 18 comments at his Montana news conference in support of reunification had received wide press coverage in the FRG and were welcomed privately.

Scowcroft was anxious that Bush's pronouncements about unification seemed to be getting ahead of what the Germans themselves were prepared to say. Baker, following Bush's lead, was also explicitly endorsing the possibility of German unification in his public statements.⁶⁰ Scheduled to deliver a major speech on US-Soviet relations, Baker planned to refer explicitly to the possibility of German unification. Scowcroft asked Baker to use the word "reconciliation" instead of "reunification." Baker reluctantly agreed. The press, to his chagrin, then seized on

Ambassador Barkley in East Berlin, seemed to differ with State's European Bureau and Embassy Bonn. They were inclined to follow the West German lead and take on the national question to the extent the West Germans were willing to approach it. George, via his representation of Barkley's views, thought the US should not be guided by the FRG (presumably since it might go too far) and America had a broader interest in assuaging British and French fears about German motives. George suggested that Washington stop endorsing the term "reunification" and instead substitute the milder term "reconciliation" to describe the way in which Germans might achieve their national aspirations. George to Ross, 26 Oct 89.

⁵⁹ Author interview with Teltschik, Guetersloh, June 1992.

⁶⁰ For example, Baker was asked for his view of German reunification in a press interview on October 8. Prepared for the question, Baker said the reunification of Germany was NATO's policy, Secretary Baker said, and "It has also been the policy of the United States to support the concept of the reunification of Germany, provided it is done — achieved, if you will, in peace and freedom. And it seems to us that there should be no concern about a unified Germany which is integrated into the democratic community of European nations." Asked whether this meant that a unified Germany would be in NATO, Baker said that issue was disputed. He referred to the President's Mainz concept of a "Europe which is whole and a Europe which is free and for an undivided Europe." The Soviets, Baker added, agreed that the people of Eastern Europe should determine their own governments. But the Soviets' bottom line was that those governments not leave the Warsaw Pact and perhaps not leave CEMA [a point Shevardnadze had made to Baker in their private talks the previous month while en route to Wyoming]. Interview of Secretary Baker on NBC-TV, "Meet the Press," October 8, 1989 (pp. 7-8 of PA transcript, PR No. 186). The questioner on the topic was Elizabeth Drew of The New Yorker.

the new wording as evidence of American retreat.⁶¹

⁶¹ On October 16, Secretary Baker was to address the Foreign Policy Association in New York. The main focus was on how to find "points of mutual advantage" in US-Soviet relations. Scowcroft felt that, since Kohl was still offering carefully nuanced statements on unification, the U.S. should do the same. True, Bush had endorsed unification in his May Washington Times interview and again during his Montana press conference in September. But Scowcroft drew a distinction between press interviews and deliberate, formal policy statements by top Administration officials. So, in the portion of his speech dealing with Germany, Secretary Baker said:

Of course the United States and our NATO partners have long supported the reconciliation of the German people. Their legitimate rights must some day be met. But let me be clear — reconciliation through self-determination can only be achieved in peace and freedom. Normalization must occur on the basis of Western values with the end result being a people integrated into the community of democratic European nations. (emphasis added)

Ross and Zoellick, briefing reporters on the speech, tried to emphasize the conceptual framework the address presented for US-Soviet relations. To their dismay, the reporters immediately focused instead on the paragraph which dealt with Germany — asking if the US was becoming more cautious about reunification. The two officials then were forced into the kind of argument Genscher and most other West German officials made, placing the issue in the context of a broader evolutionary process of European integration and the general acceptance of Western values. Department of State Background Briefing on US-Soviet Relations, October 16, 1989, pp. 3-5. This account is based on interviews with both Scowcroft and Zoellick, Washington, June 1991..

Throughout October working-level officials within the State Department had debated just what Baker should say about unification. The matter belongs in a footnote because the debate never reached the policymakers in the State Department. Yet the clash of ideas holds some academic interest. State's Policy Planning staff was both more worried about German movement toward reunification and more interested in developing an active US policy to steer West German policy. So Ross privately urged Baker early in October to think about how to engage the Germans in a "sensible discussion of reunification without misleading them or alarming the other allies," and to consider the need for US initiatives. Ross attached a paper prepared by his staff (Roger George) reviewing US policy. Ross to Baker, "Reunification Revisited," 5 Oct 89. The memo was passed directly to Baker without seeking agreement on the text from State's European Bureau.

Again, George argued that FRG leaders were not being "up-front" about their real plans. He thought, with some truth, that West German leaders were privately moving more toward reunification than they would reveal in their public comments. The U.S. therefore had the choice of either putting "its money where its mouth is" with a more activist policy on reunification or staying with "the current policy of benign neglect." He then detailed the "obvious" drawbacks to pushing reunification: none of America's Allies wanted it; no Eastern state supported it; the Soviets would insist on neutralization of Germany; and, whatever Germany's status, the basis for the US military presence in Europe was likely to disappear if Soviet forces went home.

So, since the U.S. had to accept that change was coming and try to shape it, the U.S. should take a more active role in heading off a private West German plan to push reunification. George offered two substantive objectives: (1) to promote "unification on the right terms," diverting attention away from the option of political unification by staying away from the word "reunification" and just endorsing "self-determination" instead; and (2) to take a more public stance favoring emerging opposition groups in East Germany. In other words, Washington should dampen speculation about reunification and support reform in the GDR. George to Ross, "Reunification Revisited," 27 Sep 89, attaching a copy of Bonn 29785, "The German Question: Back on the FRG Agenda," 14 Sep 89. George's paper did not mention Bush's public remarks on the issue of unification.

As Kohl felt increasingly exposed in leaning forward toward a return to older West German aspirations, he wanted to confer with Bush. Calling the American president on October 23, Kohl reviewed his political situation. He was skeptical about Krenz's prospects and complained that, "Things will become incalculable if there are no reforms."

Kohl then commented on media opinion, on both sides of the Atlantic, which believed, "crudely speaking," that the Germans cared more about good ties with the East because the Soviets were the key to unification. "This is absolute nonsense!", Kohl exclaimed. He would tell everyone that the changes in Europe stemmed from

The European Bureau did not agree with the Policy Planning staff. In a separate memo sent to Baker at about the same time, Seitz and Dobbins were advising the Secretary that "the foundations of postwar Europe are shifting." Although, "for most Germans, the vision of a united Germany has not yet become an operational policy objective to be actively pursued," EUR thought the push for change would not come from the more cautious and self-satisfied West Germans but from the East German people. "[P]opular forces in the East could push events more rapidly than now foreseen toward new arrangements for Germany."

EUR cared little for the new government in the GDR. There is "little useful business we can do with the current GDR leadership." On unification itself, Seitz and Dobbins viewed support for eventual unification as good both for public purposes and on the merits. They argued that the US position should follow the mainstream West German lead, being supportive of the goal of unity, but not prejudging or trying to prescribe exactly how or when unification might be achieved.

EUR did share its memo with the Policy Planning staff, which attached their dissent. The staff thought EUR's predictions for the future were "overly conservative" (though that assertion, while true of Embassy East Berlin's predictions, did not jibe with the argument Seitz and Dobbins had made). The planners thought Washington needed "to accommodate the possibility (albeit unlikely) that dramatic events could occur in the GDR more quickly than anyone has been willing to predict." So, given this view, "even greater policy allowance should be made for the unpredictable: collapse of the regime; massive uprisings; hard repression; or a new Soviet gambit." Short on specific policy recommendations, the Policy Planning staff did argue the U.S. should not sit back and follow a West German lead. It was "dangerous," they said, to be "deferential [to the Germans] regarding the pace for evolving inner-German relations, if indeed it will condition the entire 'map of Europe.'" Instead, the Policy Planning Staff recommended longer-term thinking about U.S. policies, German initiatives, and likely Soviet reactions. Seitz through Kimmitt to Baker, "The Future of Germany In A Fast-Changing Europe," 10 Oct 89 (drafted by Dobbins). The European Bureau's summary of the Policy Planning staff views were approved by Ross.

These serious policy differences were presented in an information memo, not an action document. Baker was not obliged to make a choice between them. There is no evidence that the dispute actually had any observable influence on the thinking of Baker, Zoellick, or even Ross. Author's interview with Zoellick, Washington, 1992. For example, the Policy Planning staff's October 5 memo had urged Baker to stop using the term "reunification" and use only the term "self-determination" instead. Yet Ross personally cleared the NSC staff's draft National Security Directive language on Germany, with its explicit endorsement of possible unification. Ross also joined with Zoellick in drafting language for Baker that explicitly endorsed the possibility of unification, both in Baker's October 8 press appearance and the draft "points of mutual advantage" speech.

Western strength, a strong NATO and a strong EC. Then Kohl made his pitch: Could Bush publicly stress Western solidarity as the key to continued change in the East? Kohl surely understood that such an American stance would help keep British and French anxieties on Germany from splitting Western support for continued change.

Bush went right to the point. "We are seeing a spate of stories about German reunification resulting in a neutralist Germany and a threat to Western security," he said. "We do not believe that." Of course, Bush added that the U.S. was trying to react carefully to change in the GDR. But he thought Kohl was doing a great job. He said he would find a way to signal how important U.S. relations were with West Germany, "especially when we see some of these mischievous stories around."⁶² Bush did not wait long to keep his promise.

The next day Bush gave an interview to New York Times reporter R.W. "Johnny" Apple. Referring to Chancellor Kohl's phone call, the President told the Times he expected major changes in Germany's status. Then he said, "I don't share the concern that some European countries have about a reunified Germany." He said he thought "Germany's commitment to and recognition of the Alliance is unshakable," stressing that, "there's a lot written on the fear of reunification that I personally don't share."

Consistent with a policy line developed by his staff and the State Department earlier in the month,⁶³ Bush was not trying to tell the Germans what they should do,

⁶² Memcon of the President's Telephone Call from Chancellor Kohl, Oval Office, 23 Oct 89. The morning of this call, the President and other top officials had been briefed by intelligence analysts on "German Reunification: What Would Have to Happen?" The analysts explained that, for Germany to be reunited, East Germany would have to allow democratic choice; Soviet attitudes would need to change; Western allies would need to cooperate (and the FRG underestimated the opposition they would face from London and Paris); West German domestic support would need to be strong; and Bonn would need to tackle the problem of external alignment. Having heard such a briefing, Bush would have been especially sensitive to the impact of Kohl's request upon West European and German opinion.

⁶³ During September the NSC staff had prepared a draft National Security Directive on United States Policy toward Europe, for signature by the President. Zelikow negotiated the draft with Seitz and Dobbins at State and with assistant secretary of defense Stephen Hadley at the Pentagon. Although the document was overtaken by events before it could be issued, it reflects the developing bureaucratic consensus on how

but he was signaling to the West Germans that the U.S. would back them if they were ready to take on the national question.

... I don't think we ought to be out pushing the concept of reunification, or setting timetables, or coming from across the Atlantic over here making a lot of pronouncements on this subject. It takes time. It takes a prudent evolution. It takes work between them. And understanding between the French and the Germans, and the Brits and the Germans on all this. But the subject is so much more front and center because of the rapid changes that are taking place in East Germany.⁶⁴

With this interview Bush showed sympathy for European concerns but, by taking the high road of reiterating support for German aspirations, made it much more difficult politically for European leaders to publicly voice their private doubts and fears.

to formulate the US position on German unity. The portion of the NSD which dealt with the German question was strongly influenced by suggestions from Dobbins. It was cautiously written, designed to let the FRG set the pace of change. It read:

The Future of Germany. The division of Germany is at the heart of the division of Europe. A Europe truly whole and free would have to include arrangements which satisfy both the legitimate aspirations of Germans for self-determination and of their neighbors for security and stability. The overriding objective of the United States with respect to Germany is the maintenance of a democratic Federal Republic, firmly anchored in the Western political, security, and economic system. The United States also remains committed to the goal of German self-determination, which could result in a Germany reunified in peace and freedom, part of the commonwealth of free nations. As I said in my address in Mainz, we seek self-determination for all of Germany and all of Eastern Europe. Recognizing the extreme sensitivity of this issue among Germans and their neighbors, we should express our principled support for German self-determination in a careful manner, neither prejudging possible forms it could take, nor taking upon the United States the role, properly belonging to Germany's freely elected leaders, of acting as the principal proponent of progress toward this objective.

Though the language was carefully nuanced, it was more forward leaning than alternative language that was considered, which would simply have endorsed self-determination and the unity of the German nation without explicitly repudging American support for the possible political unification of Germany. The compromise formula reflected Seitz's and Dobbins' desire — which Scowcroft shared — for the US not to get too far out in front of Kohl in encouraging unification. They did not want America to be seen as prejudging what, after all, should be a choice made by the Germans. On the other hand, both State's European Bureau and the NSC staff were opposed to suggestions that the US should offer initiatives to slow or otherwise regulate the pace Bonn preferred to set. See Zelikow through Blackwill to Scowcroft, "National Security Directive on United States Policy Toward Europe," 4 Oct 89.

⁶⁴ R.W. Apple, Jr., "Possibility of a Reunited Germany Is No Cause for Alarm, Bush Says," New York Times, October 25, 1989, p. 1 (see also p. A12).

News of this interview, carried on the front page of the New York Times, had reverberated across the Atlantic. On the same day the American undersecretary of state, Robert Kimmitt, was hosting a lunch for key political directors from states of the European Community. France's political director, Bertrand Dufourcq, asked Kimmitt about America's position on developments in Germany. "That is easy to answer," Kimmitt replied, directing him to the front page interview.⁶⁵

West German officials welcomed Bush's position. Other Europeans reacted anxiously. Conor Cruise O'Brien spoke for many in Western Europe when he wrote in the Times of London that Bush's remarks were "more like a declaration than a reaffirmation." "Until recently, US support for reunification has been vague and theoretical." Now Bush had given "a warning to Britain and France that the US would oppose efforts on their part to put obstacles in the way of reunification" and "its significance should not be under-estimated."⁶⁶

Scowcroft had been trying to restrain American commentary on unification, to keep Bush from getting ahead of German opinion. Now he gave up. Bush had effectively settled the issue.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ The story is told, significantly, in Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, p. 57, remarking on how important Bush's position was for Bonn's diplomacy.

⁶⁶ Conor Cruise O'Brien, "Beware, the Reich is Reviving," The Times, October 31, 1989, reprinted in Harold James & Marla Stone, eds., When the Wall Came Down: Reactions to German Unification (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 221. O'Brien noted that, according to press reports, even some advisers to Kohl were dismayed by Bush's comments because they "might fuel expectations of the unification on the far right in West Germany." *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ There were other signs of Bush's thinking. When Bush met with NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner on October 11, he (as with Waigel on September 26) ignored the GDR and asked directly how Woerner handled the reunification question, both for NATO and as a German. Woerner, a longtime CDU politician and pro-American conservative, answered that, first, he told people the situation is untenable. There must be self-determination for all, including East Germans. NATO had accepted the goal of overcoming the division of Europe. Second, he told people that unification was not a policy problem "for tomorrow." The main thing was to persuade the Soviets to allow continued change in Eastern Europe and the GDR. Gorbachev, Woerner warned, would not let the GDR leave the Warsaw Pact. "If it leaves, that is the end. He needs the GDR in order to keep the others in." Bush wondered if he could persuade Gorbachev to let the Warsaw Pact go, to decide its military value was no longer essential. "That may seem naive," he said, "but who predicted the changes we are seeing today?" Woerner thought this scenario was unrealistic. It was the Soviet Union's great legacy from World War II, the emblem of their status as a great power. The President acknowledged that he might not be able to convince Gorbachev. "I was just

So, despite the generally negative tone of American editorial commentary about the prospect of German unification,⁶⁸ Baker instantly discarded "reconciliation" and returned to straightforward acceptance of possible unification. Asked by reporters about the dangers of German unity, Baker replied that, "Let me simply say that for over 40 years it's been the policy of the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance to support the reunification of Germany." He added that, "When you mention the word 'reunification,' to some it conjures up visions of a return to 1937 borders or perhaps to a reunification that is not achieved through peace and freedom. So I think we should make it clear that when we talk about reconciliation or reunification, we're talking about self-determination for the peoples of East Germany achieved in peace and freedom."⁶⁹

thinking," he said. Memcon for Meeting in Oval Office with Manfred Woerner on October 11, 1989. Other US participants were Baker, Sununu, Ambassador Taft, Scowcroft, Gates, Fitzwater, Seitz, and Zelikow. Woerner was accompanied by Bob Pearson and Jim Cunningham from NATO's International Staff. Secretary Baker met separately with Woerner later that day, but neither he nor Woerner raised the subject of German unification. State 333656, 18 Oct 89.

⁶⁸ Between mid-September and mid-October 1989, media opinion on the prospect of German reunification was split, with the majority favoring caution. In one survey of editorial opinion, "the question of German reunification was raised by 10 papers. Nine saw reunification creating problems Western Europe may be unready to face." Kennedy (acting assistant secretary of state for public affairs) to Eagleburger, "Editorial Comment on the East German Exodus," September 29, 1989. For examples of such caution, see "How to Slow the East German Exodus," New York Times, October 6, 1989, p. A30; and John Hughes, "Deutschland über Alles?," Christian Science Monitor, October 13, 1989, p. 18. But for more positive views of German reunification, see Richard C. Hottelet, "Once Again, the 'German Question,'" Christian Science Monitor, October 6, 1989, p. 19; Enno von Loewenstein (from Die Welt), "France's Germanophobia Cannot Block Reunification," Wall Street Journal, October 9, 1989, p. 18.

⁶⁹ Address on Arms Control and Q&A Session by Secretary Baker before the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco, October 23, 1989. While Baker was trying to emphasize the process by which unification should be accomplished, rather than the goal itself, the U.S. was engaging in quiet contingency planning to consider extreme scenarios of chaos in East Germany. In October Scowcroft and Gates asked the NSC staff to organize preparation of crisis contingency plans in a restricted group for several possible developments, including events in the GDR and Berlin. The contingencies included widespread violence in the GDR, a major challenge to Allied status in Berlin, regime collapse or near-collapse in the GDR, and Soviet military intervention. Jim Dobbins at State convened meetings to discuss the group's work and a suitable planning paper drafted by NSC Staff (Bob Hutchings) was ready by early November. These plans framed US objectives in trying to manage such chaos but did not detail just what would be done. The work became moot and none of the papers were ever utilized. Hutchings reported on this work in Hutchings through Blackwill to Gates, 18 Oct 89, and forwarded the final product to General Scowcroft on November 10. The contingency planning was part of a broader effort which also included plans for possible developments in Poland and Hungary. See Zelikow through Blackwill to Scowcroft, 16 Oct 89.

Kohl soon tested the political waters again to see what was possible. On November 8, speaking to the Bundestag, he stressed two key points: First, he promised West German financial aid for the GDR if it undertook "thoroughgoing" East German political, not just economic, reform which would include the communist party giving up its "power monopoly," allowing the formation of independent political parties, and assuring "binding free elections."

Second, Kohl referred more openly to the possibility of German unification. He noted President Bush's October 24 statement with appreciation (as well as Mitterrand's more cautious November 3 endorsement, described further below). The key, Kohl said, was "free self-determination." He went on: "Our fellow Germans do not need lectures -- from anybody. They themselves know best what they want. And I am sure: if they get an opportunity, they will decide in favor of unity." After quoting, significantly, Konrad Adenauer ("We strive for both -- for a free and united Germany in a free and united Europe."), Kohl concluded that: "We have less reason than ever to be resigned to the long-term division of Germany into two states."⁷⁰

This view could again be distinguished from the more traditional perspectives voiced by other West German officials, such as Genscher. Genscher, at the end of October, was still careful to stress that the relationship between the two German states must somehow be "embedded in a European architecture."⁷¹

Unease in London and Paris

⁷⁰ "Erklaerung der Bundesregierung....," Bulletin (Bonn: Presse und Informatiionsamt der Bundesregierung), no. 123 (1989), p. 1053. For approving commentary on Kohl's line, even from SPD leader Vogel, see "Kohl: Die SED muss auf ihr Machtmonopol verzichten," Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, November 9, 1989, pp. 1. Pond, citing an anonymous West German chancellery source, asserts that Kohl's linkage of aid to comprehensive political reform was suggested by an unnamed "East German middleman." Beyond the Wall, p. 131 & note 2. The Washington Post's editors promptly criticized Kohl though, and warned of the dangers posed for European stability by accelerating movement toward reunification. "Toward German Reunification," Washington Post, November 9, 1989, p. A22.

⁷¹ See Die Zeit, October 20, 1989. Genscher remained quite vague on the nature of these architectural arrangements, but was clearly arguing that Germany would not have to choose between East and West -- it was coming together in an evolutionary way as East and West were coming together.

As governments reflected on whether the unification of Germany truly was in their national interest, one Western government was already forming a view sharply at odds with the United States. That government was America's closest ally in the world, Great Britain. Even during the early postwar years the British government had never felt strongly committed to the goal of unification. In 1946 and 1947, as Chapter Three pointed out, London had supplied both ideas and energy to plans for the separate development of a western German entity. The British were not anxious to see any new concentration of power on the European continent, whether from the Soviet Union or from Germany. In 1989 former prime minister Edward Heath spoke for many in his reported comment that, "Naturally we expressed our support of German reunification; because we knew it would never happen."⁷²

One person who shared Heath's views, though she agreed with him on little else, was Britain's Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher. She began expressing her anxieties to foreign leaders in September 1989. She did not confide her fears to President Bush, whose pro-German stance was already becoming all too clear. Instead she raised her worries with a statesman she thought would be more sympathetic: Mikhail Gorbachev.

Stopping in Moscow for talks with Gorbachev on the way back from a visit to Japan, Thatcher raised the subject of Germany with the Soviet leader. She recalls that, "I explained to him that although NATO had traditionally made statements supporting Germany's aspiration to be reunited, in practice we were rather apprehensive." Another Western leader agreed with her, she said. Here she was referring, though she did not say so to Gorbachev, to a meeting of the minds she thought she had already reached on this matter with France's President Mitterrand.

Gorbachev confirmed to Thatcher that the USSR did not want German reunification either. This, she has written, "reinforced me in my resolve to slow up the already heady pace of developments." She supported democratic reform in East Germany, of course, but to her unification was a separate question, "on which the

⁷² Quoted in "Wir muessen Kurs halten," Der Spiegel, September 25, 1989, pp. 16-17.

wishes and interests of Germany's neighbours and other powers must be fully taken into account." At that time she thought the West Germans accepted this reality.⁷³

Britain's Foreign Office was also thinking about Germany, but was far more circumspect in its views. The Office was itself going through some turmoil as John Major's brief and ill-starred stint as Foreign Secretary was about to give way to the long tenure of his successor, Douglas Hurd. Yet its staff prepared an extensive analysis of the German Question in late October.

This Foreign Office paper noted that previous British governments had tended to refer to the goal of self-determination rather than to reunification, implying that the German nation might recover its unity by something other than full reunification of a German state (a position analogous to the one being recommended by State's Policy Planning staff in Washington). The British had therefore instantly noticed Secretary Baker's careful (though short-lived) use of the term "reconciliation" rather than "reunification" in his October 16 speech about U.S.-Soviet relations.

On the substantive question of reunification, the Foreign Office thought it was doubtful that all the obstacles to such a development could be overcome. Their paper argued that the GDR could well go on separately even if its Communist dogma was overthrown. Yet the paper advised that it was best not to risk alienating Germans by openly discouraging reunification. Stick to the careful phrasings of the past, the paper suggested, while consulting closely with other concerned countries.⁷⁴

Though Thatcher was right to believe that France shared her worries about the

⁷³ Margaret Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years* (New York: HarperCollins, 1993), p. 792; Beschloss & Talbott, *At the Highest Levels*, p. 137. Soviets present at the meeting accept these accounts, with Chernayev recalling that Thatcher was voicing concerns about Germany as early as April 1987. Author interviews with Chernayev and Pavel Palazchenko, Moscow, January 1994. Chernayev's written account of the September meeting with Thatcher does not mention Germany, instead focusing on what Gorbachev considered most important – his internal situation within the Soviet Union. See Anatoly Chernayev, *Shest' let s Gorbachevym: Po dnevnikovym zapisyam* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1993), pp. 298-99.

⁷⁴ Zelikow interviews with the head of the Foreign Office's West European Department at the time, Hillary Synnott, and Britain's then deputy chief of mission in Bonn, Pauline Neville-Jones, London, June 1992. A copy of the Foreign Office paper, "The German Question" was shared in 1989 with U.S. officials..

possibility of German unification, she was mistaken if she thought she could rely on Mitterrand as a diplomatic ally. To be sure, a powerful united German state evoked obvious historical anxieties for a country that had been invaded three times by such a state in little over a hundred years. The possibility of German unification would also call into question France's relative stature within European politics and the European Community.

These French concerns were muted, however, by President Mitterrand's personal conviction that Franco-German cooperation should continue to be at the center of French policy in Europe. Stanley Hoffmann has commented perceptively that Mitterrand was "better at driving on old tracks, or at moving them just a shade, than at setting new ones in new directions." His style was to proceed "by small touches, oblique statements, contradictory advances and retreats." The "earthquake of 1989-90 upset his expectations and calculations; he had to improvise, and it showed." So Mitterrand's position was anything but clear. And, just by not taking a clear stand against Germany's discussion of unity, Mitterrand found himself showing more tolerance for possible German aspirations to unity than was evident anywhere else in the top echelons of France's ruling Socialist Party.⁷⁵

After meeting with Chancellor Kohl at the beginning of November, Mitterrand went public with a prepared stance on the possibility of German reunification at length in a November 3 joint press conference. The remarks are typical Mitterrand-speak. He noted the importance of peaceful change and the need to deal with the legal issues involved. "But," he said, "what counts is what the Germans want to do ... And where does the German Democratic Republic stand in all this? ... Is there even question of reunification in those circles? I shall wait for the facts before completing a report."

Still, Mitterrand professed that he was "not alarmed by the idea of reunification."

⁷⁵ Stanley Hoffmann, "French Dilemmas and Strategies in the New Europe," in Keohane, Nye, Hoffmann, After the Cold War, p. 134.

I don't ask this type of question as history moves forward. History is there. I take it as it is. I do think concern over reunification is justified for Germans. If this is what they want and they can bring it off, France will adjust its policy so as to be able to act for the best in Europe's interest and in its own interest. ... The answer is simple: in so far as Eastern Europe is evolving, Western Europe must itself grow stronger, strengthen its structures and define its policies.

These elliptical remarks were deemed, at the time, to be quite tolerant even if Mitterrand also added that: "Reunification poses so many problems that I shall make up my mind as the events occur."⁷⁶

The Wall Comes Tumbling Down

Events did occur, and at an extraordinary pace. As the new East German government prepared to announce its reform program at the party plenum, ordinary citizens kept pouring into the streets to voice pent-up dissatisfaction with decades of hardship and repression. The daily public protests were capped by the rally of an estimated 500,000 in East Berlin on November 4. The demonstrators clamored for greater democracy in the GDR.

Krenz replaced part of the ruling politburo on the eve of the Berlin demonstration and the entire East German government resigned on November 7, the eve of the Party plenum. In addition the Volkskammer, usually a rubber-stamp legislature, surprised observers by rejecting the party's new draft travel law, which kept currency restrictions and still required elaborate bureaucratic approval for travel outside the GDR.

The awaited meeting of the SED's party plenum reorganized the government and vaulted Hans Modrow, a reformer within the Party exiled as Party boss in

⁷⁶ Unofficial translation of President Mitterrand's remarks, provided to the U.S. government by the Press and Information Service of the French Embassy in Washington. The French ambassador to Washington, de Margerie, told under secretary of state Robert Kimmitt that he thought Mitterrand's comments displayed great courage. Eagleburger (Acting) to President Bush (for his evening reading), 7 Nov 89. Bush clearly took note of Mitterrand's position and chose, as Ambassador de Margerie and Eagleburger had suggested, to characterize the French position as positive. See, e.g., "Q and A Session with Reporters," 9 Nov 89, in Public Papers, II (1990), p. 1490.

Dresden, into the party's politburo. Promises were made to legalize New Forum and other opposition parties. The US embassy in East Berlin reported to Washington that the Plenum demonstrated "a significant shift toward potentially credible reform, primarily because of the dramatic rise of Modrow."⁷⁷

Gorbachev's government, always on the lookout for 'little Gorbachevs' who could rejuvenate the communist parties of Eastern Europe, had long taken a friendly interest in Hans Modrow. As mentioned earlier, the Soviet Union had already demonstrated its support for Krenz's new government when he visited Moscow at the end of October. Both governments had agreed that talk of unification was absolutely out of the question. Even Helmut Kohl courteously telephoned Krenz, wished him success, and promised him -- sincerely or not -- that he, Kohl, was only interested in "calm, sensible" developments.⁷⁸

Now that reformist communists like Schabowski and Modrow were coming to the front, the USSR felt even more strongly committed to backing a new leadership which could hopefully stabilize the situation. On November 6 Gorbachev telephoned Ambassador Kochemasov in East Germany and told him emphatically: "Our people will never forgive us if we lose the GDR."⁷⁹

The most important issue confronting the reorganized East German government was the problem of allowing travel to the West. On November 4 the GDR had again begun allowing East Germans to go to the FRG through

⁷⁷ EmbBerlin 8783, 8 Nov 89; see also the more detailed analysis in EmbBerlin 8764, "GDR Crisis: As the Plenum Meets, Can the SED Seize Its Slender Chance?," 8 Nov 89. In a slightly different assessment, after the November 7 resignation of the Krenz government, West German ambassador to the US Ruhfus told Kimmitt that the move increased Krenz's freedom of maneuver, but his government was pessimistic about a new SED government's chances for survival.. The State Department reported these remarks to President Bush. Eagleburger to President Bush (for his evening reading), 7 Nov 89.

⁷⁸ On the Kohl-Krenz call, see the transcript of this conversation later published in Der Spiegel, December 3, 1990.

⁷⁹ The quotation appears in Maximychev, "Possible 'Impossibilities'," pp. 112-13 without an explanation of its origin. Maximychev elaborated on the background of the quotation in an interview with the author, Moscow, January 1994. Maximychev was present during the telephone conversation and recalled that other Soviet diplomats in the East Berlin embassy were soon aware of Gorbachev's clear warning.

Czechoslovakia. Once again tens of thousands of East Germans crowded the roads into Czechoslovakia, trying to make their way west. Once again the West German embassy grounds in Prague began filling with refugees.

The Soviets did not offer much direct advice to the East Germans on how to solve the travel dilemma. But they made it clear that travel regulations should be liberalized as a way of venting public pressure, even if large numbers of East Germans left and did not come back. Soviet ambassador Kochemasov in East Berlin reported that East Germans were considering loosening the travel laws.

Shevardnadze's top deputy, Anatoly Kovalyov, phoned Kochemasov to inform him that its travel laws were a matter for the GDR to decide for itself. Kochemasov did not argue, but insisted on receiving written instructions to this effect. After 3 or 4 days he received the cable: "the travel law was an internal responsibility of the GDR."⁸⁰

The East Germans proceeded with completion of a new travel law. They had delegated the task to Erich Mielke, the former security chief, now forced out of the government and politburo. The intention was to liberalize travel and defuse public protests. Applicants for exit visas could receive visas quickly. East Germans leaving the country would be converted from refugees into tourists. Since not all of them would find ready, lucrative employment in the West, it was expected that most travelers would return -- especially since the new government now offered more hope for real reform.

The text of the new law was hastily drafted, the Soviets were later told, by two Stasi colonels and two departmental chiefs from the Interior ministry. In the drafting, they extended the new liberal rules to all trips, even short private ones, and to all of the GDR's frontiers, including those in Berlin. No senior official on the East German side fully grasped that, in theory, the law would apply to crossing points in

⁸⁰ Author interviews with Tarasenko, Providence, June 1993 and Maximychev, Moscow, January 1994. On the communications between Berlin and Moscow, see Valentin Falin, Politische Erinnerungen, tr. Heddy Pross-Weerth (Muenchen: Droemer Knaur, 1993), pp. 488-89. Despite this Soviet acquiescence, Krenz accuses Gorbachev of having obstructed Krenz's wish to loosen travel restrictions even sooner. Reuth & Boennte, Das Komplott, p. 158.

Berlin, a city under Four Power supervision. So no East Germans consulted with Soviet officials about the text of the law. Another feature of the text said that: "Requests for private trips abroad may be submitted from now on even in the absence of special prerequisites." This sentence had several possible interpretations, though there was certainly no intention that the law was to authorize departures without prior processing of an exit visa. The draft was submitted to the 213 members of the SED central committee present for the party plenum; none noticed the significance of the language or objected to the text.⁸¹

After the central committee had blessed the draft law during the day on November 9, Krenz gave a copy of the draft to politburo member Schabowski, who had begun giving press conferences each day on the daily activities of the SED party plenum. Krenz was distracted; he was concentrating on the day's major announcement: the decision to call a special party conference in December that would transform the leadership of the GDR. One of the notes to the document said that the new travel regulations would be announced the next day, November 10, after exact instructions on how to implement the law had been circulated to East German security authorities throughout the country. Overlooking this detail, Schabowski simply read out the new law near the end of his hour-long press conference, just before 7:00 in the evening. Partly reading from the paper and partly speaking extemporaneously, he said that interim travel regulations were ready that would allow anyone to apply for private travel, that permission would be forthcoming "in short order," and that the police had been told to issue visas for permanent emigration "immediately" without applications. He said the new law would take effect immediately. Then he drove home, unaware that he had touched off a storm.

Everyone hearing the press conference was seized with curiosity. But they could not get a copy of the law's exact text, which was not to be released until the next day. So they began running stories giving their understanding of the law,

⁸¹ Maximychev, "End of the Berlin Wall," pp. 106-07 (based on his numerous discussions with relevant East German officials).

garbling the language and creating a public sensation during the night of November 9. Diplomats and West German officials were confused, trying to figure out what Schabowski had meant. While Schabowski was speaking, the West German mission's press representative had grasped his head, moaned, and dashed from the room to sound the alarm. There had been no consultation with anyone outside of the East German government.⁸² Rumors spread that all travel restrictions were being dropped, including exit visa requirements. Thousands of people began massing near the Berlin Wall. They asked border guards about new regulations. The border guards had no information, and no guidance.

As the night went on huge numbers of people crowded at the Wall. The guards at checkpoints still had not received new instructions. They did not know what to do and were uncertain about their legal duty. With hordes of people essentially forcing the guards to give way or shoot, the confused and orderless local guard commanders gave way. The bewildered interior minister ratified what his guard commanders had already decided. Crowds streamed through into West Berlin. The Wall had been opened. November 10 became a holiday in Berlin as crowds of East Germans joined their western brethren in a tumultuous mood of euphoric celebration.

The next day Krenz put the best face on events and pretended that the opening of the Wall had actually been planned. Actually the government had been so disorganized that it took months before Schabowski himself felt he had pieced together just what had happened that night. Krenz phoned Soviet ambassador Kochemasov on the morning of November 10. The Soviets were furious. But, Krenz replied, we were planning to open the borders in any case, as your side knew. But not this way, Kochemasov answered, and on the FRG-GDR frontier, not in Berlin.

⁸² In Bonn, for example, "there were no preparations or contingency plans for this situation, which had always been talked about, but in truth was considered most improbable. There was also no warning from the intelligence services." Kiessler & Elbe, *Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken*, p. 45. Kiessler & Elbe go on to criticize the West German intelligence service, the Bundesnachrichtendienst (BND), for writing reports "as if the people of the GDR did not exist," focused only on the governing communist elite. Ibid., p. 46.

Matters in Berlin affect the interests of the Four Powers. Well, said Krenz, this is now a theoretical question.⁸³ A senior American diplomat was more upbeat the 'day after,' reflecting that, "Krenz, Schabowski, and Modrow are improbable, even unwilling, reformers who at the decisive moment acted courageously and rationally. They hope that by at last taking a bold, full measure, instead of reluctant half measures, they can get ahead of their people."⁸⁴

But the way the Wall had opened had robbed the East German government of initiative, and authority. Though the government did not say so, from their perspective the opening of the Wall on the night of November 9 had been a mistake. The Wall had opened as a result of one of the most colossal administrative errors in the long, checkered history of public bureaucracy. The enormous facade of government authority had been devastated. It was the East German government, not the dissident groups, which had inadvertently set off the rush of crowds to the Wall. Then it was the East German government which inadvertently failed to give any guidance to deal with the crush. So the East German government abdicated responsibility for the most important decision in its history to the people in the street. Those people never really let the government have its power back again. It was a mortal blow to the Communist regime.

As he realized what was happening Schabowski himself was not alarmed. He was glad the government had finally done something popular. "We hadn't a clue that the opening of the wall was the beginning of the end of the Republic. On the contrary, we expected a stabilization process." In the next few days not a single leader of the GDR appeared at the Wall. But every leading figure in the Federal Republic of Germany did come there. They came there to speak both to West

⁸³ See Krenz, Wenn Mauer Fallen; Hans Modrow, Aufbruch und Ende (Hamburg: Konkret Literatur, 1991), p. 25; Reuth & Boennte, Das Komplott, p. 160. Early accounts of the opening of the Wall sometimes inaccurately assert that Gorbachev had approved this decision. The Soviet government had blessed a liberalization of travel laws, but was taken aback — like everyone else — by what happened on the night of November 9-10. For a sober assessment, see Pond, Beyond the Wall, p. 309 n. 7.

⁸⁴ Greenwald, Berlin Witness, p. 265 (entry for November 10, 2:00 p.m.).

Germans and to the new leaders of East Germany: the common people.⁸⁵

⁸⁵ Schabowski, Das Politbuero, pp. 138-39. Unless otherwise cited, this account of the opening of the Berlin Wall is drawn from Krenz, Wenn Mauer Fallen, pp. 161-95; Schabowski, Das Politbuero; Gedmin, The Hidden Hand, pp. 109-10; Pond, Beyond the Wall, pp. 132-34; Maximychev, "End of the Berlin Wall," pp. 106-08; and Greenwald, Berlin Witness, pp. 258-65. For the US embassy's reporting of the events, see EmbBerlin 8820, "GDR Plenum: Virtually Free Travel and Emigration in Force Immediately," 9 Nov 89; EmbBerlin 8823, "...And the Wall Came (Figuratively) Tumbling Down," 10 Nov 89.

Chapter Six

THE GOAL BECOMES UNIFICATION (November-December 1989)

Leaders React to the Opening of the Wall

Helmut Kohl first heard about Schabowski's press conference while sitting in a guest house in Warsaw. Kohl, too, was caught by surprise. Of course, the situation in the GDR had been on his mind. Just the day before he had delivered the speech to the Bundestag, demanding radical political reform in East Germany as the price for West German economic aid. And he had expressed confidence that, given the chance, East Germans would choose unity.

But it was characteristic of the tumultuous times that the German chancellor had moved on quickly to yet another historic event -- his first state visit to Poland to praise that country's movement toward democracy and to celebrate German-Polish reconciliation. Now there was this news from Berlin. Did it mean the Wall was opening?¹

There was no time for analysis. Kohl and Foreign Minister Genscher were off to the welcoming state dinner hosted in the faded elegance of the Palais Radziwill by the new Polish prime minister, Tadeusz Mazowiecki. The dinner conversation was dominated by the news from Berlin. Poland's own symbol of democracy, Solidarity leader Lech Walesa, could not believe the East German government would just open the Wall. Walesa thought that Krenz was not ready to handle the democratic reform the people would demand if the Wall came down. It might take another week or two, he thought. But what then? The situation in the GDR was so dangerous. Walesa was worried that the country could be overtaken by revolutionary chaos.² He repeated those concerns to Genscher and Teltschik the next morning. Things were happening so quickly and Walesa feared Poland "would pay the price for it."

¹ Horst Teltschik, 329 Tage: Innenansichten der Einigung (Berlin: Siedler, 1991), pp. 11-12.

² Ibid., p. 13.

As events unfolded throughout the evening, Kohl and his party realized that they had to cut short the visit to Poland and get to Berlin as quickly as they could. But the chancellor could not get there directly. Under Four Power rules, West German aircraft were not permitted to fly directly from Poland to Berlin. The American ambassador to West Germany, Vernon Walters, arranged for a U.S. military plane to meet the Chancellor in Hamburg. Kohl left Poland, changed planes and -- in an act thick with symbolism that no one seemed to notice at the time -- the Americans took the West German Chancellor to Berlin.³

On the podium in Berlin that November day, facing jubilant crowds, SPD senior statesman Willy Brandt, who had been mayor of Berlin when the Wall was erected, celebrated its downfall and an end to the "unnatural division of Germany." Genscher, already worried about the attitudes of Germany's neighbors, avoided any reference to the theme of German unity in his careful remarks. "No one," he said, "should be fearful if the doors between West and East opened" or if "freedom and democracy will become a reality in the GDR."

Moments before Helmut Kohl began his remarks, Teltschik spoke to the Soviet ambassador in Bonn, Yuli Kvitsinsky. Kvitsinsky conveyed an urgent message from Gorbachev asking Kohl to calm the people and head off dangerous "chaos." Teltschik barely had time to pass this message to Kohl before the Chancellor addressed the crowd. Kohl did not respond directly to Gorbachev's prompting in what he chose to say. He emphasized the German right to "self-determination." He thanked the Western allies for their support and solidarity. He thanked Gorbachev for having recognized the right to self-determination. Then Kohl became more expressive: "We demand this right for all in Europe. We demand it for all Germans." Saying that the way ahead was about "unity and right and freedom," Kohl, now filled with emotion

³ Richard Kiessler & Frank Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken: Der diplomatische Weg zur deutschen Einheit (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1993), p. 46; Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 15-18; Vernon A. Walters, Die Vereinigung war voraussehbar: Hinter den Kulissen eines entscheidenden Jahres – Die Aufzeichnungen des amerikanischen Botschafters, trans. Helmut Ettinger (Berlin: Siedler, 1994), pp. 82-87.

declared: "A free German fatherland lives! A free, united Europe lives!"⁴

The opening of the Berlin Wall was as electrifying and emotional an event as the world had seen in many years. Though the Wall's collapse immediately called into question the postwar order and Germany's future, those were hardly the concerns that dominated the moment. Rather, there were, first and foremost, the scenes of Germany overcoming its division in the most human of terms as families reunited after years of separation. There were pictures of giddy East German citizens encountering the casual prosperity which most West Germans took for granted; seeing the bewildering array of material goods that had been nothing more than images on West German television.

And there were the feelings of nationhood that welled up in Germans on both sides of the divide -- among people who had assumed that those emotions were long dead and properly buried. In one such response, the Federal Bundestag broke spontaneously into the national anthem upon learning that the Wall had opened.

About nine million East Germans visited the West during that first week, a majority of the entire country's population. They were welcomed as brothers and sisters by those in the West. The whole German nation enjoyed days of wild celebration. Almost all the Eastern visitors returned to their homes, but some were biding their time, waiting to see what would happen.

No one -- neither ordinary citizens nor heads of state -- knew what would or should happen next. Years after the event it is easy to assume that the popular pressure for unity was immediate, predictable, and irresistible. But it was not. The first popular calls for unification began to be heard nearly two weeks after the opening of the Wall, on November 19 in Leipzig. Even in early December most East Germans still thought the GDR should remain a separate, sovereign state. Those who

⁴ For the November 10 speeches by Brandt, Genscher, and Kohl, see Bundesministerium für innerdeutsche Beziehungen, Texte zur Deutschlandpolitik, series 3, vol. 7 - 1989 (Bonn: Deutscher Bundes-Verlag, 1990), pp. 399-407. On the Kvitsinsky call, see Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 19-20.

liked the idea of eventual unification also wanted to retain "socialism."⁵

That is not to say that the communists were popular. The party's rank and file wanted change. On November 11 an American diplomat on the scene noted that, "The SED is far from a 2-million-plus bulwark for Krenz. Its total control of society is shattered beyond recovery, and its disgruntled membership may be the greater immediate threat to his position."⁶ The way the Wall had opened had robbed the Krenz government of any credit for the deed. East Germans wanted more prosperity and even greater freedom.

Still, the leaders of street protests against the GDR regime did not yet want unification. Baerbel Bohley, a founder of New Forum, was angry at the way the government had opened the Wall. "The people are crazy, and the government has lost its mind." East German dissidents wanted a better socialism in a separate German state that rejected the materialism and exploitation of the West.⁷

The political counselor at the American Embassy in East Berlin, an astute judge of the East German public temper, put it well in an opinion piece he drafted on November 12 to help Americans understand what was happening. What do the reformers want? "Essentially the democratic, human rights standards of the Helsinki Final Act." Are the Communists doomed? "Not necessarily." Gorbachev-style reforms might renew their hold on power. Were there alternatives to the Communists? "Of course, but each has problems." Above all, will Germany reunite? That was the wrong question. "The current insistence is on self-determination, not

⁵ A poll conducted by the GDR Academy of Sciences for West German media found, in early December, that 71% were against unification and 27% in favor. "Ein Staat, Zwei Staaten?", Der Spiegel, December 18, 1989, p. 89. This survey may have been moderately skewed toward SED respondents. Another survey, also flawed, estimated that, at the end of November, 48% of East German women favored unification. Elizabeth Pond, Beyond the Wall: Germany's Road to Unification (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1993), pp. 135, 310 n. 13. See also G. Jonathan Greenwald, Berlin Witness: An American Diplomat's Chronicle of East Germany's Revolution (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), p. 274.

⁶ Greenwald, Berlin Witness, p. 269.

⁷ See Pond, Beyond the Wall, p. 134.

reunification. They are not necessarily equivalent.⁸

Helmut Kohl did not focus immediately on unification either. After flying back to Bonn in the early evening of November 10, Kohl spoke on the telephone with Margaret Thatcher. She had publicly welcomed this "great day for freedom." Privately she wanted to know what Kohl planned to do next. She hoped to convene a special summit of European Community leaders to consult about the future. She urged Kohl to confer soon with Gorbachev. Kohl then phoned President Bush.

Bush had first heard the news about new East German travel laws, during the afternoon of November 9. Coincidentally, there had been a special intelligence briefing for the President the day before about the quickening pace of reform in East-Central Europe and the possibility of more radical developments in East Germany. The lead CIA briefer had begun his presentation by saying that events were moving so fast he had torn up his notes three times on his way to the White House.⁹

Reporters gathered in the Oval Office that same day to hear Bush's reaction to first news of the new East German travel laws. The President was extremely guarded. "I am very pleased with this development." Was this the end of the Iron Curtain?, one reporter asked. "Well," he answered, "I don't think any single event is the end of what you might call the Iron Curtain." Had he imagined this would happen? "No, I didn't foresee it, but imagining it? Yes." Asked why he did not sound more elated, Bush replied, "I am not an emotional kind of guy. ... I'm very

⁸ Greenwald, Berlin Witness, pp. 272-275. Greenwald's views did not reflect U.S. government policy. Nevertheless, at the European Bureau, Dobbins agreed to let Greenwald submit his piece to the Los Angeles Times "out of generosity and the belief that events would soon overtake it, not because he agreed." *Ibid.*, p. 278. In fact the piece was indeed overtaken by events and was not published.

⁹ The November 8 meeting was part of a series of briefings which Blackwill and Rice had arranged in order to prepare Bush for his Malta summit meeting with Gorbachev. In addition to Bush, participants in the November 8 meeting were Baker, Sununu, Scowcroft, Gates, Blackwill, Rice, Ross, Dobbins, Curt Kamman (deputy assistant secretary of state for Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union), and four analysts from CIA. The description of the briefing is based on interviews with one of the CIA analysts, Dobbins, and Blackwill.

pleased."¹⁰

Bush was instantly criticized by legislators and journalists, and widely satirized, for his underwhelming, even rambling, reaction to such a momentous occasion. Some thought he should have rushed to Berlin to celebrate the victory of freedom. Bush was annoyed by this criticism. He had made a deliberate choice not to humiliate the Soviets by gloating. "I won't beat on my chest and dance on the wall," was the way he put it. At the time Bush talked to the reporters, though, his main problem was lack of information. No one knew precisely what Schabowski's press conference meant.

Bush could have avoided the criticism had he made an eloquent -- if anodyne -- statement the following day, after it was clear that the Wall had been opened. The idea was never considered. This was characteristic of Bush -- often well reasoned on substance but inattentive to the public, ceremonial dimension of his presidency.

Yet Bush was attentive to his diplomatic duties in the face of these changes. In the phone call, Bush congratulated Kohl. The grateful chancellor said this historic moment would not have happened without the support of the United States. Bush concentrated on the Soviets. He would be seeing Gorbachev for their first summit meeting in less than a month, in Malta. The two leaders agreed to consult intensively with one another before Bush met with the Soviet leader.¹¹

Later that night, an hour before midnight, Kohl gathered his closest aides together for a talk. It had been a long day since they woke up that morning in Warsaw. Kohl's interior minister, Wolfgang Schäuble, thought the East German refugee problem would now subside. He thought West German public sympathy for the refugees would also now diminish since they no longer appeared to be victims of

¹⁰ Public Papers of the Presidents: George Bush, 1989, bk. II, pp. 1488-1489. The discussion took place at 3:34 p.m. on November 9, or about 9:30 p.m. in Berlin.

¹¹ On the Kohl-Thatcher call see Margaret Thatcher, The Downing Street Years (New York: HarperCollins, 1993), pp. 792-793; Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 21; on the Kohl-Bush call see Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 22; Memcon of Telephone Call from Chancellor Kohl, 10 Nov 89. Bush later referred to Kohl's words of gratitude in this call in his televised Thanksgiving address to the nation, delivered from Camp David on November 22, 1989. The President called this "fitting praise from a good friend."

Germany's division. New issues loomed.

The East German government would be pushing hard for West German money to help stabilize their country. Kohl would talk the next day to Krenz. The chancellor needed to decide whether or how to reward Krenz's government for opening the Wall. No one discussed unification.¹² In that room, like many others in capitals across Europe, the subject just hung in the air.

As the group was talking, Teltschik had to break away to take a phone call from General Scowcroft in Washington. Scowcroft had news. Gorbachev had sent a message to Washington. The Soviets wanted an immediate Four Power meeting to prevent a "chaotic situation" from emerging with "unforeseeable consequences." It turned out that similar messages had gone to Thatcher and Mitterrand too.¹³ As celebrations continued in Berlin, euphoria in Bonn, Washington, Paris and London was giving way to hard calculations about what was to come. There were certainly no celebrations in Moscow.

First Moves

The events in Berlin left Soviet leaders struggling to gain their footing on the soft mud beneath their policy in Eastern Europe. After all, Gorbachev had encouraged the replacement of orthodox leaders by the strongest advocates of reform within the East European communist parties. The Soviet Union had formally renounced the Brezhnev Doctrine and the world breathed a sigh of relief when Moscow held to that promise in the face of events in Poland during the spring and summer of 1989. Gorbachev and Shevardnadze had long advocated looser travel laws in the GDR as a first step toward a more humane and respectable East German regime. Like many in East Berlin, they thought that a reformed but still socialist East

¹² Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 22, 24. The list of participants in this late night session are a roster of Kohl's inner circle: Schäuble, chancellery minister Rudolf Seiters, finance minister Theo Waigel, inner-German minister Dorothee Wilms, Hans "Johnny" Klein (Kohl's press spokesman), and Teltschik.

¹³ Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 23; for text of Gorbachev message, see State 363047, 11 Nov 89.

Germany could survive without imprisoning its citizens.

But the Wall was not removed; it was overrun. That would soon become a metaphor for Soviet policy in Eastern Europe and Germany. The Gorbachev of November had to be a less confident man than the one who paraded triumphantly through Bonn in June. The Soviet gamble that the pace of reform would be deliberate, and its direction predictable, had not paid off in Poland, Hungary, and now in the GDR. Soviet policy in Europe was coming apart.

Not surprisingly, then, the first reaction from Moscow barely disguised the Kremlin's panic. On November 10, Gorbachev himself sent warning letters to Western leaders. He told George Bush he was worried about civil disturbance in Berlin ("a chaotic situation may emerge with unforeseeable consequences"). Gorbachev then warned bluntly about the "political extremism" the Soviets saw in West Germany. He could live with reform in East Germany. "But," Gorbachev added, "when statements are made in the FRG designed to stir up emotions, in the spirit of implacable rejection of the postwar realities, that is, the existence of two German states, then such manifestations of political extremism can only be seen as aimed at undermining the current dynamic processes of democratization and renewal of all aspects of the society's life. And, looking ahead, this can bring about a destabilization of the situation not only in Central Europe, but on a larger scale."

Though Gorbachev had also sent a message to Kohl, the letter to Bonn had not included the proposal for Four Power talks. Scowcroft and Teltschik quickly agreed that the Soviet demand for Four Power talks should be rejected. The West German cabinet had decided just days earlier to resist any Four Power contacts "over the heads of the Germans."¹⁴

The White House did not reply immediately to Gorbachev. Instead Washington worked to see that America, Britain, France, and the FRG agreed on a common approach. This was the first, but certainly not the last time, that the

¹⁴ State 363047, 11 Nov 89; Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 23; see also Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 13 Nov 89. Teltschik believes that Gorbachev's message was also delivered to Willy Brandt, a leading figure in the opposition SPD. Author interview with Teltschik, Gütersloh, June 1992.

Americans assumed the role of orchestrating a unified Western response to events in Germany.

Baker emphasized caution in his phone conversations that day. He told West German foreign minister Genscher that free travel was a long way from talk of reunification. He advised Genscher that it might be premature to address the reunification subject right now. Genscher answered, obliquely, that there would need to be free elections in the GDR and a free and democratic country would never be a threat to its neighbors. Like Scowcroft and Teltschik, Baker and Genscher also agreed that a Four Power conference on Germany was a bad idea.¹⁵

The American secretary of state called British foreign secretary Douglas Hurd the next day, November 11, and recounted his talk with Genscher. The two ministers agreed that reunification was still some distance away. Baker said he had asked Genscher not to jump prematurely to conclusions on reunification, and that Genscher had not objected to this statement. Indeed, Genscher had instead stressed the FRG's ties to the West. Hurd agreed on the need to follow a cautious public line.¹⁶

The U.S. proposed a reply to Gorbachev that ignored his warnings but welcomed Gorbachev's public support for the East German decision to open the Wall. The answer would agree that public order was important yet express confidence that West Germany was committed to a stable, step-by-step process of change. Allies concurred, and President Bush dispatched a reply along these lines on November 17.¹⁷

Soviet press spokesman Gennady Gerasimov told reporters that Bush had

¹⁵ Memcon for Telephone Call from FM Genscher to Secretary Baker, 10 Nov 89. Genscher repeated the assurances about Germany's ties to the West in a November 11 Bonn briefing for NATO ambassadors. See Bonn 35783, "Genscher Briefs Allies on Developments in GDR and Chancellor's Poland Trip," 11 Nov 89.

¹⁶ Memcon of Telephone Call from Secretary Baker to Foreign Secretary Hurd, 11 Nov 89. For Baker's own handling of public reaction, see the State Department Bureau of Public Affairs (PA) transcripts of his appearances on CBS-TV's "This Morning" (Nov 10); ABC-TV's "Good Morning America" (Nov 10), and ABC-TV's "This Week with David Brinkley" (Nov 12).

¹⁷ See State 364359, 14 Nov 89; and Bush's reply to Gorbachev in State 369390, 17 Nov 89.

handled the opening of the Wall "as a real statesman," but warned the Germans about "recarving the boundaries of postwar Europe." East Germany, he said, must remain a "strategic ally" of the Soviet Union.¹⁸ Still angry about Kohl's Bundestag speech of November 8, the Soviet Union seemed ready to adopt a firm stand in its dealings with the FRG.

But when Kohl and Gorbachev spoke on November 11, the tone was calm and amicable. Kohl was reassuring. The East German people should stay home, he said. He remained ready to help Gorbachev with his economic reforms. Gorbachev said the changes in Eastern Europe were occurring faster than he had anticipated. The GDR needed more time to adopt the necessary reforms. He told Kohl that every action must now be "carefully thought out." This was a turning point and "we cannot allow clumsy actions to endanger this turn or, worse, to push events toward an indescribable path, a path to chaos." Gorbachev asked Kohl to use his authority, his political weight, and all his influence to hold matters within a framework that would allow adequate time to deal with related events."

Kohl said his entire government agreed. He assured Gorbachev that he too felt a "strong feeling of responsibility" for the historic consequences of his actions.¹⁹

Kohl and Teltschik were delighted with this phone call. Look at it from their perspective. First there had been this very tough, ominous message from the Soviet leader the previous day. Yet Gorbachev did not criticize West German rhetoric or mention his proposal of the day before for Four Power talks. "No threat, no warning, only the request to show caution," Teltschik noted in his diary.²⁰

¹⁸ For Gerasimov's comments see Michael Beschloss & Strobe Talbott, At the Highest Levels: The Inside Story of the End of the Cold War (Boston: Little Brown, 1992), pp. 136-137.

¹⁹ Verbatim excerpts from the Soviet memcon for the call are in Anatoly Chernyayev, Shest' Let s Gorbachevym: Po dnevnikovym zapisyam (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1993), p. 305 and Alexander Galkin & Anatoly Chernyayev, "[To Truth, and Only Truth: Memoirs in Connection with Remembrances]," Svobodnaia Mysl', January-February 1994, pp. 19, 24; which can be supplemented by Teltschik's recollection on the other end, 329 Tage, p. 28.

²⁰ Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 28.

Other Soviet officials continued to use tough rhetoric about German behavior. The French foreign minister, Roland Dumas, was the first Western minister to arrive in Moscow after the Wall came down. The public Soviet account of his visit stressed that Shevardnadze had told Dumas on November 14 of his "great concern" about any effort to put German reunification "on the plane of present-day policy." This was nothing less than a challenge to "the territorial and political make-up of the continent as a whole." The Chancellery officials were instantly told about these comments, recognized them as an "unmistakable warning," and then discounted them because -- after all -- they had gotten a different reading of Soviet tone directly from Gorbachev himself.²¹

Gorbachev's adviser, Chernyayev, believes that at this time Gorbachev was still counting on a transitional period during which a profound perestroika could revive the fortunes of the GDR. He feared the results of some uncontrolled rush to German reunification. Nonetheless, Gorbachev chose not to convey that sense of alarm to Kohl.²² Perhaps Gorbachev wanted to send a strong message through other channels while adopting a more amiable tone -- hints rather than warnings -- in a person-to-person conversation with Kohl. The Soviet leader may also have thought Kohl was genuinely trying to reassure him, and that Kohl's reassurances could be accepted at face value.

Whatever Gorbachev's real intentions, Kohl and Teltschik chose to adopt the most benign possible interpretation, thinking that the Soviet leader was more tolerant in private than his government acted in public. This muffled any effect upon Bonn of all the other signals Soviet diplomacy was trying to convey.

The confused messages from Moscow -- one day anxious and the next calm --

²¹ See Igor Maxymchev, Posledniy God GDR (Moscow: Mezhdunarodniye Otnosheniya, 1993), pp. 85, 92-93. For the Dumas visit, see TASS, "Multifaceted Soviet-French Political Dialogue," Pravda, November 15, 1989, p. 6, in FBIS-SOV 89-219, November 15, 1989, p. 31; on the West German reaction, see Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 31. On the drumbeat of public statements coming from the Soviet government opposing German unification, see Fred Oldenburg, "Sowjetische Deutschland-Politik nach der Oktober-Revolution in der DDR," Deutschland Archiv, 23 (January 1990): 68-76.

²² Chernyayev, Shest' Let s Gorbachevym, pp. 304-305.

tough with one set of officials and flexible with another -- set a pattern to be repeated again and again in the months to come. One senses that after the Berlin Wall fell, Moscow began to temporize rather than to elaborate a strategy that contained a bottom line. That, in turn, left it to others to set the agenda, exploiting the appearance of Soviet indecision.

Bonn and East Berlin Take the Initiative

The East German leaders were in the unenviable position of needing Bonn's comprehensive aid in order to sustain current living standards. And yet the FRG's demands for political change threatened the vitality of the communist state itself. Still, the battered East German leadership spoke up for its right to exist. In a November 11 call, Krenz told Kohl that reunification was not even on the agenda. Kohl could not let that pass. The chancellor said he stood by the commitment to eventual unification in the FRG's Basic Law, but agreed that other questions now took precedence.²³

Privately, Kohl had already decided how he would handle Krenz's pleas for aid. He would stand by the position he had taken in his November 8 speech. Massive economic aid to East Berlin would be conditioned on revolutionary political change: genuinely free elections in the GDR, the Communist party's surrender of the monopoly on power, and creation of new independent political parties. As for unification, Kohl would insist (a) on self-determination for East Germans; while (b) stating his belief that, given a free choice, East Germans would choose unification. Kohl knew Bush would back him. Gorbachev's apparent retreat from the tough language of November 10 emboldened Kohl to believe that there were no limits to reform in the GDR as long as specific Soviet security interests were respected.²⁴

So Kohl announced to the Bundestag on November 16 that the FRG was ready

²³ Kohl talked to Krenz on November 11. Then Seiters traveled to East Berlin and received a more detailed picture of what the East Germans wanted. Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 27, 30-31.

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 32-34.

for a "completely new dimension of aid and cooperation" if the GDR enacted a long list of radical political and economic changes, from free elections, free press to the free market. On the national question Kohl emphasized that "we are still far from our goal: the right of all Germans to self-determination is not yet realized;" the provisions of the Basic Law calling for the "unity and freedom of the Germans" had not yet been fulfilled. The people of the GDR must decide for themselves which path to the future they wanted to take. "They themselves know best what they want. That also applies to the question of German unity, the question of reunification." Any decision the East German people made in free self-determination should obviously be respected.²⁵

The East German leaders were indeed making new choices. Their first, on November 13, was to change the government. With the SED party plenum concluded, its policy proposals were presented to the Volkskammer. But the East German parliament was no longer simply a rubber stamp for the ruling party's preferences.

The one credible reform figure in the SED was the party secretary from Dresden who had been chastised in early 1989 for supporting Gorbachev-style perestroika, Hans Modrow. The Volkskammer selected Modrow to be prime minister, running the government while Krenz continued as general secretary of the party, chairman of the council of ministers and head of state. Personally unassuming and straightforward, Modrow formed a new government with several new faces,

²⁵ Statement to the Bundestag, "Erklärung der Bundesregierung zur Lage in der DDR," in Texte zur Deutschlandpolitik, pp. 412-421. McAdams is mistaken in asserting that Kohl was trying to slow down the pace of change in the GDR. A. James McAdams, Germany Divided: From the Wall to Reunification (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 204.

On terminology: Reunification and unification were words used almost indistinguishably in 1989 to refer to the recreation of a unified German state (in German, 'wiedervereinigung' and 'vereinigung'). Reunification was (and still is) the most common usage. However, 'reunification' implied that the German state which existed before 1945 and was divided after the war was being brought back together. Indeed, the FRG itself defined 'reunification' in its Basic Law by reference to the borders of Germany in 1937. Yet the old Germany was not being put back together, particularly since the 'Eastern territories' would remain part of Poland and the Soviet Union. Therefore U.S. officials tried to begin using only the term 'unification' to describe the process of recreating a single German state. That will be our usage as well, unless the source material used a different term. For a prescient discussion of this point, see Karl Kaiser, "Unity for Germany, Not Reunification," New York Times, October 6, 1989, p. A31.

including some from outside the Communist party, and he initially garnered wide public support. As one expert noted, "Both Eastern citizens and Western media considered him the most hopeful leader of the successor generation."²⁶

Modrow announced his program on November 17. He detailed specific reforms, from politics to education and environmental improvement. Dissident leaders welcomed his initiatives. Modrow also offered a vision for progress on the national question that posed an East German alternative to Kohl's statement the day before. Political reform, he explained, would establish the legitimacy of the GDR as "a socialist state, a sovereign German state." Not just words, but a new reality in the life of the GDR would clearly reject the "unrealistic as well as dangerous speculation about a reunification." The two German states could have a "cooperative coexistence" on all questions, from peace and armaments to culture and tourism,

²⁶ Konrad H. Jarausch, The Rush to German Unity (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 63; on the Soviet view of Modrow see M. Podklyuchnikov, Pravda, November 20, 1989, p. 6 in FBIS-SOV 89-224, November 21, 1989, p. 35; Novosti interview with Nikolai Portugalov, in Frankfurter Rundschau, November 17, 1989, p. 2 in FBIS-SOV 89-222, November 20, 1989, p. 33; Gedmin, The Hidden Hand, p. 112. Valentin Falin flew to Berlin, reportedly on November 17 but probably later in the month. In either case it was after Modrow had been elected as prime minister. Falin reportedly came to discuss reform plans with both Modrow and Krenz with Markus Wolf helping as an intermediary. Though Falin undoubtedly discussed elements of the government program Modrow planned to announce, there is no evidence that he or other officials in the Soviet government had a decisive influence on the substance of the program. Falin, and Wolf, do appear to have strongly supported Modrow's move to begin moving decisive influence over the government to himself and away from the Party leadership, including Krenz. Some sources go further, however, and claim that Falin effectively removed Krenz from power and installed Modrow. See the interview with a former East German intelligence officer in "Wie Krenz zum Verlierer wurde: Wolf und Falin zogen die Fäden," Die Welt, May 25, 1990, p. 6. But a Western diplomat thought Falin was just "trying to find out what the hell is going on" and Modrow's private secretary also told Elizabeth Pond that Falin was just conducting a fact-finding visit, and said there was no direct Soviet intervention to push out Krenz. Pond, "A Wall Destroyed: The Dynamics of German Unification in the GDR," International Security, 15 (Fall 1990): 35, 44 n. 18. But see Lally Weymouth, "East Germany's Dirty Secret," Washington Post, October 14, 1990, p. C1, C4 (reporting assertion of East German intelligence officer about Falin negotiating replacement of Krenz with Modrow in Berlin meeting on November 12, instead of the November 17 date given by a Stasi officer in the earlier Die Welt interview. The date is significant because Modrow was elected prime minister on November 13.) In addition to Pond, another sober account that has sifted the evidence of Falin's supposed kingmaking, is Gerhard Wettig, "Die sowjetische Rolle beim Umsturz in der DDR und bei der Einleitung des deutschen Einigungprozesses," in Jürgen Elvert & Michael Salewski, eds., Der Umbruch in Osteuropa (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1993), pp. 56-57. Modrow himself simply says, probably truthfully, that Falin came at the end of November to talk about Modrow's planned visit to Moscow in early December. Hans Modrow, Aufbruch und Ende (Hamburg: Konkret Literatur, 1991), p. 92. The slight comment on the trip in Falin's memoirs refer to his effort to learn the facts about the opening of the borders. Valentin Falin, Politische Erinnerungen, trans. Heddy Pross-Weerth (München: Droemer Knaur, 1993), p. 488.

cemented by a "treaty community" (Vertragsgemeinschaft) building on past agreements and hopes for a "common European home."²⁷ Ruling out unification, Modrow offered instead a relationship between the two German states not unlike that between members of the European Community.

The Meaning of "Self-Determination"

It was hard to argue, at least in public, with West German claims that the Germans had a right to "self-determination." States were bound by their assent to that principle of in the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 and the general view that some right of self-determination was clearly extended to member states of the United Nations by the UN Charter.²⁸ Kohl had also adopted a relatively narrow interpretation of this principle. He did not argue that the German people as a whole could determine the GDR's fate, asserting only that the people of the GDR could do that and West Germany was obliged to respect their decision.²⁹ The Soviets could, and did, argue that an FRG or GDR decision for unification was qualified by various agreements, that these countries had voluntarily limited their sovereign rights. But Moscow and East Berlin could not argue directly that the East Germans had no right to self-determination, nor claim that this right did not extend to the form of

²⁷ Texte zur Deutschlandpolitik, pp. 422-429.

²⁸ The UN General Assembly had agreed, for example, that the Charter protected the right of "establishment of a sovereign and independent State, the free association or integration with an independent State or the emergence into any other political status freely determined by a people." UNGA Res. 2625 (XXV), October 24, 1970.

²⁹ On the theoretical question of whether Kohl was actually obliged by international law and FRG constitutional law to adopt this narrower stance, see Jochen Abr. Frowein, "'Deutschlands aktuelle Verfassungslage,' Veröffentlichungen der Vereinigung der deutschen Staatsrechtslehrer, 49 (1990): 12. These arguments turn, in part, on whether "Germany" continued to exist as an entity under international law, an entity whose existence as a unified state was suspended in 1945 but not terminated. The majority of experts accept this interpretation. See I.D. Hendry & M.C. Wood, The Legal Status of Berlin (The Hague: Grotius, 1987), p. 19; Gilbert Gornig, "The Contractual Settlement of the External Problems of German Unification," Aussenpolitik, 3 (1991): 4. For the minority view that "Germany" had ceased to exist during the 1940s, a view sometimes but not always espoused by the Soviet government, see Hans Kelsen, "The Legal Status of Germany According to the Declaration of Berlin," American Journal of International Law, 39 (1945): 518.

government. Thus international norms and agreements strongly influenced the vocabulary and shape of the emerging debate over Germany's unification.

But there were still many possible interpretations of "self-determination" and great uncertainty about what was politically possible. East Berlin and Bonn had placed radically different images of the German future on the table. The next ten days saw frantic efforts to define, for the German people, just what was possible and what was not.

In mid-November, the tide seemed to be turning against Helmut Kohl and his bet that self-determination would mean unification. Modrow's option for the coming together of the two German states smartly pushed unification aside. For the first time, there was a legitimate voice in East Berlin to counter Kohl's vision for Germany.

There were popular stirrings about unity in the East but they were still weak. On November 19, a few Leipzig demonstrators began changing the slogan, "Wir sind das Volk" (We are the people) to "Wir sind ein Volk" (We are one people). So East Berlin stepped up the pressure to convince the East German people that the path of unity was not open. They reasoned that there was a chance of doing just that because there had been no craving for unity before the Wall opened. "Western interviews with demonstrators and various opinion polls ... had indicated strong support for preserving the GDR as a separate state."³⁰ Neues Deutschland put the point bluntly. "Any issue may be part of the agenda except one -- namely reunification." Leading East German intellectuals were quite strongly opposed to unification and could clearly rally strong and vocal public backing for this view within both East and West Germany.³¹

³⁰ Pond, Beyond the Wall, p. 135. An excellent running chronology of daily events in the GDR during 1989 and 1990 is provided in Deutschland Archiv, Chronik der Ereignisse in der DDR (Köln: Verlagswissenschaft und Politik, 1990).

³¹ On November 26 a group of thirty-one writers, respected reform Marxists, church figures, and opposition leaders all joined in a published appeal to their East German countrymen to "insist on GDR independence" and not accept "a sell-out of our material and moral values and have the GDR eventually taken over by the Federal Republic." Within two weeks 200,000 people had signed this manifesto of

But Kohl did not want to see unity pushed off the table. He wanted the East German people to believe that it might be allowed. He was convinced that seeing that if the East German people thought unity was really possible, not just a mirage, they would rally to this standard. The crucial task was to keep the option alive against growing pressure from world as well as domestic opinion. Immediately after hearing the details of Modrow's call for a "treaty community," Chancellor Kohl decided to call President Bush.

Bush was well prepared for the call. In the preceding week the U.S. government had considered how to express its policy toward change in the GDR and the possibility of unification. Both Bush and Baker had been advised to choose a passive policy for the moment, one which mirrored Kohl's support for self-determination that might lead to unity but was stated mildly enough not to further alarm the anxious Soviets. The Americans had already decided to reject Gorbachev's proposal for Four Power intervention.³²

"antifascist and humanist ideals." A prominent group of West German intellectuals responded with a parallel manifesto rejecting unification and dangerous nationalism. Jarausch, The Rush to German Unity, p. 67.

³² The day after the Wall was overrun General Scowcroft had commissioned another interagency examination of options for US policy in dealing with the question of German unification. The small group of working-level officials, led by Dobbins, quickly agreed that the main issue was to choose between emphasizing German self-determination, letting Kohl set the pace for progress toward unity, or supporting early Four Power intervention to regulate the process. Hutchings through Blackwill to Scowcroft, "Paper on German Reunification," 11 Nov 89. Bush was also urged by Henry Kissinger to keep open his rhetorical acceptance of the possibility of unification when Kissinger visited the White House for dinner on November 13. Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, p. 138.

Baker was also receiving advice on the issue of German unification within his Department. As background, the Office of the Legal Adviser had already prepared a summary of Allied rights in Germany. Sofaer through Kimmitt to Baker, "Allied Rights in Germany," 30 Oct 89 (forwarded by Kimmitt on November 10). Dobbins quickly drafted and sent Baker the European Bureau's recommendations. Baker was advised to avoid any suggestion of a US-Soviet 'superpower condominium' to dictate events in Germany. Any U.S. economic aid to the GDR should be tied to free elections — the same condition Kohl had imposed on West German aid. On reunification, Dobbins argued that the US should resist calls to take the lead in setting out a blueprint for change in Europe or assert Four Power rights. Instead Dobbins urged the US to keep the emphasis on German self-determination. Staying away from Four Power intervention would avoid a Soviet veto or the appearance of wanting to block German national aspirations. Baker highlighted this analysis and noted his agreement with this conclusion. Instead Dobbins urged that the US work with Allies on guidelines for channeling movement toward unification. "We now need to begin considering how Germany's Western ties can in practice be assured in a transformed European context." Again, Baker agreed. Dobbins (Acting) through Kimmitt to Baker, "The Wall Breached: Implications for

Reaching Bush on the phone, Kohl explained what he was saying to the East Germans and to the Soviets. He said he had told the East Germans that any aid would be conditioned on far-reaching political reform, including free elections, freedom of the press, and free trade unions. Kohl added that he had told Gorbachev the FRG would do nothing to destabilize the GDR. On the other hand, if the GDR did not undertake reforms as in Poland or Hungary, the new government was likely to fail.

Though Kohl's promise to Gorbachev might have seemed disingenuous, Bush said he liked Kohl's position. He assured the chancellor that the U.S. would be restrained in its public comments about Germany's future. His greatest worry, Bush explained, was that American gloating might upset the fragile Soviet or East German tolerance for fundamental reform. The euphoric excitement in the US, he said, runs the risk of triggering unforeseeable reactions in the USSR or the GDR that could be dangerous. "We will not be making exhortations about unification or setting any timetables. We will not exacerbate the problem by having the President of the United States posturing on the Berlin Wall." The two leaders then arranged for more discussions before and after Bush met with Gorbachev at Malta. Bush said he had never needed Kohl's input more than he needed it now, in preparation for this

Malta, Your Trip to Europe, Relations with the GDR, and the Reunification Debate," 11 Nov 89.

Baker's Policy Planning staff also sent forward separate analyses to Baker. The key memo, drafted this time by Ross and staffer Francis Fukuyama (instead of Roger George) argued, with Dobbins' concurrence, that any process leading to unity had to start with internal reform in the GDR to allow free elections. Although a subsequent move to unification seemed more distant, Ross and Fukuyama recommended that the US confront the unity question soon – at least to help manage disparate views within the Alliance. They noted that unification could evolve in several ways and the U.S. should not insist upon a particular outcome. But the U.S. could enunciate some key principles: true self-determination with an outcome acceptable to Germany's neighbors; unification with Germany remaining in NATO and the EC; moves to unity in a gradual step-by-step process, and respect for postwar borders. The US could also embed its views on Germany in a broader vision of Europe's future "architecture, including change in NATO and US-EC relations. The US could also start talking more to the British, French, Germans, and Soviets. Ross to Baker, "How to Approach the German Unity Issue," 13 Nov 89; see also Ross to Baker, "GDR," 9 Nov 89. See also Ambassador Walters' belated complaint about use of term "reconciliation" instead of endorsing "reunification" in Bonn 35777, "Discussion of German Unity by USG Spokesman," 10 Nov 89.

summit.³³

Francois Mitterrand and Margaret Thatcher were not as relaxed about developments in Germany. The French president invited all twelve heads of government of states in the European Community to rush to a special meeting in Paris on November 18 that would consider the German situation. In her memoirs Thatcher recalls that Kohl's own statements had prompted this hastily arranged European summit session. In private, she was hearing that Genscher was offering reassurances, explaining to Hurd that Germans wanted to avoid talk of reunification.

Mitterrand opened the Paris discussion by posing questions to Kohl about his intentions, including the future of Europe's borders. Kohl spoke for forty minutes. He repeated his publicly stated themes, emphasizing respect for self-determination but finding no need to discuss borders. Thatcher then detailed her concerns. Any talk of border changes or German reunification would undermine Gorbachev and open up a Pandora's box of border claims. "I said," she wrote later, "that we must keep both NATO and the Warsaw Pact intact to create a background of stability." Kohl voiced no reservations and in fact did not speak of unification at all. Kohl's theme was reassurance. In private, of course, Kohl's advisers were carefully noting the differences in the way foreign governments had reacted to the opening of the Berlin Wall. The Americans were obviously most positive; the French seemed friendly but reserved, and the British and Dutch cold.³⁴

In fact, the American attitude was beginning to crystallize even more. The regular bureaucracy was cautious, counselling support for German national aspirations but concluding that "at the moment neither the people of the GDR nor the government of the FRG is talking about reunification, ... the emphasis has been on democratization, and this is where we should keep our emphasis as well."³⁵ Baker

³³ Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 36; Memcon of Telephone Call from Kohl to President Bush, 17 Nov 89.

³⁴ Thatcher, The Downing Street Years, pp. 793-794; Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 37-38.

³⁵ Interdepartmental paper, "Handling the German Question at Malta and Beyond," p. 7, attached to Hutchings through Blackwill to Scowcroft, "The German Question," 20 Nov 89. The paper was drafted by

himself, however, was attracted to the specific guidelines on unification proposed in a paper he had seen from Ross and Francis Fukuyama on his Policy Planning Staff. Ross emphasized the "four principles which should frame our policy." They were: (1) support for true German self-determination without endorsing any specific outcome; (2) unification must be consistent with Germany's membership in NATO and the EC; (3) moves toward unity should be gradual, peaceful, and step-by-step, and -- to address the issue of postwar borders -- (4) all should respect "the principles adopted in the Helsinki Final Act recognizing the inviolability of frontiers in Europe, and allowing for the possibility of peaceful change."³⁶

Baker did not need to get in a detailed discussion of what these principles might mean when foreign minister Genscher visited Washington on November 20 because Genscher downplayed the unification issue. He emphasized that unity was a process evolving within the framework of general change in European politics: the FRG's ties to the EC, NATO's posture toward the Soviet Union, and East-West relations.

It was President Bush who raised the subject of unification with Genscher. The President said he backed German self-determination and wondered, "Will reunification move faster than any of us think?" Genscher replied that no one could tell. There were different voices being heard in East Germany. The first thing was to establish democracy in the GDR. The FRG would stick to its obligations in NATO

Dobbins, Jack Seymour from State's German desk, and Jim Holmes from State's Policy Planning staff. On the term 'German self-determination,' see also the interesting memo from Mulholland (INR) to Kimmitt, "German Self-Determination: Three Components," 21 Nov 89 (drafted by Bowman Miller). The National Intelligence Officer for Europe (Martin van Heuven) believed "the Kohl government will continue to be cautious in pressing the reunification theme for fear of adding to the current political turbulence in East Germany and out of concern not to trouble relationships with its West European partners. ... For now, Bonn's policy will be continued incremental steps...." National Intelligence Council Memo for the Record, "A German Peace Treaty," 15 Nov 89. He also thought the Intelligence Community agreed that "unfolding events are making it clear that political reunification is not in the offing for now" because the East German people did not want it, dissident leaders wanted to keep a distinctive East German identity, democratic elections would reinforce rather than weaken East German separateness, and "Bonn also does not want to destabilize the European situation by active pursuit of reunification." National Intelligence Council Memo for the Record, "German Reunification," 14 Nov 89.

³⁶ Ross to Baker, "How to Approach the German Unity Issue," 13 Nov 89.

and the EC, "but all of this must be done in a way that does not alarm the Soviet Union."³⁷

In a separate meeting General Scowcroft asked Genscher whether the Soviets might propose negotiation of a peace treaty to settle the status and borders of Germany during the upcoming Malta meeting. Genscher doubted it. He did think the Soviet president might suggest a CSCE summit to boost the conventional arms control talks (CFE) -- an idea Genscher liked. In any case, Genscher had little use for the idea of any forum dominated by the Four Powers. "We don't want to take our place at the Katzentisch [cat's table]. In the past there were Four Power talks, and the Germans were at the side, at the 'cat's table.' Also, he said, German issues must be tied to everything else in East-West relations. "Germany's fate should never again be isolated. This would happen if Four Power talks isolated the German national problem from the European problem. ... Together with our friends, we can build a new Europe. We have the winning concept. We should not talk about it too much, but we know things are going our way."³⁸

In late November then, the US and the FRG were united in their support for German self-determination and the immediate policy objective of encouraging the establishment of democracy in East Germany. President Bush was comfortable with Bonn's policy and did not press Chancellor Kohl to elaborate his design for Germany's future. Genscher had told the Americans: "German reunification is discussed more outside Germany than inside Germany. Germans are now concentrating on free elections in the GDR."

Still, the British and French governments were uneasy. Thatcher's views were

³⁷ Memcon for President Bush's Meeting with FRG Foreign Minister Genscher, 21 Nov 89. On Genscher's meetings at the State Department see Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 21 Nov 89; see also Seitz to Baker, "Meeting and Luncheon with Hans-Dietrich Genscher," 18 Nov 89. The European Bureau's briefing memo followed the agreed line endorsing German self-determination which could lead to unification, while adding cautiously that "like the FRG and other European governments, we believe it is premature to put German unification on the international agenda."

³⁸ Memcon for General Scowcroft's meeting with Foreign Minister Genscher, 21 Nov 89. In Bonn Genscher's report to the Chancellery about his Washington visit emphasized the positive American stance toward the possibility of German unification. Teltzschik, 329 Tage, pp. 47-48.

already fairly clear and, characteristically, she made no effort to mute or conceal them. Prime Minister Thatcher first described her country's policy in the aftermath of the opening of the Berlin Wall in a November 13 speech that said publicly just what she was writing to Gorbachev privately, that "in East Germany the objective must be to see genuine democracy" and that "would itself be a huge achievement." But "once the demand for reform starts, there is a tendency for it to run very fast. Indeed the very speed of change could put the goal of democracy in jeopardy. Strong emotions have been aroused on all sides by recent events. The need now is to take a measured view of the way ahead."

Writing to President Bush a few days later, Thatcher went right to the point. She argued that the Soviet Union should be reassured and that "German reunification is not a matter to be addressed at present." Thatcher said she might phone the President to check that he agreed with her on these important points, and indeed she did on November 17.³⁹

During their telephone conversation (several hours after Bush had spoken with Kohl), Bush agreed with Thatcher that change should follow a measured pace that would ease Soviet concerns. But Thatcher repeated that discussion of German reunification was premature and unwise. She welcomed Bush's idea for a NATO summit meeting right after the Malta summit meeting with Gorbachev.⁴⁰

³⁹ See Address by Prime Minister Thatcher at the Guildhall, November 13, 1989; Thatcher, The Downing Street Years, p. 793; Message from Prime Minister Thatcher to President Bush (sent through special channels), 16 Nov 89. For more on British attitudes toward Germany in 1989, see Karl-Günther von Hase, "Britische Zurückhaltung: zu den Schwierigkeiten Englands mit der deutschen Einheit," Die Politische Meinung, November-December 1990, pp. 13-18; Richard Davy, "Großbritannien und die Deutsche Frage," Europa Archiv, February 25, 1990, pp. 139-145; Günther Heydemann, "Britische Europa-Politik am Scheideweg: über Deutschland nach Europa?," Deutschland Archiv, December 1989, pp. 1377-1382.

⁴⁰ Memcon of Phone Call from Thatcher to the President, 17 Nov 89 (notetaker was Zelikow). After the Kohl phone call in the morning of November 17 but before the Thatcher call, the President was asked repeatedly during a press interview to offer a view on the prospects for German unification. He said the matter was "for the people of the Germanys to determine." Pressed on other countries' fears Bush told reporters that, "We've had discussions with countries that express concerns in this regard because of certain historical precedents, but I don't think history need repeat itself if there evolves a single German state. But that is down the road, and it is not something that is being pressed. And I repeat: That is a matter for the determination of the German people." Interview with Peter Maer of Mutual/NBC Radio, 17 Nov 89.

The President prepared to discuss Germany at much greater length with Prime Minister Thatcher on November 24, when she was to join the President at Camp David for a full day of meetings. Since Thatcher's views were obviously so strong, the NSC staff urged him not to be drawn into formulations which supported German self-determination but treated reunification as distant and unattainable. Instead General Scowcroft recommended that: "Your position should remain clear: that we are prepared to honor the German people's choices about their future -- including a choice for reunification; that we are committed to peaceful change in a stable way; and that we are comfortable with the way Bonn is meeting the challenge posed by recent events." Bush studied this recommendation and noted that he agreed.⁴¹

At Camp David, Prime Minister Thatcher explained that her top priority was to consolidate the movement toward democracy in Eastern Europe. To achieve that goal, an environment of stability was essential. That meant preserving NATO, and with it the Warsaw Pact. Germany's fate, she argued, was not just a matter for self-determination. The borders issue, the role of the Four Powers in Berlin, the CSCE position on inviolability of frontiers all widened the problem. She concentrated again on two themes: the significance of the borders issue (pointing out the implications on a map) and the danger to Gorbachev. Reunification means Gorbachev is lost.

Instead Thatcher urged Bush to keep attention on democratization of the GDR. True, it would be hard to keep the Germans from unifying if they wanted it, but one could certainly dampen their expectations.

At first Bush did not respond directly to these arguments. He asked the Prime Minister to put aside East Germany for a moment and consider what would happen if other East European countries wished to leave the Warsaw Pact. Even if that

⁴¹ Scowcroft to President Bush, "Meeting with Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher," 22 Nov 89, forwarded from Zelikow through Blackwill to Scowcroft, "Briefing Materials for the President's Meeting with Prime Minister Thatcher at Camp David," 21 Nov 89. Bush also underscored the recommendation that he tell the Prime Minister he would "respond negatively to any Soviet request for special US-USSR arrangements on Germany, or Four Power talks, or other devices that shift the focus at this time from the pressing need for reform and democracy in the GDR."

happened, NATO, he thought, must stay in place. Thatcher said her point was that if Europe was destabilized by developments in Germany, democracy might not come to Eastern Europe at all. Bush was noncommittal. As Thatcher later concluded in her memoirs, "The President did not challenge me directly" but "the atmosphere did not improve as a result of our discussions."⁴²

The British government was not alone in resisting 'premature' discussion of German unification. French leaders were concerned too. But President Mitterrand displayed a more philosophical stance, at least in public, and concentrated on the need to deepen European integration and with it, the FRG's ties to the EC. On November 17, the day Bush talked with both Kohl and Thatcher about Germany's future, Bush also spoke with Mitterrand. Neither leader chose to discuss Germany.⁴³

After the special EC summit discussion in Paris on November 18 produced Kohl's reassuring presentation, the French took no further action to organize European opinion on Germany. But later in November, as East Germans in the street began calling for a united fatherland, French political commentary became more anxious and Mitterrand's mask of philosophical detachment began to slip. He wrote to Bush on November 27 and worried that the Soviet Union was not ready for a change in the strategic equilibrium in Europe.

The EC, he thought, could help. A radical revision of the postwar status quo must be linked to, if not preceded by, agreement on stronger European integration. Further, Mitterrand -- perhaps reacting to the worried tone of debate in the French senate -- announced, without consulting Bonn, that he would visit East Germany in December, apparently before Kohl's own first trip there. Then the French also

⁴² Thatcher, The Downing Street Years, p. 794; Memcon for Meeting with Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, Camp David, 24 Nov 89 (based on notes taken by Scowcroft). Others present at Camp David were deputy secretary of state Eagleburger, U.S. ambassador to the UK Henry Catto, Thatcher's private secretary, Charles Powell, and UK ambassador to the U.S. Antony Acland.

⁴³ Memcon of Phone Call to President Mitterrand, 17 Nov 89 (notetaker was Adrian Basora).

announced that in two weeks Mitterrand would also meet with Gorbachev, in Kiev.⁴⁴

Bush's readiness to accept German unification was apparently not disturbed either by European cautions or by the worries repeatedly being voiced in the editorial pages of American newspapers.⁴⁵ Talking to foreign journalists on November 21, Bush was asked what he would say to British and French people who were against German reunification. He replied that "I say to them: That's a matter for the

⁴⁴ Message from President Mitterrand to President Bush, 27 Nov 89 (U.S. translation), attached to Hutchings through Blackwill to General Scowcroft, "The President's Telephone Call to President Mitterrand," 29 Nov 89. Speaking to Bush again on November 30 (after Kohl had announced his program for unification to the Bundestag), Mitterrand again avoided any direct comments on Germany. But, describing his plans for the Malta summit, Bush repeated twice that despite Gorbachev's concern about premature reunification he would "go in a forward-leaning position" on Germany. Mitterrand said he was not worried and had full confidence in President Bush. Memcon of Phone Call to President Mitterrand, 30 Nov 89; on West German unhappiness with Mitterrand's travel announcements, see Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 47. For more background on French views of Germany in 1989 and 1990, see Walter Shütze, "Frankreich angesichts der deutschen Einheit," Europa Archiv, February 25, 1990, pp. 133-139; Ingo Kolboom, "Vom 'Gemeinsamen Haus Europa' zur 'Europäischen Konföderation' - Francois Mitterrand und die europäische Neuordnung 1986-1990," in SOWI-Sozialwissenschaftliche Informationen, no. 4 (October-December 1990): 237-46. French mass opinion was apparently less troubled by the prospect of German unification. Renate Fritsch-Bournazel, Europe and German Unification (Providence: Berg, 1992), pp. 174-175.

⁴⁵ For the chorus of cautions coming from the editorial pages of American newspapers see, e.g., Editorial, "German Reunification," Washington Post, November 12, 1989, p. D6 (advising the West to be satisfied with movement short of political unification); Anne-Marie Burley, "High-Stakes Poker at the Berlin Wall," New York Times, November 13, 1989, p. A21 (calling for preservation of a stable GDR); Stephan-Gotz Richter, "Overloading Noah's Ark," Washington Post, November 14, 1989, p. A25 (arguing that East Germans would not want unification); Tom Wicker, "Decline of the East," New York Times, November 14, 1989, p. A31 (advising the West to be satisfied with a more democratic GDR); Christopher Layne, "Do Something Bold in Central Europe," Wall Street Journal, November 14, 1989, p. 21 (suggesting an initiative trading unification for German neutralization, with Germany remaining in the EC but not in NATO); William Echikson, "Two (Safe) Germanys," Christian Science Monitor, November 16, 1989, p. 19 (urging the US to pressure Kohl to abandon the goal of reunification); Elie Wiesel, "I Fear What Lies Beyond the Wall," New York Times, November 17, 1989, p. A39; Stephen Rosenfeld, "Striking a Balance on Germany," Washington Post, November 17, 1989, p. A23 (calling for more "awareness of where the undisciplined sentiment for self-determination can lead"); Editorial, "One Germany: Not Likely Now," New York Times, November 19, 1989, p. 22 ("For many different and sound reasons, hardly anybody wants reunification to happen."); and Theo Sommer, "A Dog That Doesn't Bark," Newsweek, November 20, 1989, p. 39 (the title was a metaphor for the reunification issue). George Kennan was also quoted cautioning that now was "not the time to raise the subject" of German reunification. Jim Hershberg, "German Reunification: A Tale of Two Plans," Christian Science Monitor, November 29, 1989, p. 19.

For examples of the minority view that took a more welcoming view of the prospect of German unification, see Jim Hoagland, "Reunification: What's the West's Plan?," Washington Post, November 13, 1989, p. A13 (urging the US to begin seriously negotiating terms of an all-German settlement); David Broder, "Our Great Mission in Europe," Washington Post, November 15, 1989, p. A21; Editorial, "East Germany's Future," Washington Post, November 22, 1989, p. A22; and Joseph Nye, Jr., "Designs for Europe: An Occasional Series," New York Times, November 26, 1989, p. A24.

German people to decide. And there are some that worry about it. I understand that Mr. Gorbachev has some understandable constraints, because he looks at borders, he looks at history -- he's concerned. But ... this is 1989. And we can learn from history, but we also can look to the future. And my view is: Let this matter be determined by the people in Germany.⁴⁶

By late November, the U.S. government and its key allies were avoiding an open clash over Germany only because they could all agree they shared the short-term national interest of seeing continued political reform in the GDR. Even Moscow could share that goal. The Soviet government fervently hoped Modrow could master the situation with a mix of domestic reforms, the allure of a "treaty community" with the FRG, and discouragement about prospects for any other form of unification. But at a critical point, with things finally going reasonably well in East Germany, freewheeling Soviet officials, perhaps inadvertently, encouraged the Germans to think beyond reform in the GDR and consider the terms for possible unification of the two German states.

The day before Kohl's November 16 Bundestag speech where he linked aid to GDR political upheaval and pressed the goal of "self-determination," Alexander Yakovlev, travelling in Japan, told the press that the Soviet Union would not be forced into playing the role of the villain. "The U.S., Britain and France do not want reunification of Germany and hope the Soviet Union will forestall such a development," he said. Yet it was Soviet leaders who were insisting most stridently that postwar realities had to be respected. Modrow, confident of the Soviet stand, had categorically rejected unification in his speech on November 17 and, after Kohl spoke to the Bundestag, heads of the French and German national legislatures heard directly from Gorbachev that "reunification is not on the agenda."⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Interview with Foreign Journalists, November 21, 1989, in Public Papers, pp. 1588-1589.

⁴⁷ Gorbachev's words on November 17 were repeated to the press by one of the visitors, Bundestag President Rita Süßmuth (the other was French National Assembly president Laurent Fabius), see Deutsche Presse-Agentur report, November 17, 1989 in FBIS-SOV 89-222, November 20, 1989, p. 34.

Then, on November 21, Central Committee staff member Nikolai Portugalov, Falin's top German expert, met with Horst Teltschik. Portugalov and Teltschik were old friends, and Portugalov handed Teltschik a hand-written paper. The first part, Teltschik recalled, had an "official character" and had been approved by Falin and Chernyayev. It identified the GDR's renewal with the Soviet Union's own perestroika. The second part of the paper had only been discussed with Falin. It indicated a wide range of issues to be considered before unification could take place, including alliance membership and a German peace treaty. "As you can see," Portugalov explained, "we are thinking about all possible alternatives for the German question, even things that were practically unthinkable." He even confided that the Soviets might give a green light to a German confederation.

According to his own account, Teltschik was "electrified" by this news. He immediately began wondering how much further the Soviet leadership might go. Obviously they were willing to go further than previously had seemed possible. This "green light" evidently emboldened Teltschik, who was about to begin drafting the speech that became Kohl's ten-point plan for German unity.

Yet it is far from clear that this was the message Portugalov had meant to leave with his unofficial non-paper. Portugalov himself had publicly denounced unification only a few days earlier as "not liked by any of the neighbors" of the Germans and "incompatible with the geopolitical and geostrategic requirements of stability." Portugalov had even added that, "in the foreseeable future and also in the long run, the two German states will continue to exist as sovereign and equal states." Portugalov had not forgotten these words; he actually referred to this interview in his meeting with Teltschik. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that both sides to the conversation heard each other selectively. Portugalov had no way to know that Teltschik was preparing a major address for the Chancellor and might be particularly sensitive to any hint of Soviet flexibility. The Soviet official's elaborations on his handwritten paper, a paper that had not even been seen by any foreign ministry officials, offer a reminder of why veteran diplomats emphasize precision in written as

well as oral expression.⁴⁸

Kohl understood how others, particularly Modrow, were trying to take unification off the political agenda. Faced with an uncertain political landscape, Kohl decided to seize the initiative and put unification back at the center of discussion.

Kohl Announces A Program to Achieve German Unification

Kohl and his closest advisers secretly decided to prepare a specific policy program showing how unification could happen. This program, they thought, would accomplish several goals. First it would pour gasoline on the interest in unification that was just beginning to catch fire in the dry kindling of East German unrest and soaring expectations. Kohl's team deliberately decided to "take the offensive." Second, their program would instantly differentiate Kohl politically from his more cautious political opponents, positioning the unpopular chancellor for elections next year. Third, the move might decisively counter Modrow's "treaty community" idea, overwhelming it before an international consensus could build up around it and back Kohl into a corner.⁴⁹ Modrow's government was already explaining that their "treaty community" could mean some sort of confederation, a broad term that encompassed any close combination of independent states for a common purpose.⁵⁰

Opinion within West Germany about unification was divided. A week after the Wall came down about a quarter of West Germans thought that during the next few years the FRG would remain oriented toward the West with a separate GDR facing East. Another quarter thought reunification might be possible. The large

⁴⁸ Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 43-44; Novosti interview, "Two Systems, One Nation," in Frankfurter Rundschau, November 17, 1989, p. 2, in FBIS-SOV 89-222, November 20, 1989, pp. 33-34.

⁴⁹ On Kohl's motives, see Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 41-58.

⁵⁰ See Pond, Beyond the Wall, p. 136. The term "confederation" had a mixed legacy from German history. Between 1806 and 1813 the Confederation of the Rhine had linked a number of independent German kingdoms and states, including Bavaria, Saxony, Wurttemberg, Baden, and Hesse-Darmstadt, in an alliance combining political aims (the absorption of some smaller German principalities) and military power. The Confederation was, however, conceived mainly in Paris as an instrument of Napoleon's policy, a French-dominated counterweight in Central Europe against Prussia and especially against Austria.

middle, 44%, foresaw closer relations between two states, like the FRG's ties to Austria or Switzerland. Another poll, more encouraging to Teltschik, showed that most West Germans at least supported reunification in principle, and nearly half thought it might be achieved in as little as ten years. Meanwhile Kohl's likely opponent from the opposition Social Democratic Party, Oskar Lafontaine, was commenting that "the conservative right wing" might have "the old national state as its point of orientation." But Lafontaine warned that "this isn't appropriate anymore, and it certainly has nothing to do with the current wishes and feelings of the people of the GDR."⁵¹

The East German economic situation was continuing to deteriorate. The outflow of emigrants did not stop. Over 130,000 East German citizens, almost 1% of the population, moved to the West in the month of November alone. As the mass of East German citizenry realized the full extent of their country's problems and considered the obstacles they would face in solving them, they began to see unification with the Federal Republic, a country that already appeared to exemplify the virtues of democracy and prosperity, as the clearest answer. As one German newspaper pointed out: "Speakers in Leipzig demanded reunification above all and exclusively because for them existing socialism has collapsed. Because they do not want to sacrifice their lives for five years, not one year, not one month more."⁵²

Leaders can shape opinion. They can provide a focal point for confused or uncertain public views by taking a stand. On November 28, Helmut Kohl did just that. He delivered an address to the Bundestag that presented a ten-point program for achieving German unity. The ten points were:

⁵¹ See Der Spiegel, November 20, 1989, pp. 16-17 (Emnid survey); Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 41 (ZDF Politbarometer survey); Lafontaine in Süddeutsche Zeitung, November 25-26, 1989, quoted in McAdams, Germany Divided, p. 206 n. 74.

⁵² Die Tageszeitung, November 23, 1989, quoted in Daniel Hamilton, After the Revolution: The New Political Landscape in East Germany (Washington, D.C.: American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, 1990), p. 13. On developments in the GDR, see Pond, "A Wall Destroyed"; and Hamilton, After the Revolution. The number for East German emigrants in November 1989 is from Karl Kaiser, "Germany's Unification," Foreign Affairs 70 (America and the World 1990/91): 179, 184.

1. Facilitate travel between East and West Germany.
2. Expand technological cooperation with the GDR, as in environmental protection, telecommunications, and railroads.
3. Expand economic aid to the GDR on a large scale if "a fundamental change of the political and economic system is bindingly resolved and irreversibly started in the GDR." This meant free elections in the GDR with no guarantee of the SED monopoly on power, as well as dismantling of centralized economic planning. "We do not want to stabilize conditions that have become untenable."
4. Establish a "treaty community" with the GDR to cooperate institutionally on a variety of common problems.
5. Go further, after free elections in the GDR, to develop confederative structures between the two German states and, eventually, a federal system in Germany. The policy of 'small steps' to mitigate the consequences of division would be replaced by new forms of cooperation, starting with joint governmental committees and a common parliament. "Nobody knows today how a reunited Germany will ultimately look like. I am sure that the unity will come if the people in Germany want it."
6. Embed the development of inner-German relations "in the all-European process and in East-West relations."
7. Encourage the EC to open itself to a democratic GDR and "other democratic countries in Central and South-Eastern Europe."
8. Speed up development of the CSCE, perhaps including new institutions for East-West economic cooperation and environmental relations.
9. Support rapid progress in arms control.
10. Strive for a "peace order" to allow German reunification as one state. As for the "particularly difficult" question of "transnational security structures," embedding the German question "in the all-European development and in the East-West relationship" might allow "an organic development which takes into consideration the interests of all parties concerned and"

guarantees a peace order in Europe.⁵³

With this speech, Chancellor Kohl defined a path to German unity, both internationally and within German domestic politics. The initiative was brilliantly constructed, drafted principally by Teltschik. The speech built on Kohl's November 8 and November 16 positions. It borrowed traditional Ostpolitik rhetoric about the "all-European process" and the sacred "peace order" while actually completing the subversion of old Ostpolitik and returning to "change through strength." It was a step-by-step process. But it marched straight through Modrow's "treaty community," past the latest "confederation" idea and onward to reunification, though enveloping this goal with vague phrases calculated to mollify concerns. Still the ultimate destination, reunification, was marked clearly on the map.

Kohl's address started to bridge the vast gulf between the abstract desire for unification and operational accomplishment of the goal. The East Germans could see that the idea was not only still on the table; it was a real possibility -- something that they could demand. Kohl's speech gave the emerging East German public mood a focal point -- and a leader. Teltschik exulted to his diary about the "giant success!" "We have achieved our goal," he wrote. "The Chancellor has taken over the leadership of opinion about the German question."⁵⁴

Kohl had, in particular, outflanked his coalition partner, Hans-Dietrich Genscher. Genscher had been gathering public praise during November for his conduct of what seemed to be a very successful foreign policy. This meant votes for

⁵³ "Zehn-Punkte Programm zur überwindung der Teilung Deutschlands und Europas," Texte zur Deutschlandpolitik, pp. 426-433.

⁵⁴ Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 58. As further evidence that Kohl and his advisers were trying to shape East German opinion, not just respond to it, it is noteworthy that on the day the speech was given, Teltschik told Ambassador Walters that "there was not much open talk of reunification in the GDR at present" though "as millions of East Germans visited the FRG, that could change." Bonn 37206, "Teltschik Briefing on Kohl Speech on German Unity," 28 Nov 89. Elizabeth Pond originally argued that Kohl saw the oncoming public clamor for unification within East Germany and was trying to slow it down to a manageable pace. She subsequently and correctly abandoned this argument, but her original position was cited approvingly by James McAdams, who also mistakenly saw Kohl's move as an effort to slow the pace of change. Compare Pond, "A Wall Destroyed," p. 57 & nn. 45-46 with Pond, Beyond the Wall, p. 137; and see McAdams, Germany Divided, p. 205.

Genscher's small Free Democratic Party. So to secure the political coup, Kohl had told no one else in the government about his plans, including his foreign minister.

To mute reactions to his move, Kohl had emphasized a gradual process of integration between two German states in a flexible framework. But his program clearly went far beyond Genscher's public and diplomatic approach, which had strongly downplayed the significance of unification as an operational objective for policy. Yet Kohl's ten-point plan was so unassailable that Genscher was obliged to congratulate Kohl on his "great speech" and stand by the program. The SPD, divided on how to react, offered qualified support for Kohl's plan.⁵⁵

Fearful of leaks, Kohl had not revealed the contents of his speech to his Western allies. He could hardly tell foreign governments what he would not tell his own foreign minister. Some of his advisers, including Rudolf Seiters, thought that springing such a surprise on the world could prove to be counterproductive. Teltschik preferred to keep the "surprise effect" and Kohl backed this view. Kohl made one exception. He ordered that the text of the speech be sent to Bush as it was being delivered, accompanied by a lengthy message explaining to Bush what Kohl was trying to do. Other countries would be briefed afterward by Teltschik, through their ambassadors in Bonn.⁵⁶

In Washington, on November 28, President Bush was receiving another of his pre-Malta briefings in the Oval Office, this time on the German Question and Berlin. Jim Dobbins reviewed the international situation, indicating that events -- especially among the East German populace -- were starting to force the pace of German

⁵⁵ Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 58; Jarausch, The Rush to German Unity, pp. 68-69.

⁵⁶ Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 50-58; Bonn 37206, "Teltschik Briefing on Kohl Speech on German Unity," 28 Nov 89. Teltschik briefed the US ambassador along with the British and French. He told Walters that Kohl had already sent the details of his speech to Bush. Unfortunately, probably because of difficulties in communicating the eleven-page message either in Bonn or Washington, the message arrived at the end of the day in Washington, hours after the story was all over the world. U.S. officials were irritated at first by the lack of consultation, since Bush had been so scrupulous in consulting with Kohl. The annoyance was eased once the message arrived and when Kohl called Bush the next day. It is ironic that American officials were annoyed about poor consultation since Kohl had actually intended that Bush be the only head of government who would be fully informed as soon as Kohl informed the rest of his own government.

unification. News of Kohl's speech had just arrived, and Dobbins thought it was an important development, putting unification on the policy agenda with a concrete program. The intelligence analysts agreed.⁵⁷ Bush seemed relaxed about the prospect of momentum building toward unification. That same day Bob Zoellick prepared an informal analysis of Kohl's speech for Secretary Baker which was also positive, emphasizing that the speech allowed for a spectrum of possibilities leading eventually to some form of unification.⁵⁸

Chancellor Kohl's November 28 message to President Bush not only reported on his speech but also offered detailed advice on every major topic in East-West relations, looking to Bush's upcoming meeting with Gorbachev at Malta. The key was Kohl's discussion of "Malta philosophy." Kohl was glad that Bush had clearly "rejected any parallel between Yalta and Malta." Therefore Kohl argued against any attempts to "to contain or channel popular movements." He urged Bush not to let the Malta meeting take on the appearance of being "a status quo summit."

On the specific question of German unification, Kohl first expressed "heartfelt" thanks for Bush's support. He warned that Gorbachev might insist that there should be no change in "the existing borders between East and West" and hoped Bush would stand by his previous position. Kohl said he had not tried to achieve "the national goal of the Germans independently." There should be no doubt, he wrote, about the FRG's "unwavering loyalty" to the NATO alliance. Kohl summarized his ten-point program and closed by asking: "Dear George, I would be particularly grateful if in your talks with Mr. Gorbachev you would support the policy expressed in these ten points and emphasize to him that this future-oriented course, not

⁵⁷ In addition to the President, participants in the November 28 briefing were Baker, Scowcroft, Gates, Blackwill, Rice, Zoellick, Seitz, Dobbins, Director of Central Intelligence William Webster, and two CIA analysts. This account is based on author interviews with Dobbins and the analyst who joined Dobbins in making the presentation, 1991.

⁵⁸ From undated paper in Zoellick's office files, probably prepared to brief Baker for a press conference on November 29. Zoellick may have drawn upon a short factual summary, George to Ross and Zoellick, "Kohl's Ten Point Plan," 28 Nov 89.

adherence to outmoded taboos, is in the best interests of his country, too."⁵⁹

The same day, President Bush also received a very different kind of message from the East German president, Krenz. Krenz urged the President to agree that the existence of two German states "and their membership in different alliances" were "fundamental" elements in European security. "Nationalism, a revival of Nazi ideas, and the striving for a revision of the results obtained in the wake of the anti-Hitler coalition's victory," Krenz wrote, "are detrimental to achieving a secure peace in Europe."⁶⁰ Bush never replied to this message.

U.S. officials immediately recognized that, with his ten-point plan for unity, Kohl had undertaken a tremendous gambit. He could be very exposed politically in the FRG, especially if the German public believed Kohl had triggered an international crisis. Soviet unhappiness was soon evident, despite Kohl's advance consultations with Gorbachev. So officials at both the State Department and the NSC staff quickly decided that Washington must energize U.S. policy in order to back Kohl's initiative and shield the chancellor from severe international criticism. They hoped President Bush, after his Malta meeting with Gorbachev, could rally a Western consensus behind a policy that both stood by Kohl yet insured that Kohl's program met their own principles for unification. The American officials were worried that Kohl's private affirmation of support for NATO had not been voiced in his speech.

Thus briefed by his staff, President Bush spoke for half-an-hour with Chancellor Kohl early on the day after Kohl's historic speech, November 29. Kohl thought more change was definitely coming to the GDR. He expected free elections in East Germany by the autumn of 1990 or the beginning of 1991. Movement toward unification would, he said, be a "long-term process." (Privately, at that time Kohl and his advisors thought they would be lucky to achieve unification within five or ten

⁵⁹ Message via special channels from Chancellor Kohl to President Bush, 28 Nov 89 (message was sent from Bonn in English); the contents are also quoted in Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 54.

⁶⁰ Letter from Krenz to President Bush, 28 Nov 89. See also Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 28 Nov 89.

years.) He did not want to confront the issue of a united Germany's alliance membership. "They will remain in the Pact and we, in NATO."

Kohl was, however, thinking much more concretely about how to help the French support his plan. He had decided to join with Mitterrand in supporting rapid progress toward a new European treaty to establish Economic and Monetary Union at an upcoming EC summit (December 8 in Strasbourg), the last such meeting with France in the chair of the EC's governing body, the European Council. Kohl assured Bush, "It is an iron law that there will be no going it alone in German policy." We Germans are fortunate, Kohl commented. "History left us with good cards in our hands. I hope with the cooperation of our American friends we can play them well."

Bush said he supported Kohl's general approach. Stability was certainly important and Bush said he had tried "to do nothing that would force a reaction by the USSR." But he assured Kohl "we are on the same wavelength. I appreciated your ten points and your exposition on the future of Germany."

As he had in closing his written message, Kohl now again finished the call by pleading with Bush to be sure that the Malta summit backed his approach toward German unity. The public comments were so important. "Germans -- East and West-- are listening very carefully. Every word of sympathy for self-determination and unity is very important now."⁶¹

Bush was ready to provide those words of sympathy. Talking to reporters later in the day (November 29), Bush told them about his phone conversation with Kohl. "I feel comfortable; I think we're on track." The reporters asked Bush what he wanted for Europe. Bush replied: "In terms of the 'vision thing,' the aspirations, I spelled it out in little-noted speeches last spring and summer, which I would like everyone to go back and reread. And I'll have a quiz on it [laughter] ... you'll see in there some of the 'vision thing' - a Europe whole and free. Now that, I think, takes on a little more relevance today, given the changes that have already taken place or

⁶¹ Memcon for President Bush's phone call with Chancellor Kohl, 29 Nov 89; for the staff advice before the call see Hutchings through Blackwill to General Scowcroft, "The President's Telephone Call to Chancellor Kohl," 28 Nov 89.

that are taking place.... But in terms of your question, I think a Europe whole and free is less vision and perhaps reality. But how we get there and what that means and when the German question is resolved and all of these things -- I can't answer more definitively.⁶²

The next day, November 30, President Bush departed Washington for his shipboard meetings in Malta with Gorbachev, which would be followed by a meeting with all heads of government of the NATO alliance. It would be the first U.S.-Soviet summit of Bush's presidency and the first meeting of Western leaders since Kohl's plan had grabbed headlines around the world. The week to come would help determine the fate of Kohl's new "offensive."

Kohl needed help. As some of his advisers had predicted, both the substance of the plan and the lack of consultation had provoked a negative reaction from practically every country in Europe. French diplomats complained confidentially to German officials about a "surprise attack" and publicly expressed strong reservations about "precipitate" action. Prime Minister Thatcher let Kohl know that she did not believe unification "was on the agenda."⁶³

Moscow was unhappy too. Just prior to Kohl's speech, Gorbachev and Shevardnadze had met with Canadian prime minister Brian Mulroney. Mulroney later told President Bush that Germany was the top concern for Soviet leaders and that they thought the Germans should just forget about reunification. According to the Canadians, Gorbachev, especially irritated, had accused the American ambassador in Bonn, Walters, of "acting like a German gauleiter" for having publicly voiced his support for unification. The Canadian foreign minister recalled Shevardnadze saying that most Europeans agreed with them, since "all of us who were in the war are against revanchism and neo-Nazis." More ominously, Mulroney remembered

⁶² Public Papers, p. 1603. Bush was referring to his speeches at Boston University (May 21), in Mainz (May 31), and in Leiden (July 17).

⁶³ Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, pp. 51-53.

Gorbachev saying, "People have died from eating unripened fruit."⁶⁴

The Soviet government was attacking Kohl in public as well as in private. Gorbachev himself told a group of students that, "There are two German states. History saw to that. And this fact is generally accepted by the world community.... That is the reality, and we must work on the basis of that reality. ... I do not think that the question of the reunification of these states is currently a pressing political question."⁶⁵

Moscow's pique carried great risks for Kohl, raising the danger of a genuine crisis. Faced with a confrontational stance, Kohl would be blamed -- not aided -- by his West European allies. The West German public might quickly deem his stance, and his secrecy in springing the move, to have been dangerously provocative.

The Soviets were still counting on Modrow's ability to get control of conditions in the GDR. But the Soviet ambassador to Bonn, Yuli Kvitsinsky, thought that Moscow would need a more dynamic policy -- not just vague public statements -- in order to protect its relations with the GDR and influence the German future. He cabled home that the existence of the GDR was only a question of time. The exodus to the West reminded him of the months before the Wall was built in 1961. The East Germans would not stay and work in the East, he thought, when they could go 100-200 kilometers west and earn four to six times as much for the same work. Kvitsinsky was alarmed because If those who stayed with socialism in the GDR were spurned, then the socialist system in the Soviet Union itself might be put in question.

Therefore, Kvitsinsky recalled later, he went on to argue that it no longer

⁶⁴ As he prepared for the Malta summit Bush invited Mulroney and his foreign minister, Joe Clark, to come to Washington and brief him on their trip to the Soviet Union. For their comments on Soviet views of Germany, see Memcon of Dinner with Prime Minister Mulroney, 29 Nov 89. It can be assumed, especially since Bush and Mulroney were known to be friends, that the Soviet leaders anticipated that what they told the Canadians would be passed on to the American president.

⁶⁵ For Gorbachev's remarks see "Confidently Along the Path of Perestroika: M.S. Gorbachev Replies to Questions from All-Student Forum," Pravda, November 17, 1989, pp. 1-2, in FBIS-SOV 89-228, November 29, 1989, p. 107. One German observer asserts that Gorbachev's comments were strengthened when they were reported in print. Hans-Peter Riese, "Die Geschichte hat sich ans Werk gemacht," Europa Archiv, April 1990, pp. 117, 121.

made sense to try to reject any national unity of the Germans. Instead the GDR and socialism could be largely preserved by preempting Kohl with the idea of a confederation. A confederation could bind two separate states with different social systems. To work though the initiative should come from the parties in the GDR, rather than from Moscow. But there was not much time, he warned, before the chance to move would be lost -- a matter of weeks.⁶⁶

Shevardnadze answered immediately and supported Kvitsinsky's idea. But then another cable arrived from Moscow soon arrived, saying that Shevardnadze's initial reply did not reflect a final opinion of the Soviet government. The new instruction characterized Shevardnadze's reply as a sign of Moscow's interest in Kvitsinsky's views, but his proposal was in many respects overly hasty and controversial. Kvitsinsky felt he was being told that he had unduly dramatized the situation. He thought that back in Moscow the attitude was: "One could definitely not talk of the disappearance of the GDR. The Soviet Union will not permit it."⁶⁷

The usual suspect for such a more conservative instruction was the Central Committee staff. Bureaucratic clashes between the Foreign Ministry and the Central Committee staff were nothing new in the USSR's German policy. There was usually a race to see which part of the bureaucracy could first take up "the cudgels for the 'No experiments'! principle, popular ever since Adenauer's time."⁶⁸ The principle of collective, unanimous consensus was strong. The irony was that even though Kvitsinsky was being warned about his idea of getting the East Germans to propose a

⁶⁶ Julij A. Kvizinskij, Vor dem Sturm: Erinnerungen eines Diplomaten, trans. Hilde & Helmut Ettinger (Berlin: Siedler, 1993), pp. 16-17. For Soviet inaction after the opening of the Wall explained by Gorbachev's hope that Krenz and Modrow would stabilize the situation, see Vyacheslav Dashichev, "On the Road to German Reunification: The View from Moscow," in Gabriel Gorodetsky, ed., Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917-1991: A Retrospective (London: Frank Cass, 1993), pp. 170, 173.

⁶⁷ Kvizinskij, Vor dem Sturm, p. 17.

⁶⁸ Igor Maximychev, "What 'German Policy' We Need," International Affairs [Moscow], September 1991, pp. 53, 55. Maximychev also points out that the Soviet bureaucratic picture was further complicated by the division of responsibility for Germany, after a recent Foreign Ministry reorganization, between a department for socialist countries in Eurasia and a separate department dealing with Western Europe.

confederation, Portugalov from the Central Committee staff had floated the very idea in front of Teltschik on November 21, without any clearance from the foreign ministry! Portugalov's suggestion also swept any possible advantage from appearing to let the East Germans take the initiative. In the fluid circumstances of the last months of 1989, Moscow's inability to develop a creative and united line of policy on Germany weakened Soviet diplomatic efforts to regain control of the international agenda.

The Malta Summit

The Americans were wondering where Moscow really stood. Mulroney's warning seemed to suggest that the Soviets would take a tough line at Malta. Scowcroft gave Bush the NSC staff's best estimate, drafted by Rice. Bush's staff offered four judgments: (1) The Soviets had lost control of their policy toward Eastern Europe. They did not anticipate current developments. They were now reacting to events day-by-day. (2) The Soviets were opposed to German reunification. They thought this "would rip the heart out of the Soviet security system." Their "worst nightmare" was a reunified Germany allied with NATO. "The Warsaw Pact, having lost its East German anchor, would quickly disintegrate and the Soviet line of defense would begin at the Ukrainian border." The gains of World War II, bought so dearly, would be gone. (3) Moscow was now struggling to devise policies to prop up the continued existence of two German states. It would try to work with France and Britain to stabilize the existing situation. Finally, (4) There was still no evidence of panic in Moscow on the German issue. If Soviet influence began to deteriorate more rapidly, they might revert to 1950s-style calls for pan-European collective security or negotiation of a German peace treaty.⁶⁹ The CIA prepared a similar analysis, but its analysts added that Gorbachev's own views on

⁶⁹ Scowcroft to President Bush, "The Soviets and the German Question," 29 Nov 89. Markings on the memo indicate that Bush read it.

Germany had betrayed some ambiguity and that Gorbachev might harbor a pragmatic outlook. For a variety of reasons, the CIA did not expect Gorbachev to be candid with the President in revealing his real bottom line on Germany, instead expecting him to project a concerned but philosophical approach -- especially if his leanings were indeed pragmatic.⁷⁰

Informed by these analyses of likely Soviet attitudes, Blackwill, Rice and Zelikow worked intensively with Zoellick and Ross, to develop the policy Bush could take to Europe for his meetings with Gorbachev and the NATO Summit. The German issue was, of course, only one aspect of a complex US-Soviet agenda, which included the timing of a full-scale summit, the future of perestroika, economic relations, arms control, and regional issues. Fearing leaks, the President's materials were closely held by those five officials and their direct superiors.

As it touched on Germany, the American approach to the Malta summit with Gorbachev and the subsequent Brussels meeting with Allied heads of government had three operational objectives. First, the President should avoid alarming the Soviets by stressing the immediate need for democratic reform and self-determination in the GDR. But as needed, Bush would stand up for the goal of German unity and reject any proposal for a Four Power peace conference. Second, Bush would then try to rally allied support for Kohl and his ten-point unity plan, while using America's pivotal position with the Germans to cement Bonn's continued support for NATO and a responsible position on borders. Third, the U.S. would outline a vision for the general transformation of European politics to accompany the political revolutions in Central Europe.

⁷⁰ CIA, "The German Question and Soviet Policy," SOV M 89-20089X, 27 Nov 89. It is doubtful that the President or his Cabinet-level advisers actually read this 20 pp. analysis, but it was reviewed by key sub-cabinet officials before the Malta meeting. The CIA analysts did not know about the Soviet statements to the Canadians recounted by Mulroney to Bush. There was no evidence that Shevardnadze sympathized with the pragmatists, though -- as with Gorbachev -- there were conflicting indicators about Yakovlev's views. Veteran advisers on Germany, like Valentin Falin, were considered to be strongly opposed to reunification. Military opinion was thought to be divided. No Soviet officials at any level had indicated any willingness to accept a unified Germany entirely inside NATO. The debate was over whether, as a historical or policy matter, Germany should be unified at all.

Gorbachev was coming up with his own initiatives and, en route to Malta, he stopped in Italy and announced his major proposal. He restated his hope for a 'common European home' of sovereign and economically interdependent nations and called for a summit meeting of leaders of CSCE member countries, to be held in 1990. In this setting of thirty-five countries, Germany's future could be debated as part of a general discussion of European security and politics. An all-European process was important, Gorbachev explained, but it had to deal with the existence of two German states as a fact of life.⁷¹

The Americans left for Malta a little worried that Gorbachev would ask Bush to throw the German question into the most unwieldy European forum imaginable -- the CSCE. There it would be debated until the end of the century.

Aboard the Maxim Gorkii

American and Soviet leaders arrived in Malta along with one of the Mediterranean's infrequent but violent winter storms. They had intended to meet aboard cruisers of the respective navies. Instead, as the winds howled outside, the talks on Marsaxlokk Bay were confined to the wardroom of a support ship, the Soviet cruise liner Maxim Gorky. Bush had decided to lay his cards on the table at the very beginning. He knew that Gorbachev still harbored suspicions that Bush did not support perestroika. The President therefore began with a lengthy statement unpacking nearly twenty different policy initiatives, ranging from moves in arms control talks to ideas for more US-Soviet economic cooperation.

Gorbachev replied that, until that time, he had been looking for a tangible demonstration of American support. "During your presentation, I heard it. I was going to ask you today to go beyond words. But you have done so." Gorbachev emphasized his philosophical approach: "The emphasis on confrontation based on our different ideologies is wrong." Gorbachev thought that, "strategically and

⁷¹ See 'Rech' M.S. Gorbacheva," Pravda, December 2, 1989, p. 2; "Press-konferentsiya v Milane," Pravda, December 3, 1989, p. 2.

philosophically, the methods of the Cold War were defeated."

The Soviet leader said he knew some in America thought that Eastern Europe was falling apart, the policies of the Cold War were right, and the US only needed "to keep its baskets ready to gather the fruit." He did not think Bush believed this. Bush assured Gorbachev that as Europe had changed, "we have not responded with flamboyance or arrogance ... I have conducted myself in ways not to complicate your life. That's why I have not jumped up and down on the Berlin Wall." Gorbachev said he had noticed that, and appreciated it.⁷²

Then the two leaders separated for a more private one-on-one discussion. They turned to Germany. Gorbachev told Bush that he knew some of West Germany's allies were worried about reunification. He was worried too and, "unlike you and your allies," would be clear: "There are two German states, this was the decision of history." Referring to their November 11 phone conversation, Gorbachev said he thought Kohl "realizes his responsibility and will adhere by the agreements that we reached in Bonn [in June 1989]." Bush promised not to take ill-conceived steps to accelerate the solution of the German question. But, even though some Western countries agreed with the Soviet position, Bush said they and everyone else "have to think about the time when the notions of FRG and GDR will become a part of history." He urged Gorbachev to accept the changes underway, with the

⁷² The Soviet memcon of this meeting has been published in Mikhail S. Gorbachev, Gody Trudnykh Reshenij. 1985-1992: Izbrannoye (Moscow: Alfa-Print, 1993), pp. 173-176; for other published accounts of the meeting based on interviews with participants, see Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, pp. 154-156, 157-158; Don Oberdorfer, The Turn: From the Cold War to a New Era. The United States and the Soviet Union 1983-1990 (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991), pp. 378-379. For the American notes see Memcon of First Expanded Bilateral Session with Chairman Gorbachev, 2 Dec 89. Bush was accompanied at this session by Baker, Sununu, Scowcroft, undersecretary of defense Paul Wolfowitz, Zoellick, Blackwill, and an interpreter. Gorbachev was joined by Shevardnadze, Yakovlev, Bessmertnykh (then first deputy foreign minister), Chernyayev, Anatoly Dobrynin (then foreign policy adviser to Gorbachev), Akhromeyev, and their interpreter. For some background on the decision to meet in Malta and Bush's preparations for the meeting, see Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, pp. 139-152; Oberdorfer, The Turn, pp. 375-376. For Bush's key briefing materials on Germany at Malta, see Presidential Briefing Book, "Presidential Presentations," 29 Nov 89. This book was prepared by Scowcroft, Rice, Ross, Blackwill, Zoellick, and Zelikow. It was distinct from the regular briefing materials normally compiled for such trips and its contents were very closely held. See papers on "Key Points to be Made in Subsequent Presentations"; longer presentation on "The Future of Germany"; and notional Gorbachev presentation and suggested Presidential response to possible surprises - paper on "German Peace Treaty."

understanding that the U.S. would not take rash steps that could have dangerous consequences. Bush promised he would not "jump on the wall because too much is at stake in the situation." "Yes," Gorbachev replied with a laugh, "jumping on the wall is indeed not an occupation for the President."⁷³

The subject of Germany came up again at a larger meeting the following day, December 3. The meetings were coming to a close and the atmosphere was friendly. Bush's initiatives had made a good impression, as had Bush's receptiveness to Gorbachev's philosophical approach. Gorbachev, in turn, had responded seriously to Bush's concerns on issues such as the need for free elections in Nicaragua and more restraint in Soviet support for Cuba's foreign policy adventures.

Referring to the previous day's one-on-one conversation on Germany, Bush now answered Gorbachev's statement that the existence of two German states was a fact of history. Bush said the United States could not be asked to disapprove of German reunification. He knew how sensitive this subject was for Moscow. He had tried to act with restraint. He was also well aware of the Helsinki language about borders. He asked what Gorbachev saw beyond the status quo.

Gorbachev began by emphasizing his acceptance of America's involvement and engagement in Europe. Any other approach "would be unrealistic and unconstructive." As for the relations between East and West, that was "an objective process where the countries of Europe will become closer to each other." All Europeans agreed, even Kohl, that "we should do everything within the Helsinki context rather than ruining what has been done." Therefore Gorbachev called for a "Helsinki II Summit" to deal with this new phase in a prudent and responsible way. The summit of thirty-five European countries should improve stability, turn the

⁷³ This account is based on the verbatim excerpts from the Soviet notes taken in the meeting, quoted at length in Chernyayev, Shest' Let s Gorbacheyym, pp. 309-310, which appear to be from this one-on-one session. Similar records from the American side are unavailable for the one-on-one discussion. But Bush and Scowcroft later debriefed aides about the meeting, and the Soviet account dovetails with the recollections of Blackwill and Rice, as well as the more general accounts later offered to journalists. See Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, pp. 156-157. While Bush and Gorbachev were having their one-on-one meeting Shevardnadze was in another room telling Baker his government felt deep unease about German unification and was worried about revanchist statements coming out of West Germany. Ibid.

Warsaw Pact and NATO into political rather than military organizations.

Gorbachev attacked, though, the American view that "the division of Europe should be overcome on the basis of Western values." He warned that if "policy is made on that assumption the situation could become quite messy. You used to make similar accusations against the USSR -- the export of revolution." Instead, as Eastern Europe became more open, democratic, and respected universal human values, "this opens up the possibility for a tranquil and placid pause." It was "dangerous" to "try to force the issues" to push them to achieve an advantage.

Gorbachev offered his own vision of gradual historical change, carefully managed to avoid "a chaotic situation." He said he was optimistic. "You can tremble and some panic but if you look at it philosophically -- things fall into place. We are dealing with fundamental processes if nations and peoples are involved in the developments -- one can't expect it to be smooth."

Bush admitted that democratic values were universal, not just "western." Gorbachev in turn agreed that each country should be able to choose its political, cultural, or economic system. Bush concluded that there was no difference then in their support for self-determination. Baker pointed out that the US discussed Western values in the context of German reunification in order to stress the importance of openness and pluralism, as a contrast to the Germany of the 1930s and 1940s. Gorbachev, Shevardnadze, and Yakovlev repeated their wish not to refer to these common values as Western. "They are our values too," Gorbachev claimed. Secretary Baker then suggested the phrase "democratic values" and Gorbachev settled down and concurred.⁷⁴

The two leaders then had another short 'one-on-one' discussion. Both leaders

⁷⁴ For the Soviet memcon of this session, see Gorbachev, Gody Trudnykh Reshenii, pp. 176-179; for the American notes see Memcon for Second Expanded Bilateral Session (on the Maxim Gorky), 3 Dec 89. In this session Bush was accompanied by Baker, Sununu, Scowcroft, LTG Howard Graves (assistant to the chairman of the JCS), Ross, Rice, and the interpreter. Gorbachev was joined by Shevardnadze, Yakovlev, Bessmertnykh, Chernyayev, Dobrynin, Akhromeyev, and their interpreter. The language quoted here is from the primary sources. For similar accounts based on interviews with participants, see Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, p. 162; Oberdorfer, The Turn, p. 381-382.

agreed that the meetings had gone just as they had hoped. There was no mention of Germany. They did, however, discuss the potentially explosive situation in the Baltic republics. They reached a sensitive understanding that the U.S. would try to give Gorbachev scope to deal politically with Baltic demands for independence by not pressing its formal position in support of the Baltic goals. In turn, Gorbachev understood that America insisted he not use force in dealing with the Baltic problem.⁷⁵

The same non-confrontational tone that had been evident in the meetings was apparent in the friendly press conference given by Bush and Gorbachev at the conclusion of the summit. The two leaders had decided on the spot to hold their press conference jointly. It would now send a message to the world about how the Americans and Soviets had handled the issue of Germany, and Kohl's proposal. Asked specifically about German unity and Kohl's plan, Bush said the US and NATO had a long-standing position and, mistakenly, added that "Helsinki spells out a concept of permanent borders." He said he had made clear that the US would act with restraint -- "not to go demonstrating on top of the Berlin Wall to show how happy we are about the change. We are happy about the change." The President affirmed that the rapidity of change was a matter for the German people to determine themselves.

Picking up the question, Gorbachev fell back on the "Helsinki process." That process, he said, "summed up the results of the Second World War and consolidated the results of that war. And those are realities." The two German states were realities. That "was the decision of history." His thesis was that "history itself decides the processes and fates on the European continent and also the fates of those two states." He warned against any "artificial acceleration or prompting" of the processes that are going on in those two countries.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Scowcroft took notes for the American side in this conversation. For the content see Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, p. 164.

⁷⁶ Remarks of the President and Chairman Gorbachev and a Question-and-Answer Session With Reporters at Malta, December 3, 1989, in Public Papers, 1989, bk. II, pp. 1877-1878.

Gorbachev had given the impression, publicly and privately, of being uneasy about developments in Germany but not gravely concerned. None of the hostility which Mulroney had seen a week earlier was in evidence. Gorbachev defender of the USSR, meeting with Mulroney in the heart of the Kremlin, had been replaced by Gorbachev the statesman, philosophical about the historic transformation taking place. Bush, in turn, had softpedaled his presentation of America's position on Germany as he sensed and took advantage of the low-key Soviet approach.

But Gorbachev's relaxed demeanor served to convince the Americans that the Soviet leader was malleable on the German question. Wrapping up in Malta, Baker and Scowcroft's advisers talked about avoiding situations in which the Soviet Union might be forced to say "no" to any concrete proposal on Germany. They reasoned that the Soviet government did not know seem to know exactly where it was going. Since events were moving in the West's favor, Gorbachev could be brought along as long as the West did not force him to declare a bottom-line. The U.S. would try to steer, cajole and persuade Moscow. But Gorbachev had given the Americans reason to believe that they might never need to confront him.

Was that the impression that Gorbachev intended to leave? His close aide, Chernyayev who has remained unfailingly faithful to Gorbachev, provides an interesting insight into that question. Commenting generally about his character as a statesman, Chernyayev has remarked on Gorbachev's "renowned tendency to seek compromise, his predilection for bringing about peace everywhere, and hence his calculated readiness to accept what he does not really approve of. When he does this it is because he finds it necessary to pacify his opponent so as to prevent him from drawing undesirable conclusions or doing something wrong and believes that afterwards things will take care of themselves and agreement will be reached." Chernayev judged that this trait, "makes Gorbachev as a person and politician at once strong and weak."⁷⁷

⁷⁷ Anatoly Chernyayev, "The Phenomenon of Gorbachev in the Context of Leadership," International Affairs [Moscow], June 1993, p. 48.

In retrospect, some who recognized the need for an energetic response to the developments in Germany considered Gorbachev's handling of the issue at Malta to be a fateful error. One of the participants on the Soviet side in Malta, the late Marshal Akhromeyev, reflected bitterly that Gorbachev's failure to give a "concrete answer" to the German question must have convinced the West they would encounter no decisive opposition from the USSR. "G. Bush realized that had a position like this been formed, it would have been expressed by M. Gorbachev in Malta. ... It is hard to doubt that G. Bush informed H. Kohl about this shortly." Akhromeyev blamed Gorbachev, and he blamed a foreign ministry which "was not ready for a serious discussion" of the issues.⁷⁸

The European Summits

As President Bush flew from Malta to Brussels for his meetings with Allied leaders, he faced another formidable task. Having determined that Soviet policy on Germany was still relatively quiescent, he now needed to accomplish the remaining operational objectives for his trip. Most crucial among them was to rally Allied support behind Kohl's ten-point plan for unity, while using America's now solid position with Kohl to link moves toward unity with assurances about Germany's continued commitment to NATO..

Soon after his plane touched down in Brussels, Bush met with Chancellor Kohl. Baker chose not to attend, deliberately permitting the two heads of state to talk without Genscher (Baker's counterpart) present and thus allowing Kohl to speak more freely. To the Germans, Bush and Scowcroft seemed tired. But Bush launched into a detailed report on the talks in Malta. The American president warned Kohl that Gorbachev thought the chancellor was in too much of a hurry. Kohl said he had told Gorbachev that no one wanted events in the GDR to get out of control and then he proceeded to detail the latest news of political turmoil in the GDR.

⁷⁸ S.F. Akhromeyev & G.M. Kornienko (a former deputy foreign minister who retired in 1988), Glazami Marshala i Diplomata (Moscow: Mezhdunarodniye Otnosheniya, 1992), pp. 253-254, 259.

Kohl thanked Bush for his "calm" reception of the ten-point plan. He promised not to do anything reckless. There was no timetable. The FRG was part of Europe and part of the EC. The chancellor said he always worked carefully with President Mitterrand. Continued integration with the West was a "precondition" for the ten points. After free elections in the GDR the next step was confederation, but with two independent states. The third phase, federation, was for the future and could be stretched out. It would take years, perhaps five, to reach this goal.

Bush conveyed the mild tone of Gorbachev's concern at Malta by summarizing the Soviet leader's problem just as one of uncertainty. That was why "we need a formulation which doesn't scare him, but moves forward." Kohl said he didn't want Gorbachev to feel cornered. The newspapers were full of nonsense. Kissinger, he said, had thought the Germanys might come together within two years. That was obviously impossible -- the economic imbalance between the two states was too great. But Bush should not misunderstand, the German question was developing "like a groundswell in the ocean." "I need a time of quiet development," Kohl remarked, sounding a little drained by the extraordinary events of November.

Both the White House and the Chancellery considered this dinner conversation significant. The Americans thought Kohl's determination to move forward toward unification was clear. The Germans could feel some relief about the way Gorbachev had approached the German issue with Bush at Malta. General Scowcroft felt sure Kohl now understood that the U.S. would stand by him, and he was right.⁷⁹

The subsequent NATO summit meeting of sixteen heads of government, held in Brussels on December 4, had two main sessions. In the morning, the President would debrief his colleagues on his meetings in Malta. In the afternoon he would offer a general overview of the future of Europe. Before the trip Blackwill and Zelikow had drafted this overview. They started with a paper originally prepared

⁷⁹ For the German account of this meeting, see Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 62-64; for the American notes see Memcon for meeting with Chancellor Kohl at Chateau Stuyvenberg in Brussels, 3 Dec 89; the account also draws on author interview with Scowcroft, Washington, June 1991. See also Scowcroft to President Bush, "Scope Paper -- Your Bilateral with Chancellor Kohl," (in trip briefing materials).

when Blackwill was flirting with the idea of a landmark joint statement by President Bush and Gorbachev. Instead they turned it into a statement of American policy toward Germany and Europe. It included an outline of NATO, CSCE, and the EC as the central institutions in Europe's future. On Germany, the draft welcomed the possibility of unification. General Scowcroft had circulated the draft to Secretary of Defense Cheney, who had endorsed it with enthusiasm.

On the road, Bush's planned policy statement was significantly revised, principally by Zoellick and Blackwill. The revisions on Germany were especially important. In late November Baker had endorsed four clear guidelines for American policy on German unification put together for him by Ross and Fukuyama on his Policy Planning staff. Though the press took little notice, Secretary Baker first publicized an initial version of these four principles in his pre-Malta briefing for the White House press corps in Washington on November 29.⁸⁰ During the trip, Zoellick suggested that Baker's four principles for German unification be inserted into Bush's statement. Blackwill agreed and the travelling party worked on the language, strengthening its endorsement of German unification. The draft was reviewed and approved by General Scowcroft, Baker, and President Bush.

Bush began the afternoon session before NATO leaders with his policy statement on "the future shape of the new Europe and the new Atlanticism." The Alliance, he said, faced great choices in consolidating the peaceful revolution in the East and providing the "architecture for continued peaceful change." To begin, the US and NATO had never accepted the "painful" division of Europe. All had supported German reunification "and in our view, this goal of German unification should be based on the following principles."

First, self-determination must be pursued without prejudice to its outcome. We should not at this time endorse nor exclude any particular vision of unity. [The earlier State addendum, saying the outcome must also be acceptable to Germany's neighbors, had been

⁸⁰ See PA transcript, Press Conference by Secretary Baker on Bush/Gorbachev Malta Meeting, The White House, 29 Nov 89, pp. 7-8.

dropped.]

Second, unification should occur in the context of Germany's continued commitment to NATO and an increasingly integrated European Community, and with due regard for the legal role and responsibilities of the Allied powers.⁸¹

Third, in the interests of general European stability, moves toward unification must be peaceful, gradual, and part of a step-by-step process.

Lastly, on the question of borders we should reiterate our support for the principles of the Helsinki Final Act.

"An end to the unnatural division of Europe, and of Germany," Bush added, "must proceed in accordance with and be based upon the values that are becoming universal ideals, as all the countries of Europe become part of a commonwealth of free nations. I know my friend Helmut Kohl completely shares this conviction."

Then Bush proposed, following up on the "Europe whole and free" rhetoric of his May 1989 trip, that the Alliance should make the promotion of greater freedom in the East a basic element of its policy. At the same time, NATO should continue to be the guarantor of stability in this period of historic transition. In this context, Bush said, "I pledge today that the United States will maintain significant military forces in Europe as long as our Allies desire our presence as part of a common security effort. ... The U.S. will remain a European power." Bush also praised "intensified" integration of the EC and said the U.S. would seek closer ties with the Community.⁸²

⁸¹ The earlier Ross/Fukuyama formula had included a qualifier, "if there is unification." That phrase was dropped. The language referring to Four Power rights was new, added because Embassy Bonn complained of Kohl's persistent failure to refer to these rights and because of American care to refer to their legal obligation for Berlin and "Germany as a whole." See Bonn 37736, "Kohl's Ten-Point Program -- Silence on the Role of the Four Powers," 1 Dec 89.

⁸² The text of the intervention was subsequently released to the public. "Outline of Remarks at the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Headquarters in Brussels," December 4, 1989, in Public Papers, pp. 1644-1647. Bush passed along his four principles on Germany directly to Gorbachev. See Letter from President Bush to President Gorbachev, 8 Dec 89. For a sense of the positive press reactions for Bush from his handling of the Malta-Brussels trip, see News Conference in Brussels, 4 Dec 89, in Public Papers, pp. 1647-49; Scowcroft to President Bush, "European Press Reaction to the NATO Summit and Your Speech on the Future of Europe," 6 Dec 89.

After Bush completed his statement, Chancellor Kohl said that no one could have done a better job of summarizing the Alliance approach. "The meeting should simply adjourn." After an awkward pause, Italian Prime Minister Andreotti asked to continue with his presentation. He warned that self-determination -- if taken too far -- could get out of hand and cause trouble. Kohl snapped back that Andreotti might not hold the same view if the Tiber divided his country.

The Dutch prime minister interrupted the skirmish between the Germans and Italians to support Bush's approach. Thatcher could not let the matter rest there. She said that she shared Andreotti's concerns and wanted to study Bush's proposal more carefully. But one by one, other Allied heads of state supported the general thrust of the Bush approach.⁸³

Thatcher felt defeated, both by the American stance on Germany and by Washington's strong support for the further integration of Europe. After the NATO meeting in Brussels she knew there "was nothing I could expect from the Americans as regards slowing down German reunification -- possibly much I would wish to avoid as regards the drive towards European unity."⁸⁴

Kohl and his advisors, on the other hand, were elated. The framework from NATO would now dominate the treatment of Germany at the EC summit four days later. The world leaders would not derail Kohl's plan. "On the contrary!," Teltschik wrote. "The signal stayed green -- caution will be admonished, but the railway switches are all thrown the right way."⁸⁵

⁸³ Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 64-67; Zelikow interview with Blackwill, Cambridge, 1991. Despite growing calls for US troop cuts in Europe, American public support for the military commitment remained solid in late 1989. While in 1982 about 66% of Americans wanted to maintain or increase US troop strength in Europe, in November 1989 -- despite the political changes on the continent -- this figure had shrunk only 8 points, to 58%. The success of the May 1989 NATO summit may have played a part, as did wariness about future Soviet intentions and the uncertain political situation -- themes repeatedly emphasized by President Bush. On the polling data see Tutwiler to Baker, "Support for NATO and U.S. Troops in Europe," 8 Dec 89.

⁸⁴ Thatcher, The Downing Street Years, pp. 795-796.

⁸⁵ Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 67.

Gorbachev Strikes Back

The NATO allies were not the only ones to hear the news from Malta. Warsaw Pact heads of government also gathered on December 4 to hear Gorbachev's report. All these states except Poland were now ruled by Communist "reformers" except Romania. Gorbachev praised the Malta summit and Bush. He said Bush did not lecture him as Reagan sometimes did, but instead formulated careful positions "slowly, thoughtfully." In Gorbachev's book of his public and private statements, the chapter on Malta is entitled, "A Historic Breakthrough." Privately too, Gorbachev felt he could trust Bush.

But Gorbachev was displaying second thoughts about the way he had handled the German issue at Malta. He told the East European delegates, according to one participant, that both NATO and the Warsaw Pact must be maintained to preserve Europe's security. Kohl's speech, he said, had gone too far. Gorbachev asked for comments. There were none, except for a bitter tirade from Romania's dictator, Nicolae Ceaușescu, a man whose overthrow and execution by his own people was then only three weeks away. Modrow came to Moscow for the Warsaw Pact meeting and was able to meet personally with Gorbachev, who told Modrow that the East German's "treaty community" idea was fine only if it did not lead to German unification.⁸⁶

Storm clouds were forming around Modrow's once hopeful government. By early December it was clear that the East German people would force their government to allow free elections, whatever this choice might mean for the future of socialism in the GDR. On December 1 the Volkskammer voted to revoke the constitutional guarantee of the SED's leading role in politics. The country was

⁸⁶ For the official Soviet report on the Warsaw Pact summit meeting, see "Vstrecha rukovoditeleye godzudarstvuchastnikov Varshavskogo Dogovora [Meeting of the Leaders of the Warsaw Pact Member States]," *Vestnik*, no. 24 (58), December 31, 1989, pp. 42-45. For the account of the participant, as told to a journalist, see Oberdorfer, *The Turn*, pp. 384-86. Although Krenz insisted on going to Moscow with Modrow, the Soviets pointedly publicized Gorbachev's meeting with Modrow, treating the now discredited Krenz as a non-person. Ralf Georg Reuth & Andreas Bönte, *Das Komplott: Wie es wirklich zur deutschen Einheit kam* (München, Piper, 1993), pp. 185-186. Modrow later recounted the message he heard from Gorbachev to Rudolf Seiters. Teltschik, *329 Tage*, p. 68.

rocked by disclosures of top-level corruption. Shortly afterward the entire SED Politburo, then the full Central Committee, resigned their positions.

The arrests of former top officials began on December 3. They were charged with corruption and abuse of power. Krenz resigned his positions as head of state on December 6, leaving Modrow alone at the top. Civil authority began to break down. Some citizens' committees seized public buildings in order to stop secret police destruction of incriminating government records.⁸⁷

Kvitsinsky was recalled from Bonn back to Moscow to help prepare a long, highly secret, interdepartmental paper on upcoming Soviet negotiations with the government of the GDR. The paper contained his still controversial proposal to persuade the East German government to press the idea of a German confederation, as an alternative to unification. Kvitsinsky has written that he reminded his colleagues that the paper could only be put forward after it had been formally approved by the Politburo of the USSR.⁸⁸

On December 5 Gorbachev abruptly dropped his philosophical tone. The appeals to history and to Kohl's "sense of responsibility" were not working. Gorbachev had convinced Bush and Kohl that he was in fact relaxed about Germany's future, perhaps because -- as Chernyayev noted -- he liked to avoid confrontation in personal discourse. Now he seemed frustrated and angry that they had misread his message. To Chernyayev, Gorbachev seemed angriest that the West Germans had not consulted him about the ten points. Yet, when he had the chance to tell the American President that directly, he had not done so.

Genscher was the first target of the wrath of the now anxious and angry Soviet leader. In an extraordinary meeting that Chernyayev -- who was there -- thought

⁸⁷ See Deutschland Archiv, Chronik der Ereignisse, pp. 33-34; Pond, Beyond the Wall, pp. 140-45; Jarausch, The Rush to German Unity, pp. 70-76. In Washington, Blackwill convened a meeting of CIA and DIA analysts to review the situation in the GDR on December 7 and the US government closely monitored developments for signs of a breakdown of public order. Soviet forces remained quiet. See Benko (analyst attached to Blackwill's office) through Blackwill to Scowcroft, "Intelligence Community Assessment of Current Tensions in the GDR," 7 Dec 89.

⁸⁸ Kwizinski, Vor dem Sturm, p. 17.

went "far beyond the bounds" of Gorbachev's usual discussions with statesmen, Gorbachev treated Genscher like an errant child. He told Genscher at the start that the conversation would be serious and Genscher would not be spared, especially since the two men knew each other well and Gorbachev felt he could be direct. Genscher delivered a general presentation about Soviet-German rapprochement. Gorbachev said he could only welcome such comments. But more needed to be said.

This was a test of history, Gorbachev explained, and he could not understand why Kohl had come forward with his "ten-point" plan. Kohl's demand for revolutionary political change in the GDR as a condition to German assistance outraged him. "One should say this is an ultimatum, a 'diktat.'" The move had been an "absolute surprise" after Gorbachev thought he and the Chancellor had reached an understanding in their phone conversation on November 11. "And after that -- such a move!"

"Or maybe the Federal Chancellor does not need this anymore?" Gorbachev went on. "Perhaps he thinks that his melody, the melody of his march, is already playing and he is already marching to it." This could not be reconciled with the talk of constructing a common European home. Kohl had promised a balanced, responsible policy. But his practical steps were not consistent. These confederation ideas, Gorbachev exclaimed, what did they mean for defense and alliance membership? Would the FRG be in NATO, or the Warsaw Pact? "Did you think this all through?"

Genscher loyally defended the ten-point program, though in fact he had been surprised by it as much as Gorbachev. He pointed to the qualifying language, to the vague assurances. It was a proposal, not an ultimatum. Gorbachev would not be assuaged. The Chancellor, he said, was treating citizens of the GDR as if they were his subjects. The tone only eased when the two discussed how to portray the meeting to the press. They agreed to downplay the severe differences. Privately, however, the situation was now clear at least to Genscher. The Soviets "left no doubt" that Moscow thought the GDR must remain an independent state and a member of the

Warsaw Pact.⁸⁹

Breaking with what had become a practice of downplaying differences between Western and Soviet leaders, the Soviet press went out of its way to emphasize that Genscher's meetings with Gorbachev, Shevardnadze and Yakovlev had been "extremely frank."⁹⁰

Gorbachev formally reported on his German policy to the Communist Party's Central Committee in a plenum on December 9. "We underscore with all resoluteness," he declared, "that no harm will come to the GDR. It is our strategic ally and a member of the Warsaw Treaty." He attacked harshly Western attempts to "influence the processes underway in socialist countries" and promised to "neutralize attempts at such interference, in particular, in regard to the GDR."⁹¹

Meeting Gorbachev in Kiev the day after the Soviet president had savaged the West German foreign minister, the French president heard first-hand about Soviet anger with Bonn's behavior. At the end of November Gorbachev had phoned Mitterrand and reportedly told him that on the day Germany unifies, "a Soviet

⁸⁹ The most detailed account of the Gorbachev-Genscher meeting is in Chernyayev, Shest' Let s Gorbachevym, pp. 306-309. The "left no doubt" quotation is from Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, p. 70. For Genscher's own account to his counterparts of his meeting in Moscow, see State 3834, "12/13/89 Quadripartite Ministers' Meeting," 5 Jan 90. See also "M.S. Gorbachev Meets with H.D. Genscher," Pravda, December 6, 1989, p. 1, and "Talks at the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs," Izvestia, December 6, 1989, p. 4, in Current Digest of the Soviet Press vol. 41, no. 49 (1989), pp. 28-29. Shevardnadze's public criticism of Genscher was especially sharp. Teitschik was surprised to hear the Soviet hard-line after Bush's report of his more temperate talk with Gorbachev in Malta. 329 Tage, p. 68. Echoing Gorbachev's line (which he may have helped write) Valentin Falin told the British ambassador in Moscow on December 7 that the USSR thought Kohl, demonstrating "national egoism," had broken a promise to Gorbachev not to undertake any pan-German initiatives. On the hardening Soviet line see the analysis sent urgently (NIACT Immediate) to Washington in Moscow 35285, "Soviet Concerns About Germany," 9 Dec 89. The Falin comment was passed along by the British to their American colleagues in Moscow. Soviet deputy foreign minister Anatoly Adamishin also went out of his way on December 11 to convey a message in Paris to assistant secretary of state (for human rights) Richard Schifter that, in part because of the domestic criticism, Moscow was "deeply concerned" over the possibility of early German reunification. (Schifter heard concerns from senior officials in the French Foreign Ministry as well.) See Schifter to Baker, "Soviet Concern over German Reunification and French Thoughts Thereon," 15 Dec 89.

⁹⁰ See TASS reports, December 5, 1989, in FBIS-SOV 89-233, December 6, 1989, p. 51. The Pravda reports for the next day, December 6, are similar.

⁹¹ "M.S. Gorbachev's Speech at the December 9 CPSU Central Committee Plenum," Pravda, December 10, 1989, pp. 1-3, in FBIS-SOV 89-236, December 11, 1989, pp. 47, 52.

marshal will be sitting in my chair." In Kiev Mitterrand tried to meet Soviet concerns by announcing his agreement with the Soviet proposal for a CSCE summit meeting (to be held in Paris!). The two leaders also seemed to agree when Gorbachev, as at Malta, spoke of respect for postwar realities and the need to avoid any artificial urging forward of a reunification issue that was not yet relevant. Privately, the French confided later, the Soviets had severely criticized Kohl and his plan.

In public, Mitterrand spoke in his usual elliptical way about his friendship for Germany balanced by the need to include external issues in considering German unity. But consider the tone of this remark: "I hope that this situation [in Germany] will gain a necessary foundation and that there will not be a striving to divide, to somehow fragment Europe, that there will not be a situation like that which pertained on the eve of 1914, which did not lead to anything good, a situation which on the contrary might simply frighten people off."⁹²

With Soviet concerns ringing in his ears, Mitterrand flew back to France to prepare for another EC summit, a meeting of the European Council, that he would chair in Strasbourg on December 8. Mitterrand soon found that the British wanted him to help open up a Second Front against Kohl's plan. Discouraged by Bush's handling of the NATO summit meeting, Thatcher had still not given up. Her eyes

⁹² For French foreign minister Dumas' account of the meetings in Kiev, see State 3834, "12/13/89 Quadripartite Ministers' Meeting," 5 Jan 90. Mitterrand told Kohl, over breakfast during the EC summit on December 9, that Gorbachev had displayed "astonishing" inner peace about Germany but might react differently if developments moved too quickly toward unification. The Germans noticed that Mitterrand said nothing about the French side of this conversation. As usual, Kohl tried to downplay any concern about unification taking place anytime soon. Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 71. For Mitterrand's public statements, see Joint Press Conference in Kiev on December 6, 1989, FBIS translation of live broadcast by Moscow Domestic Service in Russian. Mitterrand's remarks can be contrasted with President Bush's unusually elaborate public explanation of the US position on unification on December 8, stressing German popular choice and his hope for a new Europe, in answering a question from a high school student in Colorado. Question and Answer Session with Students at John F. Kennedy High School in Denver, Colorado, December 8, 1989, in Public Papers, pp. 1671-1672. Whatever "inner peace" Gorbachev may have shown in Kiev, there is no evidence to support the assertion that Gorbachev actually was more supportive of unification at this meeting than Mitterrand was. For the assertion, attributed to Fyodor Burlatsky, see Pond, Beyond the Wall, p. 314 n. 23. Burlatsky's assertion does tend to confirm, however, that Mitterrand was confiding his anxieties about Germany to almost everyone (except for Helmut Kohl).

turned to Paris. "If there was any hope now of stopping or slowing down reunification," she recalled, "it would only come from an Anglo-French initiative."⁹³

Mitterrand and Thatcher had two private meetings in Strasbourg on the margin of the summit. The subject was Germany. Thatcher recalls Mitterrand as then being "still more concerned than I was." Mitterrand criticized Kohl's plan, and commented disparagingly on the Germans. So what could be done? Mitterrand said Kohl had already gone well beyond the assurances he had offered to EC colleagues in Paris a few weeks earlier. Mitterrand, according to Thatcher, commented that at times of great danger France and Britain had always established special relations. Such a time had come again. But the two leaders could not agree on a plan of action.⁹⁴

At least France could ease its worries by assuring itself that German steps toward unity must be matched by equally large steps toward European union. On these points Kohl was ready to agree. So France was able to accomplish its most important operational objectives for the Strasbourg summit of the European Community. Mitterrand won Kohl's support for convening, in late 1990, an Intergovernmental Conference which would amend the Treaty of Rome that had created the European Community in order to prepare a new treaty adopting an Economic and Monetary Union. In return the EC endorsed Germany's movement toward unification in terms similar to the guidelines proposed by President Bush at the December 4 NATO summit.

Yet the language on Germany was contested. The Germans reportedly sought unequivocal support for self-determination. The French and Italians objected that the Germans could not alone determine Germany's future. After a sometimes heated discussion, the EC heads of government agreed only on the following modest paragraph:

We seek the strengthening of the state of peace in Europe in which the German people will regain its unity through free self-determination [the

⁹³ Thatcher, The Downing Street Years, p. 796.

⁹⁴ Ibid., pp. 796-797.

traditional formula]. This process should take place peacefully and democratically, in full respect of the relevant agreements and treaties and of all the principles defined by the Helsinki Final Act, in a context of dialogue and East-West cooperation. It also has to be placed in the perspective of European integration.⁹⁵

Kohl commented later on the "icy climate" he encountered from his fellow leaders in Strasbourg. The winds from Moscow were chilly too.

The United States had been watching the pressure being put on Kohl with alarm. He seemed to be isolated on all fronts. Gorbachev might have been calm at Malta but now he seemed furious. In Bonn, though, Teltschik was still discounting the Soviet worries as just "appeals and warnings." After all, when West Germany had accepted deployment of new U.S. nuclear forces in 1983 "the Soviet leadership had threatened us with war and missiles."⁹⁶ Fortunately for Bonn, the Soviet, British, and French governments seemed to have an attitude without a policy.

The top priority for Moscow was to find some diplomatic brake that could slow developments in Germany. Gorbachev's late-November proposal for a 'Helsinki II', a CSCE summit, was still on the table even though the Soviet leader had failed to press the idea at Malta. From the Soviet perspective, such a CSCE Summit could treat the German problem in the context of broader changes in European political structures, such as the nature of the two alliance systems. Mitterrand had penly backed the Soviet suggestion and other West European governments were sympathetic, although Genscher showed more interest than Kohl.

The US government seriously considered the Soviet idea for a Helsinki II. American officials disagreed on how to respond. At State both Seitz and Ross urged Baker to "respond more positively to Helsinki II, even press it" as a way to hold the

⁹⁵ Conclusions of the Presidency, European Council, Strasbourg, 8 and 9 December 1989. See also Scowcroft to President Bush, "Mitterrand and the Strasbourg Summit," 13 Dec 89 (drafted by Blackwill). The CIA pointed up the similarities between the President's four principles on Germany and the EC's Strasbourg statement in an informal chart "Conditions for German Reunification," which Blackwill passed to General Scowcroft on December 13.

⁹⁶ Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 70.

allies together and get others to agree with the ideas for Europe-wide change that President Bush had announced in Brussels. Seitz's specific recommendations were more reserved, however, since he thought that in practice several conditions would need to be met before a CSCE summit could be held, including signature of a CFE (conventional arms control) treaty. Zoellick too thought about preconditions, both in CFE and in winning Europe-wide agreement on norms of democratic governance and principles of free enterprise. To Baker the debate seemed a bit abstract, since even Seitz's conditions, he noted, "would put it [the CSCE summit] in late 91 or 92 at earliest."⁹⁷

The NSC staff vehemently opposed the Helsinki II idea, and counseled the President to resist it when he met with Mitterrand in December. Blackwill thought a CSCE summit would divert attention from CFE and thought any 1990 summit should just be dedicated to signing the CFE treaty. Otherwise the idea could develop into an "open-ended negotiation about the future of Europe in about the worst multilateral setting one can imagine." General Scowcroft agreed. Fortunately for Washington, the issue never came to a head. When he met with Bush in December Mitterrand did not press the issue of a CSCE summit. Doubtful of its merits and not under strong pressure, the Americans remained cautious and the idea of a CSCE summit to deal with the German question stalled.⁹⁸

In any case, the Soviets -- rarely able in this period to pursue a policy line for very long -- pushed their own idea aside in favor of a different proposal for a Four Power meeting. On December 8, the day before Gorbachev explained his policy to the Central Committee, Moscow proposed a meeting of ambassadors of the Four

⁹⁷ See untitled note from Seitz to Baker, 4 Dec 89 (with Zoellick's annotated recommendation and Baker's marginal note), in Zoellick's office files. The concerns about preconditions for a CSCE summit influenced Baker's advice to Bush, just before the St. Martin meeting with Mitterrand, that Gorbachev's CSCE Summit proposal "puts the cart before the horse" by not letting allies decide first "what such a meeting might accomplish." Baker to President Bush, "Thoughts for the Mitterrand Meeting," Secto 19021, 16 Dec 89 (cabled from Brussels).

⁹⁸ Scowcroft to President Bush, "Mitterrand, the Germans, U.S.-EC Cooperation and the CSCE," 15 Dec 89 (drafted by Blackwill). See also Mitterrand's and the President's public comments at their St. Martin news conference. Public Papers, p. 1713.

Powers (US, UK, French, USSR) "within the shortest possible time" in Berlin to address grave concerns about events in the GDR and possible breakdown of public order there. The Soviets had no trouble getting French and British support. Mitterrand, still in Strasbourg for the EC Summit, conferred with colleagues and supported the Soviet proposal for the first meeting of Four Power ambassadors since the conclusion of the Quadripartite Agreement in 1971.

Asked if Bonn would be displeased with the four-power meeting, a senior French official replied, "That is the point of holding it."⁹⁹ Though they had rejected the idea at American urging on November 10, a great deal had happened in the interim to increase French and British unease.

The State Department and the White House quickly agreed that the Soviet proposal clashed with US policy, settled since mid-November, against invoking Four Power intervention to regulate German internal developments. Trying to dodge an open breach within the Alliance, Washington fashioned a reply back to the British and French, proposing that a Four Power meeting be held, but only to discuss the Allied Berlin initiative (originally offered by Reagan in 1987 and renewed by Bush in May 1989) to enhance Berlin's status as an international city through sports events like the Olympics, conferences, and youth exchanges. As a sovereign country, the Soviet Union would of course be able to talk about whatever it liked.¹⁰⁰ In a break with the tradition of four power consultations, the proposal was sent to Bonn as well.

The West Germans, though, did not want a meeting of the World War II victors from which they were formally excluded. Still Bonn went along with the American idea for a limited meeting with a limited subject. The Americans just wanted the meeting to be held quickly and with little fuss. Baker was preparing to go

⁹⁹ The French official was quoted in Jim Hoagland, "Germans and French," Washington Post, December 14, 1989, p. A31.

¹⁰⁰ See Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 8 Dec 89; account also draws from Zelikow's contemporary notes on Blackwill's conversations with Kimmitt and others at State and with officials at the British Embassy. On the background of the "Berlin initiative" see Maximychev, "What 'German Policy' We Need," pp. 58-60.

to Berlin (on the evening of December 11) and the United States wanted the four power affair to be over before he arrived.

The December 11 meeting of the four Ambassadors took place in the Allied Control Authority building in Berlin's American Sector. It began with the careful U.S. statement about the old Berlin initiative. The Soviet ambassador to East Germany, Kochemasov, reiterated the now-standard line that the existence of the two German states was a reality whose fate could only be determined by history, and proposed institutionalizing regular meetings of the Four Power ambassadors, to be prepared by a "multilateral working group." This would turn the Four Power forum into the regular institution for diplomatic discussions about developments in Germany. The U.S. managed to achieve Western consensus on the spot to decline this invitation.

Despite the Four Power meeting's modest content, the fact that it was held at all angered many West Germans. Ambassador Walters thought the widely reprinted picture of the four ambassadors of the victorious powers standing together in front of the old Allied command headquarters was "the worst picture of the year." But one of the Soviet officials involved thought that the meeting had been a warning shot which "beyond all doubt, [was] one of the major conditions that enabled the revolution in the GDR to remain bloodless."¹⁰¹ The Americans had reasoned that the best way to diffuse tensions at that moment was to do something "to bring the Soviets down from the ceiling." Moscow needed an outlet for its anxiety. So in fact did Paris and London. The meeting -- as uncomfortable as it was for the Germans -- served its purpose.

The more important priority for the U.S. was to keep the path for Kohl open -- free of conditions that Moscow, or for that matter, the French or British might attach. In early December, the only addendum to Bonn's goals were the principles articulated by Bush, putting Kohl on the record in support of continued German

¹⁰¹ See Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, pp. 73-74; Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 75, 79; USBerlin 3510, "Four-Power Talks on Berlin Initiative: December 11, 1989," 11 Dec 89; see also Bonn 39821, "Follow-Up on Four Power Talks in Berlin," 21 Dec 89. On the furious reaction in the West German press, see Pond, Beyond the Wall, p. 168. For the Soviet official's comment, see Maximychev, "What 'German Policy' We Need," p. 62.

alignment with NATO. As one of Genscher's top advisers put it, "In this way Bush had made Germany's NATO membership an unequivocal prerequisite for the later process of unification, like the solution of the border question with Poland."¹⁰²

A week after the Strasbourg Summit, Mitterrand flew to a French island in the Caribbean, St. Martin, to review developments in Europe in person with President Bush. They discussed the future of Germany at some length. Again Mitterrand tried to find the proper balance. Though not projecting the alarm Thatcher recalls from the Strasbourg summit, Mitterrand was clearly very troubled about developments in Germany. This time Mitterrand agreed with President Bush that Germany could unify, with "a proper transfer." But the objections of the Soviets, Poles, Czechs, Belgians, Danes, Italians, and others, could not be ignored. Mitterrand said he had told Kohl [the two leaders had just met in Switzerland] that Germany should go no faster than the EC, or the whole thing "will end up in the ditch."

Mitterrand repeated that, for him, developments in Germany were linked to developments in NATO and the EC. He could understand what the Germans wished and it was hard to stop them — we could not go to war against Germany. But if Kohl went too fast it could cause a diplomatic crisis. It would have the wrong effect, complicating East-West relations at a time when the West was winning hands down.

Baker pointed out that the NATO and Strasbourg summits had shown the way to a common position. Mitterrand said he agreed with Bush's position. But he was trying to manage the contradictions of the situation. Fast movement could disrupt the equilibrium in Europe and the frontiers. Mitterrand's anxiety seemed to spill over as Mitterrand went on to say there needed to be a new Europe or Europe would be back in 1913 (the metaphor Mitterrand had also used in Kiev) and everything could be lost.¹⁰³

¹⁰² Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, p. 55.

¹⁰³ Memcon of Meeting with President Mitterrand, St. Martin, 16 Dec 89. See also Scowcroft to President Bush, "Scope Paper - Your Meeting with President Mitterrand," 15 Dec 89 (drafted by Basora and Blackwill); and Scowcroft to President Bush, "Mitterrand, the Germans, U.S.-EC Cooperation and the CSCE," December 15, 1989 (drafted by Blackwill). At the joint press conference after their meeting, Bush

Baker Travels to Berlin -- and Potsdam

Consequently, as Secretary Baker traveled to Berlin on December 11, he knew the political environment in Germany was increasingly unstable. Soviet fears were growing, and the narrow Four Power outlet the Allies had been granted for them would not placate Moscow for long. The CIA estimated that a complete political reshaping of East Germany was now certain to occur within months, leading to non-Communist rule and a dramatic intensification of sentiment for reunification. State's diplomats reported that West German parties tended to support Kohl's program, but with significant qualifications. Genscher was going out of his way to reassure the Soviets that their interests would be addressed. In December, even in conservative Bavaria, "an almost universal disquietude about inconceivably rapid developments seem to be gaining the upper hand." If Kohl stumbled, the Federal Republic's readiness to take on the difficult task of actually moving toward unity might fade.¹⁰⁴

En route to Berlin, the Secretary stopped off in London and heard again from Thatcher about her unhappiness with premature consideration of German unity. Arriving in Berlin, the Secretary's first major event was a speech to the Berlin Press Club, in the Steigenberger Hotel, to help meet his trip's first major objective: to consolidate a common Western vision of how Europe's political structures could adapt

and Mitterrand were asked whether they had agreed to slow down Kohl's drive toward reunification. The replies were revealing. The President instantly answered, "No." Mitterrand said there was a great conformity of view in the US about slowing down Mr. Kohl, but "we think that everything, as was said in Strasbourg, is to be done in the respect of treaties and the principles of Helsinki; and that at present, there are two states." If this evolution became faster, Mitterrand added, "it would be a good thing for the German authorities to contribute at the same time, to develop the parallel construction" of the new Europe in the EC, CSCE, and elsewhere. Kohl had assured him he would not precipitate events. Kohl was a German patriot "and he obviously has reflexes which are not mine" but as leaders of their countries, they had developed an outline on which they could agree. Joint News Conference in St. Martin, French West Indies, December 16, 1989, in Public Papers, pp. 1711-1712.

¹⁰⁴ See CIA, "East Germany: Movement Toward Democracy and Reunification," 11 Dec 89; Munich 4955, "Bavarians and the Reunification Question," 15 Dec 89; Bonn 38006, "Kohl's Ten-Point Program: A Burst of Criticism and then More Embracing," 5 Dec 89; Claus Gennrich, "Genscher Pledges Respect for Soviet Security Interests," Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, December 13, 1989, p. 4; Bonn 38015, "The SPD and the German Question," 5 Dec 89.

as the continent's division -- and hopefully the division of Germany -- came to an end. His speech was entitled: "A New Europe, A New Atlanticism: Architecture for a New Era."

President Bush had already outlined how he thought Europe could "consolidate the fruits of this peaceful revolution and ... provide the architecture for continued peaceful change." Baker explained in his address that the "new architecture for a new era" must, first, offer an opportunity for the division of Berlin and of Germany to be overcome through peace and freedom. Second, it should reflect the continued linkage of America's security to Europe's security.

The first element of the new architecture would be new missions for NATO. In addition to its traditional mission of deterrence and defense, the Alliance would attend more to non-military aspects of security, specifically including the CFE treaty and arms control verification. The Alliance would also need to pay more attention to regional conflicts and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It would consider new Western initiatives, as in the CSCE, to build political and economic ties with the East. NATO's example of a cooperative, not coercive, alliance for common security was important for Europe and, Baker asserted, even the interests of the Soviet Union would be served by maintaining a vigorous NATO.

The second element in the new architecture would be in the future development of the European Community. Building on Bush's May 1989 announcement, the U.S. renewed its support for political as well as economic integration within the Community. Baker proposed "a significantly strengthened set of institutional and consultative links" between the United States and the Community, as well as expanded EC support for the new democracies of Eastern Europe.

A final element in the new architecture was the CSCE. Baker argued that CSCE had outgrown the pessimistic view in 1975 that it would only codify the postwar status quo. Instead the organization had set up standards for human rights and consultation that were already helping to overcome the division of Europe. To go further Baker proposed new agreements in each of the organization's three "baskets" of issues: security, economic transactions, and human rights.

In the economic "basket," he offered a new initiative -- building on a suggestion Bush had presented to Gorbachev in Malta -- to involve the CSCE in setting guidelines for the transition from planned to free market economies. These principles could be agreed at the CSCE intersessional meeting on these issues already scheduled to be held in Bonn during May 1990. Finally, in the human rights basket, the Secretary renewed the idea -- first introduced by Bush in his May 1989 Mainz speech -- of asking the CSCE to set standards for the conduct of free elections. New Europe-wide rules for democratic governance could become the top priority for the CSCE process.

Baker then turned to Germany. He reiterated the four principles the President had stated in Brussels. He told his German audience that "this very positive course will not be easy, nor can it be rushed. It must be peaceful. It must be democratic. And of course, it must respect the legitimate concerns of all the participants in the New Europe."

The repetition of the four principles on German unification now received much wider public notice in Western Europe. The French and British press was positive, while the mainstream West German press commented, to quote Die Welt, that the US approach could provide "the decisive support for a newly-forming Europe and especially for German reunification." Even Shevardnadze later told Manfred Woerner he had carefully noted the step-by-step approach recommended in Baker's speech. Bush had promised American leadership. His policy statement at the NATO summit and Baker's speech were now delivering on that promise.¹⁰⁵

But the Americans were a little unnerved by what they saw in Berlin. Along

¹⁰⁵ This was the judgment in Bonn at both the chancellery and the foreign ministry. See Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 78; Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, pp. 58-59. See also the appraisal in Pond, Beyond the Wall, pp. 153-154. On the speech see also the background briefing on the speech in PA transcript, Briefing by Senior State Department Officials (Ross and Zoellick) in Berlin, 12 Dec 89. For Shevardnadze's comment, see USNATO 7044, "IS Notes of Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze's Meeting with NATO SYG Woerner at NATO Headquarters - December 19, 1989," 19 Dec 89. It appears that Baker had discussed the main elements of his speech with President Bush before his departure, on December 9 or 10. See Dobbins to Baker, "Talkers for Use with the President," undated (probably 8 Dec 89). The handwritten annotations on State's file copy of this memo are Zoellick's, but the memo was also marked up by Baker in a manner indicating that he probably used it to brief Bush.

the motorcade route in Berlin, they had seen campaign slogans plastered everywhere by the CDU, gathering for a party conference: "One people; one nation!" Meeting with Kohl over breakfast on December 12, Baker pressed Kohl to be more careful in his handling of the Soviets, British, and French. Baker began the conversation by restating the consistent American support for German unification. But surely, he said, Kohl could understand the nervousness of the USSR, the UK, and France.

For the first time, the German chancellor was defensive with the Americans and bristled. He said that the West might be embarking on a dangerous path, confronting the German people. The FRG did not want to upset the current equilibrium in the GDR. But the most dangerous gate "on this slalom course" was real public opinion, as opposed to the opinions found in the media. The people in the two German states would want to grow together. They had to be offered a "perspective" on how they might eventually get there. Again, Kohl explained that unification would take a number of years. But now Kohl's estimate was 3 or 4 years, not five or ten. First there would be 'contractual relationships' and then confederal structures -- like joint governmental committees -- even before a confederation, which was still short of federation. But people had to see "a perspective." Without it, there was a danger of violent frustration in the GDR.

Kohl then informed Secretary Baker, in confidence, that he hoped to see Gorbachev soon. (In fact, the Soviets would stall and refuse to see the German chancellor until early February.) Kohl said that he understood Soviet concerns, stemming from the war. Kohl thought Gorbachev objected only to making federation the goal of the ten-point plan. Kohl argued that if he had not put forward his plan the Soviets might have proposed reunification linked to the neutralization of Germany in a reprise of Stalin's ploy in 1952. Such a move, he asserted, had been in the air.

Kohl was happy the U.S. did not have the complexes other Europeans had about Germany. Thatcher opposed mentioning unification as a goal, hoping it would go away. The British had won two world wars and lost an empire. Germany had lost twice but was again the number one power in Europe economically. Some thought the prospect of adding another 17 million Germans to this power was a

nightmare. Kohl said he had told Thatcher, shortly after visiting Churchill's grave, that the difference between them was that Kohl lived in the post-Churchill era and Thatcher lived in the pre-Churchill era. Mitterrand, in Kohl's view, was more far-sighted. He recognized that the key was to tie Germany to Europe, to the EC. This was why Kohl was ready to push for new European monetary integration even over the objections of the Bundesbank.

Baker said the nervous countries needed to be reassured about Bonn's firm anchor to the West. The borders issue was also important. Kohl said that those who were worried about the Oder-Neisse border talked about borders in the plural because they also wanted to freeze the inner-German border as well. The FRG had made commitments to Poland on the Oder-Neisse line and would stand by them, even if it still lacked the legal authority to make commitments for 'Germany as a whole.' In an implicit linkage between flexibility on the inner-German border and the Polish-German border, Kohl said that if FRG-GDR reunification were on the table tomorrow there would be no problem for Poland's border.

Kohl said he was being completely open with the U.S. The FRG's relationship with the United States was its most important international tie. He would maintain a step-by-step approach. He knew America had reacted positively to his ten-point plan. He asked repeatedly for continued US understanding and support.

Baker replied by, in effect, offering Kohl guidance for his future behavior. Everyone's statements on the German question were being carefully scrutinized, Baker said, and the Chancellor would need to be watchful to see that his statements were not taken out of context. The Secretary said he was pleased that the Chancellor supported a gradual and peaceful strategy that took account of others' concerns. There would be resistance. That was why it was so important for the process to be handled correctly.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 77; State 408228, "Secretary's December 12 Meeting with Chancellor Kohl," 26 Dec 89. Before Baker's trip, officials in Washington were so worried about West German antagonism of other governments that they had considered whether Baker should give Kohl, in this meeting, a letter from Bush highlighting the need for better US-FRG consultations during the period ahead. A draft was prepared but President Bush decided such a letter was unnecessary.

Knowing that Kohl believed that the pace of events in the East was quickening, Baker had to decide whether to visit the German Democratic Republic. At the end of November Baker had read a CIA analysis of the changing relationship between the two German states. He studied the paper closely, and noted one clear conclusion: "GDR holds key!"¹⁰⁷ Baker would be the first U.S. secretary of state to visit the GDR and the political situation was very unstable. There was a great deal to worry about. Would Baker's trip be read as support for two German states and a rejection of Kohl? On the evening of December 11, Baker conferred with his advisers, with Ambassadors Barkley and Walters, and with Minister Gilmore of the US Mission in Berlin. Barkley encouraged a stop in the GDR; Walters disagreed.

Baker decided to go.¹⁰⁸ He arranged a meeting in Potsdam, in the GDR (not in Berlin), with Modrow and with Church leaders who had played such an important part in mobilizing opposition to the old regime. Toward dusk on December 12 the Secretary and his party drove across the Glienecke Bridge, scene of spy exchanges in the bitterest days of the Cold War, into Potsdam.

One factor in Baker's decision was his desire to bolster the Modrow government enough so that it could prepare free multi-party elections for the GDR (then planned for May 1990). As Baker began his meeting with Modrow, U.S. officials were startled when a gentleman entered the room appearing to be the former SED leader, Egon Krenz, whom Baker would not have agreed to see. They were relieved to observe that the gentleman was a waiter who merely bore an eerie resemblance to Krenz. Baker, like Kohl, linked any Western economic assistance for the GDR to fundamental political and economic reform. He stressed the importance

On the border issue, Kohl had offered private assurances at the EC Summit in Strasbourg similar to those he extended to Secretary Baker. The Dutch were reportedly satisfied with these Strasbourg assurances. The Hague 10159, "German-Polish Border: Dutch Claim Germans Gave Assurances at EC Summit," 20 Dec 89.

¹⁰⁷ CIA, "The Changing Relationship Between the Two Germanys: Prospects and Implications," EUR M 89-20218, 29 Nov 89 (Baker's marked up copy in Zoellick's office files).

¹⁰⁸ For the disgruntled account of the adviser whose advice was rejected, see Walters, Die Vereinigung war vorausehbar, pp. 65-66.

of genuinely free elections. Modrow pledged his commitment to reform.

The Church leaders assured Baker that they too counted on Modrow to manage the transition to free elections. The clerics openly described their fears about the future. There was widespread anger about the disclosures of Communist corruption and a desire for vengeance against the long-hated secret police. The danger of violence was real. Further, the Churchmen believed popular desire for unification with the FRG was growing, as the shortest path for matching the material prosperity of the West. The clergymen did not necessarily sympathize with this mood, but they had to reckon with it. Baker noted that the two Germanies could come together economically before moving to political unification. But the Lutheran leaders thought people would demand more, and they feared international conditions would not permit the rapid movement toward unification needed to appease the demands to accelerate the process.¹⁰⁹

Immediately after his meetings in Potsdam the Secretary traveled onward to Brussels. He met with EC foreign ministers on December 13, principally to discuss the status of economic assistance for Eastern Europe. Most importantly, on the evening of December 13 he had a working dinner with Foreign Ministers Hurd, Dumas, and Genscher to discuss Berlin and German issues.

The ministers responded positively to the themes articulated in Secretary Baker's Berlin speech. But the Germans were still angry about the sight of Four Power ambassadors standing together in Berlin. Genscher told Baker, Hurd, and Dumas that there should never be another meeting like this. Never again should the Germans be at what Genscher called the "cat's table." Behind the scenes, Genscher's advisors had begun to warn of the danger of a new peace treaty "like Versailles." Baker put his hand on Genscher's arm and said, "Hans-Dietrich, we have understood

¹⁰⁹ The account of the Potsdam meetings is based on Brussels 16024, "Fastpress: Background Briefing by Senior Administration Official (Baker) Tegel Airport en route Brussels, Dec 12," 13 Dec 89; PA transcript, "Background Briefing by Senior State Department Officials (given by Ross and Zoellick in the press bus in Potsdam en route to Tegel Airport), 12 Dec 89; Modrow, Aufbruch und Ende, p. 94; and the author's own recollections of the trip.

you." ¹¹⁰

Other European statesmen pursued their own efforts to moderate the quickening pace toward German unity. Mitterrand, completing his energetic round of diplomatic consultations, met with Modrow in East Berlin on December 21 and called for caution, as well as closer GDR ties to Western Europe. Privately, one of Mitterrand's advisors warned Teltschik again that Kohl was going too fast, pressing the pace of change. ¹¹¹

Nevertheless, as the last days of 1989 approached, Helmut Kohl clearly held the reins in determining Germany's future. Bush and Baker had deliberately decided to legitimize Kohl's program. The U.S. had succeeded in adding its own objective -- Germany's continued membership in NATO, anchoring the FRG firmly to the West. America's diplomatic strategy was intended to calm the Soviets and keep the allies from descending into renewed national hostilities so that Washington and Bonn's goals could be achieved.

Chancellor Kohl tried to reassure the Soviets. He sent a message to Gorbachev promising not to destabilize the situation in Europe. It was the people, he wrote, who were putting the German question back on the agenda. Any developments would be embedded in all-European structures. He recognized legitimate Soviet security interests. As this message was being delivered, Gorbachev was sending his own letter to Kohl. Its tone was cold. Gorbachev said the USSR would do all it could to "neutralize" intervention in the GDR's internal affairs. East Germany was a strategic partner of the Soviet Union and the existence of two German states was a historic fact. ¹¹²

Undaunted by Gorbachev's rebuff, Kohl pressed on with the first steps in his

¹¹⁰ For accounts of the meetings see Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, pp. 74-75 (which quotes Genscher and Baker -- Elbe was present); State 3834, "12/13/89 Ministers' Meeting," 5 Jan 90.

¹¹¹ On the comment from Mitterrand's advisor (Jean-Louis Bianco), see Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 96.

¹¹² Kohl's message was sent to Moscow on December 14. Gorbachev's message was waiting when Kohl returned on December 18 from a visit to Hungary. Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 80-81, 85.

ten-point plan, meeting with Modrow in Dresden on December 19 to begin negotiating new agreements on social, cultural, and economic ties between the two German states. The two leaders announced they would open the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin as a border crossing and remove remaining restrictions on cross-border movement in time for Christmas.

Addressing cheering crowds in Dresden, Kohl spoke emotionally of the German nation and was met with chants for unification. Kohl had rallied political support for his cause within his party. He had kept his program for unity on the table and now, as he hoped, the East German people were rallying to the dream he, Kohl, had told them could really come true.

In Washington, even the Americans were becoming worried that the CDU was beginning to act imprudently. Conceding that Kohl had scored a public relations coup in his visit to East Germany, Secretary Baker advised President Bush that Kohl's activities "may raise again the question with some, however, of whether the Chancellor's domestic political interest is leading him too far, too fast on the issue of unification; he's tapping emotions that will be difficult to manage."¹¹³

Clearly the frenzied diplomacy in the month after the opening of the Berlin Wall had dramatically altered the political landscape. Genscher's adviser Frank Elbe captured the difference when he recalled that in the middle of November he told Zoellick that "the tempo of German unification cannot be permitted to endanger the stability of Europe." In early December Elbe was now telling Zoellick, "If German unity doesn't come, that will endanger the stability of Europe."¹¹⁴ As pressure mounted in 1990, no one doubted any longer that the two German states would come together as one. The most difficult challenge now was to determine when and how, and to balance these plans against the danger of a new East-West crisis that could

¹¹³ Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 20 Dec 89. On Kohl's trip to the GDR, see Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 87-96.

¹¹⁴ Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, p. 47 (emphasis added). Elbe remembers that Zoellick replied to the December warning by agreeing that, "We also see it that way."

plunge Europe back into a renewed cold war.

Chapter Seven
THE PROCESS BECOMES THE TWO PLUS FOUR
(December 1989 - February 1990)

Shevardnadze Muses; Pressure Mounts on Kohl

As Soviet anger with Kohl's ten-point plan began surfacing in early December 1989, the Soviet foreign minister, Eduard Shevardnadze, was wondering how to translate Moscow's concerns into an international policy. He knew the Soviet government had lost the initiative. In November his ambassador in Bonn, Kvitsinsky, had urged him to get ahead of Kohl and recover momentum with a plan for a confederal Germany to be sponsored, of course, by the East Germans. The Soviet government had judged the plan too radical. The East German government had pressed the idea of a limited confederation. The Soviet government had remained anxious but passive.

So weeks had passed without Kohl's move receiving any clear public rebuff. Kohl's announcement had shrewdly used the language of confederation, but Germans east and west knew that the pole of unification now guided Kohl's compass. In this climate many East Germans were now thinking the unthinkable, speculating about direct unification with West Germany rather than some sort of confederation that would preserve separate East and West German states. The Soviet Union thus faced a very tough decision -- whether to fight unification inch by inch or side with German national aspirations, freely accepting some form of unification in order to insist upon conditions that would protect the perceived interests of both the East German republic and the USSR.

Shevardnadze was preparing to give a major address to the Political Commission of the European Parliament in Brussels on December 19. Unhappy with the hardline speech drafted for him by the European Department of the Foreign Ministry, he asked his close aide Sergei Tarasenko to compose more forward-looking remarks. The foreign minister wanted to cede the possibility of unification but force

states to confront the serious issues that would arise.¹

Tarasenko, though no expert on Germany, obliged. But as he set out to prepare the delicately balanced speech, his job was made harder by the stance that Gorbachev had taken on December 9 at the meeting of the CPSU's Central Committee. As mentioned in Chapter Six, Gorbachev's angry and inflexible remarks, probably influenced by the views of top Central Committee international adviser Falin, left no doubt that the Soviet Union would fight for the GDR's continued existence and continued acceptance of the "post war realities."² Gorbachev's firm public position had to be taken into account in preparing Shevardnadze's speech. Shevardnadze could not imply that Moscow accepted German unification. Thus Tarasenko prepared a draft that focused on the conditions to be attached to unification, appearing to accept the possibility that unification might occur. The draft went back to the European Department. Bondarenko and his deputy were upset with what they saw. They confronted Tarasenko, yelling at him that "it was impossible to accept the possibility of unification. It could not be discussed this way. "Tell that to the minister," Tarasenko shot back.

The officials then took their disagreement to Shevardnadze. Bondarenko insisted that Shevardnadze should not go beyond Gorbachev's statement. Shevardnadze retorted that he was a minister, "not a parrot." He could not just go to Brussels and speak nonsense. Moscow needed a constructive approach, not just a negative stance of trying to block developments.

The speech was polished and Shevardnadze departed for the West with his text mostly intact. He did not clear the remarks with the Politburo; nor did he circulate his draft to the Central Committee staff. But Shevardnadze respected Yuli Kvitsinsky's knowledge of Germany and shared his draft speech with this seasoned

¹ Author interview with Tarasenko, Providence, June 1993. Tarasenko was assisted by Teymuraz Stepanov from Shevardnadze's policy planning unit.

² For more on Gorbachev's December speech to the Central Committee plenum see Chapter 6, note 91, and accompanying text.

diplomat. Kvitsinsky also thought the Tarasenko draft went too far. He cleverly edited the speech to tilt it away from implicit acceptance of unification and harden the conditions. Shevardnadze received Kvitsinsky's rewrite at the last minute, after he had already arrived in Brussels. Tarasenko protested Kvitsinsky's changes, but Shevardnadze chose to accept them.³

The result was that Shevardnadze's speech -- the first comprehensive Soviet policy statement on the revival of the German question -- was a strange hybrid of old and new. The minister seemed to muse indecisively before the world, raising questions but providing no answers to them.

The premise of the speech was that German unification was indeed on the agenda: The possibility had to be considered. But then, Shevardnadze appeared to rule out unification, while at the same time posing questions about how it could happen. He then offered no alternative conception for East Germany's future. The effect was at once puzzling and ominous.

Europe, Shevardnadze said, faced a choice between a "polarization of forces" or becoming a "polycentric community of peoples and states." If the entire legal environment in Europe was not considered, it was possible for one state "to catch some point of detail or other and by pulling it upon oneself bring about the collapse of the whole structure."

Shevardnadze restated Gorbachev's public stand at the Central Committee plenum, including the warning that departure from postwar realities of two German states would threaten "destabilization in Europe." The Soviet Union would, however, support peaceful cooperation between the GDR and FRG based on respect for the equality and sovereignty of both states. Yet the future progress of such cooperation, he said, would be determined by history "within the framework of development of the all-European process," a clear link to parallel progress in the CSCE. This would clearly be "interstate" cooperation, as envisioned in the 1972 treaty between the FRG and GDR, thus hinting at readiness to support some sort of confederation.

³ Author interview with Tarasenko, Providence, June 1993.

Becoming even more strident, Shevardnadze warned that the Helsinki process of pan-European cooperation should not "go to ruin on German soil. That is impermissible." The Allied powers had legal rights over Germany. As if that was not enough, Shevardnadze added the frightening comment that the Four Powers "have at their disposal a considerable contingent of armed forces equipped with nuclear weapons on the territory of the GDR and the FRG."

So the postwar realities could not be ignored. These included the postwar borders, and anyone who reopened the "definitive and irreversible" borders of Europe would block any further advancement in relations between the GDR and the FRG. "Self-determination" was important, but it could not allow for "instructions on how and at what times to change the state structure of the GDR." There had been a chance to get a united democratic Germany, Shevardnadze acknowledged, but that time had gone. It had passed after rejection of the Soviet note of 1952 and the FRG decision to join NATO.

Having denounced German unification unequivocally, Shevardnadze then posed seven direct questions to be addressed by anyone who wanted to restore German unity. They were:

First, where are the political, juridical, and material guarantees that German unity, in the long term, will not create a threat to the national security of other states and to peace in Europe? There is no answer to this question.

Second, will such a hypothetical Germany -- if it comes into being -- be willing to recognize the existing borders in Europe and renounce any territorial claims whatsoever? As is known, the government of the FRG is avoiding an answer to that question.

Third, what place would this German national formation take in the military-political structures existing on our continent? For one cannot seriously think that the status of the GDR will change radically while the status of the FRG will remain as it was.

Fourth, in the event of German unity taking shape, what will be the real potential of this new formation? What will be its military doctrine and the structure of its armed forces? Will it be prepared to take steps toward demilitarization, to adopt a neutral status and radically

restructure its economic and other ties with Eastern Europe as was envisaged in the past?

Fifth, what will be the attitude toward the presence on German soil of Allied troops and to the continued operation of military liaison missions and to the Quadripartite Agreement of 1971?

Sixth, how will the possible creation of such a German formation tie in with the Helsinki process? Will this promote its constructive development in the direction of overcoming the division of Europe, eliminating any discrimination in mutual relations between European states and further movement toward creating unified legal, economic, ecological, cultural, and information zones in Europe?

Seventh, if the German states do in some way express themselves in favor of starting to move toward the unity of the Germans, will they be ready to consider the interests of other European states and, on a collective basis, to seek mutually acceptable solutions for all issues and problems which may arise in this connection, including concluding a European peace settlement?⁴

Looking back in his memoirs, Shevardnadze considers this speech to have been an important breakthrough, believing that he dramatically ceded the possibility of unification in order to recapture the initiative. This may have been the minister's original intention. Yet the speech Shevardnadze actually delivered reflected the dilemmas in Soviet foreign policy without resolving them.⁵

Shevardnadze's warnings went largely unnoticed in the West German press, preoccupied with Kohl's tumultuous visit to East Germany, civil strife in Romania, and the American invasion of Panama. But the West German foreign ministry thought the speech was very worrying. The Soviets were now publicizing the harsh message they had given privately to Genscher two weeks earlier. There was no doubt

⁴ "Europe: A Time of Change -- E.A. Shevardnadze's Speech at the European Parliament Political Commission," Pravda, December 20, 1989, p. 4, in FBIS-SOV 89-243, December 20, 1989, pp. 25-31.

⁵ See Eduard Shevardnadze, The Future Belongs to Freedom, trans. Catherine Fitzpatrick (New York: The Free Press, 1991), pp. 135-136. For a contemporary analysis of the speech, see CIA, "An Analysis of Shevardnadze's Seven Questions on German Unification," SOV M 89-20099, 29 Dec 89. To place the speech in the context of political developments within the Soviet Union, see Moscow 37130, "Gorbachev's Foreign Policy Facing Critical Tests," 23 Dec 89.

that Moscow would insist on an independent GDR, allied to the Soviet Union. On the other hand Teltschik, at the Chancellery, preferred to see Shevardnadze's questions as an effort to initiate a dialogue on the terms of unification.⁶

Still, the open Soviet hostility left Kohl exposed to domestic political criticism. His position became more vulnerable as West German politicians called upon Kohl to state his acceptance of the postwar border with Poland. The respected President of the Republic, Richard von Weizsäcker, urged the government to reaffirm that the border with Poland was inviolable. CDU colleague and Bundestag president Rita Süßmuth also suggested a joint FRG-GDR declaration that would again recognize Poland's western border.

Kohl called this proposal "unacceptable," noting that the FRG's position was already clear and that neither the FRG nor the GDR had the legal authority to settle the border question in a more definitive way. The Four Powers had long ago reserved the ultimate power to determine the borders of "Germany as a whole." Kohl's position was legally defensible. But many West Germans believed Kohl's argument to be a clever dodge, designed to pander to a few voters who resented the loss of so much historic German territory in 1945 and might be attracted away from the CDU to far right-wing opposition parties. Kohl was thus attacked for sacrificing international stability upon the altar of his domestic political ambitions.⁷

⁶ See Richard Kiessler & Frank Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken: Der diplomatische Weg zur deutschen Einheit (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1993), pp. 68-72; Horst Teltschik, 329 Tage: Innenansichten der Einigung (Berlin: Siedler, 1991), pp. 92-93.

⁷ For the Süßmuth & Kohl statements, see Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, December 30, 1989, p. 5; General Anzeiger, January 2, 1990, p. 2; see also Bonn 40202, "CDU Leaders React to Criticism of President von Weizsaecker's Call for Recognition of Poland's Western Border," 29 Dec 89; Bonn 79, "Poland's Western Border: Kohl Calls 'Unacceptable' Proposal for Joint FRG-GDR Declaration," 2 Jan 90.

The legal issue was whether the FRG had the legal capacity to settle the border with Poland. As discussed in Chapter Three, the Four Powers had reserved ultimate authority over the border of Germany in the Berlin Declaration and Potsdam agreement of 1945, with the Western allies recognizing the continued reservation of their rights in all subsequent agreements, such as the Relations Convention of 1955 and Quadripartite Agreement of 1971. Further, the West Germans had argued, with support from the U.S. and Great Britain, that "Germany" still existed as a potential state with capacity to conclude agreements about its borders or other subjects once this state was reestablished. The Polish and East German position, occasionally shared by the Soviets, was that "Germany" had been irrevocably extinguished in 1945. The FRG and the GDR were its successors. These two states had each declared their assent to the existing

Kohl was also under pressure from the new, even more reformist, East German government headed by Hans Modrow. The Modrow government was weak but was fighting to broaden its base of popular support. Modrow's government established a partnership with a "roundtable," created under church auspices, that included more than thirty delegates from every existing political faction. Most of these delegates reflected the views of the dissident elite that had led or helped organize the protests of October and November. These dissidents, like Modrow, opposed unification and pressed instead for reconstruction of the GDR, searching for a "Third Way" between communism and capitalism. Trade union representatives even threatened to stage a general strike if the government moved toward unity with the capitalist west.

The roundtable agreed on a May 1990 date for new parliamentary elections. The members of the roundtable began to behave as a surrogate parliament and to take on the still powerful and recalcitrant secret police, publicizing new revelations about the murderous activities of the Stasi. The East German Communist Party, the SED, under its new reformist leader Gregor Gysi, changed its name to the Party of Democratic Socialism -- PDS (for a time it was known by the hybrid acronym SED-PDS). For a short time it looked as if the GDR might regain its footing with a new program of reform socialism.

With the date for free elections set, Modrow turned his attention to Bonn and pressed Kohl to make good on his promise of comprehensive aid. Kohl balked. He refused Modrow's request for an emergency sum of 15 billion Deutschmarks while giving substantial financial assistance for infrastructure improvement and authorizing the negotiation of agreements on broader economic cooperation. Respect was rising for Modrow's government and, though polls were not wholly reliable, there seemed to be greater support for the East German leader's "treaty community" between the

GDR-Polish border in the 1950 Treaty of Görlitz (GDR-Poland) and the 1970 Treaty of Warsaw (FRG-Poland). See, e.g., Wladyslaw Czapinski, "The New Polish-German Treaties and the Changing Political Structure of Europe," American Journal of International Law, 86 (1992): 163, 164; Jochen Abr. Frowein, "Legal Problems of the German Ostpolitik," International & Comparative Law Quarterly, 23 (1974): 105.

two German states than for direct unification into one country.⁸

Helmut Kohl was clearly at another crossroads. Conditions in East Germany were unsettled; the Soviets were hostile. He was under fire within his own party and from his coalition partner, Genscher. His plan for unity was on the table, but what was the next step? Talks with Mitterrand at the French President's home in southwest France shed no new light. The momentum toward unity had surely slowed as 1989 came to an end.⁹

The Soviets Push Again for Four Power Intervention

There was anxiety in Washington too. Bush's four principles on German unity had shielded Kohl's program from Western attacks while tying it to German membership in NATO. The principles had served their purpose. The U.S. also needed a new policy.

As Robert Blackwill paused to think about next steps, he wondered whether America ought to slow down the process that it had helped to accelerate. He was worried about what the Soviets might do.

Blackwill and a member of his staff, Robert Hutchings, sent a memorandum to Scowcroft arguing that Gorbachev, alarmed at the threat to the GDR's existence, might call for a German peace conference, perhaps inviting all the World War II combatants. Gorbachev could well persuade other countries to agree, especially if he pleaded privately that his political and even personal survival was at stake.

At such a German peace conference, the Soviet leader could then propose that Germany be reunified over a period of years, under conditions of neutrality and substantial demilitarization. The Soviets might propose, for example, that Germany remain in the EC but not in NATO. The East Germans would support the Soviets on

⁸ See Konrad Jarausch, The Rush to German Unity (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 76-89, 91-92; Elizabeth Pond, Beyond the Wall: Germany's Road to Unification (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1993), pp. 145-152; Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 95.

⁹ On the January 4 meeting with Mitterrand, see Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 97-100. Neither the West German nor French foreign ministries appear to have been represented at these talks.

the substantive issues and the British and French would want to brake moves toward unification. Bonn and Washington would be diplomatically isolated.

The NSC staffers went on to suggest that Kohl would find himself under unbearable pressure to offer the withdrawal of foreign forces and nuclear weapons from Germany in order to win Soviet acquiescence to German unification. He could attempt to replace German NATO membership with various bilateral security guarantees between Germany, America, and other states. CIA analysts (asked by Blackwill to examine the issue) had earlier given just such an estimate of likely German and European reactions to the dynamics of a possible German peace conference.

Blackwill and Hutchings therefore concluded that: "Given the difficulties of managing a peace conference proposal issued by a desperate Gorbachev, our aim should be to insure that such a Soviet initiative never comes to pass." To stave off such a Soviet proposal, they thought America might need to use "such influence as we have to slow down artfully the reunification process this year and bring some order and predictability to it -- for our sake as well as Gorbachev's."

Scowcroft did not agree. He too worried about what the Soviets might do. But the die was cast with Kohl, he thought. Bush's views were clear. The U.S. would simply have to find another way to handle the Soviet problem.¹⁰

Moscow was indeed searching desperately for a way to slow down the process of unification. On January 5 intelligence analysts warned senior US officials that Moscow might renew its push for Four Power discussion of Germany. They thought London and Paris would back the Soviets, although the British really wanted to keep discussion of unification off the international agenda altogether. Five days later, the Soviet government delivered messages from Shevardnadze to foreign ministers in Washington, London, and Paris proposing further Four Power consultations on

¹⁰ See Hutchings through Blackwill to Scowcroft, "Responding to a Soviet Call for a German Peace Conference," (undated, but written in late December 1989). The memo contained a draft memo embodying these views that Scowcroft could sign forward to President Bush. General Scowcroft noted his disagreement, however, and declined to forward the memo to the President. Account is based on the documents and author interview with Scowcroft, Washington, June 1991.

Germany.¹¹

In his message, Shevardnadze said the "Big Four" understood that "a requirement may arise for some parallel or coordinated steps with respect to German affairs." The Four Powers could not be indifferent to the FRG-GDR negotiations on their new 'treaty community.' Shevardnadze called for Four Power discussion of the developing relations between the FRG and the GDR. He suggested that special envoys or resident ambassadors take up the task.¹²

The U.S. promptly informed the FRG about the Soviet proposal. Alarmed, Genscher immediately wrote letters to Baker, Hurd, and Dumas urging the "closest consultation" about a proposal that had such "fundamental significance" for the Germans and East-West relations. Genscher did not need to worry about the American stance. Baker thought he and Genscher had agreed a month earlier, in Brussels, to resist Soviet calls for Four Power intervention in German politics. Washington accordingly suggested to its allies that they all answer the Soviet note with an offer to talk only about cultural and commercial contacts in Berlin. The discussions would be conducted only by low-ranking diplomats.

As expected, the British and French wanted to be more receptive to Soviet concerns. But the four Western countries finally agreed to a reply along the lines suggested by the American government.¹³ The Western answer to the Soviet proposal temporarily held off the push for direct Four Power regulation of German unification. The West Germans were adamant. In December Genscher had made it clear that he

¹¹ Item in National Intelligence Daily, "Four-Power Talks and Reunification," 5 Jan 90; State 10185, "Shevardnadze Message on Germany," 11 Jan 90.

¹² State 11920, "Shevardnadze Message on Germany - Corrected Text," 12 Jan 90.

¹³ State 13681, "Response to Shevardnadze's Proposal for Four-Power Exchange on Germany," 13 Jan 90; Bonn 1390, "Response to Shevardnadze's Proposal for Four-Power Exchange on Germany," 16 Jan 90; State 13666, "Followup on Four-Power Talks in Berlin," 13 Jan 90; Bonn 1510, "Meeting with UK and French Ambassadors on Shevardnadze Message and Berlin Initiative," 17 Jan 90. The final Western reply included the notion that Four Power diplomats resident in Berlin could coordinate with the FRG and GDR as needed on traditional Four Power issues such as the status of Berlin and public safety in the city. This was a British suggestion made in the hope of softening the Allied refusal to agree to the main points of the Soviet note.

hoped there would be no further meetings of Four Power ambassadors. His political director, Kastrup, categorically informed his US, UK, and French counterparts that under no circumstances could the four World War II victors sit down together in the Allied Kommandatura to consider the German political situation. Though Kastrup had no legal power to prevent a meeting and would not have wished a confrontation with the Soviet government, the Americans, British, and French hastened to assure him there was no intention to form a Four Power directorate that would negotiate over the FRG's head. Kastrup said this was the first time he had received this assurance.¹⁴

Rebuffed in this first attempt, the Soviets tried again. Protesting the suggestion that West Berliners might finally vote in West German elections, Soviet diplomats in late January called again for Four Power intervention and summoned apparitions from the past. Their note referred to "recently intensified activities of right-wing extremist and neo-Fascist forces in the FRG, GDR, and some other West European countries" and added that, "Attempts to play down the significance of the neo-Nazi threat are untenable as they are refuted by the facts." The note called on the U.S. to join in concerted action against "the increase of 'brown' danger which accompanies the process of rapprochement between the two German states," suggesting action both in the CSCE and through Four Power mechanisms.

The State Department was puzzled by the way this note was delivered (by the deputy chief of mission rather than the ambassador) and by the "old-fashioned and almost hysterical language" of the comments. Washington informed Bonn and other allies about this second demarche but decided essentially to ignore it. Still, it was a disturbing glimpse into the Soviet bureaucracy's mental image of developments in Germany.¹⁵

¹⁴ See Bonn 1899, "Ambassador's Discussion with Foreign Minister Genscher, January 19," 19 Jan 90; EUR/CE (Skinner) to Embassy Bonn, "Political Directors' Meeting in Washington, January 23," 23 Jan 90.

¹⁵ See State 29161, "Soviet Demarche on Direct Elections in Berlin, Activities by Neo-Fascist Forces," 27 Jan 90; Bonn 3160, "Soviet Demarche on Direct Elections in Berlin, Activities by Neo-Fascists," 31 Jan 90; and Seitz to Baker, "Soviet Demarches on Germany," 27 Jan 90 (drafted by Alexander Vershbow and Pierre Shostal). On initial Western consideration of the elections issue, see also State 14289, "Direct

Through most of January 1990, America, along with the FRG, France, and the UK, had hoped to have time to devise answers to the hard questions about how German unification could come to pass. There was a delicate balance to maintain. Both Washington and Bonn hoped Modrow could hold his country together until the elections in May. While neither Bush nor Kohl wanted to stabilize the communist government, they did not want a sudden collapse. Kohl and his CDU colleagues hoped that the communists would be swept out of office in the May elections and that East Germany's new leaders would lead the GDR over down the gradual path toward confederation, then federation, as envisioned in Kohl's plan, with unification possibly being achieved as early as 1994 or 1995.

But in the unsettled environment at the end of the Cold War, no policy line seemed to hold for very long. Just weeks before it had seemed as if Modrow -- forming the Roundtable and speaking of market reform -- might stabilize the GDR. But in January 1990 conditions in the GDR deteriorated and policies that seemed bold in November and December were about to be overtaken by events.

The Chancellery and the White House Decide to Hit the Accelerator

Though Modrow was weathering some of the waves of political criticism following the first wave of disclosures of corruption and Stasi abuses, he was increasingly besieged by the grave economic problems, especially the lack of foreign exchange. Krenz had revealed the full extent of this danger to Gorbachev at the beginning of November. With press censorship lifted, the East German people learned what Krenz had told Gorbachev months before: the GDR was not an economic success story but a Potemkin village that had been living beyond its means for nearly a decade. West German cash had been the lifeblood of the GDR economy -- subsidizing the inefficiencies of central planning and paying the bills for Western

Election and Voting Rights of Berlin Bundestag Deputies," 14 Jan 90. From Moscow, U.S. ambassador Jack Matlock urged Washington to offer the Soviets some framework to discuss the changes in Germany and Eastern Europe. This could, he thought, be a group to explore the issues a CSCE Summit might consider. Moscow 2333, "Dealing with Soviet Concerns About Germany," 19 Jan 90.

goods.

Modrow's government had no answer to the economic crisis. He had difficulty staffing key positions and was unable to put together a budget. His economic program, supervised by economics minister Christa Luft, at first included only a few market elements. It offered little scope for privatization even as the state enterprises, starved for subsidies, were starting to go bankrupt.

Tensions grew between the Modrow/Roundtable government on one hand and Kohl's government and the city government in Berlin on the other. Bonn saw that money given to the East German government would be wasted without fundamental market reforms. The East realized that West German demands amounted to the imposition of the Western economic system on East Germany. Accepting these Western demands would crush any hope of finding a "Third Way" to rebuild the GDR based on reform or genuinely democratic socialism. Both Modrow and the East Berlin intellectuals who dominated the Roundtable thought that Kohl's CDU was looking ahead to using its economic leverage to buy votes for their political opponents, led by the CDU-East party headed by Lothar de Maiziere.

Even in politics, Modrow's government had not fully satisfied the popular demand for reform. Some old and discredited figures still held high office. The government parroted Moscow's preoccupation with the 'neo-Nazi' threat to justify the maintenance of the hated secret police apparatus. East Berlin first changed the police name from Stasi to an even more unfortunate acronym, "Nasi", then, realizing the error, changed it still again. Tens of thousands of demonstrating citizens stormed and pillaged the central secret police headquarters in East Berlin on January 15. In some areas the East German government simply ceased to function. East Berlin asked the West Berlin municipal authorities to take over the East's garbage collection. By January 16, West German officials who met with Modrow noted that he, and even the CDU-East's de Maiziere, were at the edge of "despair."

Many East German citizens were no longer prepared to wait for internal reform and the flow of refugees -- including some of the country's most skilled young people -- reached an average of about 2,000 a day in January. Modrow conceded that

many of those who stayed were packing their bags. For those who stayed, the road to meaningful internal reform seemed so long that they began to see unification with the FRG as their salvation. There seemed to be an alternative to painful reform that people in Poland and Hungary were enduring: Unification of the German nation.

Kohl's success in making unification seem possible kept gnawing away at the stability of Modrow's government. People began imagining how absorption into the FRG would instantly bring them into a magnificent social welfare system, secure the value of their future earnings, and sweep away the debris of the old, repudiated, even hated Communist structure as nothing else could. The widening gap between public attitudes and their political representatives posed a danger of collapse in the GDR before May, and possibly even violent confrontation.¹⁶

For weeks West Germany and the United States watched the widening gap between their policies and the realities on the ground. In January the governments in both countries conducted reviews of their policies.

There is no one point at which Bonn decided to discard the gradual approach. The gradual policy envisioned some initial confederal structure, probably involving economic and monetary unity and coordinated with East German entry into the European Community. But there had to be a viable GDR as the receptacle for a new, reformed, non-communist state. That possibility was diminishing daily as the East German people grew restless and impatient. Kohl's warning to Baker in December that the push for unity might come from the streets suddenly seemed prescient. Demonstrators, now constantly in the street, often chanted, "Deutschland einig Vaterland" (Germany one Fatherland).

Modrow himself confessed to Kohl, on the margins of a larger meeting in Switzerland, that he could no longer rely on parts of his government to obey his

¹⁶ Sources for this account of conditions in the GDR in January 1990 are Jarausch, The Rush to German Unity, pp. 95-107; Pond, Beyond the Wall, pp. 170-171; Discussion Paper for Europe PCC on GDR, "GDR Policy Review," 9 Jan 90; USBerlin 213, "The Momper-Modrow Discussions on the Internal GDR Situation," 22 Jan 90; Bonn 1973, "FRG Economics Ministry on Inner-German Economic Developments," 22 Jan 90; and CIA, "Appraisal of Situation - Increasing Uncertainty and Growing Prospects for Confrontation in East Germany," 24 Jan 90.

orders. The East German state no longer seemed to be working. It could not pay its debts. There was a sense that the country was just falling apart, a conviction reinforced for Kohl when it was repeated to him by Katherine Graham, the American news magnate, after she had visited Berlin and the GDR.

Kohl had publicly agreed to meet with Modrow in February, to cap another phase of negotiations for the terms of confederation. But Kohl became convinced that he wanted nothing to do with Modrow or any other official of the old communist party. When Modrow tabled a draft treaty for confederation, Kohl was no longer interested.

Instead he began preparing for another risky leap. Seeing the CDU-East as an extension of his own party -- and the coming elections in the East as a preview of those in the West, Kohl began to imagine a direct path to the unification of Germany on his terms. He and Teltschik became convinced that the East German elections should be held soon, sooner than May. The pressures in the GDR were tremendous and Modrow realized too that he could not hold the country together until May. When Modrow and the Roundtable advanced the elections from May 6 to March 18, Kohl welcomed the move although he, like Modrow and the West German SPD, thought that earlier elections would actually favor the communists and the SPD-East since they had the best known and best organized parties in the GDR.

Kohl was still speaking of a five-year timetable for unification. When Mitterrand's adviser, Jacques Attali, called Teltschik on January 29 and, during the conversation, offered a bet that Germany would be united by the end of the year, Teltschik laughed nervously. But, by dropping any effort to negotiate a step-by-step arrangement with Modrow, Kohl had dramatically altered his course. The alternative to a confederal structure negotiated with Modrow's government was a straight line toward unification with no stops in between. And that policy only made sense on one timetable -- as fast as the international traffic could bear. When Teltschik met Scowcroft at a conference in Munich on February 3 he discovered that, in fact, the White House had come to just this conclusion: there should be a direct move, and at

the fastest possible pace.¹⁷

Washington had begun to adjust its course in the second half of January. The bureaucracy was still churning along, trying to think of ways to bolster the stability of Modrow's government. A working-level meeting on January 11 concluded that the U.S. should prepare an aid program for the GDR following the pattern already set in providing aid to Poland and Hungary. But as soon as top officials learned of the idea of sending U.S. money to Modrow, it died.¹⁸

At the White House, Blackwill was worried that "We seem to be proceeding with business as usual -- unwieldy...; extended interagency disputes too small to be seen without the aid of a magnifying glass; routine and episodic exchanges with our Allies, etc. You will know the quality of exchanges on these breathtaking developments in Europe at your breakfast meetings with Baker/Cheney." The U.S. needed a more ambitious policy. Shaking off the pessimism of late December, Blackwill had concluded that the sooner Germany became unified the better. There should be a rush toward de facto unification along lines worked out between the United States and the Federal Republic. The international community would be presented with a fait accompli. That might mean the U.S. would waive its Four Power rights, but Washington should spare no effort to seize the high ground with the

¹⁷ This account of the evolution of Kohl's thinking in January relies on Teltschik's day-by-day diaries, 329 Tage, pp. 104-127; author interview with Teltschik, Gütersloh, June 1992; Bonn 2631, "Chancellery Readout on Inner-German Relations," 26 Jan 90; Bonn 2422, "Ambassador's Conversation with Chancellor Kohl, January 24, 1990," 25 Jan 90; author's recollection of information about the conversation between Chancellor Kohl and British ambassador Malaby in Bonn on January 25; Deutschland Archiv, Chronik der Ereignisse in der DDR (Köln: Verlagswissenschaft und Politik, 1990), pp. 46-50; and Pond, Beyond the Wall, pp. 170-171. A good sense of the contemporary mood can be captured by reading the proceedings of a January 24-25, 1990 conference in Bonn, well attended by East and West German luminaries. Both Teltschik and Egon Bahr presented papers on the international issues, previewing debates still to come. See Hans Süsmuth, ed., Wie geht es weiter mit Deutschland? (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1990) (the Teltschik paper is at pp. 119-127).

¹⁸ See Hutchings to Gant (for Scowcroft and Gates), "PCC on U.S.-GDR Relations," 11 Jan 90 (sent via electronic mail), reporting on the PCC recommendations with which Hutchings, in attendance, had concurred. Scowcroft sent back the report with the note: "See me." Scowcroft made it clear that the GDR would not be treated in a manner comparable to the new democracies in Poland or Hungary.

German people as the foremost advocates of their national unity.¹⁹

Blackwill feared that, if unification was stretched out for years, the Soviets and others would find too many opportunities to trade their acceptance of unity for concessions from Bonn on Germany's NATO membership, its military participation in the Alliance, the presence of American forces, and the presence of nuclear weapons in Europe. At the moment the Soviets wanted Western friendship and their German policy was cautious, even confused. Blackwill thought this window of opportunity would not stay open much longer, and the West should move quickly. West European concerns should also be put aside. Blackwill advised General Scowcroft on January 26 that, "Reunification is coming rapidly, not gradually and step by step, and the process will not await 'an increasingly integrated European Community.'"²⁰

But what would the Soviets do? Blackwill asked Rice to make the assessment for Scowcroft. She argued that "creeping reunification -- because everyone is afraid to talk about terms -- is probably not very smart." Yes, Gorbachev would be alarmed if the pace quickened. Rice preferred to try to achieve rapid reunification in a six power negotiation that would include the two German states. The Soviets would still resist a more rapid pace. Yet they were in a difficult position and Rice thought the US should go ahead and hit the accelerator. She made a crucial judgment: "I believe (and this is a hunch and I guess if we did this that I would spend a lot of time in church praying that I was right) that the Soviets would not even threaten the Germans. Within six months, if events continue as they are going, no one would believe them anyway."²¹

Gorbachev and Modrow Also Develop A New Plan

While the Americans were guessing about Soviet thinking, the Soviets

¹⁹ Blackwill to Scowcroft, "1990," 19 Jan 90.

²⁰ Hutchings through Blackwill to Scowcroft, "Your Breakfast with Kissinger: Managing the German Question," 26 Jan 90.

²¹ 21. Rice to Blackwill, "Thinking About Germany," 23 Jan 90.

themselves were trying to decide what to do. But once again, the dizzying pace of change in and around the Soviet Union made it difficult for the Soviet leadership to concentrate -- even though Germany was arguably the most important foreign policy problem confronting the country.

In December, while he was considering policy toward Germany, Shevardnadze had been distracted by his anger over the government's coverup of the facts surrounding the massacre of civilians in his home capital of Tbilisi, in Georgia. He offered his resignation to Gorbachev, who refused to accept it and persuaded Shevardnadze to stay on.²²

Even larger issues loomed in the Baltic republics of the Soviet Union -- Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. These nations had been part of the Czarist empire but had gained their independence after World War I. In 1940, while Hitler and Stalin were dividing up Eastern Europe, the USSR had forcibly annexed these short-lived republics. The United States had never recognized these annexations. The communist leaders of Lithuania were encouraged by Gorbachev's 'new thinking' and the turmoil in Europe to take the bold step of formally breaking relations with the central government in Moscow. At the beginning of 1990 the Lithuanian leaders demanded full independence from the USSR. After narrowly heading off demands for immediate use of force against the dissident republic, Gorbachev cancelled all his foreign appointments and headed a delegation which flew to the Lithuanian capital, Vilnius, on January 11. The results were inconclusive.

A little more than a week after the talks in Lithuania new nationalist unrest in Azerbaijan obliged Gorbachev to send defense minister Dmitri Yazov to the scene. Yazov ordered the use of force and hundreds were killed during fighting in Baku on January 20.²³

Meanwhile, Soviet policy toward Germany was going nowhere. The periodic

²² Shevardnadze, The Future Belongs to Freedom.

²³ For a condensation of press reportage of these events, see Bernard Gwertzman & Michael T. Kaufman, The Collapse of Communism (New York: Times Books, 2d ed., 1991), pp. 350-355.

pleas for Four Power talks elicited no action. Shevardnadze's December statement had had little lasting effect. A month after his "seven questions" speech Shevardnadze was still musing vaguely about developments in Germany, warning the West but offering few ideas. The Soviets indicated support for a proposal of the new East German communist leaders that all nuclear weapons be removed from Germany and showed interest in their suggestion that all foreign troops leave German soil too. Yet Moscow had no diplomatic plan for pushing these ideas. It was diplomacy backed by the threat of an international crisis, not some overt use of force, that worried the Americans. They understood how the danger of an East-West crisis would transform West Germany's domestic politics. In December Blackwill had feared Gorbachev might call for a German peace conference. Neither this nor any other substantial initiative had materialized.²⁴

This then was the setting when Gorbachev convened an extraordinary meeting of advisers to discuss policy toward Germany, probably in the third week of January, soon after he returned from his talks in Lithuania. Falin had suggested gathering a "crisis staff" to work on Germany. Present in his Kremlin office were the prime minister, Nikolai Ryzhkov; Politburo member and Central Committee secretary Yakovlev along with Falin and his deputy, Rafael Fedorov, from the Central Committee's International Department; Vladimir Kryuchkov, head of the KGB; and Marshal Akhromeyev, Chernyayev, and Sergei Shakhnazarov from Gorbachev's personal staff. Gorbachev set the tone: We must say quite openly that all premises are open for discussion except one. There will be no action with our armed forces. Thus began four hours of tense debate.

²⁴ Eduard Shevardnadze, "Europe -- From Division to Unity," *Izvestija*, January 19, 1990, p. 5, in *FBIS-SOV* 90-013, January 19, 1990, pp. 12-16; see also the public statements surrounding the visit of East German foreign minister Oskar Fischer to Moscow at the same time, "Rabochii vizit O. Fishera v SSSR [Working Visit of O. Fischer to the USSR]," *Vestnik*, no. 3 (61), February 15, 1990, pp. 19-20. Teltschik characteristically glossed over the negative aspects of Shevardnadze's *Izvestija* article, preferring to comment on its relaxed tone, which he interpreted as showing a readiness to compromise. *Teltschik*, 329 Tage, pp. 112-113. Teltschik again could find statements in press interviews with Central Committee staffers, including Portugalov, that seemed to indicate a more tolerant Soviet attitude (though the Central Committee staff was actually anything but tolerant within the internal deliberations of the Soviet government). *Ibid.*, pp. 113-114.

Chernyayev adopted a radical pro-Western position, urging Gorbachev to align himself directly with West Germany. He was blunt. The Soviet government should work for a mutual understanding with Kohl's ruling coalition. Chernyayev thought Kohl was a reliable partner, firm FRG ties to NATO were good, and Kohl would link German unification to development of the "all-European process." Gorbachev should, he thought, just drop the discredited East German government, refusing to see Modrow and, especially, refusing to see the new head of the 'reformed' East German Communists, Gregor Gysi.

Falin and Fedorov disagreed. They argued that Moscow could not abandon either East Germany or its communists. Fedorov even argued that no one in West Germany really wanted reunification. But what can one do?, Gorbachev asked. Every alternative seemed to come from some use of Soviet troops. Falin thought the Soviets, like the GDR, were now harvesting the fruits of a short-sighted policy. Whatever the Germans might decide, the USSR had every right to insist that its interests be respected. It was wrong, he said, to treat the transformation of East Germany into a NATO sphere fatalistically as something that was inevitable. Yakovlev had been the Soviet point man on the important constitutional changes taking place in the Soviet Union itself and on Baltic issues. He had been at the margins of Soviet policy toward Germany but in this instance he backed his deputy, Falin. Yakovlev was for action, not contemplation.

Falin was concerned too with how Germany would unify, if indeed it did. He grasped the crucial distinction between direct unification via a West German takeover of East Germany and a confederation of two equally sovereign states. But, by Chernyayev's own admission, no one in the room knew what Falin was talking about.

Shevardnadze and Ryzhkov took a middle stance on what to do about Germany. They agreed that the USSR should try to work with, not block, the path of change in Germany. Kryuchkov, for the KGB, was neutral on policy but reported that the old East German communist party no longer existed and the state structures of the GDR were falling apart. But this group also thought, as Ryzhkov put it, that "one should not give everything to Kohl." The Soviets should work more closely

with those seeking to restrain the West Germans, like the British and the French. Beyond this, Shevardnadze was looking for guidance from Gorbachev.

Chernyayev recalls proposing that the Soviet government come forward with the idea of negotiating the unification problems in a "group of six," with the Four Powers joined by the two German states. No one appears to have suggested either calling for a German peace conference or pressing hard on the earlier idea of holding a CSCE summit to discuss Germany.

Gorbachev then summed up the conclusions. He tried to satisfy everyone. Everyone agreed with the idea of the "group of six." The USSR would orient itself more toward Kohl. Gorbachev was apparently more favorably disposed to Kohl in January than he had been in December. He knew that earlier in the month he had pressed Kohl to make good on some of the June 1989 promises by asking the FRG for urgent deliveries of food, especially meat. Kohl had responded. Two weeks after the Soviets made their request, the FRG had finalized its plans to deliver about a \$100 million worth of food to the USSR, including more than 100,000 tons of meat.

But Gorbachev also agreed that the East German communists would not be ignored. Both Modrow and Gysi would be invited to Moscow at the end of January. The Soviet Union would try to work more closely with London and Paris. Gorbachev was even willing to consider traveling to both capitals in order to build a common front. The unification of Germany should not bring NATO closer to the Soviet border. A united Germany's membership in NATO was unacceptable, he said. Meanwhile, Akhromeyev was asked to look into possible plans for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from East Germany, a plan that could be linked to the East German proposal for the withdrawal of all foreign forces, Western as well as Soviet, from both the FRG and the GDR.²⁵

²⁵ This account of the January "crisis staff" meeting is based on Anatoly Chernyayev, Shest' Let s Gorbachevym: Po dnevikovym zapisyam (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1993), pp. 346-347; Valentin Falin, Politische Erinnerungen, trans. Heddy Pross-Weerth (München: Droemer Knaur, 1993), pp. 489-490; interview with Falin quoted in Ekkehard Kuhn, Gorbatschow und die deutsche Einheit: Aussagen der wichtigsten russischen und deutschen Beteiligten (Bonn: Bouvier, 1993), p. 94; author interview with Chernyayev, Moscow, January 1994; and Alexander Galkin & Anatoly Chernyayev, "[To Truth, and Only

The Soviet government deployed its new policy in coordination with the East Germans during Modrow's January 30 visit to Moscow. Modrow and his advisers hastily refined their own plan for a confederation of two German states, bound by a treaty that would link them economically and in some spheres of governance while preserving political independence. Eventually it might be possible to imagine both German states transferring sovereign powers to the new confederation. The German right to self-determination would be undisputed. So Modrow could announce a plan for "unification" via confederation.

Modrow found Gorbachev brilliant and open-minded but also indecisive, and lacking a deep understanding of economic problems. Nonetheless Gorbachev and Modrow found a common basis for work. Gorbachev thought Kohl's attempt to destabilize the GDR was a mistake that could have serious consequences for both the FRG and others in Europe. He was hopeful that the East German people would vote on March 18 to stay with the GDR. Though the Soviets had not openly endorsed a confederation proposal before, Gorbachev had liked Modrow's plan, which dovetailed so well with the outcome of the Kremlin's policy review. So for the first time the Soviets seemed prepared to accept the prospect of German unification, based on Modrow's confederation plan.

Gorbachev emphasized Soviet interests in security issues and presumed that a future German confederation would be militarily neutral. He could imagine working

Truth: Memoirs in Connection with Remembrances]," *Svobodnaia Mysl'*, no. 2-3, January-February 1994, pp. 19-29. The Falin account, though vaguer and confused about timing, is generally consistent with Chernyayev's version except for two details. Falin names Defense Minister Dimitri Yazov as a participant in the meeting, who just listened; and Falin names Shakhnazarov as a supporter of Chernyayev's position, while Chernyayev wrote that Shakhnazarov supported Falin. The consideration of Soviet troop withdrawal from the GDR should be placed against the nuanced Soviet reaction to Gysi's proposal for withdrawals of all foreign troops in Shevardnadze's January 22 *Izvestija* article. See Shevardnadze, "Europe -- From Division to Unity," in *FBIS-SOV*, p. 14.

The Soviet request for foodstuffs was delivered directly from Kvitsinsky to Kohl on January 8, with Kvitsinsky stressing Soviet disappointment with the record of assistance delivered so far from the agreements of the June 1989 Kohl-Gorbachev summit in Bonn. Kohl seized on this opportunity to assuage Soviet hostility, instructed his Agriculture Minister (Ignaz Kiechle) to move on the request, and had finalized his government's plans by January 24. See Teltschik, *329 Tage*, pp. 100-02, 109, 114. At the same time the Soviet government finally said yes to Kohl's request to make a visit to Moscow, a request that had been pending for more than a month.

with the British and French to develop a plan for all of Europe in which NATO would be transformed and Germany would be neutralized, all sealed by a German peace treaty.

Modrow, with little time to consult others in the Roundtable or the government, publicly presented his new plan on February 1. Gorbachev and Shevardnadze then repeatedly praised the logic of Modrow's approach, conceded the right of Germans to self-determination, and envisioned gradual moves toward confederation. Their vision of this "rapprochement" of the two German states was consistently linked to a peace treaty, the "all-European process," and a new Germany that was militarily neutral and disarmed.²⁶ Moscow finally had a coherent policy coordinated with East Berlin.

Gorbachev wrote to Bush, describing Moscow's joint policy with East Berlin and warning darkly that: "Unification sentiments are boiling over, which someone is clearly trying to exploit in order to create an uncontrollable situation." The best way to deal with this pressure, according to Gorbachev, was to back Modrow's gradualist plan that would take external interests into account. "Any haste, leaping over stages, overly categorical conclusions and assessments can only result in a chaos." Modrow had also agreed, according to Gorbachev, on the need for Four Power involvement in German affairs to address these issues. Despite the earlier discussions within the Soviet government about a "six power" forum, Gorbachev referred only to a Four Power diplomatic process. The situation required required "a heightened sense of

²⁶ On the talks with Gorbachev, see Hans Modrow, Aufbruch und Ende (Hamburg: Konkret Literatur, 1991), pp. 120-123; and interviews with Gorbachev, Modrow, and Manfred Gerlach excerpted in Kuhn, Gorbatschow und die deutsche Einheit, pp. 100-103. For the public commentary see TASS, "Talks Begin with Gorbachev," January 30, 1990, in FBIS-SOV 90-020, January 30, 1990, p. 22; TASS, "Shevardnadze Outlines Policy on German Unity," February 2, 1990, in FBIS-SOV 90-024, February 5, 1990, pp. 33-35; Bericht des Bundesministerium fuer innerdeutsche Beziehungen in Materialen zu Deutschlandfragen (Bonn: Kulturstiftung der deutschen Vertriebenen, 1989-91), pp. 243-244; "Rabochii vizit G. Gysi v SSSR [Working Visit of G. Gysi to the USSR]," Vestnik, no. 4 (62), February 28, 1990, pp. 4-5. For the notice taken of these comments in Bonn and Washington, see Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 120-121; Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 30 Jan 90. For the full text of Modrow's plan see Ingo von Muench, ed., Dokumente der Wiedervereinigung Deutschlands (Stuttgart: Alfred Kröner, 1991), pp. 79-81.

responsibility.²⁷

But Bonn and Washington had come to the conclusion that unification should be fast not slow. Moreover, just as the Soviets were hoping to strengthen their diplomacy by coordinating their new stance with the British and French, the prospects for such a coalition were already fading.

Thatcher's final attempt to cement an Anglo-French axis to confront the Germans had failed. Discouraged by American-led blockage of the Four Power avenue and having clearly failed to win any support from President Bush during her November talks at Camp David, Thatcher now pinned her hopes on talks with Mitterrand in Paris on January 20. Germany dominated their conversation at the Elysee Palace. Mitterrand was annoyed by West German behavior. He thought, Thatcher recalled later, that the Germans had the right to self-determination but did not have the right to upset the political realities of Europe, or make their drive for unity take precedence over everything else.

Still, while Mitterrand agreed with Thatcher's analysis of the problem, he could not imagine what could be done. Thatcher thought there were a number of diplomatic devices available to slow the process down. But she said the trouble is that other governments would not speak out openly about their fears. The meeting ended inconclusively. The two leaders agreed that their foreign and defense ministers should confer about German unification and greater potential Franco-British defense cooperation but, as Thatcher admits, "little or nothing in practical terms came of these discussions between me and President Mitterrand about the German problem."²⁸

The fact is that Bonn and Washington were united in a way that made it nearly

²⁷ Letter from President Gorbachev to President Bush, 2 Feb 90 (quoting unofficial translation provided by Soviet embassy). Although Chernyayev contends that Gorbachev had decided on a Six Power forum at the January meeting of his "crisis staff," it is noteworthy that the Soviet government was still proposing only a Four Power approach in this letter to Bush. On the disconnection between this "crisis staff" and the traditional foreign ministry and Central Committee bureaucracies, see Hannes Adomeit, "Gorbachev, German Unification and the Collapse of Empire," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 10 (1994): 197, 215-217.

²⁸ Margaret Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years* (New York: HarperCollins, 1993), pp. 797-798.

impossible politically for other NATO allies to go public with their concerns about unification, much less work to derail the process. Without American backing almost all diplomatic options for Britain and France seemed quixotic. Mitterrand was also not willing to risk his hopes for the future of the European Community on a gambit with the British to confront Bonn.

Washington Answers Three Questions

Once the U.S. government concluded that unification should happen directly and as quickly as possible, it had to face up to other issues that would arise. Three questions seemed paramount by the end of January.

- How quickly did the U.S. want German unification to happen, and what substantive outcomes could America accept?
- What kind of process should the U.S. support in order to manage the external aspects of German unification?
- What kind of military presence should the U.S. plan to keep in Europe and Germany in the 1990s, and how should this be reflected in the arms control process?

Blackwill, at the NSC staff, recommended that the US and the FRG sketch out a blueprint for rapid unification.

The blueprint placed all of united Germany in the NATO alliance, even if the former GDR territory was demilitarized. Substantial but reduced U.S. forces would remain stationed in Germany. Current FRG/GDR borders would be the borders of a united Germany. The Four Powers, the FRG, and a newly elected government in the GDR would eventually meet to bless the substance of a German peace treaty. This treaty would then be presented to the CSCE only for its information.²⁹

²⁹ See Blackwill to Scowcroft, "Germany," 30 Jan 90. This memo attached a draft memo that Scowcroft could forward to President Bush on "A Strategy for German Unification," laying out the proposed policy. The blueprint (outlined in eight points) was in the draft memo to the President. A copy of this package was also passed informally to Secretary Baker and Zoellick at the State Department. To insure secrecy this memo (and others) were forwarded outside of the normal paperwork system and I have been unable to determine when the "Strategy" memo was actually forwarded by Scowcroft to Bush. I do know Scowcroft agreed at the time with Blackwill's argument.

Blackwill discussed his views with a few top officials at State, including Zoellick. Officials within the State Department had been considering the same issues, but were coming to quite different conclusions. Members of State's Policy Planning staff thought the U.S. might need to yield on the NATO issue. Though a united Germany might be a member of NATO, these officials thought America should consider letting Germany leave the Alliance's military organization and be prepared to negotiate the withdrawal of all American as well as Soviet troops from German soil. Working-level diplomats in State's European Bureau harbored a different form of pessimism. They thought that America should be ready to negotiate the removal of all nuclear weapons from Germany. They also thought the Four Powers should stay out of the process and that the CSCE could be allowed to ratify a diplomatic solution. But none of these ideas were actually presented to Baker, or to the White House. Instead, at the beginning of February 1990, Blackwill's blueprint remained the most influential guide to U.S. preferences on the international status of a united Germany.³⁰

American preferences could not be forced on Bonn, however. The American government noticed that Kohl, when asked in a mid-January press interview whether a reunified Germany would be a member of NATO, replied that it was too early to say. President von Weizsäcker began declaring his hope to embed German unification gradually in a European framework, but could not be more specific. He too had no

³⁰ On the Policy Planning staff (S/P) Roger George, with Peter Hauslohner, first drafted a memo to Ross on "German Confederation in a New NATO," apparently around mid-January. The head of the European Bureau's German desk, Pierre Shostal, then prepared a counter-draft. George told Shostal that S/P's recommendations reflected a consensus among the staff but admitted that Ross himself had some doubts about the memo's recommendations. On January 23 George gave Shostal a redraft of the S/P memo, now formatted as a memo to Zoellick, reiterating the original arguments. Shostal renewed his effort to substitute a counter-draft, set up as a memo through Kimmitt to Baker (January 29). (See also, for similar views, draft memo from Shostal and McKinley through Dobbins to Seitz, "U.S. Goals for a Future Germany," 30 Jan 90, drafted by EUR desk officer Andrew Goodman.) After more debate about how to combine the competing S/P and EUR memos into a memo for Zoellick the effort was abandoned at the beginning of February. This debate had little effect on U.S. policy. It is doubtful that Zoellick, or even Ross, read any version of the S/P memo beyond the first George draft. Zoellick was influenced instead by the NSC staff analysis he had received informally. It was the NSC staff's more inflexible stand on NATO that Zoellick — with a significant modification — later passed on to Baker.

answer to the NATO problem.³¹ But the question was left there for the moment, as the U.S. government worried about what process to propose for the unification of Germany.

The Two Plus Four is Born

The NSC staff had won approval for a policy that supported rapid unification but had not articulated a diplomatic process for carrying it out. This was deliberate. Scowcroft, Blackwill, Rice and Zelikow hoped that the two German states could accomplish de facto unification quickly before the Soviets and others could muster effective diplomatic resistance. Then -- when unification was effectively accomplished -- the German states could come together with the Four Powers to bless the outcome. At that point he thought the Soviets would have little choice but to go along.

Over at the State Department Baker's close advisers, Ross and Zoellick, had a different view. To manage Soviet concerns they felt that Moscow would need to be offered the chance to participate in some kind of process that would consider aspects of unification as it was happening, not after it was an accomplished fact. Like the NSC staff, they had rejected both the Four Powers and the CSCE approach. But they had developed an alternative mechanism, which they called the Two Plus Four Powers Talks, that they described to Secretary Baker.

They advised Baker that "over the next several months the unification process could accelerate to the point that it overwhelms the careful approach you laid out in your Berlin speech." So they concluded, with Blackwill, that "we need to shift to 'fast-track' unification sequence." To do this they proposed transforming the Four Power process into a Two Plus Four Power forum. They knew the West Germans would resent any appearance of Four Power intervention. Though West German

³¹ See Bonn 1904, "Chancellor Kohl's Press Remarks on German Unification and NATO," 19 Jan 90; author's recollection of information on discussion between British ambassador Malaby and Von Weiszäcker. See also Mulholland to Eagleburger, "German Unity: Kohl Escalates His Demands," 22 Jan 90 (arguing, quite mistakenly, that Kohl thought the Bush/Baker four principles of December were meant as roadblocks to unity, so Kohl was now defying the United States).

participation ameliorated this concern, Ross and Zoellick wanted to be able to go further and explain clearly that, "The US will use Two Plus Four Power talks to bring German unity to fruition." The talks would begin only when a freely elected East German government could participate, after the March 18 elections in the GDR.

Creating a forum was thus not enough. Ross and Zoellick explained that the forum must be created along with acceptance of three "irreducible" conditions: (1) the East German delegates must come from a freely elected government; (2) the two German states were full participants in "consultations" with the Four Powers about German unity; and, most importantly, (3) all participating countries had to agree publicly that the goal of the talks was to produce a mandate for unity, empowering the two German states to accomplish unification. The two officials thought Moscow, wanting some diplomatic intervention into the process of German unification, would welcome their Two Plus Four idea, "but may have to swallow hard on the conditions for such talks." Yet Ross and Zoellick thought these conditions were essential if West Germans were to be persuaded to go along with this involvement of the Four Powers in deciding Germany's future.³²

After submitting their memo to Secretary Baker, Ross and Zoellick shared their views with the head of State's European bureau, Ray Seitz. Seitz, after consulting with Dobbins and another adviser, Brunson McKinley, decided to oppose the proposal. He then wrote a note to Baker telling him that "Bob Zoellick and

³² Ross and Zoellick to Baker, "Germany: Game Plan for Two Plus Four Powers Talks," 30 Jan 90 (emphasis in original). This memo drew upon and revised an earlier set of ideas for the Two Plus Four written by Roger George as a draft note for Ross to send to Baker. George's draft had captured the idea of wanting to do "more than say no to Four Power Talks, which leaves the Soviets outside the process, capable of creating trouble," and the need to condition creation of a Two Plus Four forum upon explicit acknowledgment that the self-determination process "could" lead to unification. But the draft was murky on other key points. It implied that Four Power talks might still be appropriate, prompting Zoellick to note in the margin, "Too much." George's original draft also envisioned, as Genscher did, the CSCE Summit "as the place to present an allied-endorsed German unity plan, developed by the two Germanies." In addition, George and his S/P colleagues were also writing other papers in late January that referred consistently to Four Power talks as the vehicle for negotiating the possible withdrawal from Germany of both U.S. and Soviet troops. See "Action Plan: Two Plus Four Talks," undated S/P note to Zoellick (apparently written around the third week of January). The best published account of the development of Two Plus Four, though it underestimates how fully elaborated the plan was before it was discussed with the West Germans, is Pond, Beyond the Wall, pp. 176-178.

Dennis Ross have sent you a memorandum on Germany with which I disagree."

The European bureau made three basic arguments against the Two Plus Four idea. First, Seitz thought unification might be happening faster than Europe wanted, but it was not "a stampede." The Germans had a sensible plan for negotiation between the two German states. "Raising an alternative or even complementary mechanism is premature at best." Or, as McKinley put it in separate comments, "Two Plus Four is not a 'fast-track unification sequence'; it is a slow track. Two Plus Zero is the fast track." This was, of course, also the NSC staff's view.

Second, Seitz thought "a Four-Plus-Two formula will be seen for what it is: A Four Power nose under the German tent." This would alienate the Germans. It would place America as an opponent of German self-determination and signal distrust of the FRG, jeopardizing U.S. influence which had -- so far -- been strong.

Third, Seitz thought U.S. interests were not served by "inviting the Soviets into an essentially German affair, certainly not at this stage." Limited Four Power involvement should be on the basis of "a tightly restricted, pre-arranged agenda" and should be at the end of the process rather than the beginning. Instead the US needed to strengthen its bilateral efforts with the FRG, and with the Soviets. We could probably work out agreeable substantive outcomes with the West Germans. With Bonn, the US should concentrate more on Kohl and the Chancellery and less on Genscher.

Zoellick forwarded this dissent to Baker, explaining that he thought the disagreement was really about how best to manage the Soviets. Zoellick thought that, without a multilateral forum, the FRG would probably be obliged to work out a private deal with Moscow. That was risky. "If the Germans work out unification with the Soviets, NATO will be dumped and will become the obstacle." Further, without an ongoing multilateral forum, the United States might be left behind, out of the game. Zoellick argued that the "timing of two and four is a legitimate question, but if it only becomes a ratifying device, we'll be ratifying a deal the FRG cuts with

the USSR.³³

At the same time the United States considered the goals and process for a policy on Germany, it had to pair these thoughts with judgments about the future of American military forces in Europe. The problem had a military dimension, deciding what forces would be needed as the tensions of the Cold War subsided. It also had a diplomatic dimension, since the U.S. was pushing hard to wrap up a treaty in 1990 regulating all conventional forces in Europe and now also had to respond to proposals coming from Moscow and East Berlin envisioning the complete withdrawal of all foreign forces from the two German states, as well as all nuclear weapons.

In 1989 President Bush had promised to keep substantial US nuclear and conventional forces stationed in Europe. His administration believed strongly that, even if the immediate military threat from the Soviet Union diminished, the United States should maintain a significant American military commitment in Europe for the foreseeable future. They held this view because the political situation seemed so turbulent and unsettled, because U.S. forces in Europe had come to seem vital to projections of American power in other areas such as the Middle East, and because Soviet military power would inevitably be large enough to overawe Western Europe if the U.S. departed. Every European head of government that Bush encountered wanted American forces to stay in Europe, and stay in strength. The American troop presence thus also became the ante which insured a central place for the United States in European politics. The Bush administration placed a high value on retaining such influence, underscored by Bush's flat statement that the United States was and would remain "a European power."

American officials hoped their continued military presence on the continent would be anchored by US forces in the Federal Republic of Germany, then the base for about 80% -- or approximately 250,000 -- of the more than 300,000 US soldiers and airmen deployed across the Atlantic. But U.S. force plans would adjust as the

³³ Seitz to Baker, 1 Feb 90 (with attached McKinley comments annotated by Zoellick) and Zoellick's cover note forwarding the package to Baker.

Warsaw Pact's military potential faded. The administration would submit its Five Year Defense Plan to account for those changes in January. Congress would have its ideas. There was a real danger that the US troop presence could go into free fall, leaving Allies uncertain about whether the US could continue to play its part in guaranteeing Europe's security. The challenge to President Bush was to find a way to plan for a continued strong troop presence in Europe, manage the defense budget presence, and remain a stable and predictable leader of the NATO Alliance.

These were fateful judgments. The Bush administration was determined to maintain crucial features of the NATO system for European security even if the Cold War ended. Germany would continue to rely on NATO for protection; America would continue to keep substantial forces in Europe as a token of its commitment. The Germans would thus forego pursuit of purely national defenses, including development of their own nuclear weapons. America would accept the responsibility of being a European power in every sense, based on a recognition that America's fate, like it or not, had always been linked to that of Western Europe. The task then, as the Bush administration saw it, was to reduce the American military commitment without setting in motion a freefall that might wipe it away.

As part of his May 1989 proposal to energize the conventional arms control talks (CFE), Bush had suggested setting a ceiling on US and Soviet stationed troop strength of no more than 275,000. That would mean about a ten percent cut in US forces and withdrawal of more than half of stationed Soviet forces. To respond to the momentous events of late 1989, Bush was presented with three new alternatives. Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney, General Colin Powell, and NATO's military chief, U.S. General John Galvin, wanted to stick to the 275,000 figure and not trigger a debate over how far to cut. Scowcroft and his staff thought the debate could not be avoided, so they wanted Bush to shape it with his own proposal dropping to a floor of 200,000 U.S. troops and codifying this floor into the CFE treaty. Baker wanted to stay by 275,000 until after CFE was signed, but then promise unilateral cuts down to

200,000.³⁴

Bush preferred the NSC staff approach, but he wanted to be sure that any new initiative did not get in the way of wrapping up a CFE treaty in 1990. He asked the Pentagon to pick an optimal number for US troop strength close to 200,000. They came up with 195,000 for the US and Soviets in Central and Eastern Europe and a grand total of 225,000 for all of Europe by 1994. Such cuts would eliminate about a quarter of American troop strength in Europe, and the majority of Soviet deployments in Europe outside of the USSR.³⁵

Bush first called Kohl, who was completely supportive. Kohl also wanted to come to America to talk about Germany directly with the President. A date was set for the following month.³⁶ Bush got more support from Italian prime minister Andreotti. Mitterrand, however, was less comfortable with the planned American move. Mitterrand first wanted to know Kohl's reaction. The President said both Kohl and Andreotti had been very supportive. Mitterrand worried that from one reduction to the next we will come to the point of the neutralization of Germany. Bush assured him that America opposed such an outcome.³⁷

Bush finally called Thatcher. She too feared the impression of retreating piecemeal from NATO positions without taking full account of the pressures that might accompany German reunification. Her ambassador in Bonn had mentioned Kohl's plan to achieve unity in five years, by the end of 1994. There needed to be a

³⁴ See Scowcroft to President Bush, "CFE Reductions," 16 Jan 90, attaching separate memos from Cheney, Scowcroft, and Baker. The NSC staff approach that was ultimately adopted was crafted by Blackwill and Zelikow with Arnold Kanter and Heather Wilson from Kanter's defense and arms control directorate in the NSC staff, then refined by General Scowcroft.

³⁵ General Scowcroft considered a compromise between the NSC staff and State positions that would proceed to conclusion of a CFE treaty with the 275,000 number and then, just before signing, add a protocol changing the number to 200,000. This idea was weighed and then discarded, for reasons described in Blackwill and Kanter to Scowcroft, "CFE Move on Manpower: The Protocol Idea," 25 Jan 90.

³⁶ Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 117; Memcon for Phone Call from the President to Chancellor Kohl, 26 Jan 90.

³⁷ Memcon for the President's Call to President Mitterrand, 27 Jan 90.

fundamental political and strategic assessment of the situation in Central Europe. The Prime Minister said she would be talking to her Foreign and Defense officials at Chequers discussing these matters. She proposed a fundamental political assessment just between Britain and the United States.

Bush still urged Thatcher to agree that there had been dramatic changes in Europe since the original 275,000 number had been proposed in CFE. He wanted to take these into account while trying to fix a sustainable level for the United States. He elaborated on how his proposal would make the US figure more sustainable. We do need, the President said, to talk about Germany. He delicately acknowledged that there was a "nuance of difference" between the two leaders on Germany. Thatcher remained concerned about the fate of NATO if Germany reunifies and wanted to denuclearize its territory. The President agreed the "jury was still out" on the implications of the changes in Europe, but defended his plans for U.S. troops.³⁸

Bush's secret envoys dispatched to explain the plan, Lawrence Eagleburger and Robert Gates, encountered reactions similar to those Bush had already heard directly. There was serious tension between the British and the Germans. Mitterrand had no difficulty with the proposal itself but renewed his concern about heading off any neutralization of Germany. Kohl repeated his support for a continued US troop presence in Germany but, worryingly, made little reference to NATO. Within the Chancellery, officials were happy to see the American diplomacy making such considerable progress. They were looking for ways to link a drive toward unification with broader European developments and Teltschik was pleased about "how Bush and Baker are readying the ground for us."³⁹

With consultations among key Allies complete, the President sent an explanation of his troop cuts proposal to President Gorbachev on January 31, the day

³⁸ Memcon of President's Call to Prime Minister Thatcher, 27 Jan 90.

³⁹ Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 123. The account of the Eagleburger-Gates discussions is drawn from *ibid.*, p. 119; and Zelikow's notes of Gates's debrief after he returned to Washington. On the meeting with Thatcher, see also Paris 2912, "Meeting with Mrs. T.," 29 Jan 90.

he intended to include the initiative in his State of the Union message to the Congress. Bush's message told Gorbachev quite candidly that, "The U.S. intends, within this ceiling and with the consent of our allies, to retain a substantial military presence in Europe for the foreseeable future, regardless of the decisions you take about your own forces." Bush then phoned Gorbachev and repeated that he was determined to keep American forces in Europe regardless of what happened to Soviet deployments. Gorbachev repeated this point to be sure he understood it, then said he would consider Bush's proposal in a constructive spirit.⁴⁰

So, by the end of January, United States officials had developed three lines of policy for Central Europe. First, the White House and State had agreed to encourage the fastest possible achievement of German unification and had key goals for an outcome to the process. Second, officials at State had developed a design for a Two Plus Four process that could negotiate external aspects of Germany's movement toward unification. It would provide an outlet for those who wanted some forum but it would be neither Four Power supervision nor a 35-nation CSCE conference. Also, the participants in the Two Plus Four would have to agree that the process had unification as its goal. Third, Bush had decided what kind of troop strength the U.S. should keep in Europe for years to come and how his decision should be tied into the ongoing arms control talks.

In the first half of February the emerging American policy would be juxtaposed against the new approach that had just been devised by the Soviets along with the East German government. At the same time the West Germans were organizing their own thoughts about the next steps on the path to their goal of national unity. With so much at stake, diplomacy intensified. The British and German

⁴⁰ Letter from President Bush to President Gorbachev, 31 Jan 90; Michael Beschloss & Strobe Talbott, At the Highest Levels: The Inside Story of the End of the Cold War (Boston: Little, Brown, 1992), pp. 177-178; Memcon of the President's Call to President Gorbachev, 31 Jan 90 (Rice was notetaker). NATO allies formally welcomed the President's troop cut initiative both as an arms control measure and because they understood that Bush was placing a floor under the US troop commitment. The Soviet press spokesman pronounced Bush's move "a step in the right direction." See memos from Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 1 and 2 Feb 90.

foreign ministers met in Washington; the American secretary of state went to Moscow, followed there by the West German Chancellor; and foreign ministers from NATO and Warsaw Pact countries gathered in Ottawa -- all within a span of two weeks.

It might be useful to take a moment and draw a simplified diagram of the American and Soviet positions on the German problem at the beginning of February, again utilizing the framework outlined in Chapter Two.

National Interests:

- USA** (1) Unification of Germany as fast as possible
- (2) United Germany stays in NATO
- (3) US troops and nuclear weapons stay in Germany and Europe
- (4) Maintain support for Gorbachev's perestroika

- USSR** (1) Unification of Germany slowly, create new confederation
- (2) United Germany out of NATO, neutral and demilitarized
- (3) Unification of Germany linked to transformation of existing alliance system in Europe
- (4) American and Soviet force reductions are linked and reciprocal
- (5) Maintain good relations with US and FRG

Operational Objectives:

- USA** (1) Set in motion agreed process aimed at unity, specifying outcomes consistent with American goals (nature of process still not agreed within US government)
- (2) West Germans clearly accept firm linkage of NATO membership and unification, stand by US troop presence and nuclear weapons
- (3) Defuse danger of sharp confrontation between East and West over Germany
- (4) No dealings with current East German government

- USSR** (1) West Germans agree to proceed with negotiating "confederation" with GDR
- (2) Western governments accept that a united Germany cannot be in NATO; NATO cannot move eastward
- (3) Modrow and other "responsible" factions in GDR are strengthened in runup to March 18 election in GDR

Strategic Theories:

- USA** (1) If US gets agreement to Two Plus Four idea then momentum toward unification will accelerate without East-West (or West-West) confrontation
 (2) If US helps manage process toward quick unification then it can strengthen West German resolve to hold out on NATO issue and presence of US forces

- USSR** (1) If USSR presses its views directly to Americans and West Germans then they can be persuaded to avoid confrontation by respecting Soviet stance
 (2) If USSR can get startup of Four Power or CSCE processes for handling Germany then pace of unification can be slowed and outcomes can be managed

The Soviet strategic theory required Gorbachev to design a diplomatic plan to press his and Modrow's common approach. He was already planning to see Baker, then Kohl, in Moscow. First though the Americans and Germans would coordinate their common position for the weeks ahead.

Baker and Genscher Suggest Their Strategies

Preparing for the weeks ahead, Secretary Baker sat down and talked through his ideas on policy toward Germany with President Bush. Though there is no written record of the meeting between the two men, Baker's notes show he understood that "Soviet statements [were] now recognizing unification will happen, but making clear the terms will be at issue." The big risk was that the Soviets would refuse to allow unification with Germany in NATO. Then American insistence on NATO might be seen as the obstacle to unity and it would be the Americans, not the Soviets, standing in front of the train.

So the Americans had to talk frankly with the West Germans about the need to keep a united Germany in NATO, even if the eastern portion was demilitarized. Baker had in mind a straightforward quid pro quo: The United States would help unification happen, if the West Germans would stand with America on the issue of

NATO.⁴¹

Baker began his diplomatic work in Washington, meeting with the new British foreign secretary, Douglas Hurd. Hurd had separate meetings with Baker, Scowcroft, and President Bush. All agreed that Germany was the biggest issue facing the West. Hurd had just visited the GDR. He too thought unification was inevitable and could come quickly. But Hurd worried that the consequences of unification had not yet been thought through. That, he said, was why Thatcher was reluctant to endorse unification. She was "a reluctant unifier. Not against, but reluctant." Hurd thought Mitterrand shared this reluctance (at least when he met with Thatcher), but was just less willing to say so in public.

What needed to be thought through? The British ticked off the problems: (1) Germany and the EC -- the Community was not ready to take 16 million new people from a different economic system; (2) NATO, where the problem of unification could pose a serious, even lethal, blow to the security system; and (3) handling the Soviets in an appropriate process.

Everyone agreed on the importance of the NATO issue but no one had a clear solution for handling it. Baker then opened a discussion of process. The U.S. would tell the Soviets that Four Power talks were out. But something was needed. Hurd agreed. That evening, two senior British diplomats, Sir Patrick Wright and Ambassador Acland, invited Blackwill and Zoellick to the British embassy for a further discussion. A few days earlier, Thatcher had urged the President to set up a discreet channel for US-UK bilateral discussions on developments in Central Europe. Hurd had raised the matter and the channel was now being opened, with the British embassy on one side and Zoellick and Blackwill on the other.

Zoellick told the British about the Two Plus Four idea. The British displayed interest, but made no commitment. They, like the French (and Genscher) were all

⁴¹ From point IV of Outline for Baker's meeting with President Bush, 31 Jan 90 (these outlines were usually prepared by Zoellick for Baker). The preparatory notes for the meeting allude to the Two Plus Four process idea, and it is unclear whether Baker raised the this idea with President Bush. The outline erroneously treats the concept of a "demilitarized" eastern Germany as identical to Genscher's suggestion that the former GDR be outside of NATO.

moving toward accepting the Soviet proposal for a CSCE summit. This was clearly envisioned as a forum which could handle the relationship of German events to the concerns of all European countries. Indeed, Hurd told Baker and Scowcroft that EC foreign ministers had just agreed in Dublin to accept the Soviet idea and hold a CSCE summit in 1990.

The U.S. had, however, crystallized its own thinking about such a 35-nation conference. Baker said the US could go along with a CSCE summit only if certain conditions were met. First there had to be more progress on human rights, such as agreement to the U.S. initiative on principles for holding free elections (perhaps at the Copenhagen meeting of diplomats from CSCE countries in June). Second, any CSCE summit had to be preceded by completion of the CFE treaty. Since the CFE treaty would effectively eliminate the imbalance of Soviet conventional forces in Europe, erasing the advantage Moscow had enjoyed for decades, the Americans intended to use Soviet interest in the CSCE summit as a lever to secure Soviet agreement to this crucial arms control document.

Scowcroft also warned Hurd that the U.S. would not let a CSCE Summit turn into a German peace conference. Hurd did not argue with him. Scowcroft emphasized that the U.S. preferred that there be no German peace treaty. Chancellor Kohl supported NATO, but under the pressures of a German peace conference he might be vulnerable to acute pressure from Gorbachev and other delegates.⁴²

Baker's next step was, in some ways, the most important. Hurd was followed to Washington by Hans-Dietrich Genscher, who met with Baker on February 2. The

⁴² See Memcon of the President's Meeting with Foreign Secretary Hurd, 29 Jan 90. See also State 54508, "British Foreign Secretary Hurd's Meeting with Secretary Baker, January 29, 1990," 20 Feb 90; and Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 29 Jan 90. The account of the discussions with Scowcroft are from the author's notes of the meeting. Beschloss & Talbott have Hurd opposing the Two Plus Four idea, saying he preferred "Four-plus-Zero," i.e., "leaving the Germans out." At the Highest Levels, p. 185, and this is then repeated by Kieseler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, p. 88. I have not found any evidence to support this assertion.

The American position on the CSCE summit was developed during January by State's European Bureau and the NSC staff. See Seitz through Kimmitt, McCormack, and Bartholomew to Baker, "Framing the Basis for a 1990 CSCE Summit," 11 Jan 90. On January 22 Zoellick told Seitz that Baker agreed with the EUR recommendations and would review the issue with Scowcroft.

West German foreign minister was determined to regain the initiative from Kohl and begin taking charge of the West's diplomatic handling of the German question.

First Genscher publicly announced that German unification was indeed inevitable. He advocated early progress to accomplish unity, starting with an economic and monetary union. As for the process, Genscher spoke out against any use of postwar Four Power structures to regulate German self-determination.

Genscher's January 31 speech at Tutzing on "German Unity in the European Framework," was a major public presentation of his diplomatic strategy for the months and years ahead. Genscher thought that after the March 18 elections the FRG and GDR could alone negotiate a "treaty charting the course to German unity in Europe." This treaty would explain Germany's position in a future Europe. Existing borders would be respected. Germany would remain a member of the EC and of the Western Alliance. "We do not want a united Germany that is neutral," Genscher declared.

Genscher's plan was consistent with the Soviet/East German stance, in that it envisioned a treaty on the course to German unity, implying a gradual step-by-step path that could be based on a new confederation. Genscher differed from the East, however, in standing by NATO. To address Eastern concerns about these choices, Genscher proposed that: "There will be no expansion of NATO territory eastwards." The former GDR would not be incorporated into NATO or NATO's military structures. Indeed, NATO itself, along with the Warsaw Pact, would disappear, transformed into "elements" of some entirely new "cooperative security structures throughout Europe."

The CSCE would be strengthened, with new structures for it to be agreed at the CSCE Summit. That Summit would be the key European diplomatic forum to consider the "future structure of Europe," including Mitterrand's suggestion of a European confederation. Genscher suggested ten different institutions the CSCE could set up, from economic cooperation and "conflict management" to the environment, science, law and human rights. These steps, Genscher said, would

place the process of German unification in a European framework.⁴³

Genscher's plan was comprehensive, but it was obviously quite different from the positions being developed in Washington. It was unclear on just how a united Germany would be joined into NATO if the Alliance's obligations to defend Germany would, like Allied forces, stay in the old FRG. Both NATO and the Warsaw Pact were equated together as structures that could disappear into a new system that was still undefined. Intelligence reports available to American officials seemed to confirm that Genscher saw NATO as continuing only in the "short-term" and that Genscher was considering announcing new pan-European security ideas later in 1990. There was, ominously, no discussion of the future of either American nuclear weapons or American or other foreign forces in the new Germany.

Genscher was quite clear on keeping the territory of the GDR out of the NATO alliance. This territory would, in his view, be both neutralized and demilitarized. "To think," he scoffed to former U.S. Senator Charles Mathias, "that the borders of NATO could be moved 300 kilometers eastward, via German unification, would be an illusion. ... No reasonable person could expect the Soviet Union to accept such an outcome." Genscher was equally categorical in a press interview published on January 28: "Whoever wants the border of NATO to extend to the Oder and Neisse (the GDR-Polish border) is closing the door to a united Germany."

Genscher knew the idea of having Germany only partially included in NATO might seem odd, but he thought it "sounded more difficult in theory than it would work out in practice." Yet Teltschik, at the Chancellery, was noting privately, "How could [Genscher's idea] be imagined in practice: a united Germany with two-thirds in NATO and a third outside it?" It is likely that Genscher thought the practical

⁴³ Hans-Dietrich Genscher, "German Unity in the European Framework," Tutzing Protestant Academy, 31 Jan 90. Quotations are from the English language translation prepared for Genscher and passed by him to Baker when the two men met in Washington on February 2. See also Bonn 3400, "Genscher Outlines His Vision of a New European Architecture," 1 Feb 90. For a rather general discussion of the thinking behind the Tutzing formula, see Kiessier & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, pp. 77-80.

difficulties would evaporate as NATO and the Warsaw Pact were themselves replaced by his vision of a new pan-European security framework -- probably based in the 35-nation CSCE.⁴⁴

Genscher certainly understood the arguments against this "Tutting formula." But he was more concerned about the views of the Soviet Union. He was extremely worried about the Soviet reaction to his plan. Elbe later recalled how "nervous" Genscher was, fearing that even this commitment to NATO walked out onto "thin ice."⁴⁵ Genscher, more than any other Western statesman, had seen Soviet wrath first-hand, when he had been dressed down by an angry Gorbachev in early December.

Genscher's plan also diverged from the U.S. vision for the right diplomatic process. The Four Powers were barely mentioned. The external aspects of German unity would be determined by the two German states, then blessed at a CSCE Summit. While this was consistent with some Soviet views, the top American officials thought the CSCE summit would inevitably become the outlet for outside states to address the German problem and that this 35-nation forum, which included Europe's neutrals such as Sweden, Finland, and Cyprus, was the wrong place to try to protect Germany's political and military alignment with the West.⁴⁶

But the danger of disagreement between Baker and Genscher had already been headed off before the two men met. Genscher sent Elbe ahead to confer with Zoellick and Ross. Zoellick and Ross went along with Genscher's "Tutting formula"

⁴⁴ See Bonn 2169, "Genscher's Views on the German Question," 23 Jan 90 (the Genscher- Mathias was on January 23); Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 117; FBIS translation of "Austrian Press interview with Genscher in Bonn on January 21," Vienna Television Service in German, 21 Jan 90; CIA report on "Foreign Minister's Genscher's Views on German Unification, Four-Power Meetings, Future European Security Structures and SNF," 29 Jan 90; Bonn 1899, "Ambassador's Discussion with Foreign Minister Genscher, January 19," 19 Jan 90.

⁴⁵ Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, p. 80.

⁴⁶ See the untitled briefing paper on the Genscher meeting Zoellick prepared for Baker, 2 Feb 90. In preparing these points, Zoellick drew to some extent upon George through Holmes to Ross and Zoellick, "The Genscher Visit: Working the Unification Issue," 1 Feb 90.

for not extending NATO eastward into the former GDR. Elbe in turn agreed to the Two Plus Four design crafted by Baker's aides, including its express commitment to the outcome of unification. Elbe met Genscher at Dulles Airport and briefed both Genscher and Kastrup while they were riding to the State Department. Genscher was very pleased with the Two Plus Four idea, as long as it was clear this was "Two Plus Four" and not "Four Plus Two."⁴⁷

In a relaxed and friendly, jackets off, two-hour fireside talk with Baker, Genscher outlined his ideas. Germany, Genscher said, would remain in NATO but the Soviets had to be assured that NATO's territorial coverage would not extend to the former GDR. Genscher made it clear that he meant NATO's jurisdiction. The NATO treaty's defense commitments would not extend to the former GDR. Baker still had not grasped the distinction between demilitarizing the former GDR, a position he had supported, and neutralizing it -- that is, leaving it outside of the Alliance. When Baker noted during their subsequent press conference that Genscher supported continued membership for Germany in NATO, Genscher promptly elaborated that he and Secretary Baker "were in full agreement that there is no intention to extend the NATO area of defense and security towards the East."

Genscher revealed how he thought the NATO problem might disappear with NATO itself after the CSCE summit. When journalists pressed him to explain how the "Tutzing formula" would work he replied that, "nobody ever spoke about a half-way membership, this way or that. What I said is, there is no intention of extending the NATO area to the East. And I think you should wait for things to further develop ... that will be the situation at this summit, the CSCE summit...."

Baker was, on the other hand, able to publicly announce Genscher's assent to the U.S. conditions that had to be met before there could be a CSCE Summit. At the press conference Baker announced U.S.-FRG agreement that, "Any such summit

⁴⁷ Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, pp. 86-87; Pond, Beyond the Wall, p. 178. Kiessler & Elbe mistakenly assert that Blackwill was also involved in devising the Two Plus Four plan that Elbe accepted, although they appear to know that Blackwill was against the idea. Compare Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, pp. 87, 88-89.

should sign a CFE agreement. ... We are also in agreement that any such summit should involve the inclusion of a right of free elections as an additional human right in the human rights basket of CSCE."

Privately, Baker had won assent to the Two Plus Four scheme. He argued to Genscher that the CSCE process was not appropriate for determination of Germany's future; it was not adequate to manage Soviet concerns. Nor, the ministers agreed, would the Four Powers acting alone be acceptable. But Genscher wanted to keep a Two Plus Four proposal under wraps before the March 18 GDR election because he thought such an announcement might be construed by the Soviets as more pressure and intervening in the affairs of the GDR.⁴⁸ Baker, however, intended to use his plan to reassure the Soviets.

Genscher represented only part of the West German government. Much of West German policy on the unification question was being run separately by the Chancellery, where a new working group on German policy had been created under the chairmanship of chancellery minister Seiters. Genscher had not cleared his Tutzing formula with the Chancellery and the cabinet. In turn, Genscher only found out about Gorbachev's invitation for Kohl to come to Moscow from James A. Baker III, not from Kohl.

While Baker was meeting with Genscher, Scowcroft and Blackwill were on their way to Germany to participate in an unofficial "Wehrkunde" conference of security officials and prominent academics. They arrived in a country consumed by the question of unification. Berlin Governing Mayor Momper (SPD) introduced the latest major proposal for unification on the day Scowcroft and Blackwill arrived, February 3. His nine point plan saw the Four Powers as taking

⁴⁸ This account of Genscher's visit is drawn from Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, p. 89; draft report on the meeting prepared on February 2 by Seitz for Baker to send to Scowcroft in Germany; from PA transcript, "Departure Remarks by Secretary Baker and Foreign Minister Genscher," 2 Feb 90; and from author interviews with Zoellick, Washington, 1991. Oberdorfer's brief description of the Baker-Genscher meeting, though apparently based on an interview with Zoellick, is inaccurate. Don Oberdorfer, The Turn: From the Cold War to a New Era, The United States and the Soviet Union 1983-1990 (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991), pp. 393-394.

over all of East Germany for a brief period, then there would be unification accompanied by a settlement of the international issues at a summer CSCE Summit. Under Momper's scheme for unification, West German domestic laws would be extended eastward, but not West German defense structures or international commitments. The GDR would be demilitarized and Soviet forces could remain there in a number matching Western forces stationed in the FRG, providing security in the East in concert with enhanced Four Power military liaison missions. Momper presented his ideas as a third path between Modrow's plan for a neutral Germany and the CDU/CSU proposals for inclusion of the GDR in NATO.⁴⁹

While in Munich, Scowcroft and Blackwill consulted with Teltschik. Teltschik said Kohl would explain to Gorbachev that either a mass exodus of East Germans or the unilateral action of the East German parliament could force unification upon the FRG very quickly after the March 18 elections. Consistent with the policy line developed in Washington, Teltschik and the White House representatives came to a clear common understanding that Washington and Bonn were prepared to cooperate in encouraging very fast movement to accomplish unification.

Teltschik also said Kohl would tell Gorbachev that German neutrality was out of the question. Teltschik added, however, that NATO plans for modernization of short-range nuclear forces might have to be scrapped. Kohl would take this matter up with Bush at Camp David, later in the month. Teltschik was sure Kohl would want to retain the political initiative in shaping the electoral debate about nuclear weapons in Germany during the upcoming West German campaign.

As for the process of getting to unity, Teltschik was very worried about Four Power intervention. He thought the Soviets would push hard and that the British and French might be inclined to go along. Scowcroft assured him that President Bush would do nothing to embitter the Germans or weaken Kohl politically. Both men agreed that any CSCE summit should not be turned into an "ersatz" German peace conference. Scowcroft, however, did not present the Two Plus Four alternative

⁴⁹ See USBerlin 406, "Momper's Nine-Point Paper for German Unity," 6 Feb 90.

because Scowcroft and Blackwill had not yet accepted the idea, and perhaps did not fully understand how far Baker had already gone in launching it.⁵⁰

One point was obvious in early February. The Gorbachev/Modrow readiness to accept movement to unity had unleashed expectations for real unification much sooner than had been considered possible. The effect on officials and ordinary citizens was riveting and intoxicating. Kohl's own five-year timetable was now gone. Unification could happen, people thought, in a year or two. Enormous expectations were mixing with equally enormous uncertainties. All major participants agreed on the need for an economic union of some sort with East Germany. That, after all, could be reconciled with the plans for economic and monetary union among the entire European Community. But Kohl was also thinking privately, the Americans knew, about the explosive idea of discarding the confederation path publicly and contemplating a direct merger of the GDR into the existing FRG. Scowcroft wrote to President Bush that Germany "was like a pressure cooker" and it would take America's best efforts, and those of Kohl, "to keep the lid from blowing off in the months ahead."⁵¹

The center of diplomatic now shifted to Moscow. Baker arrived there in February, immediately followed by Chancellor Kohl. One way or another, Gorbachev would have to make his position clear. As Blackwill told Scowcroft, "the Politburo must know that if Kohl leaves the USSR having heard the same ambivalent mush that represents today's Soviet position on Germany, the Chancellor is likely to conclude he can do as he likes." Blackwill concluded that, "In any event, what John J. McCloy called 'The Big Game' of settling the postwar political geography of

⁵⁰ Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 126-127; Scowcroft to President Bush, "Trip Report: Wehrkunde Conference in Munich, FRG February 3-4, 1990," 5 Feb 90; also author interviews with Blackwill, Cambridge, 1991. For a fine snapshot of the policymaking environment in Washington at this time, see Peter Riddell & Lionel Barber, "Americans turn attention to German reunification," Financial Times, February 5, 1990.

⁵¹ See, e.g., Bonn 3968, "Unification: Increasingly, It's Seen as Coming Soon," 6 Feb 90; Bonn 4193, "German Unification: Further Developments Coming Thick and Fast," 7 Feb 90; EmbBerlin 844, "German Unification on March 19?," 9 Feb 90.

Europe is underway."⁵²

Baker Goes to Moscow

Flying to Moscow, Baker had another chance to audition his Two Plus Four design. Since the American secretary of state used a 30-year old Boeing 707 as his official aircraft, the plane still -- like the other planes of its generation -- had to stop in Shannon, Ireland, to refuel during flights from America to the continent. So Baker used the stop in Shannon to talk with the French foreign minister, Roland Dumas, who was already in Ireland for another EC meeting.

Baker explained the Two Plus Four as a way to handle the external aspects of unification, leaving the internal issues to be worked out by the Germans. Baker thought the Soviets needed some sort of diplomatic outlet for their anxiety, but Four Power intervention was the wrong way. Dumas agreed that the Soviets were nervous and needed something. They were not alone, Dumas added. The British, Dutch, and Poles were nervous too.

Interestingly, Dumas did not argue for the CSCE as a forum to consider Germany, though both Mitterrand and the EC had gone on record in support of a CSCE summit. It might have occurred to him that a Two Plus Four forum would give France greater cachet, participating in a more exclusive forum. Dumas did say that he had just warned Genscher to consider the interests of others in the external arrangements, but he, Dumas, had no ideas on how to do it. Dumas seemed more and more taken with the Two Plus Four idea.⁵³

Baker then flew on to Prague. He talked about Germany with the once dissident playwright and, suddenly, new Czech president -- Vaclav Havel. The

⁵² Blackwill to Scowcroft, "The Beginning of the Big Game," 7 Feb 90. See also Moscow 2679, "U.S.-Soviet Relations on the Eve of the Ministerial: The View from Moscow," 23 Jan 90.

⁵³ Oberdorfer, The Turn, p. 394; Secto 01005, "Secretary's Meeting with Foreign Minister Dumas, February 6, 1990," 7 Feb 90.

Czechs wanted to dismantle the Warsaw Pact and get Soviet troops out of their country. Havel was about to see Modrow. He promised Baker he would tell Modrow that Germany could not be neutral, but that he also could not imagine a united Germany in NATO. Reporting on these meetings to President Bush, Baker commented that "ideas are moving fast and furious here -- but they aren't reconciled effectively."⁵⁴

The Americans understood the essence of the joint Soviet-East German approach: the philosophical acceptance of unity, the vision of a gradual process leading through a new confederation, the adamant insistence on neutralizing and demilitarizing a united Germany. They also knew that even this stance was considered far too soft by some in the Soviet government. Germany was Exhibit #1 in an attack just launched against Gorbachev from the right wing within the Communist Party's Central Committee, and led by Politburo member Yegor Ligachev pleading for the Soviet leader "to prevent a prewar Munich." Or, as Ligachev put it in an emotional confidential letter sent to Gorbachev the next month: "The socialist commonwealth is falling apart, NATO is gaining strength. The German question has become of primary importance."⁵⁵

Shevardnadze was thus exceedingly gloomy when Baker turned to Germany in a small 'one-on-one' session with just the two men, two notetakers, and interpreters. Baker opened with a careful presentation. German unification was coming quickly. A process was needed to handle the external aspects of unification, to assure stability and respect for the interests of others. The process could be the two Germanies plus

⁵⁴ Baker to President Bush, "My Visit to Czechoslovakia," Secto 01009, 8 Feb 90 (cabled from Moscow).

⁵⁵ See "Debate Speech by Ye. K. Ligachev," Pravda, February 7, 1990, p. 6, in FBIS-SOV 90-026, February 7, 1990, p. 77-79; "Speeches in the Discussion of the Report [to the Central Committee]," Pravda, February 7, 1990, pp. 5-6 in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, 42, no. 7 (1990), pp. 7-9. See also the summary of the Soviet debate in Oberdorfer, The Turn, pp. 389-391. Beschloss & Talbott report that Yakovlev clashed at this time with Falin and other hard-liners, At the Highest Levels, p. 186, but there is no evidence to confirm a break at this time between Yakovlev and others on the Central Committee staff. Though Yakovlev did defend Gorbachev against the attacks from Ligachev, his public position was otherwise close to the prevailing line.

the Four Powers -- a Two Plus Four mechanism. It would start work after the two Germanies came together on internal issues after the March 18 GDR election. Baker argued that a Four Power forum was unacceptable to the German people, while a CSCE forum would be too unwieldy.

On the ultimate outcome of the process, Baker said America opposed Modrow's proposal for a neutral Germany. He wanted the Soviets to see that a neutral Germany would be more dangerous to Moscow than a Germany which stayed in NATO. A neutral Germany would acquire its own nuclear capability, Baker contended. A Germany firmly anchored in a more political NATO would have no need for such a capability.

To ease Soviet concerns, Baker used the formula he had picked up from Genscher and promised that if a united Germany was in NATO there would be iron-clad guarantees "that NATO's jurisdiction or forces would not move eastward." But US troops would be in Europe as long as US allies wanted them there. Baker also pledged that NATO would evolve into a more political and less military-oriented alliance.

Shevardnadze then presented his position. He agreed that unification was coming faster than anyone had expected, too quickly. All of Europe had to change too, to make unification possible. Those changes were not keeping pace. The Soviets had once supported a unified Germany, but it had to be neutral. A united Germany could not be adapted to the alliances as they now existed. The Soviets were the only ones raising reservations about the danger of a massive militarized Germany. They had nothing against unification or self-determination. But guarantees were needed, and not just from CSCE. The Soviets knew well the dangers of war with Germany. (Shevardnadze's brother had been killed by German forces near Brest in 1941.)

So Moscow supported Modrow's plan. It was no secret that Modrow had reviewed his ideas with the USSR before presenting them. Shevardnadze liked the fact that Modrow's plan was gradual, it would unfold in phases, and it ran parallel to the strengthening of European structures. More arms control, and more defensive

military doctrines were needed too. "In any case, unification will happen before we can achieve the next stage of disarmament," Shevardnadze then added, striking a note of impotent regret. "I am afraid that's the case, and I'm not sure of any way to avoid it."

Growing even gloomier, Shevardnadze conceded that unification was a fait accompli. He was annoyed that the Foreign Ministry's pleas to invoke Four Power intervention during January had been rebuffed. He blamed the Americans. Shevardnadze emphasized repeatedly that a unified Germany might be different from the current FRG. History would not forgive a failure to use the Four Power mechanism effectively.

Shevardnadze again urged Four Power negotiations, specifically to discuss a peace treaty. He said he had suggested a European referendum on unification -- but the Germans had rejected it. He thought the Germans should know how others feel. This was not just an issue for politicians. Now, Shevardnadze declared, "I have become enemy number one in Germany." He could support unification, but gradually -- in phases. There were so many problems to be addressed, including economic ones. The British and French, he said, privately shared many Soviet concerns. The Modrow plan was best.

Shevardnadze kept returning to his fears of what might eventually happen if Germany again became one country. He was worried about losing the chance for a peaceful nonnuclear world ten years down the road. He worried about neo-Nazis gaining power in Germany. The German Republikaner party was neo-Nazi, and might get as much as 20% of the vote. It was a serious force.

Baker asked if the idea of having a united, neutral Germany also be demilitarized had been in the Modrow plan. Shevardnadze said that this requirement was added in Moscow. Modrow thought that if he raised demilitarization it would be the end of him politically.

Baker then made clear that this too was unacceptable to the United States. A united Germany should not be disarmed. The Soviet Union would still be a major land power and Germany was entitled to have the means to defend itself. But, Baker

added, the American approach would anchor German military power firmly in Western institutions. This might actually be more helpful, even from Moscow's perspective, than just calling for neutrality. That was why the US wanted Germany to stay in NATO with a continued American troop presence. The Two Plus Four mechanism could help negotiate this good outcome, he argued, including an absolute ban on NATO forces in the eastern part of Germany.

Shevardnadze bent a bit. Well, he replied, all options ought to be considered. "After all the reality is that our action is late given the way events are moving." Baker then made it clear to Shevardnadze that the Two Plus Four was an American proposal, that he could not guarantee German agreement to it. He had discussed it with Genscher; there was no objection; but they had not yet agreed.⁵⁶

Baker next tried out his presentation in the Kremlin, on Gorbachev himself. Gorbachev for the first time hinted that the Soviets had also been thinking about a 'six power' forum by interjecting, "I say four plus two; you say two plus four. How do you look at this formula?"

"Two plus four is a better way," Baker answered. It put the German states first.

As with Shevardnadze, Baker also explained why the US opposed a neutral Germany but repeated the Genscher formula that, if Germany was part of NATO, "there would be no extension of NATO's jurisdiction for forces of NATO one inch to the east." This was an approach which could be agreed upon in the Two Plus Four.

Much to Baker's surprise, Gorbachev's reaction was quite different from Shevardnadze's. There was no handwringing about the historical danger of German militarism. Instead he said that, "Basically, I share the course of your thinking." The USSR had to adjust to the new realities. Regardless of differences, "there is nothing terrifying in the prospect of a unified Germany." He knew some countries,

⁵⁶ Memcon of Second One-on-One Meeting with Foreign Minister Shevardnadze, Obsobuyak Guest House in Moscow. The notetakers were Ross and Tarasenko. The burden of historical feeling about Germany and Shevardnadze's desire for a much more gradual process of unification are also evident in Shevardnadze's memoirs. See Shevardnadze, The Future Belongs to Freedom, pp. 132-133.

like France and Britain, were concerned about who is going to be the major player in Europe. This was not a Soviet or American problem. "We are big countries and have our own weight."

The process, in Gorbachev's view, had to be handled properly to recognize various sensitivities and be tactful. Though earlier in the day Shevardnadze had supported the bureaucracy's stance and renewed the plea for Four Power intervention, Gorbachev now accepted Baker's idea, so similar to the "six power" formula that Chernyayev had proposed during the January 'crisis staff' meeting. "So the mechanism of four plus two or two plus four, assuming it relies on an international legal basis, is suitable for the situation," Gorbachev said.

Baker had not forgotten the other half of the Zoellick/Ross design: an explicit understanding that the Two Plus Four participants would not interfere with a German choice for unification. Secretary Baker explained that, to win German support for the Two Plus Four idea, it was essential to start the Two Plus Four only after March 18, after the East Germans had made their choice, "and only after the internal aspects of unification are being discussed by the Germans." It must be clear that the "internal aspects are for the two Germanies to determine." The Two Plus Four would deal with the external aspect, dealing with security concerns and questions like the status of Berlin.

Baker repeated that he had not discussed the Two Plus Four idea with Chancellor Kohl, but he believed Genscher would agree. Kohl, running for reelection, would be careful not to be seen as "turning over to others the question of unification."

Gorbachev used this reference to German domestic politics to offer a sophisticated portrait of the range of views within West Germany about unification. Some wanted confederation; others wanted a federation. There was division about keeping Germany in NATO. Some wanted neutralism. Others spoke up for a confederation wherein both countries would retain their alliance memberships until the current alliances were replaced by new CSCE structures. Most surprising, to Gorbachev, was the position of Willy Brandt, who argued that Germany should

proceed to unity without waiting for the CSCE process, letting western Germany remain in NATO and working out a special status for the former GDR. He observed that most West Germans thought Brandt had gone too far. It was argued that such German nationalism could provoke resurgent Russian nationalism, which Gorbachev said was true.

Gorbachev said this showed quite a "mosaic" of opinion on possible outcomes. Rather than be swept away by emotion, "we shouldn't stop our thinking about how to channel the current events and the unification process. Let's be sure that we recognize realistic forces and take them into account." Yes, Baker replied, which is why we need a process to "shape the external aspects of unification in a way that enhances stability."

Coming back to the problem of a united Germany's membership in NATO, Baker asked Gorbachev directly whether he would really rather see Germany independent and outside of NATO with no US forces on German soil, or a united Germany tied to NATO and with assurances "that there would be no extension of NATO's current jurisdiction eastward."

Gorbachev said he was still giving thought to these options. "Soon we are going to have a seminar [or discussion] among our political leadership to talk about all of these options." One thing was clear: "Any extension of the zone of NATO is unacceptable."

"I agree," Baker replied.

Gorbachev added that he could see advantages to having American troops in Germany. Clearly impressed by Baker's argument, Gorbachev acknowledged that "the approach you have outlined is a very possible one. We don't really want to see a replay of Versailles, where the Germans were able to arm themselves. The best way to constrain that process is to ensure that Germany is contained within European structures. What you have said to me about your approach and your preference is very realistic. So let's think about that. But don't ask me to give you a bottom line

right now.⁵⁷

Secretary Baker's discussion with Gorbachev was extraordinarily significant. Gorbachev had adopted a position on both the process and the substantive outcome of German unification which was different and more flexible than Baker heard from Shevardnadze or than Seitz heard at the same time from his counterpart in the Soviet foreign ministry. Only Gorbachev seemed to be truly flexible on the German question.⁵⁸

Baker had also been the first Western statesman to present Genscher's "Tutting formula" of no extension of NATO "jurisdiction" directly to Gorbachev. Neither Baker nor the NSC staffers accompanying him (Gates and Rice) had fully appreciated the legal significance of Genscher's formula. But after Baker had departed for Europe other NSC staffers back in Washington (Blackwill and Zelikow)

⁵⁷ Memcon of Meeting with President Gorbachev at the Kremlin, February 9, 1990. Baker was accompanied by Dennis Ross, who took notes, and an interpreter. Gorbachev was joined by Foreign Minister Shevardnadze, a notetaker (name unavailable), and an interpreter.

The account of Baker's discussion of Germany in his Moscow meetings in Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, pp. 183-184, 185-186 is inaccurate. It quotes Gorbachev describing worries about Germany, though the quotes are actually paraphrases from what Shevardnadze, not Gorbachev, said in the foreign minister's earlier separate meeting with the American secretary of state. Beschloss & Talbott quote Gorbachev's comments on the NATO issue accurately in some respects but inaccurately in others. They also have Gorbachev grudgingly conceding only that the Two Plus Four "might be suitable" but refusing to commit himself to support Baker's design. In fact, as mentioned in the text, Gorbachev had responded quite positively to the idea, in part because the January 'crisis staff' meeting had already considered a possible 'six power' forum. Oberdorfer's more reliable account of the Baker meetings in Moscow has some similar problems that seem to stem in part from the way Baker and his aides chose to summarize these meetings to reporters. The Turn, pp. 394-396.

Baker's caution in describing the Soviet reaction to the Two Plus Four idea deserves notice. Though Baker summarized the reaction in the same way ("might be suitable") in his subsequent letter to Kohl, and may have also described it to reporters in these terms, the summary was actually Baker's careful, lawyerly understatement of a much more positive reaction. Readers will have noted that, in the same way, Baker repeatedly tells the Russians that the Germans have not "committed" themselves either, though Baker already had Genscher's agreement in his pocket, because Baker knew that he had not yet secured agreement from Kohl. For Baker, "commitment" was a term that meant he had a somewhat formal, binding, promise. Baker could not get such a commitment from Gorbachev because he could not formally propose an agreement to Moscow that was not yet blessed by America's allies (or indeed by parts of his own government).

⁵⁸ On the discussions of Germany with subcabinet officials, see Memcon of Meeting between Seitz and deputy foreign minister Anatoly Adamishin, 9 Feb 90. For Soviet reportage of Baker's visit, see "Ofitsial'ny vizit J. Baker v SSSR," Vestnik, no. 4 (62), February 28, 1990, pp. 5-6; and Shevardnadze's press conference, TASS, "Shevardnadze Answers Questions," February 10, 1990, in FBIS-SOV 90-029, February 12, 1990, pp. 24-29.

had thought about the question and come up with a quite different position. This White House formulation held, unlike Genscher's, that all of German territory would be in NATO and protected by the alliance. The White House also differed from Genscher in refusing to agree that eastern Germany would be demilitarized. Instead the NSC staff position promised only that the territory of the former GDR would have a "special military status" within NATO.

While Baker was still in Moscow he and his advisers received a draft Bush letter to Kohl that contained the new NSC staff line. Though the draft had not called attention to the new language, Baker quickly grasped the distinction and agreed with it. He promptly began edging away from the "Tutzing formula" that he had just offered to Gorbachev. While still in Moscow Baker told the press that if a united Germany was in NATO "you will have the GDR as a part of that membership." There would, he said, just need to be "some sort of security guarantees with respect to NATO's forces moving eastward or the jurisdiction of NATO moving eastward." Germany would be a member of NATO. There might be "some special arrangements within NATO respecting the extension of NATO forces eastward. That's all I meant there."⁵⁹

On balance, American officials were quite satisfied with the results of Baker's discussions with Gorbachev on Germany. They could justifiably believe they had received a green light from the leader of the Soviet Union for the policies the United States was developing to deal with the imminent prospect of German unification. Genscher's aide, Elbe, later credited Baker with providing "decisive help for the German side" by making such a strong case to Gorbachev with all the weight and

⁵⁹ See PA transcript, Secretary Baker's Press Conference, Novosti Press Center in Moscow, 9 Feb 90, pp. 5, 10-11. The press entirely missed Baker's delicate vagueness on the key point about NATO "jurisdiction," an issue hardly anyone understood at that point. Instead the press jumped on Baker's accidental reference to German "association" with NATO. There were then numerous press stories about a supposed US concession to accepting only German "association" with NATO. These stories were entirely baseless, since Baker quite truthfully took pains to correct his slip of the tongue during his press conference. The next day, either Zoellick or Ross, speaking to the press on background, had to put away the 'association' issue: "It's membership, it's membership, it's membership, okay?" PA Transcript, Background Briefing by Senior Administration Official, in Sofia, Bulgaria, 10 Feb 90.

authority of the leading power of the West.⁶⁰ Then the Americans worked to coordinate their diplomatic approach with that of Chancellor Kohl, as he followed Baker into Moscow.

Kohl, the Americans, and Gorbachev

Bush thought that when Kohl encountered Gorbachev, right after Baker left Moscow, the American and West German positions on the key issues must appear to be absolutely identical. The American president was sensitive to the terrific strain personally and politically, that Kohl would feel as he went to Moscow. So Bush wanted Kohl to know that America backed him. "With Kohl traveling to what may be the most portentous foreign meeting of his life," Scowcroft advised Bush, "I believe you should both give him all the personal support you can and make clear to him our preferences concerning the future of a united Germany."⁶¹

To accelerate unification and win German support on the vital security questions, the United States government sent two important messages to Chancellor Kohl on February 9-10, one from Bush and one from Baker. In deciding what Bush should say, the White House had two draft letters to choose from. They were very different. One, drafted by the NSC staff, offered unprecedented U.S. backing for Kohl's push toward unity in direct, personal terms and stressed the need to stay with NATO, the US troop presence, and nuclear deterrence. The other proposed letter, drafted by the European Bureau of the State Department, urged Kohl to reassure the Soviets about German intentions and suggested a new way of handling the NATO problem. The former GDR would not be protected by NATO, but instead by new promises to defend this part of a united Germany that would be given, outside of the NATO treaty, directly to Bonn by America, Britain, and France.

Blackwill thought the State draft was too defensive and disagreed with its

⁶⁰ Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, p. 91.

⁶¹ Scowcroft to President Bush, "Message to Kohl," 8 Feb 90 (drafted by Blackwill and Zelikow).

position on NATO. We should fortify Kohl, not urge him to assuage Soviet fears, he advised. Blackwill also wondered how the U.S. could promise entirely new security guarantees for part of Germany before the U.S. government had either analyzed the idea or won the consent of concerned agencies -- like the Department of Defense. Scowcroft arranged to have both draft letters sent out to Baker in Moscow, to see what Baker thought about them. Baker and Scowcroft agreed that they liked the NSC staff draft better. Bush agreed with their recommendation and the letter was sent directly to Kohl through special White House channels on February 9.⁶²

Bush's letter went straight to the point. German unification was coming soon. "Still," he wrote, "these new developments do not alter the complete readiness of the United States to see the fulfillment of the deepest national aspirations of the German people. If events are moving faster than we expected, it just means that our common goal for all these years of German unity will be realized even sooner than we had hoped."

Bush then dealt equally directly with any possible Four Power intervention in German affairs. Yes, America had legal rights in Germany. But these rights could only be justified by the desire to create a peaceful, democratic German state. That had already been accomplished, in Bush's view. "As I see it, no one can doubt the strength and vitality of the Federal Republic's democratic institutions." So, "whatever the formal legal role of the Four Powers may be in recognizing the freely expressed will of the German people," Washington would "do nothing that would lead your countrymen to conclude that we will not respect their choice for their nation's future." To be even clearer, Bush expressly pledged: "In no event will we allow the Soviet Union to use the Four Power mechanism as an instrument to try to force you to create the kind of Germany Moscow might want, at the pace Moscow might prefer."

⁶² See Scowcroft to President Bush, "Message to Kohl;" Blackwill to Scowcroft, "State Department Draft Message to Kohl," 8 Feb 90. The previous day, Blackwill and Zelikow had drafted for Scowcroft a catalogue of the complete spectrum of possible German affiliations to NATO and outcomes for the US security presence. See paper, "German Unity: Variations on the Theme," 8 Feb 90 (a copy was passed to Zoellick after his return to Washington).

Kohl would thus go to Moscow, carrying in his pocket an extraordinary written guarantee of American backing, worded in the strongest possible way. Bush then specified what he considered important, turning to the NATO issue. He said he "was deeply gratified by your rejection of proposals for neutrality and your firm statement that a unified Germany would stay in the North Atlantic Alliance." Bush felt sure Kohl agreed that, though NATO's mission needed to place "more emphasis on its original political role," continued German membership in NATO would include the presence of American troops on German territory backed by a credible nuclear deterrent.⁶³

Bush went on to offer his own formula for handling the status of former East German territory in NATO. Blackwill and Zelikow had liked the phrasing used by NATO Secretary General Manfred Wörner in a speech in Hamburg on February 8, where Wörner had referred to a possible "special military status" for the former territory of East Germany. Blackwill won Scowcroft's agreement to include this formulation in the President's letter. So Bush formally proposed that "a component of a united Germany's membership in the Atlantic Alliance could be a special military status for what is now the territory of the GDR."⁶⁴

Bush also explained that he expected this "special military status" for the former GDR to be accompanied by substantial, even total, withdrawals of Soviet troops from Central and Eastern Europe. The "special military status" meant that NATO's defense commitments would extend to all of Germany. Since it would be illogical for Soviet troops to remain in an area defended by NATO, Bush expected them to go home.

⁶³ This reference to NATO's "original political role" alludes to an interpretation Zelikow was offering at the time, arguing that the NATO treaty had originally served as a statement of America's commitment to Europe's future before the later decisions were made, after the outbreak of the Korean War, to commit large numbers of U.S. combat troops to Europe as part of far more elaborate efforts to deter and repel a potential Soviet attack.

⁶⁴ See Message from President Bush to Chancellor Kohl, 9 Feb 90 (sent via special channels); the contents are also summarized in Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 134-135; Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, p. 187.

This was an important letter both to Bush and Kohl. A couple of weeks later, when the two men were holding a joint press conference, Kohl said: "I wish to seize this opportunity, Mr. President, to thank you publicly today and here before the press, that on the eve of my trip to Moscow you sent me a letter which did not only speak about supporting our policy and was not only marked by the habitual friendship, but which will be going down in history as an important document of German-American friendship."⁶⁵

President Bush's message to Kohl was complemented by a parallel message to the chancellor from Secretary Baker. Baker briefed Kohl on what he might expect to hear from the Soviets. The letter then moved to the heart of Secretary Baker's message: the case for acceptance of a Two Plus Four forum. The "internal elements of unification were strictly a German matter," Baker explained. But everyone agreed that the interests of others were implicated in the external aspects of unification. Four Power intervention was unacceptable. The CSCE was unwieldy. It might "sanction the result of the unification process, but couldn't be a near-term practical mechanism for helping to shape it." Two Plus Four might be most realistic. The Two Plus Four, Baker went on, would begin work only after the March 18 elections, only after the process on the internal aspects of unification had begun, and only if the Germans accepted it.

On the NATO issue, Baker recounted the question he had posed to Gorbachev about choosing between a unified Germany outside of NATO, independent with no US forces, or a unified Germany tied to NATO "with assurances that NATO's jurisdiction would not shift one inch eastward from its present position." (This letter was drafted before Baker had internalized the different stance on NATO chosen in the Bush letter.) Gorbachev did not appear to be "locked-in." The Soviet leader "may well be willing to go along with a sensible approach that gives him some cover or explanation for his actions. I suspect that the combination of a Two Plus Four

⁶⁵ Public Papers of the Presidents: George Bush, 1990, bk. I, p. 266.

mechanism and a broader CSCE framework might do that.⁶⁶

Bush and Baker thus provided Kohl with a clear understanding of the backing he could expect from the US; a statement of the most important American concerns; advance notice of Soviet attitudes; and a recommended framework for managing the external aspects of unification. The West Germans based their presentations on what Baker told them to expect and found that the Soviets used the same points they had used with the Americans.⁶⁷

Kohl and Genscher met with the Soviet leaders on February 10 and 11. The critical meeting was between Kohl and Gorbachev on February 10, lasting more than two and a half hours. The atmosphere was friendly. Kohl, who had delivered on the Soviet leader's request for food aid earlier during January, did not encounter the angry Gorbachev that Genscher had faced in December. Kohl detailed the deteriorating political and economic situation in the GDR. Gorbachev made no effort to dispute the dire predictions for the future of the East German state. He did not utter one word of criticism about Kohl or the FRG's policies.

Kohl played heavily upon the economic advantages the USSR could derive from a friendly relationship with a united Germany. He noted that the GDR was a principal supplier of manufactured goods to the USSR, but was defaulting on its delivery contracts. Rapid unification could provide more reliable delivery of better, and cheaper, goods. The FRG was willing to negotiate with Moscow on delivery

⁶⁶ Letter from Secretary Baker to Chancellor Kohl, 10 Feb 90 (delivered by U.S. diplomats to Kohl on his arrival in Moscow). The contents of the letter are quoted at length in Oberdorfer, The Turn, p. 396; and also described in Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, p. 95; Teitschik, 329 Tage, pp. 137-138; and Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, p. 187. A copy of this letter was reviewed by the White House before it was sent. (Bush's own letter had already gone out.) By getting White House clearance for this letter, Baker was also — in effect — getting the first White House clearance for a written proposal of his Two Plus Four idea. When the NSC staff attempted to block agreement to this approach a few days later, they then had to confront the fact that Baker had already won a good deal of support for his idea from the West German chancellor and foreign minister, as well as from Gorbachev, and the approach to Kohl had been sent with a White House clearance.

⁶⁷ See Teitschik, 329 Tage, pp. 137-138; Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, pp. 95-96; Bonn 5456, "Meeting with FRG Political Director Kastrup," 16 Feb 90; Bonn 4761, "Teitschik Readout on Kohl's Visit to Moscow," 12 Feb 90.

contracts and maintain the close commercial ties between the former GDR and the Soviet Union. In addition, Kohl pointed out that trade with a unified German state could provide the Soviets with access to the EC market.

As with Baker, Gorbachev was prepared to accept the prospect of German unification. He told Kohl that it was up to the Germans to decide for themselves whether or not they wanted unification. It was also up to the Germans to choose their form of government, the pace of unification, and the conditions under which it would occur. Kohl, filled with emotion, assured Gorbachev that only peace would ever come out of German soil, and silently gestured to Teltschik to be sure he was copying all this down word for word. Inside, Teltschik was jubilant. "That is the breakthrough!" he noted in his diary. Gorbachev repeated his position later in the meeting. There could be no misunderstanding. Gorbachev, however, saw this statement as consistent with the position he had agreed upon with Modrow at the end of January.

The two leaders took up the NATO problem. Kohl said Germany had to remain in NATO. But Kohl said he could accept a plan keeping NATO forces [not NATO "jurisdiction"] restricted to the former FRG. The East German army could be converted into a paramilitary force similar to the FRG's Bundesgrenzschutz (federal border police). The West Germans were struck by Gorbachev's attitude on the NATO issue. In contrast to Shevardnadze, who had said that a united Germany in NATO was out of the question, Gorbachev had not proposed a neutral Germany, or demilitarization, or even the removal of the West's nuclear weapons. As with Baker, Gorbachev simply noted the spectrum of possible outcomes and the need to think some more about the different possibilities. "Again a sensation!" Teltschik noted later. "No demand for a price and no pressure. What a meeting!"

Kohl also said that Soviet troops could remain in the former GDR, perhaps believing that, as a practical matter, the Soviet military would find itself in an untenable position anyway in a united Germany. Gorbachev wanted to know whether current East German subsidies for Soviet forces could be paid in Deutschmarks. The FRG had not yet considered that point. The Chancellor and Genscher also tried to

reassure the Soviets by promising that a unified Germany would continue to forego development of nuclear or biological weapons.

Kohl gave explicit assurances to Gorbachev that he would not contest the borders of a united Germany. He was willing formally to agree that Germany's borders would consist only of the territory of the current FRG and GDR, renouncing all claims to former German territories, in return for unification.

When the leaders turned to process, Baker's Two Plus Four plan carried the day. Gorbachev endorsed it, clearly understanding that such a conference would not amount to the Four Powers summoning the two Germanies: it would not be the Four Plus Two. Gorbachev had been persuaded that the CSCE was too unwieldy to be a useful forum for discussing the German question. The West Germans agreed.⁶⁸

Kohl, at Teltschik's urging, portrayed the meeting as a historic event. The German people should know that the Soviet leader had given Kohl the "green light." Genscher and his aides were appalled. They considered such crowing about a "breakthrough" very risky, fearing that the Soviets would react badly. Gorbachev had been philosophically reconciled to unity in some form ever since he had agreed on a joint position with Modrow at the end of January. It was not clear there had been decisive moves on substance; certainly Genscher had encountered a more cautious position in his meetings with Shevardnadze. Genscher and his team scorned Teltschik as a foreign policy "amateur."⁶⁹

Indeed, Teltschik had seized as much on the relaxed tone as on the substance of Gorbachev's presentation. It helped Kohl politically to dramatize the moment, just

⁶⁸ On Kohl's discussions in Moscow, see Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 138-141; interviews with Teltschik and Gorbachev excerpted in Kuhn, Gorbatschow und die deutsche Einheit, pp. 108-109; Anatoly Cherniaev, "Gorbachev and the Reunification of Germany," in Gabriel Gorodetsky, ed., Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917-1991: A Retrospective (London: Frank Cass, 1993), p. 167 (though mistakenly calling this a telephone conversation and dating it on February 11 instead of February 10); Bonn 4761, "Teltschik Readout on Kohl's Visit to Moscow," 12 Feb 90.

⁶⁹ See Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 142-143; the venomous comments about Teltschik in Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, p. 98; Portugalov's comments downplaying the Moscow meeting in the interview excerpted in Kuhn, Gorbatschow und die deutsche Einheit, pp. 111-112; and Pond, Beyond the Wall, pp. 179-180. For the public commentary see Europa-Archiv, Folge 8, April 25, 1990, pp. 192-93.

as it put Genscher's role into the shadows. But it is hard to doubt that Kohl and his advisers genuinely believed this was a historic moment. Clearly, there were, as Genscher and Elbe noted, complexities ahead. But in crowing about the "green light," Kohl manufactured the momentum to carry his cause to victory in the East German election, little more than a month away.

Veteran Soviet officials instantly understood what Kohl was doing. They hastily, and angrily, took pains to contradict Kohl's glowing portrait of the decisions made in Moscow, starting with the more nuanced press reporting of the visit. In Washington, London, and Paris, Soviet ambassadors called on top foreign ministry officials to present their written version of the meetings with Kohl and Genscher. In this "official" version, the Germans could choose unity but their decision had to be linked inseparably to "the overall European development," taking into account the interests of others. They claimed to have "sharply criticized the FRG interference in the election struggle in the GDR, its policy of forcing the pace of developments and heating up emotions around the unification issue." On NATO membership, "the idea that a unified Germany be part of NATO was categorically rejected." As for Genscher's Tutzing formula, not extending NATO to the former GDR, the Soviet paper claimed their leaders "couldn't understand such a scheme."⁷⁰ The Soviet Union tried desperately to show that its policy remained formidable.

But the mask had slipped. Perhaps the Soviet leader, with so much crashing down around him, had become resigned to the inevitable and was looking ahead to West German financial help to salvage perestroika. Alternatively, maybe as at Malta,

⁷⁰ See State 49194, "Eagleburger-Dubinin Meeting on Germany," 14 Feb 90; Eagleburger (Acting) to President Bush (for his evening reading), 13 Feb 90. Falin blasted both the Bush and Genscher formulas for membership of a united Germany in NATO in an interview with Rudolf Augstein published in Der Spiegel, February 19, 1990, pp. 168-172. For Bondarenko's public effort to set the record straight from the foreign ministry, see A.P. Bondarenko, "The Truth is This," Trud, February 18, 1990, p. 3, in FBIS-SOV 90-040, February 28, 1990, pp. 23-24. In their notes to Washington, London, and Paris, the Soviets did admit they had agreed to a six-power forum. Only in the message to the Americans, the Soviets added a proposal for trilateral discussions involving the US, USSR, and FRG that would cut out the British and French. The U.S. did not pursue this suggestion, and it was dropped. For Soviet press handling of the Kohl visit, see "SSSR-FRG: Rabochii vizit G. Kolya v SSSR," Vestnik, no. 5 (63), March 15, 1990, pp. 1-3; and Yuriy Kornilov commentary, TASS, February 13, 1990, in FBIS-SOV 90-036, February 22, 1990, p. 36.

Gorbachev was just trying to avoid conflict, giving a softer impression than he intended. But whatever his personal motives, Gorbachev allowed the Americans and the Germans to leave Moscow believing that he was not willing -- or perhaps able -- to offer decisive opposition to their plans.

Bonn and Washington were anxious to exploit this opportunity but now worried about Gorbachev's political exposure at home. It was increasingly clear that Gorbachev, personally, was key to the outcome of German unification. From this time forth, the United States and the FRG were exceedingly careful to conduct the unification process in a way that would not make the Soviet Union look like the great loser. Humiliating the Soviet government could boost the right-wing reaction that American officials felt was already gathering strength. Gorbachev was in a delicate position and the West could not afford to lose him.

The Ottawa Meeting

With the European transformation accelerating, foreign ministers from every NATO and Warsaw Pact country gathered in Ottawa, Canada. The Ottawa meeting had originally been scheduled to begin serious negotiation of an agreement on Open Skies, an initiative first launched by President Eisenhower in 1955 and reintroduced in a broadened multilateral form by President Bush in May 1989 as a way of testing the extent of Soviet commitment to real *glasnost*, a new openness. That subject for the gathering was now eclipsed, however, by the diplomacy swirling around questions of Germany and Europe's future.

On Sunday night, February 11, NATO foreign ministers caucused to plan their common approach at the meeting. They wanted to talk about a diplomatic channel in which changes in Europe could be discussed. The European Community, accepting the USSR's view, wanted to rely on a CSCE summit, to be held in Paris. Baker persuaded his colleagues to agree that such a summit should be held only after a CFE treaty reducing and limiting the conventional forces of East and West in Europe was also complete and ready to be signed. The conventional forces agreement was no longer simply an arms control negotiation. Now, with the rapidly changing situation

in Europe, it would also speak volumes about the underlying political situation.

The United States had proposed a reduction in the numbers of U.S. and Soviet troops stationed on foreign territory in Europe. In Moscow, Gorbachev had agreed but only if it were modified so that U.S. and Soviet forces would have a common and equal ceiling. Baker and Bush wanted to break any notion in the public mind that U.S. and Soviet troops should be treated alike. They thought the Soviet troops had to leave and the American soldiers needed to stay. So Bush asked Secretary Baker to keep pushing for limits that would allow a larger American than Soviet troop presence on foreign territory in Europe.⁷¹

Seeing the difficulties ahead, French foreign minister, Dumas, argued that a CSCE Summit might need to be held in Paris, regardless of progress in CFE, in order to deal with the German issues. Genscher and Baker presented a united front against this argument. Genscher, amending his earlier view, said the CSCE Summit should not be about Germany. Baker stated unequivocally that the United States would not attend a CSCE Summit unless a CFE agreement was going to be ready for President Bush's signature.⁷²

Then Baker and Shevardnadze hammered out a compromise on the troop question under which both the U.S. and the USSR would be limited to 195,000 military personnel in Central Europe (which was defined to include the two Germanies, the Benelux countries, Denmark, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary). The Americans would have an additional right to station 30,000 troops elsewhere in Europe (i.e., Great Britain or Italy). The Soviets had no troops stationed in Europe outside of the central zone, and they were given no such extra entitlement. The Soviets thus abandoned the insistence on total equal ceilings voiced in Moscow and

⁷¹ The author helped pass this message to Baker. See also Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, p. 189.

⁷² At this NATO caucus Baker and Genscher also briefed their NATO colleagues on their respective meetings in Moscow. Neither alluded specifically to the Two Plus Four mechanism then being negotiated. Account based on author's notes from the caucus.

the outcome was remarkably close to Bush's original terms.⁷³ The political message was precisely as the United States wanted it -- American and Soviet troops were not to be treated in parallel.

The next morning, February 12, Baker spoke with Shevardnadze at a breakfast hosted by Canadian prime minister Mulroney and foreign minister Clark.

Shevardnadze was still worried about Germany. He said that 90% of the Russian people would vote against the reunification of Germany if they could. Mulroney added, unhelpfully, that he did not see how the EC could accommodate the weight of a united Germany either. Shevardnadze pleaded that Europe's political structures had to change, to keep pace. The Soviet conservatives once "had their Wall, their Honecker, their security guarantees -- what's it going to be now? They want to know." On that note, the ministers went on to the conference.⁷⁴

Baker used any spare moment between obligatory sessions of the Open Skies plenaries for intensive diplomacy with other foreign ministers, including Shevardnadze, on the German issue. Shevardnadze had little time to get instructions from Moscow and he was obviously nervous. Many of these meetings between ministers were ad hoc, arranged on a few minutes' notice. For example, on February 13 alone, Baker met with Shevardnadze on at least five separate occasions, had an equivalent number of meetings with Genscher, met privately with Hurd and Dumas, took part in two ministerial meetings of the U.S., UK, FRG, and France, and led a NATO ministerial caucus. This was in addition to the conference's formal Open

⁷³ This account is based on the author's recollection of events, including the drafting of the Ottawa compromise on U.S.-Soviet troop limits. See also Beschloss & Talbott, *At the Highest Levels*, p. 190. Documentary records from Baker's various meetings are fragmentary. See also Zelikow through Blackwill to Scowcroft, "Impressions from the Ottawa Conference," 14 Feb 90. The Pentagon was later annoyed that Baker's arrangement confined them to only 30,000 outside of Central Europe. Civilian and military defense officials wanted more room to mix and match according to force planning needs and availability of bases and felt Baker had hurried the process to conclusion without letting their representatives participate in the negotiations or have adequate time to consult about the deal with the Secretary of Defense or Joint Chiefs of Staff. But Baker had negotiated the accord based on force levels DOD had earlier recommended to President Bush as adequate.

⁷⁴ Memcon of Breakfast with Prime Minister Mulroney and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze, Prime Minister's Residence, 12 Feb 90.

Skies activities and previously scheduled bilateral meetings. The job was not just to get agreement on the Two Plus Four as a forum, but to nail down the other half of the design -- the public agreement linking this forum to unimpeded unification of Germany.

The U.S. prepared a joint announcement which was worked over, word for word, on February 13. The Americans got others to agree that this new forum would talk only about the "external aspects" of unification. The final announcement, released to the press by the six foreign ministers on February 13 stated simply that the foreign ministers of the six countries had agreed that the FRG and GDR foreign ministers would meet with the French, British, Soviet, and American foreign ministers "to discuss external aspects of the establishment of German unity, including the issues of security of the neighboring states. Preliminary discussions at the official level will begin shortly."

Now that a process to deal with German unification had been created, the Americans were pressured to put it into action right away. Genscher and Baker had originally agreed that the new forum would not start work until some time after the East German elections on March 18, after the internal process of unification between the two Germanies was already launched and underway. Now Ross and Zoellick, explaining the Ottawa accord, said only that no ministerial meeting would occur until after March 18. Meetings of officials could begin "shortly," which meant before the East German elections.⁷⁵

The plan met with intense criticism from other members of the Western alliance who had not known this forum was being created and felt left out. Dutch foreign minister Hans Van den Broek decried the lack of consultation. After all, the announcement implied that the six would negotiate the concerns of all of Germany's

⁷⁵ See Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, pp. 99-100; Shevardnadze, The Future Belongs to Freedom, pp. 133, 136. The background of the Two Plus Four was well described in the detailed background press briefings conducted by Zoellick and Ross at the time. See PA Transcript, "Background Briefing by Senior Administration Officials," 12 Feb 90, pp. 5-8 (Zoellick is the briefer in the cited portion); PA Transcript, "Department of State Background Briefing on Results of Ottawa Ministerial," 14 Feb 90 ('First Official' is Ross; 'Second Official' is Zoellick).

neighbors. But all of Germany's neighbors were not part of the process. Italian foreign minister Gianni De Michelis was equally unhappy. "We have worked together within the Alliance for 40 years." Luxembourg, Norway, Belgium, Spain, and Canada echoed this dissatisfaction. The situation was particularly embarrassing for the Canadians who were, after all, hosting the conference.

The Americans, British, French, and West Germans all tried to be conciliatory. Baker pledged to consult others about the activities in this new forum. Finally however, after De Michelis repeated his concerns, Genscher lost his patience. Genscher turned to the Italian and said sharply, "You are not part of the game." In the stunned pause which followed that remark, the Canadian chairman gavelled the meeting to a close.⁷⁶

Baker had to worry about more than unhappy allies. The NSC staff had never reconciled itself to the Two Plus Four plan. Like State's European Bureau, Scowcroft and Blackwill thought the idea would simply intervene in and slow down German unification. This would, in turn, defeat the goal of letting unification happen at a pace set by the Germans -- preferably as fast as possible. Baker had overruled Seitz and the European Bureau. But the NSC staff worked for a different boss.

On February 12, the first day of Ottawa talks, Scowcroft suddenly feared that the Two Plus Four, which he still thought was a subject for consultation, was about to become a reality. Bush wanted to stand by Kohl, not interfere with his plans. Scowcroft conveyed his concerns to Baker. Baker's advisers thought Scowcroft's worries were overdrawn. They mistakenly believed Scowcroft was the one trying to slow down unification, while they were trying to speed it up. In any case, Baker knew that Genscher was on board and that Kohl had agreed to the idea with

⁷⁶ Account based on Kiessler & Elbe, *Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken*, pp. 103-104; author's recollections and draft State cable, "Ottawa: Allied Ministers' Meeting on CFE and German Unity Statement," 15 Feb 90. See also The Hague 1387, "Dutch Reactions to Ottawa Agreement on Handling German Reunification," 15 Feb 90. The Canadian ambassador to the U.S., Derek Burney, later told Blackwill that his government, hosting the meeting but unaware of the Two Plus Four discussions, felt like the piano player in the first floor of a whorehouse, watching the customers going up and down the stairs, hearing the bedsprings creaking, and just playing along. Interview with Blackwill, Cambridge, August 1994.

Gorbachev. So he asked Genscher to ask Kohl to give Bush a call.

Kohl phoned President Bush on February 13. He first expressed his deep gratitude for the messages he had received from Bush and from Baker before talking to Gorbachev. He then summarized the discussions with Gorbachev and said he knew the Two Plus Four idea was being worked in Ottawa. After the call, though, Bush was still not certain that Kohl had made clear his support for the Two Plus Four idea. So to avoid any chance of misunderstanding, Bush called Kohl back. The Chancellor immediately assured the President that, "George, I have a feeling there is a misunderstanding. I'm in agreement with what the foreign ministers are talking about in Ottawa." Kohl was flattered by Bush's care in soliciting his views.⁷⁷

Baker then received the go-ahead from President Bush. But Scowcroft was still unhappy and unreconciled to the idea. He and Blackwill believed the Soviets, British, and French now all had an outlet to slow down unification. Rice and Blackwill believed that the forum would force Gorbachev to take a stand on German issues, which was just what they thought Gorbachev was trying to avoid. Scowcroft was troubled too, because he believed that the idea had not been properly considered within the US government or sufficiently vetted with the NATO allies. He believed Baker had presented Bush with a fait accompli that the President had been obliged, with some hesitation, to accept.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ On Baker's approach to Genscher, and the irritation of both men with the situation, see Kiessler & Elbe, *Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken*, p. 101. On the calls themselves see Teltschik, *329 Tage*, p. 146; Memcons of Calls between the President and Chancellor Kohl, February 13, 1990 (notetaker in both calls was Hutchings). Kiessler & Elbe repeat a story that the Americans called Kohl because Teltschik called the White House in order to use the Americans to delay agreement to a Two Plus Four process that would move bureaucratic control over the German question to Bonn's Foreign Office. Kiessler & Elbe, *Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken*, p. 101. This remarkable assertion speaks volumes about the poisoned relationship in Bonn at the time between the Foreign Office and the Chancellery. Teltschik did call Blackwill, but only to worry about how little information either of them had about just what was happening in Ottawa. Interview with Blackwill, Cambridge, August 1994. It is highly doubtful that Teltschik would have opposed the Two Plus Four idea since he knew Kohl liked it and, even more importantly, knew that Kohl had already agreed with Gorbachev to support Baker's plan. Bush and Scowcroft, not knowing about this Kohl-Gorbachev understanding, had their own reasons for wanting to confer with Kohl.

⁷⁸ Account based on author interviews with Scowcroft and Zoellick, Washington, 1991; our own recollections; and Blackwill to Scowcroft and Gates (via Gant/Edwards), "Six Power Conference," 13 Feb 90 (electronic mail messages sent at 1559 and 1900 EDT).

This episode was by far the most serious example of internal disagreement within the United States government during the process of German unification. It appears to have turned largely on misunderstandings between State and the White House on how far the concept of the Two Plus Four had progressed. Moreover, Baker, who had used every opportunity to float the idea, found himself with a chance to push it through at Ottawa. Time was of the essence and the secretary of state went ahead.

In truth, the White House had substantial notice of Baker's intent to pursue the Two Plus Four idea. Blackwill probably first became aware of this thinking at the time of the talks with Hurd and Genscher/Elbe at the end of January, if not sooner. The White House had cleared Baker's February 10 letter to Kohl pressing the idea.

Second, neither the White House nor State, for different reasons, attempted to place, or force, the Two Plus Four issue into a formal (or even a good informal) decision process leading to the President. Responsibility to secure such a decision rested with both Scowcroft and Baker. In the rush of events, there was no opportunity for a timely airing of the different positions.

Third, neither Scowcroft nor Baker fully understood each other's concerns at the time. Ironically, officials in both camps shared the objective of accelerating German unification and thought the other side had the opposite desire.

But, remarkably, the internal disputes about the Two Plus Four idea never leaked to the press. Personal relationships, though strained, did not break. Instead, with the adoption of the Two Plus Four at Ottawa, the NSC staff and the State Department turned quickly to the question of how to make it work.

Taking Stock

Baker had done more in Ottawa than just win agreement to the creation of a mechanism to manage the diplomacy of German unification. The joint announcement also served, symbolically, as public recognition that unification had passed beyond speculation and expectation into the realm of day-to-day planning. "Suddenly," Elizabeth Pond observes, "it dawned on the public that German unification was going

to come very fast indeed." Kohl was jubilant. Germany was "jumping with a single leap" toward unification. In Moscow, Falin fired a warning: "If the Western alliance sticks with its demand for NATO membership for all of Germany, there won't be any unification."⁷⁹

The United States knew that it wanted to propose membership for the united Germany within NATO. Bush had discussed the problem with Manfred Wörner, a leading conservative political figure in West Germany, former FRG defense minister, and now NATO's able Secretary General.

The President told Wörner that the German question dominated everything and made the issue of U.S. force levels, the U.S. role and the U.S. position in Europe complex. Wörner, agreeing, was adamant about the need to keep a united Germany firmly in the Alliance, or else "the old Pandora's box of competition and rivalry in Europe would be reopened." Neutrality was dangerous, for Germany and for Europe. Eventual German acquisition of nuclear weapons was quite possible. A demilitarized Germany was also unacceptable. A neutral or disaffected Germany would be tempted to float freely and bargain with both East and West. The EC and CSCE were all talk. Nothing could replace NATO as the only stable security structure. It was Bush's "historic task," Wörner argued, to protect the Germans from temptation, Europe from instability, and safeguard those elements that have made a new Europe possible. It was the way to assuage the fears of other countries in Western Europe too.

Both Bush and Wörner felt that Gorbachev would accept a united Germany in NATO if the United States stood fast. But Bush knew he would have to work hard to persuade the Soviet leader. Wörner took care to specify that German participation in NATO also had to mean German participation in NATO's military structures. The FRG was the "key" to the integration of member armies into an alliance military command. Politically this was crucial, it made European defense a multinational

⁷⁹ Pond, Beyond the Wall, p. 181; Kohl and Falin quoted in Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, p. 190.

effort rather than a national one, with national rivalries. In addition, Wörner confirmed that his notion of a special military status for the former GDR was indeed different from the idea of demilitarizing eastern Germany. Wörner did not know that Bush's staff had already borrowed this concept from the NATO secretary general's recent speech and had already presented it to Kohl as the American government's view.⁸⁰

No one doubted that the road to unification still led through Moscow. The Soviets and East Germans hoped to channel unification into a more gradual process. Their hopes rested on a leftist victory in the March 18 GDR elections, the outcome that most observers expected. Shevardnadze did not believe that he had yielded to faster unification with the adoption of the Two Plus Four framework.⁸¹

Though it is tempting to think that the Soviet position was hopeless by this time, no senior officials in either the U.S. or West German governments believed this. They knew that the USSR still had significant leverage over events in Central Europe. Moscow could force the German people to choose between unification and NATO, channeling the surging tide for unity against the supporters of the Alliance. Moscow could also force the German people to choose between respect for Soviet wishes and a major international crisis. Right after the Ottawa accord was announced, Falin explained matters in the pages of the most widely read publication in West Germany. How, he was asked, could the Soviets convince Bonn and Washington?

I think that life will convince the Americans and the majority in the Bundestag. ... The only correct answer would be not to play the problem down, not to pretend that we are unable to defend [our] interests legally -- and not only legally. There is no legal vacuum in Germany. Either the GDR -- regardless of which government will be

⁸⁰ Memcon for President's Meeting with Manfred Wörner, Camp David, 10 Feb 90 (the memcon in the official records is incorrectly dated).

⁸¹ See, e.g., the interview with Shevardnadze while on the aircraft returning from Ottawa to Moscow, M. Yusin, "Eduard Shevardnadze ...," *Izvestija*, February 20, 1990, p. 5, in FBIS-SOV 90-034, February 20, 1990, pp. 8-11 (an interview referred to later by Shevardnadze in his memoirs, The Future Belongs to Freedom, p. 137); see also Bondarenko, "The Truth is This," p. 3.

in power there -- fulfills its ... obligations concerning the Warsaw Pact and us, or the Soviet Union's latent rights [over the GDR and all of Germany] become effective. ... The Germans are intelligent enough to understand that it cannot be in their interest to bring about a confrontation. We do not threaten anyone, but we do not want to be threatened either.⁸²

The U.S. government knew that, especially in an election year, Kohl and West German voters had little stomach for a major international confrontation with Mikhail Gorbachev, a man who had been wildly feted in the FRG the year before as the revolutionary leader of perestroika.

So the United States, in the days after the Ottawa meeting, faced two great challenges: to flesh out a precise and sustainable position on the external alignment of a united Germany in Europe and to design a diplomatic strategy for the Two Plus Four which would protect this position; and to win the acquiescence of a weakened but still dangerous Soviet Union to an abrupt realignment of the European balance of power. The United States intended to consolidate the democratic revolution in Europe, reduce Soviet military power in Eastern Europe, and eliminate the Soviet armed presence in Germany. American forces -- though fewer in number -- would remain. The harsh truth was that the American goal could be achieved only if the Soviet Union suffered a reversal of fortunes not unlike the outcome of catastrophic defeat in a general war. The United States had decided to try and achieve the unification of Germany absolutely and unequivocally on Western terms.

Yet, American officials wanted the Soviets to accept this result and believe that they retained an appropriate, albeit diminished, role in European affairs. The U.S. did not want Moscow to nurture a lasting bitterness that would lead them to want to overthrow the European settlement someday.

In the past, whether at the Congress of Vienna (1814-1815) or the Congress of

⁸² Interview in Der Spiegel, February 19, 1990, pp. 168-72. Shevardnadze later told Teltschik that Falin had spoken, during the January policy review, in support of directly threatening military intervention in Germany. Falin denied it, but Teltschik did not believe him. Author interview with Teltschik, Gütersloh, June 1992.

Berlin (1878), such accommodation of the interests of a defeated power was a familiar aspect of balance of power politics. Defeated powers were 'compensated' for the loss of valued territory with other, perhaps less valued, land. The victors sought to cushion the blow to the vanquished and protect the settlement.

In this more enlightened age, such tangible compensation for political losses was not possible. The answer had to be sought in less tangible marks of power and influence. The odds of success seemed long, but the United States set its sights on creating a dignified way for Moscow to accept the retreat of its presence and authority in the new Europe.

Chapter Eight
THE DESIGN FOR A NEW GERMANY
(February - May 1990)

"I Left that Question Open"

On the afternoon of February 14, 1990 President Bush walked into the Roosevelt Room of the White House to sign a bill providing aid to the new government of Panama. Before the signing ceremony began Bush praised the "breakthrough" in Ottawa that would bring about the unity of Germany and, with it, "the objective that I have stressed throughout the first year of my Presidency: a Europe that is whole and free." But Bush also repeatedly referred to the way "things moved quite fast" in Ottawa, the tiniest sign of lingering White House unease over Baker's achievement.

A reporter reminded Bush that on February 12 he had rejected a Four Power conference on Germany. What had changed between February 12 and February 13, the day the Two Plus Four accord was announced? Well, Bush answered, Chancellor Kohl had assured him just yesterday that he considered this a sound step. Bush did not distinguish between a Four Power conference and the Two Plus Four mechanism that included the two German states. Instead he finished his answer by saying obliquely that, "We're not trying to dictate to anybody over there how it would work; I left that question open. But, yes, it moved very, very fast." The President invited Secretary Baker to add to this answer. Baker declined.¹

¹ "Remarks on Signing the Urgent Assistance for Democracy in Panama Act of 1990 and a Question-and-Answer Session with Reporters," Public Papers 1990, bk. I, pp. 244-46 (emphasis added).

The Ottawa accord was well received in the United States. Tom Wicker spoke for many in commenting that the agreement appeared to place the Administration "on top, if not literally in control, of the swiftly evolving situation in Europe." Richard Cohen remarked that "President-bashing may be as warmly satisfying as hot soup on a cold day, but sometimes the facts make it difficult.... As a West German official put it, the non-vision President had vision after all." The majority of editorial comment followed suit, though some continued to voice their fears of a united Germany. See Tom Wicker, "The Score at Ottawa," New York Times, February 15, 1990, p. A31; Richard Cohen, "... And Diplomats," Washington Post, February 21, 1990, p. A21. On the general positive reaction, see also Tutwiler to Baker, "Editorial Comment on Ottawa Ministerial," 7 Mar 90. For another sample of such comment, see "Steering the German Steamroller," New York Times, February 15, 1990, p. A30 which, curiously, gave most credit for the accomplishment to Genscher rather than Baker. In fact some commentators thought Bush had adopted a

Indeed the process had moved very fast and there were important blanks to be filled in. The Americans were clear enough that Germany should remain a member of NATO, that American troops and nuclear weapons would remain in Germany, and that the territory of the former East Germany would have some sort of "special military status" that still permitted its integration into NATO.

In the winter of 1990, nothing could be taken for granted about Germany's political future. Even staunch pro-German conservatives like Henry Kissinger believed that the new Germany might be a confederation linking the FRG and GDR, with a disarmed eastern portion of Germany integrated into NATO. Moreover, Germany would accept binding limits on its armed forces and the Western allies would cut their forces in Germany to a fraction of their former strength. Not only would NATO forces not move eastward; the alliance would move westerward -- back to some agreed line east of the Rhine.²

But the Americans and the FRG had more ambitious objectives. The Federal Republic had rejected the notion of confederation, now it was time to devise an alternative plan for unity. In Bonn, a new working group on "Deutschlandpolitik"

"laissez-faire approach" to developments in Germany; Robert Hunter, "The Transition to One Germany," Christian Science Monitor, February 21, 1990, p. 18; or, even more bizarre, thought Bush was actually opposed to rapid German unification. E.g., "The Germanys: Marching to Unity," Time, February 12, 1990, p. 30. However, due to the skillful background briefing of Zoellick and Ross, some journalists grasped the significance of the sequencing concept of the Two Plus Four, which placed internal German moves toward unity before negotiation of the external aspects of unification. See "Germans and Their Neighbors," Washington Post, February 19, 1990, p. A18; "Reunifying Germany," Washington Post, February 15, 1990, p. A24, which still noted worryingly that "one is entitled to be a bit nervous about the speed of it all and to expect that the unifiers will proceed with the utmost care."

More overt fears of Germany were evident in "An Agreeable Unity," Christian Science Monitor, February 15, 1990, p. 20 and frank hostility found both from A.M. Rosenthal, "Until Shadows Vanish," New York Times, February 15, 1990, p. A31 and from William Safire, "Kohl at Camp David," New York Times, February 23, 1990, p. A31. For strong counterarguments to allay such fears, see, e.g., Henry Ashby Turner, "Baseless Fears of a Unified Germany," New York Times, February 11, 1990, p. A25; George Will, "Europe's Furled Banners," Newsweek, February 26, 1990, p. 72. Some also recognized the formidable challenges involved in the first step: economic merger. E.g., "German Digestion," Wall Street Journal, February 16, 1990, p. A12.

² See Henry Kissinger, "Delay Is the Most Dangerous Course," Washington Post, February 9, 1990, p. A27. Also raising some of the questions was Flora Lewis, "Peace Before Power," New York Times, February 17, 1990, p. A27. A contemporary sample of a more 'liberal', though far vaguer, approach to some of these questions can be found in Hunter, "The Transition to One Germany," p. 18.

began to meet on January 31, led by the head of the chancellery, Kohl's chief of staff, Rudolf Seiters.³ The Chancellery working group at the subcabinet level would report, in part, to a new Cabinet committee on "German unity."

Everyone agreed that there should be economic and monetary union between the FRG and GDR. The Modrow government wanted and needed it -- particularly the huge economic support that it would bring; the major West German parties supported it; and the idea seemed to harmonize nicely with the European Community's own plans for creating such a union. The crucial problem was to determine the political arrangements in which that union would take place. Would there still be an autonomous GDR that might even be under communist rule?

Kohl's government concluded that it would instead link economic union to the dismantling of socialism and creation of a market economy in the GDR. Without that step, Finance Minister Theo Waigel explained to the Bundestag, the D-Mark could not become the de facto currency of the GDR. That, in turn, was the way that its citizens might be persuaded to stay home. About 340,000 East Germans had arrived in the FRG during 1989 and, in the new year, over 2,000 East German resettlers were arriving in the FRG each day. CDU-East leader De Maiziere believed that another 2.5-3.0 million Easterners were "sitting on packed suitcases." Kohl's government worried that the East German government would be toppled by an avalanche of that proportion, swamping West German resources for housing and social programs, and finishing Kohl's chances for reelection. If Bonn did not want the East German people "to come to the D-Mark, then the D-Mark must go to the [East German] people."⁴

Kohl submitted his proposal for economic and monetary union to his cabinet

³ Horst Teltschik, 329 Tage: Innenansichten der Einigung (Berlin: Siedler, 1991), p. 122.

⁴ The quote is from Teltschik's paraphrasing of Kohl's explanation to CDU/CSU parliamentarians on February 6. See Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 125, 129; Bonn 5708, "East German Resettlers Force Up-Front FRG/GDR Economic and Monetary Union; Result Will Be De Facto Unification," 21 Feb 90; the 340,000 figure is from Kohl's February 15 statement to the Bundestag in Materialen zu Deutschlandfragen (Bonn: Kulturstiftung der deutschen Vertriebenen, 1989-91), pp. 52-56.

on February 7. Kohl emphasized that money alone would not be a way out for Modrow's government. There would have to be fundamental reforms too. He, the CSU leader and Finance Minister Waigel, and FDP leader Graf Lambsdorff all agreed that economic union required a common economic order. Thus, the FRG planned to negotiate with the East on completely new federal structures to govern the GDR shortly after the March 18 elections.

Waigel outlined three possible designs for economic and monetary union. The most complex plan envisioned a move toward full currency union after economic reforms were underway. A second option was to establish a fixed exchange rate between D-Mark and East German Ostmarks, to be propped up by the Bundesbank. Third, and simplest, would be immediately to make the D-Mark the sole legal currency in East Germany as well as the FRG. This dramatic step would require the Bundesbank to take more responsibility for the GDR's monetary policies as East Germany was absorbed into the West German economic system.

The president of the Bundesbank, Karl Otto Poehl, had been invited to take part in this cabinet meeting. He had no quarrel with Waigel's outline or with the need for a monetary union with the GDR. Afterall, East Germany's foreign exchange reserves were already exhausted. There was no other choice. But despite the magnitude of the East German crisis, the meeting adjourned without a clear decision on Waigel's options. In a press backgrounder on February 9 Teltschik derisively commented that the GDR could become "insolvent" within a few days. The next day another CDU official, Lothar Spaeth, told a reporter that the unconditional economic surrender of the GDR was the only way to prevent imminent financial collapse. After a flurry of headlines Kohl, returning from Moscow, was more diplomatic: the GDR, he said, was not on the verge of bankruptcy. Privately, however, Bonn officials assumed Modrow would have to agree to Kohl's proposal for quick economic and monetary union of the two Germanies during his visit to Bonn on

February 13-14.⁵

The Modrow visit placed a spotlight on the gulf between the different notions of "economic and monetary union." Modrow was under pressure from the former dissident leaders of the Round Table to protect the East German social welfare system and avoid any quick surrender of "financial sovereignty." Modrow did of course want West German money -- 10 to 15 billion D-Marks worth. In other words the East Germans wanted to receive the benefits of monetary union and maintain economic autonomy for the East. Modrow arrived in Bonn with seventeen ministers in tow (eight from the Round Table). He presented "the position of the Round Table" but achieved little. Kohl linked massive aid to economic reforms. He promised the D-Mark, but insisted on a dominant role for West Germany in the monetary policy of the East. The East Germans balked, irritating West German officials with analogies of rapid unity to Hitler's 1938 annexation of Austria. The Easterners were annoyed, in turn, by the perceived haughty and peremptory tone of the Western side. The two countries could only agree to ask their negotiators to work on the detailed terms of "currency union and economic community."⁶

Kohl summarized the fast-breaking situation to the Bundestag on February 15. He called attention to the positive meeting with Gorbachev, the "more far-reaching

⁵ Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 130-33; see Bonn 4612, "Teltschik Flap Notwithstanding, Bonn Does Not See Imminent GDR Economic Collapse, but GDR Acceptance of Monetary Union is Likely February 13," 12 Feb 90; Stuttgart 301, "Spaeth Asks GDR to Surrender Unconditionally," 13 Feb 90. Konrad Jarausch, The Rush to German Unity (New York:: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 109, has Pöhl bowing to "political pressure" at the February 7 cabinet meeting and Kohl ignoring warnings about economic and social disruption, arguing against approaching the problem with a "mercenary mind." But the only primary source cited is Teltschik, who offers the detailed and entirely different portrait of the meeting summarized in the text. The quote about the "mercenary mind" used by Jarausch actually comes from Kohl's ruminations the next day, when he was expressing his great satisfaction with the way Poehl had handled the monetary union question on TV the night before. Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 132-33.

⁶ See Hans Modrow, Aufbruch und Ende (Hamburg: Konkret Literatur, 1991), pp. 127-36; Kohl and Modrow press conferences reprinted in Europa Archiv, Folge 8, April 25, 1990, pp. 194-99; Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 144-45; Jarausch, The Rush to German Unity, p. 110 (citing to the transcript of the Kohl-Modrow talks as well as to published sources); Bonn 4951, "GDR Prime Minister Modrow Accepts Chancellor Kohl's Offer of Economic/Monetary Union; Implementation ASAP After GDR Elections," 13 Feb 90; Bonn 5102, "Chancellery Debriefing of Modrow Visit," 14 Feb 90; EmbBerlin 1571, "Modrow Reports on Moscow Trip, Cites U.S. Senators on Polish Border," 9 Mar 90.

agreements in Ottawa," and the beginning of talks with Modrow on monetary union and economic community. Taken together, Kohl justly claimed that these developments had "qualitatively changed" the situation in Germany.⁷

But Kohl was still exposed. The stalemate with the GDR was not just bad for Modrow but threatened to aggravate the refugee crisis. That was dangerous for the West German government and the political fortunes of the CDU. Kohl also needed to settle on a preferred path to unity, to pick one of Waigel's three options for the monetary union and think through the road to political union. German officials, like their American counterparts, hoped that the Two Plus Four would lag behind the negotiation of the internal aspects of unification. In the best of all worlds, the Two Plus Four might soon be One Plus Four.⁸ Delays in negotiations between the two German states threatened this delicate calculation. The important decisions could no longer be avoided.

Kohl Decides on Takeover, not Merger

The FRG had to select between the two paths to unification provided in West Germany's constitution, called the Basic Law. Under Article 146 all-German elections would be held to choose delegates to a national assembly which would, in turn, negotiate a new constitution for a unified Germany. This was the route to unification developed and offered to the East during the Adenauer era, stemming from the McCloy initiative of 1950. It was consistent with creation of a confederation and assumed that a united Germany would be a new state, with a new constitution and form of government, and a new set of rights and responsibilities in the international system. In short, this was a provision for a merger, with the character of the new creation to be determined by the negotiations in the National Assembly elected for this purpose.

⁷ Kohl statement in Materjalen zu Deutschlandfragen, pp. 52-56.

⁸ See Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 147-48 (describing Genscher's February 14 presentation to the Cabinet committee on German unity); Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 22 Feb 90 (describing Baker's Feb 21 meeting with FRG Interior Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble).

The Basic Law also offered a second possibility. Article 23 permitted "other parts of Germany" to simply join the existing FRG. This article had actually been used for the incorporation of the Saarland in 1957, after France agreed to end its military occupation of the province. This was a provision for a takeover. The GDR would become part of the existing Federal Republic. The constitution, form of government, and rights and responsibilities in the international system of the FRG would remain in tact.

From the beginning of February, at the first meetings of the "Deutschlandpolitik" working group, Kohl's circle of advisors was drawn to Article 23. If the FRG's constitution was opened for renegotiation, pressure for substantial change in the founding document of the West German state might be irresistible, even more so if the East German SPD won the March elections and established SPD primacy in the constitutional assembly. There was simply no way to tell what the outcome might be, particularly given the external pressures now surrounding German unification. Article 23 also simplified the problem of persuading the European Community to accept East Germany into its ranks since there would be no need to amend the Treaty of Rome that established the Community.⁹

By the beginning of March, Kohl began to state publicly that Article 23 was the only acceptable route, and the CDU-backed parties contending for power in East Germany promptly adopted this position.¹⁰ This automatically answered Waigel's

⁹ An excellent summary of the arguments on choosing Article 23 or Article 146 can be found in "Grundgesetz oder 'neue Verfassung'?: Die Kontroverse ueber die Artikel 23 und 146 des Grundgesetzes," in Gerhart Maier, ed., Die Wende in der DDR (Bonn: Moeller-Druck und Verlag, 1991), pp. 73-83. Article 146 of the Basic Law did not itself require the convocation of a National Assembly. It only said that: "This Basic Law loses its validity on the day on which a constitution enters into force which has been adopted by the German people in a free decision." The name, "Basic Law," itself originally had an interim quality, the implication being that the Basic Law would be superseded by an eventual constitution. Since the West German government had maintained since 1950 that such a constitution would be prepared an all-German, freely elected, national assembly, Article 146 was interpreted to referring to this whole sequence of events. See also Bonn 6138, "Constitutional Aspects of German Unification," 23 Feb 90. On the working-group's early attraction to Article 23 see Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 128, 152-53.

¹⁰ See Bonn 5102, "Chancellery Debriefing of Modrow Visit," 14 Feb 90; Bonn 6138, "Constitutional Aspects of German Unification," 23 Feb 90; Bonn 8004, "German Unification: The Politics of Article 23 v. Article 146," 9 Mar 90.

question from the February 7 cabinet meeting, because a direct West German political takeover would appropriately be preceded by a West German economic takeover. In other words, Waigel's option 3 was best: making the D-Mark legal tender in the GDR.

The East Germans understood what was at stake. The use of Article 23 amounted to virtual annexation of the GDR. Valentin Falin understood this too and had tried to get Moscow to focus on the importance of this question at the time of the January "crisis" meeting. There was nothing good in the use of Article 23 from the point of view of the East. Given that, Kohl's gambit for rapid unification was utterly dependent on the outcome of the March 18 elections and the victory of a CDU-friendly government in East Germany.

But the conventional wisdom in the West and East was that the East German Social Democrats (SPD) would win the March 18 elections with at least a plurality, possibly even a majority. The SPD's prospects in the East seemed good because the East German Laender included areas which had been bulwarks of SPD electoral strength -- historic strongholds for the SPD before the Nazi seizure of power. The West German SPD was also thought to be well ahead of their CDU or FDP rivals in providing money, equipment, campaign advice, and stump speakers for their East German colleagues. The West German SPD was believed to have overcome the stigma of its years of close cooperation with the Communists, and its hesitant and ambivalent support for unification did not -- at that time -- seem to differ from the views of the majority of East Germans. The SPD-East, like the SPD-West, wanted monetary union without a West German economic takeover. It was sympathetic to the "confederation" approach to unification and favored Article 146 instead of Article 23.

American officials also noticed that the SPD-East and SPD-West, had issued a joint statement formally supporting neutralization of a united Germany. The foreign policy statement announced that "a future united Germany should belong neither to

NATO nor to the Warsaw Pact."¹¹

This was a potentially serious problem for Bonn and Washington. Kohl and his advisers were not anxious to get into arguments with the SPD about foreign policy issues. The emphasis on German membership in NATO was not terribly popular. A February 15 poll showed that an astonishing 58% of West Germans wanted a united Germany to be neutral, outside of both alliances. Many of the pro-NATO officials comforted themselves with the thought that both NATO and the Warsaw Pact would give way to a pan-European collective security organization -- perhaps housed within the CSCE. There was wide speculation that Germany would leave leaving NATO's integrated military command and an equally widespread assumption that U.S. nuclear weapons -- possibly all Western troops -- would leave Germany. Government leaders in the FRG were doing little to quiet such talk.

Defense Minister Gerhard Stoltenberg, tried to settle the issue of the former GDR's future military status in a united Germany. In a new cabinet working group on the foreign and security aspects of unification, Stoltenberg had privately challenged Genscher to explain how the Tutzing formula on NATO "jurisdiction" would allow NATO to protect the new eastern portion of a united Germany. How would Bundeswehr deployments be handled, since the West German army was entirely integrated into NATO's military command? Teltschik chimed in to support Stoltenberg. Genscher, probably annoyed by the challenge to his primacy in foreign policy and certainly worried about Soviet reactions, bluntly replied that only his approach was realistic.

Stoltenberg then counterattacked, issuing an uncleared public statement two

¹¹ See CIA, "The Germanys: Increasing Party Ties and the March GDR Elections," EUR M 90-20043, 15 Feb 90; Bonn 5143, "Visit of PDAS Dobbins to Bonn," 15 Feb 90 (especially comments of CDU Secretary General Volker Ruehe); Dobbins to Seitz, "Current German Attitudes on Reunification," 15 Feb 90 (reporting on his just-concluded visit to Munich, Bonn, and Berlin); FBIS, "East, West SPD Joint Statement on Security," East Berlin ADN International Service in German, 12 Feb 90; and the joint "Erklaerung zum Weg zur deutschen Einheit" issued by both SPD parties on February 19, in Materiale zu Deutschlandfragen, pp. 192-93. The SPD joint statement also called for much earlier external intervention by the Four Powers into the unification process, envisioning a conference in the second-half of April which would also include all of Germany's neighbors, whose views would "be dealt with as a matter of the highest priority."

days later that rejected neutralization of the GDR and stating that all of the territory of a united Germany would be part of NATO. He also rejected demilitarization of the East, asserting that the Bundeswehr could be deployed eastward. He thus broke with Genscher's "Tutting formula" and associated himself with the U.S. (and Manfred Woerner's) position. In a concession to Genscher, Stoltenberg said the German forces in the former GDR would be detached from NATO's command structure.

Genscher then declared publicly that Stoltenberg's "private" view was wrong, NATO territory would not extend eastward; nor would the West German army since it could not be effectively separated from NATO control. Genscher and his ministry fumed at the stance of the defense ministry and chancellery -- a position that they viewed as irresponsible and dangerous. The NATO issue was extraordinarily perilous. They could see no way to get the Soviets to accept full NATO membership for a united Germany; and the German people might not choose to defy them as the price for unity. Nor did Genscher think it was in Bonn's interest to defy Gorbachev if success meant the reformer's downfall and the end of perestroika. Genscher worried about what would happen if the Soviets played the German card? Would the Germans choose "NATO" or "Unity?"

Stoltenberg was forced to back down. Angry about the whole dispute, Chancellor Kohl had to intervene. Teltschik advised the Chancellor that Stoltenberg was right, that the Soviets had not yet pressed the issue and it was much too early to make preemptive concessions to them. Unmoved, Kohl supported Genscher. He ordered preparation of a joint declaration by both ministers, negotiated with help from Seiters, which was released on February 19. "No formations or institutions of the Western Alliance should be moved forward to the present territory of the GDR," the declaration read. This included "NATO-assigned and non-assigned military forces of the Bundeswehr." The American embassy observed that Kohl had been obliged to go along with a position under which the former East German state would be "not only 'de-NATOed' but demilitarized."

Focused on the East German elections and his dramatic gamble to unify under

Article 23, Kohl's top priority was solidarity with Genscher. Bush's plea to concede no more than that the former GDR might have a "special military status" had not been heeded.¹²

The Soviets Dig In and Europe Squirms

The Soviet government had established a policy on Germany at the end of January. Though officials sensed that Gorbachev had not firmly communicated this position to Baker and Kohl, no one thought the policy had changed. The job now was to shore up defenses and dig trenches to fortify that position. Clearly, the Soviet Union hoped that the Two Plus Four mechanism agreed at Ottawa would help. The day after Ottawa Bondarenko told an American diplomat that unification was more complicated than the Germans realized, the Four Powers would need to take charge of matters, and he warned that the Soviet public was only beginning to grasp the seriousness of Moscow's situation in Germany. American experts tried to distinguish

¹² Stoltenberg did, however, keep the statement from referring directly to NATO's jurisdiction or use the "no extension (Ausdehnung) eastward" formulation. See Genscher/Stoltenberg statement in Bulletin: Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung, Nr. 28, 1990, p. 218; Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, pp. 81-85; Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 147-52; author interview with Teltschik, Gütersloh, June 1992; Bonn 5672, "Genscher Calls for Demilitarized GDR; Stoltenberg Forced to Accede," 20 Feb 90.

In his memoir Elbe argues defensively that Genscher never wanted to keep German armed forces out of the former GDR, creating a permanently disarmed eastern zone in a united Germany. Instead he seems to argue both that Genscher was obliged to adopt a position excluding the Bundeswehr as an expedient to manage the Soviet danger and that Genscher's position actually kept all options open. The latter argument becomes even more strained as Elbe asserts that the American "special military status" formulation equally kept all options open. Richard Kiessler & Frank Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken: Der diplomatische Weg zur deutschen Einheit (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1993), pp. 81-82. The American position specified explicitly that all German territory, including the former GDR, would be part of NATO. By promising only a "special military status" the U.S. kept open the option of NATO-assigned troops, including the Bundeswehr, being deployed in the GDR — an option Genscher had expressly ruled out. Genscher (and Elbe) understood the distinction quite well, especially since we will see that Baker called the matter to Genscher's attention in a pointed message sent after Kohl and Bush agreed to the American formulation at their Camp David meeting later in February. Having firmly stated that Genscher never wanted to keep the Bundeswehr out of the GDR, Elbe then had to wrestle with the categorical exclusion of German armed forces used at Genscher's insistence in the February 19 joint statement. The best he could do was to say this position meant "nothing" since the matter would later be clarified in the Two Plus Four negotiations. Elbe was on firmer ground, however, in noting that Kohl himself was trying to dodge the issue in, for example, his February 15 Bundestag speech, holding obliquely that no "units and institutions" of NATO (Einheiten und Einrichtungen) would move eastward into the former GDR.

the "midlevel Germanists" from the more progressive beliefs they ascribed to Shevardnadze; the American embassy in Moscow even thought the old guard might be replaced.¹³ In fact Shevardnadze respected Bondarenko, relied on Kvitsinsky, and the Soviet foreign ministry's German working group combined both 'old' and 'new' thinkers together in support of the existing policy.

Flying back from Ottawa, Shevardnadze gave an interview based on the existing policy. Gorbachev himself detailed his views on Germany on the front page of *Pravda*, the most widely distributed newspaper in the country. As he had for weeks, Gorbachev was prepared to see Germany unify. He had said history would decide the fate of the two German states. "Now history has started working in an unexpectedly rapid way." But that was just "one side of the matter." The other side was that unification concerned "not only the Germans." No one must be threatened by unity. There needed to be a peace treaty with Germany, he said. "It is this agreement that can finally determine Germany's status in the European structure in terms of international law." This treaty would maintain the role of both NATO and the Warsaw Pact since any change in the "military-strategic balance" between these two organizations was "impermissible," a point of "complete clarity." He also promised that Moscow was ready to resist any Western effort to dictate terms in the Two Plus Four. "We rule out such a method whereby three or four first come to an arrangement between themselves and then set out their already agreed position before the other participants. This is unacceptable."¹⁴

Just to rebut any lingering presumption that Moscow had really given Kohl a

¹³ Moscow 5553, "As Germany Goes...So Go The Soviet Germanists?", 15 Feb 90; CIA, "Gorbachev's Germanists," SOV M 90-20026X (written with LDA), 26 Feb 90. The foreign ministry's German working group was headed by first deputy foreign minister Kovalyov and included deputy foreign minister Adamishin, Bondarenko, Tarasenko, and deputy foreign minister (for arms control) Viktor Karpov. See also Moscow 7200, "Soviet-FRG Bilaterals on German Question," 1 Mar 90; USBerlin 553, "Soviet Minister's View of Situation in Berlin and the GDR and Concerns About German Reunification," 17 Feb 90.

¹⁴ For Shevardnadze interview, see M. Yusin, "Eduard Shevardnadze: Everything in the World is Changing," *Izvestia*, February 20, 1990, p. 5, in FBIS-SOV 90-034, February 20, 1990, pp. 8-11. For Gorbachev statement see Moscow Domestic Service, "Gorbachev Discusses German Reunification," February 21, 1990, in FBIS-SOV 90-035, February 21, 1990, pp. 50-53.

"green light" to do what he wished, the Germany working group in the Foreign Ministry rallied together an extraordinary Foreign Ministry collegium. Gathered there, Shevardnadze, his deputies, and fourteen other officials, issued a rare joint public statement on the question of Germany. The collegium declared that the Soviet Union could not accept NATO membership for a united Germany. Shevardnadze's main concern was that, while his government was digging in, the Western countries kept events in constant motion. In Ottawa he had complained in a speech to the Canadian parliament about "politicians ... who want to play a game of political speed chess with a time limit of five minutes."¹⁵

Shevardnadze was not the only statesman to resent "political speed chess." Francois Mitterrand was also struggling to keep pace. As he had from the start Mitterrand, offered ambivalent support for German unity but had been active diplomatically in devising ways -- intentionally or not -- to slow the pace. He had wanted a CSCE summit to consider the future of Europe, held in Paris. He had got it, though the Americans were determined to keep Germany's future out of a chaotic debate in this large forum. He wanted to pursue the most ambitious possible agenda for the European Community. Kohl went along with the plan for another EC summit to talk about Germany and other matters, but balked on a specific push to start negotiating the European economic and monetary union. Beyond these plans Mitterrand could do no more than chide the Germans in a press interview about bearing "in mind the obligations which link us to each other, as well as security in

¹⁵ For American and West German reactions to Gorbachev's remarks, see Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 21 Feb 90; Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 155; Bonn 5836, "Genscher Comments on Gorbachev's Pravda Interview," 21 Feb 90 (Genscher highlighting need for both alliances to be redefined in the context of a new overarching European security structure). For the collegium statement see TASS International Service (Moscow), "Foreign Ministry Collegium Statement on Germany," February 24, 1990, in FBIS-SOV 90-038, February 26, 1990, p. 1. Tarasenko confirms that the collegium statement was intended as a "slap at Kohl." Author interview, Providence, June 1993. For the Shevardnadze statement in Ottawa see "Address at Canadian Parliament," Pravda, February 16, 1990, p. 5, in FBIS-SOV 90-035, February 21, 1990, pp. 9-13. See also Moscow 5968, "Gorbachev on German Unification," 21 Feb 90; Moscow 6456, "Collegium Statement on Politico-Military Status of United Germany," 25 Feb 90; CIA, "Moscow's Game Plan for Six-Power Meetings on German Unification," SOV M 90-20025, 20 Feb 90; Moscow 6450, "Shevardnadze on 'The German Question and Soviet-Polish Relations'," 24 Feb 90. See generally Mulholland to Kimmitt and Zoellick, "Soviet Attitudes on German Reunification," 27 Feb 90.

Europe, the future of the Community, and European stability."

In the same interview, Mitterrand mused publicly about the disappearance of both alliances within a decade and expressed indifference about West Germany's NATO status. The FRG would do as it pleases, he said. France, after all, had nuclear weapons and Germany did not. Indeed, he concluded that "the main thing, for me, is for Europe to take up its true place in the world again after the self-destruction of two world wars. In short, I expect Europeans to keep in mind, as I do, a paraphrase of that well-known expression, "'let Europe take care of itself'."

Mitterrand offered no plan for how Europe would do this if NATO were wrecked, Germany became neutral, or the Americans left Europe. He had a rather vague notion of a European union that might someday be have global military power in its own right: Franco-German cooperation was to somehow be the core of this, though, with Germany neutral that arguably would have been difficult to achieve. It was never clear whether the Americans were in or out. With events moving rapidly in February 1990, Mitterrand preferred to think of far horizons not the compelling issues of the moment.¹⁶

¹⁶ Mitterrand made his public comments in an interview released on February 14. "German Reunification: Interview with President Mitterrand," February 14, 1990, English translation provided to U.S. government by French embassy. Interestingly, the French embassy chose to delete some of the more disturbing parts of the interview in the translation they gave to the government. The complete text of the press interview was reported and commented on in Paris 5018, "President Mitterrand on Architecture: Is the French President Afraid of History After All?," 14 Feb 90. The next day Mitterrand met with Kohl. He told Kohl that a unified Germany seemed to be inevitable whether one liked it or not -- though Mitterrand assured his guest that he was one of the ones who liked it. Both men agreed that the West should keep some fixed number of Western troops in Germany even if the Soviets left. Teltschik thought the meeting had gone wonderfully; but one of the few French participants told American diplomats that their side had been disappointed. Teltschik recalls Kohl applauding the principle of faster movement toward European union. The French noted that he rejected the specific proposal for moving up the intergovernmental conference to negotiate economic and monetary union. Teltschik recalls Kohl offering private assurances that he would respect the Oder-Neisse border problem; the French found Kohl cagy on the border issue. Teltschik remembers Mitterrand strongly opposing a German peace conference; the French reported that they grudgingly were going along with a settlement based only on the Two Plus Four. Compare Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 150-51 with Paris 5447, "Elysee Readout on Kohl/Mitterrand Dinner: You Don't Bring Me Flowers Anymore," 17 Feb 90. Mitterrand was joined at the dinner meeting by Jacques Attali and Elizabeth Guigou; Kohl was accompanied by Teltschik and Walter Neuer. For more background on French policy toward Germany at this time, see Karl Kaiser, Deutschlands Vereinigung: Die Internationalen Aspekte (Bergisch Gladbach: Bastei Lübbe, 1991), pp. 64-68; and the negative commentary on Germany among the French political class described in Ingo Kolboom, Vom geteilten zum vereinten Deutschland: Deutschland-Bilder in Frankreich (Bonn: Europa Union Verlag, 1991), pp. 47-48.

But as vague as the thoughts were, Americans were troubled by the gloom in France and the common belief among French officials that the Americans were on their way out of Europe. Even friendly French officials confided that the most America could expect to keep in Germany was 20-30,000 troops (from the current 250,000+) and no nuclear weapons. Europe would have to fend for itself, so France had to make a virtue of necessity. A veteran American diplomat who knew France well and was now on the NSC staff visited Paris and advised his colleagues:

Gone is the vision of a Europe co-managed by equals in Paris and Bonn, with German economic superiority offset by France's nuclear capability and essential strategic role in the face of a strong Warsaw Pact. But, so far, no clear alternative vision has emerged The most striking impression I derived from my many conversations is the nearly total absence of the US in the mid- and long-term calculations of French policymakers. So convinced do the French seem that the US will rapidly withdraw its forces from Europe that they are thinking, and at times acting, as if we were already gone.¹⁷

It was hard to avoid the impression that, as one French diplomat put it, Paris was just "following history." French officials were clearly troubled by the prospect of German power. Months after the event they were still bristling at the reputed comment of a German government spokesman at a dinner in Paris in late 1989 that: "Who can contest that Silesia is a German territory?" There was deep suspicion of Germany, and pessimism about the future. A Quai official told an American counterpart that America and France must guard against a situation in which Germany once again becomes a "hegemonic" power in Europe. The Two Plus Four, he said, must deal with the Germans "very firmly."¹⁸

Across the English Channel, the British government was uncomfortable about developments in Germany too. Prime Minister Thatcher continued to express her

¹⁷ Message sent through special channels from Embassy Budapest, "What Happened to the Spirit of Kennebunkport?", 20 Feb 90, distributed only at the White House. The reference is to the harmonious meeting between Bush and Mitterrand at Kennebunkport in May 1989.

¹⁸ See Paris 4475, "French Views on the New European Architecture: Following History," 9 Feb 90; Paris 6853, "French Views on the Soviet Union and Germany: Seitz-Blot Consultations, Paris, February 27," 2 Mar 90.

doubts about German unification, publicly and privately, infuriating the Germans again with some of her comments in a Wall Street Journal interview published on January 26. She met the next day at her country house, Chequers, with her key advisers to consider policy toward Europe. One of the ministers present, the historian Alan Clark, noted in his diary that Thatcher seemed friendly but implacable. Clark noted that he argued for accepting, and exploiting, German reunification "while they still needed our support." Thatcher's own advisers from Number 10, Charles Powell and Percy Cradock, also urged more sympathy for German aspirations. But Clark wrote it was, "No good. She is determined not to." Clark cornered her later, disturbed that the conversation sounded so much like "the old Appeasement arguments of 1938." He recorded her reply: "'Yes,' she said, eyes flashing (she's in incredible form at the moment), 'and I'm not an appeaser.'"¹⁹

The British Foreign Office had been intimidated by Thatcher's stance but, aided by the December 1989 appointment of John Weston as political director under Hurd, British diplomats had begun to salvage a constructive role, concentrating on the details of the unification process. Thatcher would surely not object to protecting the

¹⁹ On the press interview see "Thatcher Sees East European Progress As More Urgent than Germans," Wall Street Journal, January 26, 1990, p. A12; and the German reaction in Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 115-16. The account of the Chequers meeting is based on author interview with Charles Powell, London, June 1993; and Alan Clark, Diaries (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1993), p. 276. The meeting should not be confused with a different Chequers discussion on Germany that was later held with academic experts in March 1990.

Thatcher's worries about the Germans were also reinforced by the equally worried Italian prime minister, Giulio Andreotti, when the two leaders met in London on February 23. Genscher traveled to Italy on February 21 to assuage concerns and patch over the anger caused by his harsh words in Ottawa. The Italians found him "Janus-like," combining conciliation and arrogance. Baker tried to ease European worries too, by at least promising every NATO minister, in writing, that he would consult with them at every stage of the Two Plus Four process. On Italian attitudes see Rome 3881, "Genscher, Italy, and Europe," 24 Feb 90; Rome 4306, "MFA Weighs in On Two Plus Four; Andreotti and CSCE," 1 Mar 90; Rome 4447, "Readout on 2/23 Andreotti/Thatcher Meeting: German Unification and NATO," 2 Mar 90. For other European and Canadian concerns see, e.g., The Hague 1639, "Further GON Reactions to 2 Plus 4 Approach to German Reunification," 26 Feb 90; Brussels 3021, "FM Eyskens Rejects SNF Modernization, Complains About German Unification Procedure," 26 Feb 90; Ottawa 1661, "Canadian Concerns About 'Two Plus Four' and NATO's Future," 28 Feb 90. On Baker's assurances and assurances from Bush conveyed by Woerner, see State 54339, "Letter from Secretary to NATO Foreign Ministers," 19 Feb 90; Dobbins (Acting) through Kimmitt to Baker, "Proposed Message from the Secretary to NATO Foreign Ministers," 17 Feb 90; USNATO 877, "Woerner Briefing of Permreps on Discussions at Camp David and Ottawa," 13 Feb 90; Brussels 2951, "Letter from the Secretary to NATO Foreign Ministers," 23 Feb 90.

strength and cohesion of NATO. So the Foreign Office quickly began focusing upon the detailed questions that would arise about a united Germany's membership in the NATO alliance.

Foreign Secretary Hurd visited Bonn on February 6 and chose to concentrate on the issues which surrounded the principle of NATO membership for a united Germany. Brilliant, articulate, and seldom emotional, Hurd walked a careful public line, acknowledging on the one hand that the German people had the right to determine their future while expressing, on the other, his concerns about the "highly practical problems" that would need to be worked out in trying to achieve unity. On February 22 Hurd told the House of Commons that Britain did not seek "obstruction," but did want to avoid "muddle and instability." Privately the British told the Americans of their anxiety after Genscher's victory over Stoltenberg in the battle concerning East Germany's future status. If the Germans were already conceding the future of eastern Germany to the Soviets, they wondered, could the Soviet Union now concentrate its efforts in the Two Plus Four on reordering the future of Allied forces in western Germany?²⁰

Thatcher's private opinions were not so nuanced. Disillusioned with the poor support from Mitterrand and even Gorbachev, she tried a new tack in a long phone conversation with President Bush just before Bush met with Kohl at Camp David. It was a disagreeable conversation for both sides. Thatcher feared German ambitions. "It will be the Japan of Europe, but worse than Japan." Mitterrand was just as worried, she said, that "the Germans will get in peace what Hitler couldn't get in the

²⁰ Author interviews with Charles Powell, Hillary Synnott, and Pauline Neville-Jones, London, June 1993; Bonn 4323, "Hurd's Visit to Bonn," 8 Feb 90; see also London 3071, "German Unification: 'Times' Says Washington Has Reassured Whitehall; Weekend Comments by Thatcher and Howe; Genscher to Stop in London Enroute Home," 12 Feb 90; Hurd's speech to the House of Commons in Hans-Joachim Fieber & Michael Preussler, eds., Europaeische Orientierungen: Dokumente und Materialen seit November 1989 (Berlin: Brandenburgisches Verlagshaus, 1990), pp. 44-46; London 3935, "The British Debate on German Unification," 26 Feb 90; London 4611, "German Unification: Thatcher's 'Cozy Isolation,'" 7 Mar 90. The British government was working closely with American officials to be sure the detailed NATO concerns were grasped by Washington. The British Foreign Office also conveyed to the Americans some astute and useful assessments of Soviet motives and plans prepared by Britain's ambassador in Moscow, Rodrick Braithwaite. For an example of the influence of British analysis, see Blackwill to Scowcroft, "The Impact of the Two Plus Four Talks on Soviet Policy Toward Germany," 27 Feb 90.

war." She and Mitterrand were, as Thatcher put it, talking about a "closer Entente Cordiale." But her initiative for Bush was to suggest that Soviet troops be allowed to stay on indefinitely in a united Germany. This would make matters easier for Gorbachev and help restrain the Germans. Genscher, she said, had no problem with this proposal. The Poles too would prefer that Soviet troops stay in Germany.

Bush gently told Thatcher he was uncomfortable with letting Soviet troops stay in Germany. He was also uncomfortable with the Genscher-Stoltenberg statement implying Germany might not keep full membership in NATO. Thatcher was not so bothered; she thought the U.S. position might be too extreme for Gorbachev. She also doubted, answering a question from Bush, that Mitterrand would care much about NATO's military arrangements. Mitterrand would care about keeping American troops in Europe. Disturbed by Thatcher's vivid portrait of British and French views, Bush suggested that, after he met with Kohl, perhaps he, Thatcher, and Mitterrand ought to all meet together, as a "triumvirate there to review things at some point."²¹

The unease with the quickening pace of unification was palpable among Germany's East European neighbors too. Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia all wanted good relations with West Germany.²² But the Poles, in particular, were

²¹ See Margaret Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years* (New York: HarperCollins, 1993), pp. 798-99; Memcon of Telephone Conversation with Prime Minister Thatcher, 24 Feb 90. Thatcher says she afterward learnt that Bush objected to her argument that Soviet military power could help preserve the balance of power in Europe, thinking that she was proposing an alternative alliance to NATO. So she concludes, "It was the last time that I relied on a telephone conversation to explain such matters." There is, however, no reason to believe Bush misunderstood what Thatcher was proposing. She was clear enough, and Bush's views on keeping Soviet troops in Germany were, as will be seen, consistent and unshakable. It is possible that someone was too polite in later explaining to Thatcher's staff just why Bush found her argument objectionable. Bush's closing suggestion of US-British-French consultations, the "triumvirate," eventually emerged as separate bilateral talks in April with both Thatcher and Mitterrand, not a threesome that would have aroused German fears and suspicion.

²² The views of the new democratic Czech government, headed by President Vaclav Havel and foreign minister Jiri Dienstbier were pro-Western and lined up with centrist West German opinion, exemplified by Genscher. They supported German membership in NATO, but hoped both military alliances would soon be transformed into something new. Bush welcomed Havel to Washington for a state visit in February 1990 and the two men found a common stance on Germany. See Memcon for Meeting with President Havel, Cabinet Room, 20 Feb 90; Kimmitt (Acting) to President Bush (for his evening reading), 20 Feb 90.

unhappy about Kohl's treatment of the border issue. The Poles found Kohl's unwillingness to make a binding statement on the final borders of a united Germany unsettling, despite the Chancellor's protestations that he was prohibited from doing so until an all German government and the Four Power acted.

Poland's president, General Jaruzelski said Soviet troops might need to stay in Poland (thus securing the logistical support for their presence in east Germany) until Poland's borders won final recognition. Prime Minister Mazowiecki launched a major diplomatic initiative on February 21, sending letters to Bush, Gorbachev, Thatcher, and Mitterrand. He wanted definitive recognition of the existing border, the Oder-Neisse line (referred to as the Odra-Lusatian-Nysa line by the Poles). To see that he got it, he asked for the two German states to initial a treaty settling the border issue which would then be signed by Poland and Germany after establishment of an all-German state. He formally asked that the Two Plus Four be changed to Two Plus Five, with Poland participation formally recognized. Exclusion "from the relevant stage of the discussion" would, the Prime Minister argued, "be tantamount to a repetition of the Yalta formula of 1945." Handing the letter to the American ambassador in Warsaw, Polish foreign minister Skubiszewski said their government was making its "strongest possible" effort "to influence the terms and process of German unification.²³

The U.S. government was alone in expressing satisfaction with Kohl's position on the border issue. The Americans trusted Kohl's private promises and understood the delicacy of his domestic position. Washington firmly believed that it was inconceivable that Kohl or any other German statesman would actually challenge the postwar borders. Eagleburger, in Warsaw, assured Mazowiecki that there would not

²³ Letter to President Bush from Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki, 21 Feb 90; and the comments in Warsaw 2677, "Prime Minister's Letter to President," 21 Feb 90. See also Skubiszewski, "Die voelkerrechtliche und staatliche Einheit des deutschen Volkes und die Entwicklung in Europa," Europa Archiv, Folge 6, March 23, 1990; Hans-Adolf Jacobsen & Mieczyslaw Tomala, eds., Bonn-Warschau 1945-1991: Die deutsch-polnische Beziehungen: Analysen und Dokumentation (Koeln: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1992).

be "another Yalta" and the U.S. would not "sell out" its friends.²⁴

Bush and Kohl Work on the Diplomatic Plan

Thus, in the middle of February the consensus on Germany was again threatening to unravel. There were many loose ends: The border issues and the exact nature of Germany's membership in NATO by far the most important of them. The Soviet Union was again bellicose and the French, British and the East Europeans were sullen and anxious. Elections approached in the East and Kohl was very far out on a limb in hoping to achieve unification through Article 23.

The United States knew that the stakes were very high and that the Two Plus Four was a risky, if necessary, mechanism on which to depend. On February 14, the day after the Ottawa accord, Blackwill, Rice and Zelikow met to talk through their worries about how the new negotiating forum would actually operate. The NSC staff did not like the decision but it had been made. Now it was time to make the Two Plus Four work. The outcome was a long memo provided to President Bush, drafted principally by Rice, on "Preparing for the Six Power German Peace Conference." They warned Scowcroft that, "We should be under no illusions about the dangers that these talks pose. It is critical that we get the Administration's position formulated and then coordinated with the Allies so that we do not mismanage what will arguably be the most important set of talks for the West in the postwar period."

The NSC staff feared that the Soviets, previously so ineffective at influencing Germany's fate, had now been handed a powerful weapon that would both motivate and empower them to act. Using their place in the Two Plus Four, allied with a

²⁴ For the US public position on the border issue, see statement by deputy press spokesman Richard Boucher, Department of State Daily Press Briefing, 15 Feb 90. Baker met with FRG interior minister Wolfgang Schaeuble on February 20 and immediately said he could not understand why the Germans could not offer the Poles a binding legal declaration to put aside the border dispute. Schaeuble then explained the international legal obstacle keeping the FRG from making a statement binding upon a subsequent united German state. Wolfgang Schaeuble, *Der Vertrag* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlag-Anstalt, 1992), pp. 59-60. For initial US-FRG consultations on assurances which could be offered to the Poles, see State 54183; Bonn 5459, "Polish Concerns on German-Polish Border," 17 Feb 90. These assurances were presented as proposals from Seitz to Kastrup. On Eagleburger's talks see Warsaw 2785, "The Deputy Secretary's Meeting with Prime Minister Mazowiecki," 23 Feb 90.

leftist East German government, Moscow might now try to force the choice between unity and NATO before the West German electorate in a volatile election year. For Kohl, facing the opportunity to win reelection and go down in history as Germany's a modern day Bismark, "all else will become for him secondary and negotiable."

The key then was to design the Two Plus Four process so that Moscow could not use it effectively against American interests. Everything depended on "how carefully we structure the mandate of the Six Power discussions and whether we and our major Allies remain united on a common approach" to the profound security questions. Three tasks were then vital. First, nail down the West Germans and other allies to a common position on the details of the security issues that would soon be so contentious. Second, delay. The Two Plus Four should start work very slowly, while Germany's unification was happening very quickly. The U.S. government also needed time to collect its wits. Third, when the Two Plus Four started the subjects for discussion should be "as limited as possible -- dealing only with the legal issues related to the end of Four Power rights, the consequences of the absorption of the GDR into the FRG, and the issue of what becomes of forces on the territory of Germany's eastern half."²⁵

At the State Department's European Bureau, Seitz and Dobbins had come to similar conclusions. Both men had opposed the Two Plus Four idea. Now that it was created, they wanted to limit its scope to make mischief. Blackwill talked to Seitz; Rice and Zelikow met with Seitz and Dobbins; and cemented their agreement on a common attitude toward the new talks: delay, and a limited mandate. Seitz thought that Baker, Zoellick, and Ross on the "Seventh Floor" had not yet decided what they wanted to do. Unknown to any of them, Zoellick was already drawing up a list of issues to be dealt with in the Two Plus Four. The Policy Planning staff had prepared a paper that would give the Two Plus Four a broad writ to consider the future of German defense and European security. Seitz and Blackwill both promptly

²⁵ Scowcroft to President Bush, "Preparing for the Six Power German Peace Conference," 15 Feb 90.

weighed in, however, with their much narrower design for the new forum.²⁶

Seitz urged "a narrow approach to the Two-Plus-Four Conference." The only purpose of the negotiations would be "to turn over remaining four-power rights to a fully democratic, sovereign German state within the territory of the FRG and the GDR." In this scheme the Two Plus Four would *decide* only how to return full sovereignty to Germany. It would *discuss* but steer to other negotiations the contentious security issues, including a schedule for full withdrawal of Soviet troops from the former GDR. A sovereign Germany would decide on its own alliance commitments, and NATO issues were the business only of NATO's members. Seitz knew the Soviets would not like this. But Soviet interests could be considered in separate sets of negotiations. It would be vital to persuade the West Germans, Britain, and France to agree to this complex design.²⁷

Zoellick had already begun to think of the Two Plus Four as a "steering committee" with a narrow mandate. He worked his ideas, along with those of Seitz and Blackwill, into advice for Baker on how the secretary should describe the Two Plus Four plan to President Bush. Zoellick tended to see the Two Plus Four not as a process leading to a final settlement on Germany but as a "process of incremental

²⁶ Seitz chaired the first meeting of a newly formed "Germany Task Force" on February 15. He and Dobbins, aided by deputy legal advisor Michael Young, rebuffed the suggestion from another one of State's German experts, Nelson Ledsky, that a peace treaty was needed to settle Germany's fate and future borders. Dobbins and Rice both argued against letting the Two Plus Four consider the status of Western forces based in the FRG, although the head of State's Soviet desk said the Soviets would insist on it. After the meeting, Seitz and Dobbins met privately with Rice and Zelikow and they confirmed their agreement on what they thought was the proper approach. Author's recollection; Zelikow to Scowcroft and Gates, "Initial Interagency Discussion of a Six Power Conference on Germany," 15 Feb 90. The 'Bonn Group' of diplomats who regularly considered Four Power (Quadripartite) issues tried to take on the job of designing the Two Plus Four forum, with the American representative proposing the idea on a personal basis to his British, French, and West German colleagues. The embassy was promptly told (informally) that the matter would be handled at the political level, and decided in Washington. All American embassies were then cautioned to "avoid speculation" about what the Two Plus Four would do. See Bonn 5284, "Bonn Group Discussion on a Two-Plus-Four Conference on German Unity: Berlin and Germany-as-a-Whole Issues," 15 Feb 90; State 64344, "German Unification, Two Plus Four, and NATO," 28 Feb 90.

For the Policy Planning staff views given to Zoellick, see Holmes and George to Ross and Zoellick, "Next Steps on Two Plus Four," 15 Feb 90. Their plan would assign to the Two Plus Four consideration of the "long-term status of German and foreign forces" as well as a future Germany's treaty commitments to NATO and the European Community.

²⁷ Seitz to Zoellick, "Agenda and Strategy for the Two-Plus-Four Conference," 16 Feb 90.

consultations."

From Zoellick's written recommendations, Baker's notations on them, and the way Baker reshaped the presentation he prepared for Bush, it is apparent that Baker wanted to stress to Bush that he hoped to (1) reassure smaller allies that they would be consulted; (2) use the Two Plus Four narrowly as a forum more for consultation than negotiation; (3) limit the Two Plus Four's mandate principally to surrendering Four Power rights and establishing the new Germany's borders; and (4) keep the Two Plus Four from even discussing a future Germany's sovereign choices over how it would defend itself. Baker did however want the Two Plus Four to discuss, but not decide, some of the issues troubling Moscow because he did not want to force the Soviets to try to cut a separate deal directly with the West Germans.²⁸

Zoellick knew that the NSC staff worried about Soviet mischief in the Two Plus Four but believed that it could be managed in a way that gave the Soviets the appearance of influence without real power. He envisioned few substantive concessions; indeed his position on the security questions was practically identical to the formulas coming from the White House. So Zoellick agreed with the need for delay in activating the Two Plus Four, especially at the ministerial level, and he agreed on the need for a narrow forum rather than a broader negotiation that would encompass all of the Soviet concerns. The European Bureau, however, wanted to delay the startup of the Two Plus Four until after Germany's internal unification was essentially complete. Such an extended delay, Zoellick and Ross thought, would place an intolerable strain on East-West relations and invite the Soviets to pressure the West Germans directly, excluding the United States.²⁹

²⁸ See annotated copy of Zoellick to Baker, "Proposed Agenda for Meeting with the President," 16 Feb 90, 1:30 pm. Annotations are in Baker's handwriting, and Baker's characteristic check marks beside points may indicate which ones he covered with Bush. Baker had just talked to NATO secretary general Woerner about the anxiety of the smaller allies. See also USNATO 933, "Allied Concern Over Two Plus Four Talks on Germany," 15 Feb 90 (the proposal for a NATO Two Plus Four working group was not adopted). The "incremental consultations" quote is from Zoellick to Baker, "Two Plus Four: Advantages, Possible Concerns and Rebuttal Points," 21 Feb 90.

²⁹ See Zoellick to Baker, "Two Plus Four: Advantages, Possible Concerns and Rebuttal Points," 21 Feb 90; Zoellick's handwritten notes on "2+4 Timing," from his office files; informal EUR paper,

This internal dispute concerning when to start the Two Plus Four masked underlying agreement in Washington on three basic issues: the details of the Western position on German NATO membership had to be nailed down; the startup of the Two Plus Four should be delayed; and the Two Plus Four should have a narrow mandate to restore full German sovereignty and fix Germany's borders. These issues therefore framed White House preparation for the first really extended face-to-face talks between Bush and Kohl, as the American president hosted the West German chancellor at his wooded Maryland retreat, Camp David.

The West Germans were preoccupied with a major gamble on the terms of internal unification: a monetary takeover followed by a direct political takeover of the East German state via Article 23. Teltschik was, however, still unhappy about the outcome of the Genscher-Stoltenberg battle, essentially appealed to the Americans to weigh in with the Chancellor and change the position. There was a bit of scheming between Blackwill and Teltschik. Teltschik wanted to get Kohl away from conceding any retreat of NATO "jurisdiction" from the GDR; Blackwill wanted to push Baker away from the Secretary's public endorsement of the "jurisdiction" line, a position Baker had adopted at Genscher's urging and which Baker had then presented to Gorbachev. So on the eve of Kohl's departure Teltschik warned the American ambassador of the need to "clarify" Baker's position, though he undoubtedly knew that Baker was actually repeating Genscher's Tutzing formula.³⁰

Scowcroft and Blackwill were, meanwhile, advising Bush to insist on a joint clarification of the NATO membership question along the lines of the formula Bush had sent to Kohl just before Kohl's meeting with Gorbachev two weeks earlier. "The time," they said, "has come for an honest and unadorned talk with Kohl about his bottom-line on security issues, despite the difficulty of pinning the Chancellor down." It must be clear that all of a united Germany would be covered by NATO; a united

"Managing 'Two-Plus-Four' Consultations on German Unification," undated (20-21 Feb 90); and Zoellick's markup of the copy of this paper in his office files.

³⁰ See Bonn 5833, "Teltschik's Preview of Camp David," 21 Feb 90.

Germany would remain in NATO's integrated military command; the Western military presence in western Germany would be unaffected by unification; and the former GDR would have a "special military status" still to be defined. On the Two Plus Four, the briefing memo for Bush used material offered by Zoellick and stressed the need for delay and a narrow mandate. The memo to Bush noted that, by offering such unwavering support for unity, the U.S. president had a strong position. Now was the time to use it "to cement a historic bargain: Kohl's pledge not to alter the form and substance of Germany's security commitments to NATO in exchange for a U.S. promise that the Two Plus Four process will not interfere with German unity."

The NSC and State Department staffs knew that this tough position would be hard for Moscow to accept. They were working to develop a package of incentives for Gorbachev punctuated by a planned Bush-Gorbachev summit that they hoped would be the most productive U.S.-Soviet summit "of the post-war period." But the bottom line, come what may, was firm:

In the final analysis, Soviet leverage to influence the fate of Germany is marginal, however much Moscow complains. Stalin and his successors set as their principal goal for European security in the postwar era the fracturing of the FRG's ties to NATO. Adenauer said no. The West did not give in to Moscow's demands when the Soviets were strong; hopefully Kohl will agree at Camp David that we should certainly not do so now when the Soviet Union is weak.³¹

Baker discussed the Kohl visit in a meeting at the White House with the President on the afternoon of February 23. There is no record of the discussion, but the Secretary

³¹ Scowcroft to President Bush, "Meeting with German Chancellor Helmut Kohl," February 22, 1990 (drafted by Zeilikow with Blackwill and forwarded by Blackwill to Scowcroft). Zoellick had passed his suggestions for the briefing paper to Blackwill, outlining the Two Plus Four approach he had worked out, blending in Seitz and Dobbins's "discuss/decide" explanation of the narrow mandate. "In general, Two-Plus-Four can exchange views on many topics, but it can decide very few." Blackwill could find little to criticize in Zoellick's papers, but he still worried that State would not stick to the narrow mandate; he feared Baker would "find the prospect of negotiating the future security structure of Europe in the Two Plus Four ministerial context irresistible." See Zoellick papers (passed to NSC staff on 22 Feb 90), "Our Objectives for Chancellor Kohl's Visit," and "Key Themes for Camp David." For the Blackwill comments forwarding these papers to Scowcroft, see Blackwill to Scowcroft, "State Department Papers on Two Plus Four Talks," 23 Feb 90 (which also forwarded the even more cautious EUR paper on "Managing 'Two Plus Four' Consultations" that Zoellick had subsumed into his own work, but which EUR had passed separately to the NSC).

left Zoellick's papers on Two Plus Four planning with Bush as additional briefing material.³²

Bush talked to Thatcher and Canadian prime minister Mulroney just before he met with Kohl. The conversations revealed that Bush had read, agreed with, and internalized all the key points covered in the briefing materials for the Kohl meeting. The conversations highlighted some of the possible dangers ahead. Thatcher, in addition to wanting Soviet troops to stay in Germany, also wanted the Two Plus Four to start work immediately. Mulroney was nettled by the signs that German unification was beginning to look more like a takeover. Bush said flatly that America would not stand in the way of unification, that Soviet troops should not stay in Germany and that he had made this point clear to Secretary Baker (Mulroney had not suggested that Soviet troops should stay; Bush was still reacting to Thatcher).³³

Camp David was a pleasant setting for Kohl and Bush to review plans for the months ahead. The Germans were flattered by the invitation; no chancellor had ever been a guest at Camp David. The weather was cold and a fire was burning in the hearth. The lodgings were comfortable and unpretentious. Kohl and Bush both brought their wives, and other members of Bush's family joined them at lunch. The Germans could tell the atmosphere would be relaxed when Baker greeted the chancellor's party at Dulles International Airport wearing a red wool shirt and cowboy boots.

³² See agenda item I in Zoellick to Baker, "Proposed Agenda for Meeting with the President," 23 Feb 90. Ordinarily the Secretary of State would prepare a formal memo to the President in connection with official or other important visits by foreign leaders, which would be appended to the NSC Staff's briefing package. In this case, State used these informal channels to provide informal papers, circumventing any potential censorship by the NSC staffers. The briefing materials prepared by the European bureau's officers never made it out of the State Department. The bureaucracy's package is stored as Kimmitt to Baker, "Briefing Materials for Kohl Visit to Camp David," 22 Feb 90.

³³ Memcon of Telephone Conversation with Prime Minister Mulroney, 24 Feb 90. Canadian diplomats were worried that Germany might opt for neutrality and thought strong US leadership was needed to help keep Germany in the Alliance. See Eagleburger (Acting) to the President (for his evening reading), March 2, 1990 (on Marchand meeting with Kimmitt). In addition to calling Thatcher and Mulroney, Bush also tried to speak with Mitterrand before Kohl arrived, but the White House was unable to agree with the Elysee on a mutually convenient time for the call. A convenient time to talk was finally found on February 26.

The substantive talks began in the middle of the afternoon on Saturday, February 24, broke for a relaxing dinner, and then resumed the next morning. Kohl had Teltschik and a couple of other staffers from the chancellery with him, but no one from the foreign ministry was present, not even the West German ambassador to America. Bush was joined only by Baker, Scowcroft, and Blackwill.

Kohl was in good form, thoughtful and well prepared. He explained how his plan for internal unification had changed. His own ten-point program of November 1989 had been swept away. He dated the decision to discard confederation and push for a quicker, more direct takeover to the beginning of February, "about three weeks ago," after it became clear that Modrow's government had effectively collapsed. Now he wanted economic and monetary union as quickly as possible, on Western terms. That meant putting the currency system directly under the Bundesbank and moving the GDR to a market economy immediately after the March 18 elections. The FRG would then soon take over financing old age pensions and unemployment benefits. He knew what he wanted. The other political parties were all in disarray. In fact, Kohl said, "everyone is confused but me."

Kohl confided a vision of Germany's future, in which the GDR might return to prosperity within three to five years. But he saw unification as an opportunity for West Germany too. We are getting fat and lazy, he said. Now there is some adventure in our national lives, in political life, even in the life of the church.

Kohl had known since the beginning of February that Washington also favored unification at the fastest possible pace. He thanked Bush and Baker for their strong support before he met with Gorbachev. Kohl said he thought German-American friendship was the strongest it had ever been in the entire postwar period. Bush did not question Kohl's internal plans for rapid unification; instead most of the talk was about how to pull off an equally quick resolution of the difficult international issues.

Kohl knew Europeans were anxious about German unification. He said he took these fears seriously. His main answer was to plunge into more European integration, to convince everyone that Germans are the most European Europeans. Kohl was pleased with Mitterrand's support for unification, though most of the

French political class was against him. Other countries were harder cases, and Kohl despaired of being able to change Thatcher's views. Bush said the U.S. did not fear the ghosts of the past, but some leaders did. The U.S. and Germany must bend over backwards to consult, Bush said, recognizing our unique role in history. After some discussion, all agreed that Kohl himself would meet with ambassadors at NATO headquarters in early March.

Kohl knew about public calls for him to settle the question of a future Germany's border with Poland. He did not consider this a serious question. Of course the vast majority of Germans favored the current Oder-Neisse line. But he had a psychological problem with many Germans still bitter about the loss of one-third of prewar Germany, the expulsion of more than 12 million innocent people, and the deaths of two million German refugees who fled from the East in 1945. A way would be found to reassure the Poles that the border was safe. Legally, the FRG could not do this alone, and Kohl thought the Four Powers would ultimately play a crucial part in settling the matter for the world.

This brought Kohl to the process issues, how the Two Plus Four would work. Both Kohl and Bush agreed Poland should not be a formal participant. Kohl worried that the Poles might use such participation to hold a settlement hostage to demands for reparations, more compensation for Poland for wartime damage done by the Third Reich. Germany, Kohl explained, had already paid DM 150 billion to Poland, Israel, and individual claimants. Fifty years after the war, the Germans would not pay more. Consultation would be a better way to ease Polish concerns. Bush suggested only that the more Kohl could do for the Poles the better.

Bush and Baker explained the U.S. idea of a narrow mandate for the Two Plus Four, and Kohl concurred. Bush said he would hate to see the Soviets get involved in a German decision about the FRG's membership in NATO. Baker pointed out how the Two Plus Four could steer issues to places where decisions could be made by countries that had to be involved. No one would decide fundamental issues about other countries without their presence. This would not be another Yalta. And many issues would be left for the Germans themselves to decide.

Bush and Kohl also agreed that the Two Plus Four should be slow to start work. Bush emphasized that the talks should not get in the way of West Germany's dialogue about the terms of unification with East Germany. Starting the talks too soon might just stimulate Soviet interference. Kohl wanted no Two Plus Four meeting before the March 18 East German elections. Baker was more anxious about the need to show the Soviets that their concerns were being addressed. But Kohl argued that, before March 18, the East Germans would just be spokesmen for the Soviets. Why should we want that? Scowcroft agreed. Baker gave way. The British and French, he said, cared more about an early startup than he did. Kohl, then Bush, settled the matter by saying that, then, we should just talk to the British and the French.

The two leaders agreed that allied consultations about the Two Plus Four would start soon, but the Two Plus Four itself would not meet until after March 18, with the first session at the level of foreign ministers occurring in May, before the Bush-Gorbachev summit meeting.

They also agreed that the Two Plus Four should finish its work before November, before the CSCE summit in Paris. Baker's worry about time reemerged. The Two Plus Four might need to be finishing its work by the time of the U.S.-Soviet summit, by the end of May, so perhaps an earlier startup was needed. But no more was said about timing.

The Two Plus Four forum would be central. Kohl was opposed to the Soviet idea of negotiating a German peace treaty. After all, he said, 110 countries were at war with Germany May 1945. Both sides agreed to this point and to the need to keep the 35-nation CSCE summit out of German issues as well. The Two Plus Four should be done by the fall so that the November CSCE summit in Paris would stay out of German issues and just bless what the Two Plus Four had accomplished.³⁴

³⁴ Immediately upon Kohl's return to Bonn his staff received a note from the East German foreign ministry on how to "embed unification in the all-European process." The East Germans wanted to be sure the unification was not complete until the CSCE summit could consider the external issues. The Americans and West Germans had already ruled out this approach at Camp David. Anyway, Teltschik noted in his diary, "this DDR-government will only be in office a few more days." Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 163.

Kohl also accepted Bush's iron linkage of the CSCE summit to signature of a CFE treaty rearranging the balance of conventional military forces in Europe. The substantive security issues were then discussed. Kohl heartily accepted Bush's argument for keeping American troops in Germany. Kohl said he wanted America in Europe, not just for its soldiers, but also to prevent construction of a Fortress Europe. Kohl thought the nuclear issue could, however, be difficult with the German public. They both also agreed that all Soviet troops should leave the territory of a united Germany after staying for some limited time. The status of American forces would not be equated with the position of the Soviets. You must stay, Kohl said, even if the Soviets leave Germany.

Bush repeatedly stressed the need to clarify a future Germany's status in NATO. It must be full membership in the Alliance. Kohl wondered aloud about whether Germany should be handled the way France was handled, i.e., leaving NATO's military organization. Bush said he hated to think of another France in NATO. Germany needed to be a full participant in NATO.

Kohl raised the specific question of NATO's presence in former East German territory. He said NATO units, including German forces dedicated to NATO, could not be stationed on East German soil. Near the end of the conversations Teltschik, having talked the matter over with Blackwill, urged everyone to agree that the limits were only on NATO "forces," but that NATO "jurisdiction" would indeed extend to all of the former GDR. The two staffers had already worked on a press statement that would publicly clarify the matter. Baker's response was crucial, since he was the one who had adopted the "jurisdiction" position at Genscher's request. But Baker, already consulted about the planned press statement, said Teltschik was right. He admitted that he had used the term only before he realized how it would affect the application of the North Atlantic Treaty to defense of all of Germany. Kohl then wanted to be sure this clarification was made public. Absolutely, Baker agreed.

Having agreed on a strong joint German-American plan of action, Bush and Kohl mused several times about how to persuade the Soviets to go along. Bush said that, in his opinion, the Soviets were not in a position to dictate Germany's

relationship with NATO. He was worried about talk that Germany must not stay with NATO. "To hell with that. We prevailed and they didn't. We can't let the Soviets clutch victory from the jaws of defeat."

Kohl saw the next months unfolding with the Americans pushing ahead on arms control while he, Kohl, pushed EC integration with all his weight, noting the EC Summit planned for late April. The US and FRG would work closely together on managing the Two Plus Four. The Soviets would be likely to influence the East German government and the West would need to coordinate every step. Frank discussions would be needed with the Soviets, but Kohl looked to the Americans to carry this burden, handling the issue of Germany's NATO membership outside of the Two Plus Four framework. The Soviets should understand there is now total US-FRG agreement. The time for games had passed. They might then name their real price tag for agreement.

Kohl wondered if it might just be a matter of money. Bush wryly observed that, "You've got deep pockets." But Kohl really thought Gorbachev would want to make his real decision directly with the American president -- superpower to superpower. Baker had earlier compared the Soviet pronouncements to the opening move of a chess game that, at its end, would surely see the Soviets accepting Germany's membership in NATO. In the end, Kohl thought, Gorbachev would make the concession on Germany and NATO to the U.S. president. For that deal, Baker thought Gorbachev would need to see, on the one hand, that the Germans were unshakably behind full NATO membership but then also see, on the other, that the West was willing to take legitimate Soviet security concerns into account. That, Bush commented, is why the US and Germany must have the closest possible consultation. We are going to win the game, but we must be clever while we are doing it.³⁵

At the joint press conference Bush, as both sides had agreed, announced the common agreement that: "a unified Germany should remain a full member of the

³⁵ Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 158-62; Memorandum of Conversations with Chancellor Kohl, February 24-25, 1990 (Blackwill was the notetaker for the meetings). Kohl was joined by Teltschik, Walter Neuer, and Uwe Kaestner.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization, including participation in its military structure. We agreed that U.S. military forces should remain stationed in the united Germany and elsewhere in Europe as a continuing guarantor of stability. The Chancellor and I are also in agreement that in a unified state, the former territory of the GDR should have a special military status, that it [referring only to the disposition of the GDR] would take into account the legitimate security interests of all interested countries, including those of the Soviet Union." During the question and answer period Kohl again got in trouble over the border issue by repeating the formal legal position that the FRG lacked the capacity to settle the border definitively on its own. Bush, for his part, had no difficulty saying -- correctly -- that the United States recognized the current East German-Polish border and considered it "inviolable," like all European borders, as stated in the Helsinki Final Act of the CSCE.³⁶

Kohl followed up on the Camp David meeting by arranging an extraordinary personal visit to NATO headquarters, where he personally reassured all the allies of his interest in their views and of Bonn's commitment to remaining a reliable and stable ally. The ambassadors were delighted with this gesture of support.³⁷

Bush and Baker also followed up on the areas of agreement at Camp David. The Secretary had on his desk a note that French foreign minister Dumas attached "great personal importance" to starting the Two Plus Four talks soon, with meetings of officials before the March 18 elections. Baker, in line with the way the discussion had been resolved at Camp David, instructed his officials to tell the French, and the

³⁶ "Joint News Conference Following Discussions with Chancellor Helmut Kohl of the Federal Republic of Germany," Public Papers, pp. 305-13. For a German-language version see Kaiser, Deutschlands Vereinigung, pp. 200-03.

³⁷ Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 170-71; USNATO 1496, "March 8 NAC on German Unification: Kohl Seeks to Reassure the NATO Permreps; Allies Stress the Need for Extensive NATO Consultations 'Synchronous' with Two Plus Four," 9 Mar 90. British foreign secretary Hurd also made progress in talking through the specific NATO issues in his March 12 visit to Bonn. See, e.g., London 5013, "March 12 Hurd Meeting with Kohl and Genscher," 13 Mar 90.

British, that America preferred to wait "until after 3/18."³⁸ Baker, conscious that Genscher had not been at Camp David, also wrote to his German counterpart to tell him of the agreement that "all of the territory of a united Germany would benefit from the security guarantee provided by the Alliance." Just to be clear, since Baker knew this position countermanded the stance they had agreed upon at the end of January, Baker added in his letter that references to limiting NATO jurisdiction were "creating some confusion" and should be avoided.³⁹

Bush phoned both Mitterrand and Thatcher. Mitterrand was annoyed by Kohl's stance on the border issue. He also warned that the USSR was still a force to be reckoned with. Thatcher was pleased about Kohl's stance on the NATO issue and did not renew her idea about leaving Soviet forces in Germany, especially since Bush said he had told Kohl how uncomfortable he, Bush, was about letting Soviet troops stay indefinitely in Germany.⁴⁰

Bush also called Gorbachev on February 28. The Soviets had paid close attention to the outcome of the Bush-Kohl talks.⁴¹ When Bush called Gorbachev he

³⁸ See note from Kimmitt to Baker, "German Unification," 23 Feb 90 and Baker's handwritten reply, dated February 25.

³⁹ State 63344, "Message to Genscher," 28 Feb 90; see also Dobbins through Kimmitt and Bartholomew to Baker, "NATO and German Unification: Message to Genscher," 27 Feb 90.

⁴⁰ Memcon of Telephone Conversation with President Mitterrand, 26 Feb 90; author's contemporary notes from telephone conversation with Prime Minister Thatcher, 26 Feb 90. The French anger about Kohl's handling of the Polish border question spilled over into French foreign minister Dumas's public remarks during a March 1 speech in Berlin. Dumas also wanted the Two Plus Four to start work immediately, the proposal he had made to Baker a week earlier and which Baker had turned down. On this episode and Kohl's March 5 call to Mitterrand, see Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 164-65, 167; USBerlin 717, "French FM Visits Berlin," 2 Mar 90; USBerlin 838, "Addendum on French FM Visit to Berlin," 13 Mar 90. For more on Bush's views of Germany after his meeting with Kohl, see the Memorandum of Conversation of Bush's meeting with Berlin Governing Mayor Walter Momper, 27 Feb 90. Momper wanted American troops to stay in Berlin as long as Soviet soldiers were there and said that, unlike some of his SPD colleagues, he was against withdrawal of all Western forces from a united Germany. Momper's administration in West Berlin was already beginning to assume responsibility for planning the future of the entire city. See USBerlin 471, "Quick Unity of East and West Berlin?," 9 Feb 90.

⁴¹ For a sampling of public commentary, see TASS, "TASS notes Kohl-Bush News Conference," February 25, 1990, and TASS, "Kornilov Comments," February 26, 1990, in FBIS-SOV 90-038, February 26, 1990, pp. 1-2; Moscow Domestic Service, "Bush-Kohl Talks Create 'Fresh Misgivings,'" February 26, 1990, in FBIS-SOV 90-039, February 27, 1990, p. 9; A. Blinov, "After the Camp David Meeting."

began by recounting his public agreement on rapid German unification, full German membership in NATO, continued presence of American troops in Europe "as long as the Europeans want them," and the need for a "special status" for the former territory of the GDR. Bush assured Gorbachev that the unification of Germany should not, however, abridge the legitimate security interests of any state in Europe.

Gorbachev restated his own government's faith in the "all-European process." The American president and Kohl might have a common view on security issues; but the Soviet Union did not have such a mutual understanding with the German chancellor. He was not sure he saw a need to incorporate a united Germany into one alliance. "If we find that this would negatively effect the Soviet Union, we would have to think long and hard about it." Gorbachev did appreciate Bush's effort to inform him personally and commented, referring also to the January 31 call when Bush consulted him about the U.S.-Soviet troop limit initiative, "That is twice and I am in debt. I will have to draw some conclusions from this."

Despite the amicable tone, the Americans understood how far apart their position was from Moscow's views. Rice advised Scowcroft that Gorbachev's "think long and hard" was not just another way of saying, 'I'll think about it.' The phrase, she said, had a somewhat ominous quality about it, though Gorbachev was obviously trying to avoid a confrontation over the telephone.⁴² On the Soviet side, the Bush-Kohl announcements spurred anxiety and the feeling that they were sitting, immobile, in their dug-in fortifications while the West was consolidating its strength. They, like the French and the British, were thinking constantly about how to use the Two Plus Four talks to play more of a role.⁴³

Izvestiya, February 27, 1990, p. 4, in FBIS-SOV 90-043, March 5, 1990, p. 8.

⁴² Memorandum on Telephone Conversation with President Gorbachev, 28 Feb 90. The President had been trying, for at least a day, to find a mutually convenient time to speak with Gorbachev, who was preoccupied by his move to take on much strengthened Presidential powers over the government. See also Rice through Blackwill to Scowcroft, "President's Telephone Call to Gorbachev," 28 Feb 90. General Scowcroft debriefed Teltschik about the call to Gorbachev. Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 165.

⁴³ See Igor Maximychev, Krushenije: Rekviviem po GDR (Moscow: Mezhdunarodniye otnosheniya, 1993), pp. 132-33 and, for Maximychev's similar views at the time, EmbBerlin 1323, "Soviet Ambassador

Defusing the Polish Border Issue

All the governments that worried about German unification seized upon Kohl's reticence about the Polish border as a focal point for their anxieties and frustrations. Genscher announced that he could support Mazowiecki's proposal for negotiation of a new Polish-German treaty that would settle the border question, to be signed after the unified German government came into being. Kohl was put on the spot at a cabinet session on February 28. That evening, he and his advisers sat around, and speculated about Genscher's political motives. Teltschik noted, "The Chancellor sees the international pressures and the domestic campaign against the background of the eight elections scheduled for this year. He knows that he must move himself further, but actually he doesn't want to." Kohl also had to decide how to present formally his emerging preference for a direct takeover of the GDR via Article 23.⁴⁴

Genscher placed unremitting pressure on Kohl in private without openly attacking the chancellor in public. The tensions grew so serious that it looked as if the coalition might break up over the matter, though FDP head Lambsdorff denies that there was a danger that the Kohl government would fall. After prolonged debates among the coalition partners on March 5 and 6, Kohl gave in and the coalition agreed to offer the Poles a joint declaration confirming the current borders, to be issued by both the West German Bundestag and the East German Volkskammer. Kohl won agreement that such a declaration would be conditioned on Polish renunciation of claims for reparations (claims Poland renounced to the GDR in 1953) as well as

"Worries About Rapid German Reunification," 28 Feb 90. Zelikow passed this cable on to Scowcroft on March 1, with a note that Maximychev's distress about Soviet inertia and his hopes that early Two Plus Four action would get Moscow's attention were both good reasons to oppose early activation of the Two Plus Four process. Having seen this cable, and another paper making the same point, Scowcroft wondered: "Can't we get this notion to Baker, or at least Zoellick?" Notation on Blackwill to Scowcroft, "The Impact of the Two Plus Four Talks on Soviet Policy Toward Germany," 27 Feb 90. See also the criticism of Soviet inaction as contributing to the Bush-Kohl announcement in Sergei Akhromeyev & Georgi Kornienko, Glazami Marshala i Diplomata (Moscow: Mezhdunarodniye otnosheniya, 1992), pp. 259-60.

⁴⁴ Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 164. On the evening of March 5 Kohl discussed the Article 23 vs. Article 146 issue again with Seiters, Schaueble, Teltschik, and other advisers (Klaus Stern, Dieter Blumenwitz, Josef Isensee, Rupert Scholz, Hans-Hugo Klein). They were all united in support of using Article 23. Ibid., p. 167.

Polish respect for the rights of the remaining ethnic German minority. Further, the coalition formally agreed to support Article 23 as the path to unification. The United States publicly and privately welcomed Bonn's decision.⁴⁵

Chancellor Kohl presented the coalition agreement to the Bundestag on March 8. Heckled by the opposition, he began with a vigorous denunciation of SPD policy on the German question, in part for the benefit of the East German electorate. He contended that: "The contribution of the German Social Democrats -- and I am not pleased about making this statement -- to German policy over the past years was simply of a kind which one can only call sad." Kohl reminded SPD leader Vogel of the SPD-SED 1987 agreement that the two sides should resign themselves to live with each other without trying to eliminate each other's systems. Now, Kohl concluded, "never since our country has been divided have we been so close to our goal of national unity in freedom."

Kohl then formally declared his support for Article 23 as the instrument for unification. The FRG's Basic Law should not be revised, even as the FRG worked out modalities for the transition to full application of West German law in the GDR. Kohl also strongly reaffirmed his agreement to keep the future Germany firmly integrated in the NATO Alliance, "while some form of interim regulation has to be

⁴⁵ On the internal debate and the March 6 coalition decisions see Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 165-68; Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, pp. 116-17; Schaeuble, Der Vertrag, pp. 60-65; Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 5 Mar 90; Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 6 Mar 90; Bonn 7347, "Coalition Agrees on Joint Statement on Polish Border," 6 Mar 90. There are indications that Genscher was worried about international reaction to the "takeover" inherent in Article 23, but there is no evidence that Genscher actually opposed this crucial choice.

Kohl promptly informed Bush directly about the coalition decision and Bush cabled back an assurance of support. Message from Chancellor Kohl to President Bush (sent via special channels), 6 Mar 90; Message from President Bush (sent via special channels), 8 Mar 90 (actually sent on 7 March, Washington time). The messages are discussed in Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 170. Genscher also passed word of the coalition agreement to Baker, through a call from Elbe to Zoellick on March 6. See Zoellick to Baker, "German Coalition Agreement on a Polish Border Treaty," 6 Mar 90. Elbe told Zoellick that Genscher had no particular dispute with Kohl over choosing the Article 23 path to unification but that Genscher, worried about the foreign reaction, preferred not to publicize the choice. Though Elbe did not mention it, Kohl could well have viewed public announcement of a choice for Article 23 as a way of differentiating his program for unification more vividly from that of the SPD, making it look faster and simpler, in order to gain an advantage in the March 18 East German election (assuming the East German people were so desperate for the economic gains of unification that they would welcome a quick takeover).

made for the present GDR territory. ... It is the objective of the Federal government headed by me to continue to completely close ranks with our Allies on this very decisive question."

Kohl then detailed his position on the border with Poland. The two German parliaments would make a clear statement, based on past declarations, "of the political will of all German people to recognize, with a view to German unity, the inviolability of the borders with Poland as an indispensable condition for peaceful coexistence in Europe." The Bundestag then adopted a declaration affirming that:

The Polish people should know that its right to live in secure borders will not be called into question by us Germans through territorial claims, either now or in the future.

The Bundestag further promised to settle the border issue definitively in a treaty to be signed between the all-German government and Poland. Poland's 1953 renunciation of reparations, in its treaty with the GDR, was duly noted.⁴⁶

The West German policy declaration clearly went some distance in addressing the substance of Polish concerns. The American government was satisfied and, privately, the British were satisfied too.⁴⁷ The Poles, however, continued to agitate for full participation in the Two Plus Four process.

Mazowiecki was encouraged by his visit to Paris on March 9. The French and Poles worked out a plan for partial Polish participation in the Two Plus Four, with a Two Plus Four session to be held in Warsaw. Mitterrand then held an extraordinary press conference, with Mazowiecki, at which he announced (without any prior discussion with Bonn) that the German-Polish treaty should actually be signed before

⁴⁶ See Jacobsen & Tomala, Bonn-Warschau, pp. 523-24; Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 169. Kohl's worry about Polish reparations demands or other desiderata were not entirely baseless. Eighty-three percent of Poles surveyed in the spring of 1990 thought German unification was a threat to Poland. The same percentage supported German reparation payments for Polish slave labor in World War II. Fifty percent wanted further limits on the civil rights of ethnic Germans still living in Poland. See Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, "Der deutsche Einigungsprozess aus polnischer Sicht," Forum Deutsche Einheit: Aktuelle Kurzinformationen, Nr. 5/90 (Hof: Mintzel-Druck, June 1990).

⁴⁷ Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 171. Hurd conveyed the British approval to Genscher when they met in Bonn on March 12. Author interview.

German unification occurred, insisting that "a juridical act be negotiated as rapidly as possible, and in any case before the likely unification of the two German states."

Mitterrand seemed to be seeking a confrontation with Kohl.

Kohl was furious. Here Kohl and Genscher had just agonizingly adopted a major new position and within days the French President had publicly attacked it. Kohl voiced his unhappiness directly to Mitterrand by telephone. The French government soon muted its support for the Polish position.⁴⁸

The American government gave no aid to this French-Polish initiative, telling Mazowiecki in a letter that the West Germans had made a "positive and important step toward settling the border question on a legal and permanent basis." Poland would be involved only in those Two Plus Four decisions which affected the vital interests of Poland, and the modalities for this involvement were left open. Genscher was soon able to secure direct agreement from the French that Poland would participate in Two Plus Four talks only "when the question of Poland's western border is considered" and the West German foreign minister opposed any meeting in Warsaw. Faced with firm opposition from Bonn and Washington, France dropped its demand for signature of a new German-Polish treaty before unification.⁴⁹

The Polish-German issue was defused in the second half of March, due in large part to Bush's secret mediation between Kohl and Mazowiecki. Mazowiecki

⁴⁸ See Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 171-72; Paris 7991, "MFA Readout on Jaruzelski/Mazowiecki Visit," 12 Mar 90.

⁴⁹ See State 79390, "Dumas Letter on Two Plus Four and the Polish-German Border," 13 Mar 90; Warsaw 3768, "Polish Foreign Minister Suggests 2 Plus 4 Meeting in Warsaw," 12 Mar 90; Paris 8101, "Dumas Letter on 'Two-Plus-Four' and the Polish/German Border," 13 Mar 90; Dobbins (Acting) through Eagleburger to Baker, "Expected Call from French Foreign Minister re Poland and Two plus Four," 12 Mar 90 and cover note attached to this memo from Eagleburger dated 13 March. On the Genscher-Dumas statement, see Bonn 8488, "FRG-French Declaration on Polish Participation in Two-Plus-Four Talks," 14 Mar 90. Baker took the unusual step of calling Teltschik on March 13, just before his subordinates began the first Two Plus Four meeting, to find out if Kohl had any opinion about the idea of holding a Two Plus Four meeting in Warsaw. Teltschik called Baker on March 14 to inform him that both Kohl and Genscher were opposed to such a meeting. He conveyed the same view to Blackwill, at the White House. Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 175. For Bush's letter to Mazowiecki, see State 81152, "Presidential Letter to Prime Minister Mazowiecki on Polish Borders and Two Plus Four Talks," 14 Mar 90 (drafted by NSC staff); see also Gates to President Bush, "Your Meeting Today with Leaders of the Polish American Congress at 2:00 p.m.: New Developments on the Issue of Polish Participation in the Two Plus Four Process," 14 Mar 90.

was on his way to Washington and all assumed that he would press his case directly with the American president.⁵⁰ Bush called Kohl on March 20 to preview what he intended to say in his meeting the next day with prime minister Mazowiecki. Kohl let his anxiety show by appearing to connect, in an oblique way, U.S. support for his stance on Poland with West German support for NATO membership. Kohl noted that the opposition SPD were pushing him hard on the border issue, but these were the same people who also wanted Germany out of NATO. Kohl assured the President he would fight for German membership in the Alliance, and he was seeing some support for this principle in the GDR too.

Bush assured Kohl he would stick by his Camp David position of understanding: Respect for the Helsinki Final Act provisions on the inviolability of current borders and U.S. recognition of the existing polish-German border. Kohl said he wished all of his partners were as reliable as the President of the United States. There were dividends that would arise out of this close German-American relationship, Kohl added. One such dividend, he added, was continued German support for membership in the NATO Alliance.⁵¹ Bush assured Kohl that the U.S. would not support Poland's claim to membership in the Two Plus Four.

Kohl then added that Bush could tell Mazowiecki that he, Kohl, wanted to help

⁵⁰ In early March members of State's Policy Planning Staff proposed a U.S. move toward Poland, writing to Ross and Zoellick. They wanted the U.S. to tell West Germany that Washington wanted a Polish-German treaty negotiated prior to unification, that the results of these negotiations would be presented to and reviewed by the Two Plus Four, and that Four Power rights would be relinquished only after this Polish-German treaty was ratified by both the all-German government and Poland. The staffers knew State's European bureau would have a "strongly negative reaction" to their idea. They were right, and there would have been equally adamant opposition from the White House, but there was no internal battle in Washington because there is no indication that this staff proposal was seriously considered either by Ross or by Zoellick. See Fox and George to Ross and Zoellick, "Polish-German Border Resolution," 9 Mar 90 and attached cable to be sent from Zoellick to Dieter Kastrup (drafted by George). The "strongly negative reaction" quote is from the March 9 cover note endorsing the proposal from the Policy Planning staff's deputy director Holmes, passing the paper to Zoellick's special assistant, Nick Burns.

⁵¹ See Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 176; Memcon of Telephone Conversation with Chancellor Kohl, 15 Mar 90; Scowcroft to President Bush, "Your Telephone Conversation with Chancellor Kohl, March 15, 1990," 16 Mar 90. Representatives of the Polish-American Congress had met with the President on March 14, and these Americans had urged President Bush to join Mazowiecki in issuing just the kind of joint statement Kohl feared.

Mazowiecki but also had to be sure he could pull off his effort to accomplish Germany's unification. Kohl said he didn't usually say so publicly, but obviously the election results had a bearing on these questions. Yet Kohl again wanted Bush to have no doubt about his determination to accept the existing border. He was not hiding anything; there was no secrecy about his intentions. The borders were a bitter burden of history, but now was the time to settle the issue definitely for the future. Yet the all-German government, under international law, had to make the final settlement. Kohl could understand the Polish wish for an earlier settlement, but there could be no doubt about the ultimate outcome -- the West and East German parliaments would still represent the same attitudes.

Bush understood how international law was shaping the resolution of this issue. When, he asked, can the East German parliament join in a joint declaration of intentions on the border question. By May or June at the latest, Kohl replied. Kohl then gave Bush some more assurances the American leader could offer Mazowiecki. Though he would not promise to negotiate a treaty for a united Germany before it was united, Kohl would be willing to work out the relevant text privately with Mazowiecki, in advance. Bush thought these two steps would be very reassuring. Kohl emphasized that he had offered promises he could keep.

Bush asked Kohl if the chancellor wanted to communicate the idea of a private agreement on the text directly to Mazowiecki. Possibly, Kohl replied, but he wanted to see what happened after Bush tried out the idea on Mazowiecki, if Mazowiecki promised to keep the idea private.⁵²

Mazowiecki arrived in Washington the next morning, March 21, and after the welcoming ceremony on the South Lawn of the White House the two leaders began a small meeting, each accompanied by only one adviser. Germany was the first subject. Mazowiecki wanted a reconciliation with the past. He wanted to be forward-looking. But Mazowiecki did not want the western territories taken from

⁵² Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 179; Memorandum of Telephone Conversation with Chancellor Kohl, 20 Mar 90.

Germany to be viewed just as a gift from Stalin. They had to be guaranteed by all the powers, not just in a unilateral act by one of them. That was why Poland wanted to be in the Two Plus Four and wanted a binding treaty recognition of the border. Declarations were just declarations; the Poles needed a treaty worked out before unification and signed afterward. They wanted it worked out before unification because they feared Germany would be less amenable to negotiations after it was unified.

Bush then worked hard to convince Mazowiecki that, at least on this matter, Kohl could be trusted. He explained Kohl's political problem and noted the strong language adopted by the Bundestag on March 8. Then he began deploying the assurances discussed with Kohl the previous day. What, Bush asked, if I could get Kohl to agree with you on the text of a treaty now? Would that help? He was convinced Kohl had no secret agenda to change the border.

Mazowiecki was a bit skeptical about Kohl, but had to admit the West Germans had moved to address Polish concerns. He wanted to study Bush's idea about a private, advance understanding of the text. Why couldn't the treaty be initialed before unification?

Bush then explained the international legal problem. Neither of the existing German states was the appropriate legal entity to negotiate such a treaty for the united Germany. Kohl had proposed common parliamentary resolutions, with a treaty to be concluded by the all-German government. Poland wanted to write and initial the treaty before unity and sign afterwards. So Mazowiecki should think about his suggestion to persuade Kohl to just negotiate the text before unity.

Bush added his own weight to Kohl's assurances. He assured Mazowiecki that America, at least, was playing no games. America trusted Kohl, but did not rest its policy on individuals. The U.S. could understand Polish feelings about this issue.

Mazowiecki then raised a proposal of his own. Poland did not believe in a neutral Germany. But something had to be done in a way Gorbachev could survive.

The NATO solution was not acceptable to Gorbachev.⁵³ Perhaps forces of both East and West could remain in Germany. In other words, Mazowiecki was now presenting the proposal for indefinite continuation of Soviet forces in Germany that Thatcher had suggested to Bush nearly a month earlier.

The President thought the prediction about Gorbachev might be right. It was hard to predict the future of the Soviet Union. The political reforms were not yet irreversible. But he would try to get all Soviet troops out of central and eastern Europe while it was still possible. Such Soviet goodwill might not last. Bush also made it clear that the situation of American troops was a completely separate matter. American troops were a stabilizing force. If Europeans did not think so, the U.S. soldiers would be out. Mazowiecki said he understood; the small meeting ended and the ceremonial schedule resumed, including a state dinner that evening.⁵⁴

That same day Blackwill talked over the U.S.-Polish exchanges with Teltschik in Bonn. They clarified a bit of confusion. The "text" that could be worked out in advance was not the entire text of a future Polish-German treaty; but it would be the critical sentence or sentences addressing the border question. Once this language was worked out, it could be incorporated into the resolutions adopted later by the two German parliaments, then into the eventual treaty with united Germany.⁵⁵

Bush and Mazowiecki had another small meeting the next morning, and returned to German issues. Mazowiecki was worried about a conflict over German NATO membership. He suggested an all-European collective security organization,

⁵³ While rejecting the neutrality solution, Polish officials were still avoiding open endorsement of the NATO alternative. Mazowiecki's plea for the US to find some other way that would address Soviet concerns was entirely consistent with Foreign Minister Skubiszewski's longer explanation of Poland's position to Ambassador Davis more than a week earlier. See Warsaw 3768, "Polish Foreign Minister Suggests 2 Plus 4 Meeting in Warsaw," 12 Mar 90.

⁵⁴ Memcon for Meeting with Prime Minister Mazowiecki, 21 Mar 90 (General Scowcroft was the notetaker). Bush was joined only by General Scowcroft and an interpreter. Mazowiecki was accompanied by Ryszard Wojtkowski, director of his private office, and an interpreter.

⁵⁵ See Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 181; Hutchings through Blackwill to Scowcroft, "Telephone Call to Chancellor Helmut Kohl of the Federal Republic of Germany, March 23, 1990," 22 Mar 90.

with everyone promising to defend everyone else, based on the CSCE. Above all, Poland should not get in the middle of an East-West clash. Mazowiecki wanted America to endorse a strong, stable Poland between these two powers, a basic factor encouraging democratic order in Europe. Bush agreed, and made just such a statement at his news conference later in the day.

But Bush made his position very clear on the more troublesome problems. The U.S. would not agree to Mazowiecki's suggestion that any Soviet troops should stay on foreign territory in Europe, if they were not wanted.

Mazowiecki promised to downplay public dispute over borders, but said Poland would continue to press for a treaty before unification. Bush argued that the future Polish-German treaty should have real content. Surely that would be better than two treaties with the two German governments without legal effect, treaties which would be superseded by the united German government. Mazowiecki had already pulled Kohl a long way, Bush pointed out. But Bush was direct: He would not go out and publicly pressure Kohl to do more. He trusted the Chancellor. A contented, unified Germany would be easier to deal with on a number of issues. He would tell Kohl of Poland's position, but he was just not as concerned on this point as Mazowiecki was. Resolutions followed by an early treaty, which the US would press for, would satisfy the United States.

Mazowiecki replied that others across Europe shared his concern, plainly alluding to Mitterrand and Thatcher, and perhaps Gorbachev. Bush said this might be true, though it must be remembered that Mitterrand was close to Kohl. Yet he asked Mazowiecki, speaking philosophically, how long did Germany have to do penance? That was not the issue, Mazowiecki insisted. Bush then pointed again to the substantive positions of the FRG, and his belief that Kohl would keep his promise to settle the border question.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Memcon for Follow-Up Meeting with Prime Minister Mazowiecki, 22 Mar 90. The participants were the same as in the small meeting the previous day. See also "The President's News Conference," 22 Mar 90, in Public Papers, pp. 460-63. Mitterrand's support for Mazowiecki in their Paris talks has already been mentioned. Thatcher, though her government had liked the March 6-8 coalition decisions, went on and blasted Kohl's stance on the border issue in an interview published in Der Spiegel, March 26, 1990,

Mazowiecki left Washington knowing just what he could expect from the leading power of the West. He found a sympathetic American President who had arranged a warm and elegant reception, with all the ceremonial trappings, for the new leader of a democratic Poland. President Bush was ready to attest to Kohl's sincerity and provide new assurances; he practically guaranteed Kohl's delivery of the promised treaty after unification (and publicly guaranteed the inviolability of the existing border). But that was all. Mazowiecki could count on no decisive support in forcing Kohl to go further, and America would not help on the idea of leaving Soviet troops in eastern Germany.

Having urged Mazowiecki to trust Kohl, Bush now called Kohl to urge him to trust Mazowiecki. Bush reviewed the arguments that he had made. He wanted to be sure there was no misunderstanding about Bush's offer to work with Kohl on the key "text" of the future Polish-German treaty. Kohl said this was not a problem. The treaty, Kohl went on, would contain one particular sentence. The sentence might read as follows: "The Republic of Poland and the Republic of Germany do not make any border claims on each other, and they consider the existing border to be permanent." His idea was to find some agreement on what that sentence should look like. Then that sentence would be put in the resolutions of the two parliaments, resolutions which at the same time would call for completion of a treaty as soon as possible. The two German governments would then pass these resolutions to Warsaw with the assurance of their support for the parliamentary position.

So the Poles would have assurances from both parliaments and governments of both German states at the highest possible levels. Then, Kohl added, no decent person could doubt German intentions. What Mazowiecki wanted, Kohl argued, was no more binding in international law than these resolutions would be. It might even be less binding, because the parliaments would not be involved. Yet Mazowiecki's approach could get Kohl brought before the FRG's Constitutional Court and accused of acting beyond his power. It would cause all kinds of trouble for weeks. Kohl

pp. 182-87.

definitely would not do that.

So, Bush said, would Kohl like to work out that sentence with Mazowiecki in advance? Bush had not committed Kohl to anything. In the talks the idea had been presented as a George Bush proposal. But, Kohl answered, we can further develop this idea. Exactly, Bush replied. Kohl thought this would be a big concession but, after some open musing, agreed to pursue the language privately with Mazowiecki. Bush thought the Poles were already feeling more reassured, and that this step could help settle the matter.

Kohl thought the problem could now be managed in a reasonable way.⁵⁷ He was right. The subsequent diplomacy to settle the Polish-German issue unfolded in line with these critical discussions between the President, Kohl, and Mazowiecki during the third week of March. The language in the German parliamentary resolutions was the key "text." It was discussed in advance with the Poles, and it accurately previewed the later contents of the post-unification Polish-German treaty.

One great irony was that the issue was propelled by the FRG's inability to sign a treaty for the future united Germany. But the FRG's March decision (formally announced on March 8) to unify via Article 23 made the point moot. If the laender of the GDR acceded to the FRG, Bonn's past international legal obligations -- including its 1970 treaty with Poland guaranteeing the borders -- stayed in tact. That would have been enough to bind the united Germany to recognition of the Polish border.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Memorandum of Telephone Conversation with Chancellor Kohl, 23 Mar 90. Zoellick urged Secretary Baker to be sure to read this memcon, and Baker later noted that he did (on or about March 31, based on his notations).

⁵⁸ Warsaw kept pressing for advance negotiation of a German-Polish treaty, though tensions had eased. Genscher was prepared meet these demands and negotiate a treaty that would be initialed before unification. Kohl overruled Genscher, knowing that Bush would back him up. The FRG continued to refuse a formal pre-negotiation of a Poland-united Germany treaty. But Kohl, as promised, used the Polish-West German dialogue as a way to negotiate the crucial border sentences of such a treaty, which were then embedded in the parliamentary resolutions passed, as he promised, in the early summer of 1990. On Genscher's March plans, see Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 179 (on March 19 meeting between Kohl, Genscher, and Stoltenberg); Secto 2045, "Secretary's Meeting with FRG Foreign Minister Genscher, March 21, 1990," 24 Mar 90 (on meeting in Windhoek, Namibia). See also Michael Ludwig, Polen und die Deutsche Frage (Bonn: Europa

The U.S., FRG, British, and French Work Prepare for the Two Plus Four

On February 28, after the President's Camp David meeting with Chancellor Kohl, top subcabinet officials from the foreign ministries of America, West Germany, Britain, and France gathered in London to start exchanging views about how the Two Plus Four would work. Baker asked Zoellick to lead the delegation, accompanied by State's usual 'political director,' assistant secretary Seitz.⁵⁹ The delegation leaders at this meeting remained the same throughout the year: Zoellick, Kastrup from Bonn, John Weston for the British government, and Bertrand Dufourcq representing France.

The first topic was one the Americans expected. How soon would the negotiations get underway? The British and French wanted to move quickly. The Americans and West Germans, consistent with the understanding reached at Camp David, preferred delay. Kastrup began giving ground but Zoellick would not. Zoellick also stressed the need to be sure Western positions were tightly coordinated before going into talks with the Soviets and East Germans. (The West German diplomats were already arranging to talk with both the Soviets and East Germans in days ahead.) The group did agree with Zoellick's suggestion that any meeting of ministers would have to be after the East German elections.

The Western diplomats also agreed to keep Germany out of the agenda for the

Union Verlag, 1990), pp. 73-74; Warsaw 6452, "Polish/FRG/GDR Draft Treaty on Border Issue," 30 Apr 90; Warsaw 9216, "Polish Approach to Two-Plus-Four Talks," 13 Jun 90. For the parliamentary resolutions, see Materialen zu Deutschlandfragen, pp. 75-76, 80-83.

The U.S. State Department's lawyers also did not grasp the significance of Article 23 and the FRG's signature on past treaties and a current Two Plus Four settlement document. In late April they still anticipated a "catch 22" in that the FRG and GDR "cannot fix (or make treaty commitments regarding) a united Germany's borders until they are united and, as a political matter, the Four Powers probably cannot bless German unification until the border question is addressed." Young (deputy legal adviser) to Zoellick and Seitz, "Legal Constraints on Timing of Settlement," 27 Apr 90. Worry about this false "catch 22" became a quite dangerous, though little known, problem in the Two Plus Four talks later in the spring, and will be discussed again in Chapter Nine.

⁵⁹ Zoellick had to leave early before the London meeting concluded, so Seitz represented the US in discussion of some topics. The U.S. foreign policy structure does not have a 'political director' in the sense found in other European capitals. So Washington designates different officials to play this role, depending on the negotiation. However, on European issues, the assistant secretary of state for European and Soviet Affairs was usually considered the "political director." The appointment of Zoellick did not reverse this tradition, but carved out an exception to it linked to the extraordinary diplomatic efforts accompanying the unification of Germany.

CSCE summit. If, for some reason, unification was not concluded by the time the summit was held, the Two Plus Four would simply offer the other 29 CSCE member states a progress report.

Turning to the substantive security issues, Kastrup presented the West German position on NATO membership. He still talked about NATO "jurisdiction" not extending to East Germany (attributing the term to Baker!) and Zoellick promptly clarified matters by reviewing the Camp David understandings. Zoellick further questioned the Genscher-Stoltenberg agreement by asking whether, if the German armed forces were kept out of eastern Germany, the FRG could avoid having a special "demilitarized" zone in its own country. He was against this, as were Weston and Dufourcq. Kastrup refused to engage, pleading a need for instructions. Zoellick urged him to tell Genscher that other allies had raised a very big red flag on this issue. Nor did Kastrup have answers to a series of pointed followup questions from Weston about how NATO defense obligations would apply in a united Germany.

A number of topics were touched upon briefly, but all the diplomats soon realized that some important legal questions needed more careful study. If the FRG took over the GDR under Article 23, which of East Germany's international obligations would be inherited by the Federal Republic? Kastrup assumed Bonn would inherit those obligations which were consistent with existing FRG law, thus dropping the GDR's Warsaw Pact membership, but more study was needed. And just how would the external aspects of German unity be settled? Would it be a "peace settlement?" The British thought so, but Kastrup said his government was adamant about rejecting anything smacking of a "peace treaty" nearly 50 years after the end of World War II. Other questions arose about whether Berliners, still under Four Power rule, could vote in the upcoming federal elections. If so, preparations had to start soon. But moves to let Berliners vote as if they were part of West Germany, rather than under Four Power rule, might antagonize the Soviets at the beginning of the

process.⁶⁰

The Soviet Union Prepares for the Two Plus Four

Not surprisingly, the West German and American goals for the talks clashed with those of the Soviet government. The foreign ministry had a settled line of policy, dating from the end of January. A Germany working group had formed within the ministry and, at this time, its leading figures were deputy foreign minister Anatoly Adamishin and European department head Bondarenko. A revised set of Soviet national interests were reasonably clear at the time: (1) use the Two Plus Four to participate in the key decisions about Germany's future; (2) get assurances on the borders of a united Germany; (3) constrain Germany's power to threaten Soviet interests in Europe; and (4) develop a plan for German security ties which does not favor the West.

American and Soviet interests were virtually diametrically opposed. Just as the Americans wanted to delay the start of the Two Plus Four and circumscribe its jurisdiction, Moscow wanted to meet as soon as possible with the broadest possible

⁶⁰ For an account of the London meeting see Zoellick to Baker, "Meeting Discussion of German Unification and Two-plus-Four," 1 Mar 90. Detailed account of the meeting drawn from final draft of State reporting cable, "German Unification: Initial Three-Plus-One Allied Consultations (Part One of Two) and (Part Two of Two)," dated 4 Mar 90. On the early German concerns with their status in the talks and the pronounced opposition to a peace treaty, see Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, pp. 106-13. In a meeting of his foreign and security policy group on March 13, Genscher reportedly presented the lifting of Four Power rights as a "very complicated" problem, but everyone was clear about not wanting a peace treaty. The presence of Soviet troops was equated with the problem of putting the presence of Allied troops on a new basis with new stationing treaties. Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 172-73.

State Department lawyers had already begun exploring the legal ramifications of unification with their West German counterparts. See Bonn 4525, "Legal Aspects of German Unification," 9 Feb 90 (from Legal Adviser Abraham Sofaer). State lawyers were already annoyed about what they perceived as progressive infringements by Bonn and the West Berlin administration of Four Power legal positions in the city. See, e.g., L/EUR - Koblitz to S/P - George, "Comments on the DDI's 1/11/90 Memorandum on Berlin Four-Power Talks," 1 Feb 90 (passed by George to Zoellick). On the issue of Berlin voting rights, see State 44833, "Genscher Plans to Press for Allied Decision on Berlin Elections," 10 Feb 90. State Department lawyers actually joined with the Soviets in believing that direct Bundestag elections in Berlin were inconsistent with the Quadripartite Agreement of 1971 (QA)(discussed in Chapter Three). Still, if the U.S. made the decision to concur with the FRG's legal view, EUR noted that the U.S. could just go along, or argue that the Soviets had violated the QA by allowing direct elections in East Berlin (consistent with the Western view, not shared by Moscow, that the QA applied to all four sectors of Berlin). Or, EUR suggested, Washington could propose Four Power sponsorship of direct elections in all of Berlin. See Seitz to Zoellick, "Where We Are on Berlin and Where We Go from Here," 29 Jan 90; Dobbins to Zoellick, untitled memo, 1 Feb 90.

mandate.

Moscow's immediate problem was to get the Two Plus Four into action. Two weeks after Ottawa, Shevardnadze sent a terse letter to the other Two Plus Four foreign ministers on March 2 proposing that, in the event of "unforeseen circumstances" connected to the upcoming GDR elections, any member of the Two Plus Four would have the right to call an urgent Two Plus Four meeting. If other ambassadors did not agree within 12 hours to the meeting, then the concerned country "shall be free to act in response to the prevailing situation" while informing the others of its actions. Washington immediately sought further clarification of what "unforeseen circumstances" were contemplated, and just what sort of unilateral action the Soviets were thinking of taking. The Soviets were obviously worried about some sudden East German lunge toward unification after the March 18 elections. The French government saw this sign of Soviet anxiety as yet another reason to begin the talks as soon as possible.⁶¹

A few days later the Soviets tried again, formally proposing a Two Plus Four to be held at the "expert level" (i.e., political directors) on March 12 or 13 in Geneva. Adamishin had already talked with Kastrup, and the Soviet Union asked for a first meeting that would only "discuss things in general terms and agree on the organization of future work."⁶² The West German foreign ministry was ready to agree, and the U.S. joined in consenting to a first Two Plus Four meeting on March 14 in Bonn, not Geneva.

At the same time, the Soviet Union and East Germany were moving to counter the Kohl-Bush consensus on rapid unification. Moscow finally understood the point

⁶¹ See Teitschik, 329 Tage, p. 167; Dobbins (Acting) through Kimmitt to Baker, "Letter from Shevardnadze Proposing Two-plus-Four Contingency Consultations Mechanism," 2 Mar 90; State 68751, "Shevardnadze Letter to Secretary on 'Two-Plus-Four' Mechanism," 3 Mar 90; Moscow 7472, "Shevardnadze Letter to Secretary on 'Two-Plus-Four' Mechanism," 3 Mar 90; Moscow 7532, "Shevardnadze Letter to Secretary on 'Two Plus Four Mechanism'," 5 Mar 90; EmbBerlin 1407, "Shevardnadze Letter to Secretary on 'Two-Plus-Four Mechanism,'" 5 Mar 90; Bonn 7216, "Kastrup on Two Plus Four Mechanism," 5 Mar 90; Paris 7024, "Shevardnadze Letter to Secretary on 'Two-Plus-Four' Mechanism: French Thoughts," 5 Mar 90.

⁶² Untitled and unsigned text of note, 5 Mar 90 (S/S Log #9005019).

that Falin had made in January: Kohl was proposing a takeover of the GDR through Article 23. Gorbachev met with Modrow in Moscow on March 5-6. Shevardnadze then announced that Article 23 was an unacceptable and even "illegal" path to unification, since it would override the GDR sovereign rights and East Germany's international obligations to its Warsaw Pact allies and the Soviet Union. Soviet ambassador to the U.S. Dubinin called on Zoellick and personally stressed the importance of Shevardnadze's stand.

Gorbachev and Modrow emerged equally adamant on the issue of Germany's membership in NATO too. Gorbachev told the press, on March 6, that the Soviet Union "cannot agree" to any form of participation of a unified Germany in NATO. "It is absolutely out of the question," he said. There must instead be a staged process, tied to the CSCE, leading to the transformation of both alliances into purely political organizations. In a vehement statement he attacked those who did not treat such questions seriously.

On returning to Berlin, Modrow also reported to the East German parliament that his coalition government had again agreed with the Soviets that NATO membership for a united Germany was unacceptable. The Soviet Union prompted precisely the response that it hoped for as West Germans rushed to assure them -- and the German public -- that no harm would come to Soviet interests. Genscher noted that "the alliances will increasingly become elements of cooperative security structures in which they can ultimately be absorbed." This position was not unlike that of centrist SPD experts who believed that Germany's membership in NATO would be temporary since the alliance would dissolve within one or two years. SPD radicals were simply opposed to German membership in NATO.⁶³

⁶³ See Hans-Dietrich Genscher, "German unity as a contribution to European stability," Nordsee-Zeitung, March 3, 1990 (translation provided by FRG government); and the anodyne reference in Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, p. 107. The pro-NATO SPD opinion mentioned refers to the views conveyed by Horst Ehmke and Dietrich Stobbe to Eagleburger in a Washington meeting on March 7. Willy Brandt was also part of this relatively pro-NATO faction of the SPD. Opposed to NATO membership were the party's chancellor Oskar Lafontaine and Egon Bahr, and the SPD had prepared a party platform calling for the dissolution of both alliances. See Scowcroft to President Bush, "SPD Thinking on a United Germany," (date unknown but probably the last week of March); Baker to President

The Soviet Union's preferences for the Two Plus Four began to emerge as well. The body would, in Shevardnadze's view, handle all security issues, borders, constrain any future German military threat, adopt guarantees against the rebirth of Naziism in German domestic politics, deal with Germany's alliance membership, address the status of all foreign forces on German soil, and consider financial and material claims against Germany left over from the war. The Soviet Foreign Ministry followed up with an official statement repeating these points and, in the harshest language yet, accused the FRG both of massive interference in East Germany's internal affairs and of deliberately attempting to push the GDR into economic ruin.

These moves came too late from the point of view of Akhromeyev and veteran diplomat Kornienko. They reflected bitterly that "it was only in March, after the NATO train had left, or at least started to move, that we began making declarations about the impermissibility of incorporating the future Germany into NATO ... and only at that time ... a more or less detailed Soviet concept of the issues related to the reunification of Germany was announced in the form of a statement by the Foreign Ministry of the USSR. But it was too late"⁶⁴

Bush (for his evening reading), 7 Mar 90 (on Eagleburger meeting). Ehmke also thought unification was proceeding too quickly, but he got no support from Eagleburger. On the interplay between outside attitudes and domestic politics in shaping West German positions on security, see the useful analysis in CIA, "Initial Security Options for a United Germany," EUR M 90-10005, Mar 90. On the uncertainties in German opinion on NATO see Seitz to Baker, "West German Public Opinion Fluid on NATO, U.S. Forces, and the Eastern Threat," 19 Mar 90; Bonn 6979, "FRG Public Opinion on the Threat from the East, the Image of NATO, and the Presence of U.S. Forces," 2 Mar 90; Bonn 7256, "The German Question and Alliance Security," 6 Mar 90. For the pro-NATO views of West German defense officials, see, e.g., Bonn 7009, "General Naumann on Security Policy Issues," 2 Mar 90.

⁶⁴ For the Gorbachev interview, see "Phased Approach Needed," Pravda, March 7, 1990, pp. 1, 5, in FBIS-SOV 90-045, March 7, 1990, pp. 24-26; for the Shevardnadze interview (published in an East German magazine and thus clearly aimed at the East German audience), see TASS, "Shevardnadze Discusses German Unity in Interview," March 7, 1990, in FBIS-SOV 90-046, March 8, 1990, pp. 37-40. For the Foreign Ministry statement, see TASS, "Foreign Ministry Make Official Statement," March 13, 1990, in FBIS-SOV 90-050, March 14, 1990, pp. 2-3. For the quote from Akhromeyev and Kornienko (Kornienko had been the top deputy to Shevardnadze's long-serving predecessor, Andrei Gromyko), see Glazami Marshalja i Diplomata, p. 26. On Gorbachev's meeting with Modrow, see Modrow, Aufbruch und Ende, pp. 137-41; Moscow Television Service, "Gorbachev Comments Before Meeting," March 6, 1990, and TASS, "Gorbachev-Modrow Meeting Detailed," March 6, 1990, both in FBIS-SOV 90-045, March 7, 1990, pp. 24, 26-27; Moscow 7912, "GDR Premier Modrow's Visit: German Unity, NATO Membership, Two Plus Four," 7 Mar 90; EmbBerlin 1571, "Modrow Reports on Moscow Trip, Cites U.S. Senators on Polish Border," 9 Mar 90. On Dubinin and Zoellick see Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading).

Opening Skirmishes: The First Meeting of the Two Plus Four

It was not clear to Bonn and Washington that it was too late for Moscow, however. A great deal was riding on the East German elections. Even if the East German people chose to side with Kohl, the West Germans were still susceptible to Soviet and other outside pressure -- the events of early March had proven that, and the pressure was quite mild compared to what was possible. So weeks before the Soviet foreign ministry pronouncement, right after the Camp David meeting with Kohl, the American government decided to provide a blueprint -- a detailed statement -- of what Washington hoped would become a united Western position.

The United States welcomed the quick unification of Germany, the sooner the better. As for the Two Plus Four, the U.S. note explained the narrow agenda: to "decide repeat decide only those questions which derive directly from post-war rights and responsibilities and which must be decided in order to restore full sovereign authority to the united German state over its territory, including Berlin." The Two Plus Four would work in two phases, and the first phase was the establishment of a freely elected government in the GDR and waiting for the results of dialogue between that government and the FRG. The March 14 Two Plus Four meeting would therefore be "purely procedural."

The precise U.S. position on German membership in NATO was reviewed, including continued German participation in NATO's military structures. Pointing out that "all forces assigned to NATO are integrated into NATO's multilateral command and planning machinery," Washington reminded European officials that NATO's collective military structure was "the only realistic alternative to purely national

8 Mar 90; State 87582, "Zoellick-Dubinin March 7 Discussion of Germany," 19 Mar 90. For additional background see S/P - Hauslochner to Zoellick, "Recent Soviet Statements on Germany," 8 Mar 90. 13 Mar 90. For acknowledgement of the Soviet pronouncements in Bonn, see Teltzschik, 329 Tage, pp. 168-69, 170. For analysis of the Soviet stance by the American embassy, see Moscow 8211, "Soviet Views on the Future Status of Germany: NATO, Neutral or Neither?," 10 Mar 90; Moscow 8648, "Soviets move Publicly to 'Put the Brakes' on German Rush for Unification," 14 Mar 90: "To Moscow, the rush toward German unification is not unlike a large Mercedes barreling down the autobahn showing little regard for public safety. ... Moscow is sending the message that unless Kohl (and others) are prepared to meet the Soviets part-way, Germany's journey to reunification could be far lengthier and slower than expected."

defenses. That is why neutrality for a united Germany should be as unwelcome for Germany's neighbors as it is for Germans themselves."

"Legitimate" Soviet concerns would be recognized in the Two Plus Four process, but "legitimate" was defined narrowly to mean only those concerns associated with the status of the former GDR in a united Germany. Those concerns would be taken into account through limits on stationing NATO forces in eastern Germany, providing a transitional arrangement to deal with the status of remaining Soviet forces in Germany, and recognizing the permanence of the present German-Polish border. NATO capitals were reminded of three essential aspects of German affiliation with NATO: full membership in the Alliance; continued participation in the integrated military command structure; and the extension of NATO security guarantees, consistent with Articles 5 and 6 of the North Atlantic Treaty (on the nature and scope of the collective defense obligations) to the entire territory of a unified Germany. As these points were presented by American diplomats throughout Europe, the West German Foreign Office expressed some relief (at least to the Americans) that Washington was being so clear and so blunt as Moscow took a tougher line.⁶⁵

The U.S. left no doubt about its view that the March 14 Two Plus Four meeting would be "preliminary and procedural, aimed at discussing modalities for later substantive sessions" that would take place only after there was a new GDR government, and after dialogue about internal unification had advanced.⁶⁶

But the NSC staff remained uneasy about the State Department's ability to limit the scope of the Two Plus Four. While Zoellick said major security issues would only be discussed, not decided, in the Two Plus Four, the White House aides worried that this "firebreak" could "quickly lose all meaning" in the real setting of a

⁶⁵ State 76007, "German Unification, Two-Plus-Four, and Germany in NATO," 9 Mar 90 (drafted by Brunson McKinley in EUR and Zelikow). See Bonn 7849, "German Unification," 9 Mar 90, for the FRG reaction.

⁶⁶ State 74775, "'Two-Plus-Four' Consultations," 8 Mar 90; State 78499, "Explaining March 14 Two Plus Four Meeting," 10 Mar 90.

negotiation. They even thought President Bush might need to issue a formal National Security Directive to confine the talks to the narrow agenda "before we are off to the races."⁶⁷

The tension within the U.S. government finally disappeared after State officials joined their NSC staff colleagues in a long discussion, held at Zoellick's initiative, that hammered out an extraordinarily detailed common understanding of how the Two Plus Four would work.

The Americans agreed on how the US would handle a dozen issues. The discussion of Kohl's choice to unify under Article 23 was put off limits for Two Plus Four discussion: The Americans would argue that this was an internal German issue. Ross and Zoellick stressed the importance of bolstering Gorbachev by using the Two Plus Four to manage Soviet anxiety about Germany. But they agreed there should be no meeting of Two Plus Four ministers until at least early April (after Baker met with Shevardnadze in Washington), and the NSC staff held out for postponing such a meeting until May.⁶⁸

The NSC staff prepared a diagram to illustrate how the Two Plus Four would deal with various issues. For example:

- Four Power rights including fate of Berlin: decide in Two Plus Four.
- Borders: decide in Two Plus Four (ratifying the sovereign German choice).
- NATO's obligations toward the former GDR: sovereign German decision; no discussion in Two Plus Four.
- German forces in GDR: sovereign German decision; could be discussed in Two Plus Four.
- Soviet troops in GDR: sovereign German decision and subject for bilateral German-Soviet agreement; could be discussed in Two Plus Four.

⁶⁷ Rice through Blackwill to Scowcroft, "Mounting Problems with 2+4," 28 Feb 90.

⁶⁸ Participants in this March 8 meeting were Zoellick, Ross, Seitz, Dobbins, Blackwill, Rice, and Zelikow. For more detail on the conclusions see Zelikow through Blackwill to Scowcroft, "Discussions with State on Plans for Two Plus Four Meeting on March 14," 9 Mar 90. These internal understandings are also reflected in EUR/RPM (Caldwell) and EUR/CE (Shostal) to Zoellick and Seitz, "Preparing for your Paris One-Plus-Three, March 13, 1990," undated.

- Nuclear weapons in FRG: to be decided by Germany or in arms control negotiations; no discussion in Two Plus Four.
- German NATO membership: sovereign German decision; no discussion in Two Plus Four.
- Prohibition of German NBC weapons: sovereign German decision; could be discussed in Two Plus Four.
- Size of the Bundeswehr: to be decided by Germany or in arms control negotiations; no discussion in Two Plus Four.

Zoellick used this diagram in presenting the American stance at the Two Plus Four meeting and allied consultations.⁶⁹

On the eve of the Two Plus Four meeting, the four Western delegations met in Paris to coordinate their strategy. They had already agreed the delegations would be small, only three members each. The American delegation at the "political director" level was Zoellick, Seitz, and Rice. The West Germans were Kastrup, Elbe, and Peter Hartmann from the Chancellery staff.⁷⁰ The Americans pressed their narrow agenda and won agreement to keep out any discussion of the West German government's decision to unify via Article 23.⁷¹ Yet the French hedged, wanting the

⁶⁹ Zelikow through Blackwill to Scowcroft and Gates, "The Two Plus Four Agenda," 12 Mar 90. See also the summaries of how other countries viewed the Two Plus Four talks found in George to Zoellick and Ross, "The Two-Plus-Four Tightrope," 12 Mar 90; EUR (Dobbins), "National Agendas for the Two-Plus-Four Meeting," undated.

⁷⁰ The U.S. State Department had made an important judgment to include Rice from the NSC staff, thereby giving more White House 'cover' for their activities and including an official nominally responsible for representing the views of other interested agencies. The West German foreign ministry needed a chancellery representative for similar reasons, compounded by the different political parties represented by Genscher and Kohl. But Kastrup and Elbe had known Hartmann, a career diplomat, for years. They felt confident he understood "how to combine loyalty to the Chancellor with loyalty to his old house." Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, p. 119.

⁷¹ Dufourcq said the Quai's legal experts thought the Soviets had a legal right to veto such a German choice. There was a precedent. France had given its permission when Bonn used Article 23 for the accession of the Saarland to the FRG. Weston said the British lawyers had a different opinion. But Zoellick and Kastrup insisted that, regardless of the law, the West should argue that the matter was outside of the purview of the Two Plus Four. Privately, State lawyers in Washington and Bonn found some legal support for the Soviet position, but felt the U.S. could also find good grounds to argue that against a veto power and to further contend that any veto claim had to be asserted jointly by all Four Powers, not just by

Two Plus Four to have a powerful writ to consider "political-military issues." Dufourcq had already had his own meetings with the Soviets and, like Moscow, clearly had a substantial list of questions to be considered by the new forum, causing several clashes with Kastrup and with Zoellick. Both the British and the French also kept pressing for faster Two Plus Four action, rather than waiting for the West and East Germans to get further along with unification.⁷² The atmosphere was tense at times -- not always about substantive differences -- but perhaps exposing still lingering anxiety concerning what was about to happen.

The fractious allies met the next day in Bonn with the Soviets and East Germans for the first Two Plus Four meeting. The Soviet team was headed by deputy foreign minister Adamishin along with Kvitsinsky, Moscow's ambassador in the West German capital.⁷³ Most Western positions on procedural issues were adopted without dissent. All agreed that the "political directors" meetings would only be held on German soil, in Bonn or Berlin. The Soviet Union surfaced the Shevardnadze proposal for emergency meetings within 12 hours should unforeseen circumstances arrive. Zoellick and Rice worked out a compromise that required a longer period for notification and a detailed rationale for holding the meeting.

one of them. The American lawyers also thought the Soviets could be deemed to have forfeited the right if they did not use it in a reasonable manner, and came up with the further argument that Moscow may have waived any veto right when it ceded full sovereignty to the GDR in the 1950s (as one of its chess moves in the Germany and Berlin diplomacy of those years). See State 81208, "Soviet Legal Argument Barring German Use of Article 23 for Reunification," 14 Mar 90; Sofaer to Zoellick, "GDR Accession under Article 23 of the FRG Basic Law," 5 Apr 90.

⁷² See "One Plus Three Meeting," detailed memcon of March 13 discussion prepared by Rice; Zoellick's notes from meeting in his files; and Zelikow through Blackwill for Scowcroft and Gates, "Readout on March 13 Meeting Between US, UK, French and FRG Representatives for March 14 Two Plus Four Discussion," 13 Mar 90 (based on call from Rice). A response to Shevardnadze's March 2 letter was also discussed and the bland American reply was sent on March 18. On some of the particular French suggestions annoying the West Germans, see Bonn 7849, "German Unification," 9 Mar 90; Bonn 7220, "Berlin Voting Issue: Paris Wants to Put Issue in the Two-Plus-Four Mechanism," 5 Mar 90; State 75918, "Berlin Aviation: French Proposal to Raise the Issue in March 14 Two-Plus-Four Meeting," 9 Mar 90.

⁷³ The Modrow government in the GDR was represented by Ernst Krabatsch, Herbert Suess, and Karl Seidel. Adamishin was accompanied by Kvitsinsky, Mikhail Timoshkin, and the head of their German desk, Valeri Rogoshin. Dufourcq was backed by Denis Gauer and Thierry Dana. Weston was assisted by department head Hillary Synnott and policy planner Jonathan Powell.

The Americans were pleased that no future meetings were scheduled.

Adamishin even agreed after lengthy discussion, to the Western agenda, since its labels (borders, "political-military issues," Berlin, Four Power rights and responsibilities) were not really defined. The Americans and West Germans opposed the notion that the Two Plus Four were negotiating a "peace settlement," while this language was favored by the Soviets (who wanted a formal peace treaty) and by the British.

Rice, writing back to the White House, reported that, "The Soviets were not prepared to be very directive [sic] or clear about what they want. They held their fire today and seemed somewhat unprepared. That's the good news." The bad news, for Rice, were signs of weakening Western solidarity. The British wanted a peace treaty. The French did not like coordinating Western views, saying they did not want to gang up on the Soviets. Both London and Paris wanted a broader Two Plus Four agenda and the FRG was not resisting them as vigorously as the U.S. would have liked. Zoellick, reporting to Baker, made similar points but was more upbeat. He thought the French were trying to respect a common allied approach.⁷⁴

The day after the Two Plus Four meeting broke up, Kohl called Bush to talk about what had happened. He suggested the following sequence of events: The GDR would form a new government; it would then decide in favor of monetary union and help slow the exodus of its people to the West; the FRG would next concentrate on getting a smooth settlement of external issues with its neighbors. Though Kohl did not say it, a monetary union on Kohl's terms would pave the way to a quick takeover under Article 23. So postponement of external issues until after a GDR decision for such a monetary union would keep the Two Plus Four from being able to interfere with internal unification. Bush, of course, was not worried about such a scenario.

In Bonn, Kohl's mood had been shooting up and down. He had gone to the

⁷⁴ See "Two Plus Four Talks," 14 Mar 90 (memcon prepared by Rice); Zoellick's notes from the meeting and notes passed during the meeting between Zoellick, Seitz, and Rice, in Zoellick's office files; Message sent through special channels from Rice to Scowcroft, Gates, and Blackwill, "2+4 Meeting 14 March 1990," 14 Mar 90; Zoellick to Baker, "Background on Two-Plus-Four for Namibia Meetings," 16 Mar 90.

GDR and campaigned directly for the CDU alliance, encountering huge cheering crowds. In six appearances he had spoken before about one million people, almost ten percent of the electorate. Yet the stress was terrific. He had undertaken an extraordinary gambit by publicly announcing the Article 23 plan to take over the GDR. His coalition partner, Genscher, had forced him into a difficult confrontation with defense minister Stoltenberg, then to a much harder stand down over the Polish border issue. He was furious with Mitterrand; then reconciled.⁷⁵

The mood in the FRG was uncertain and anxious. So much hinged on the election in the GDR now, and the polls were giving the SPD-East a clear plurality of 44% against only 20% for the CDU-East.

Historically, in Wilhelmine Germany and in the Weimar Republic, the SPD had found particularly strong popular support in the Laender which now comprised the East German state. The SPD had other assets. Its Eastern activities were quite well funded by SPD organizations in the West (probably the best-funded and organized of all the parties in the runup to the March 18 elections). The SPD-East, led by Ibrahim Boehme, could field well known and admired public speakers, such as Willy Brandt.

And its political platform did promise some sort of unification with the West, since almost all East German voters were abandoning faith in an independent East German republic. According to one survey, in late 1989 only a minority of East Germans favored unification, and only one-sixth were strongly in favor of unity. By the beginning of March 84% favored unification, and 44% were strong supporters. But the SPD's more cautious unity appeal seemed to be working. On March 12 a published poll fixed East German support at 44% for the SPD, and 20% for the conservative Alliance for Germany.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ On the confrontation with Stoltenberg, see text accompanying note 12; on the coalition battle over the Polish border see text accompanying note 45; on the clash with Mitterrand see text accompanying note 48.

⁷⁶ The first set of surveys, conducted by the Leipziger Zentralinstitut fuer Jugendforschung, were published in Der Spiegel, March 12, 1990, p. 40. The 44/20 survey, by Infratest, is cited in Teltzschik, 329

On the debit side the SPD's ties to its West German counterpart were also a liability. The West German SPD had for years been the most outspoken and consistent advocate for acceptance of two Germanies and for close cooperation with the East German Communists. The SPD and SED had devised networks of institutional cooperation, and had regularly issued joint communiqus on policy issues. The SPD-West had been caught leaning the the wrong way and was badly off balance when the popular agenda for Germany's agenda swung from Ostpolitik back to Adenauer's older vision of "change through strength," picked up with gusto by Helmut Kohl. The SPD-West tried to shift position, and stumbled. Both as a party and in the person of its Chancellor-candidate, Oskar Lafontaine, the SPD-West was slow to endorse unification, and still slower to endorse unification by the most rapid path available -- Article 23 of the FRG's Basic Law.

The East German CDU had formed a tenuous "Alliance for Germany" with two other conservative parties, the German Social Union (a counterpart to the Bavarian-based CSU) and Democratic Awakening. The CDU-East and its leader, Lothar de Maiziere, had looked for some issue to highlight the difference between the "Alliance for Germany" and the SPD-East. That issue was in the route to unity. A week before the March 18 vote the Alliance had followed Kohl's lead and endorsed Article 23. On March 13, at a rally in Cottbus, Kohl went further and promised East German voters that, after the West German takeover, their Ostmarks could be exchanged for the prized D-Marks at a one-to-one rate. To his fellow West Germans Kohl could portray his choice of Article 23 as a question of "whether we want this republic [the FRG] or another one."⁷⁷ To the East Germans, it was: after more than

Tage, p. 173.

⁷⁷ Many in the West German SPD wanted a different republic. See, e.g., the interview with SPD-prezidium member Gerhard Schroeder in Sueddeutsche Zeitung, March 14, 1990, p. 12; excerpts of interviews in Maier, Die Wende in der DDR, p. 79. The FRG Basic Law could only be amended with a two-thirds majority in both the Bundestag and the Bundesrat, which the SPD obviously lacked. West German constitutional lawyers believed a constituent assembly under Article 146 would probably operate by majority vote. Given the delicate electoral balance in the West, an SPD victory in the East -- even a plurality -- would almost certainly mean an all-German constituent assembly in which the SPD would have the necessary majority to shape the constitution of a united Germany. See Bonn 8004, "German

forty years of communist rule do you want to try new social experiments or join a proven, prosperous democratic state?

The SPD had declared repeatedly for Article 146, and the SPD-East had formally opted for this path at its February party convention. Some in the SPD-East and in the SPD-West (notably Herta Daeubler-Gmelin) wanted to leave open the possibility of using Article 23, and avoid speaking out against this option. This faction was effectively overruled in the SPD's formal party declaration on "Steps to German Unity," issued on March 9. The declaration envisaged transitional security arrangements in the process of unification which would replace both existing alliances with new structures based on the CSCE. Four Power rights would not end until the new security structures were in place. "Germany should not confront its partners and neighbors with faits accompli." Unification would proceed only under Article 146, with a new constitution that would change or augment the FRG's Basic Law as needed "by the creation of the federal state, or" taking into account the "specific characteristics of the GDR."⁷⁸

With the Christian Democrat and Social Democrat positions on unification now clearly distinguished for the East Germans, most analysts in early March, including the American embassy in East Berlin, thought the Social Democrats, the SPD-East, were likely to win. According to a survey taken at the beginning of the month, about 34% of voters favored the SPD, about 30% backed the parties comprising the Alliance for Germany, the former Communist party -- renamed the Party for Democratic Socialism (PDS) -- was in third place with a respectable 17%.

The odds seemed long and bleak for Kohl and the CDU. He had defined the terms for unity when it seemed a distant possibility and now the crucial vote to decide

Unification: The Politics of Article 23 v. Article 146," 9 Mar 90. A representative contrast of views can be found in the exchange between Schaeuble and SPD-East leader Markus Meckel in "Anschluss ist ein falscher Begriff," Der Spiegel, March 19, 1990, pp. 48-57.

⁷⁸ On the politics of the path to unification, see Pond, Beyond the Wall, pp. 198-99; Bonn 8004; Bonn 7780, "SPD Declaration on 'Steps to German Unity,'" 8 Mar 90; and intelligence analyses of the domestic debate.

the question was about to take place in the East. It is no wonder that Horst Teltschik remembers Kohl being so depressed that he wondered aloud whether he could just give it up and go home. Kohl did not have to wait long for news that restored his will to fight.

A Stunning Victory in the East

In early March the Social Democratic leader, Ibrahim Boehme, was already anticipating victory and working on who would be in his government.⁷⁹ Boehme did not have to worry about forming a government. In the first free election to be held in eastern Germany since 1932, the voters chose absorption into the more prosperous West. They voted decisively for Kohl's path to unity. The turnout was over 93% of the electorate; the margin of victory clear. The Alliance for Germany won over 48% of the electorate; the SPD about 22%. The former Communists, the PDS, held over 16% of the voters, many in Berlin. The dissidents of 1989, New Forum and the like, running as Alliance '90 mustered less than 3% of the vote.

Support for Kohl's plan was strongest among blue-collar workers and farmers, among practicing Protestants and Catholics, in rural communities, and in the southern provinces of Thuringia and Saxony. The Alliance for Germany, with 193 out of 400 seats in the East German parliament, could easily form a government dedicated to a rapid West German takeover under Article 23. De Maiziere and his colleagues

⁷⁹ The poll numbers, somewhat more optimistic than the Infratest survey cited by Teltschik, were reported from the Leipziger Zentralinstitut fuer Jugendforschung and the Institut fuer Marktforschung in "Umfrage sieht Verluste der Ost-SPD," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, March 9, 1990, p. 4. The West German political parties reportedly spent about DM 20 million in the Eastern election campaign. DPA, "20 Millionen Mark 'Demokratiehilfe,'" *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, March 17/18, 1990, p. 1. For the American embassy's pre-election assessments, see EmbBerlin 1554, "GDR Election Overview: More Unclear with Each Passing Day," 9 Mar 90; EmbBerlin 1553, "Peanuts, Popcorn, Cracker-Jack: The GDR Party Landscape," 9 Mar 90; EmbBerlin 1569, "SPD Chairman Boehme Discusses Democratization and Unification with Ambassador," 9 Mar 90. In Washington, Dobbins at State and Zelikow at the NSC staff both refused to endorse or prepare papers with predictions of an SPD victory, because they thought public opinion in the GDR was too volatile and considered the polling utterly unreliable. Even if the SPD won, the American embassy in Bonn thought Article 23 accession could still go forward, if Kohl could hold the initiative, because the West Germans would essentially force such an accession through the decision they had made about how to accomplish economic and monetary union with the East. Bonn 8255, "German Unification: A Measured Pace After All?," 13 Mar 90.

ultimately formed a grand coalition in mid-April, including the SPD as a junior partner in order to have a comfortable two-thirds majority to effect constitutional changes and command a government with the appearance of consensus support. If there was a consensus though, it was not De Maiziere -- it was for Helmut Kohl's plan, promises, and country.⁸⁰

The West Germans exultant. "The sensation is perfect! ... Who would have expected it?", Teltschik noted in his diary. By March 20 Schaeuble could report that the stream of refugees from East Germany was already diminishing. The same day, Bush telephoned his congratulations to Chancellor Kohl: "You're a hell of a campaigner!" Kohl and his advisers quickly outlined their plans for internal unification. If the conservatives could sustain their momentum through the May 6 local East German elections, Kohl and his advisers thought Article 23 could be invoked in the summer or early fall of 1990, with economic and monetary union on Kohl's terms, i.e., a D-Mark and Bundesbank takeover with effective West German management of the GDR economy, following shortly thereafter.⁸¹

Kohl hoped for agreement on the external aspects of unification by the fall of 1990, hopefully before the CSCE Summit. As for elections, Kohl remained more cautious. He wanted to go ahead with the December West German elections, then complete the formal unification of Germany in 1991 -- with new all-German elections held off until 1994. By the end of March, Kohl publicly revised this estimate and

⁸⁰ The next day's cover of Der Spiegel simply said: "Kohl's Triumph." Among the best accounts of the campaign and election are "Es gibt keine mehr," Der Spiegel, March 19, 1990, pp. 20-33; Timothy Garton Ash, "The East German Surprise," New York Review of Books, April 26, 1990, p. 14; Jarausch, The Rush to German Unity, pp. 115-28; Pond, Beyond the Wall, pp. 199-201; Martin Mantzke, "Eine Republik auf Abruf: Die DDR nach den Wahlen vom 18. Maerz 1990," Europa Archiv, Folge 8, April 25, 1990, p. 287; Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, "Erste freie Wahlen in der DDR," Forum Deutsche Einheit: Aktuelle Kurzinformationen, Nr. 1/90; Maier, ed., Die Wende in der DDR, pp. 83-88; and Daniel Hamilton, After the Revolution: The New Political Landscape in East Germany (Washington: American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, 1990), pp. 14-18, 42-43. Plans to convert Ostmarks to D-marks at a one-to-one rate were agreed within the governing coalition by the end of February and Otto Lambsdorff, FDP party chairman, assured Secretary Baker on March 1 that the FRG could manage monetary union on these terms. Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 1 Mar 90.

⁸¹ Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 176, 179; Memcon for Telephone Conversation with Chancellor Kohl, 20 Mar 90.

said he expected all-German elections immediately after unification, in the second half of 1991.⁸²

The March 18 GDR election results were a thunder bolt in Moscow. They had counted on a more gradual process toward unification, based on an Article 146 confederation route that a Social Democratic government would support. Expecting the SPD-East leader, Ibrahim Boehme, to be the next East German prime minister, Gorbachev and Shevardnadze had met with Boehme in Moscow. Instead the election results, which one Soviet official admitted to an American diplomat were "completely unexpected," seemed to be a mandate for a West German takeover under Article 23, a path Moscow had publicly denounced. To make matters worse, Moscow had just finished a gloomy meeting of their erstwhile Warsaw Pact allies in Prague and were unable to rally a common approach on Germany, even on the issue of Germany's NATO membership.⁸³

But the Soviet Union stood its ground. Shevardnadze, Baker, Genscher, and other dignitaries all gathered in Windhoek, Namibia on March 20-22 to celebrate the independence of the new state. They used the occasion for a series of lengthy bilateral meetings with each other. Shevardnadze's position was essentially the same as it had been almost six weeks earlier, when Baker and Genscher had journeyed to Moscow. Shevardnadze was still worried about the power and intentions of a united

⁸² See Bonn 10349, "German Unification: Kohl Says All-German Elections in the Second Half of Next Year," 29 Mar 90; Bonn 9413, "Teltschik's Comments on German Unification and Future European Security Arrangements," 22 Mar 90; and intelligence reports circulated at the time.

⁸³ See Moscow 9214, "Warsaw Pact Meeting and GDR Elections Spell Trouble for Soviet German Policy," 19 Mar 90; and, for the public line, TASS, "Termed Useful, Necessary," March 17, 1990, in FBIS-SOV 90-053, March 19, 1990, pp. 4-5. For Soviet commentary on the GDR elections, blaming the past Stalinist leadership for bringing socialism into such disrepute and steadfastly maintaining Moscow's positions on the external issues, see Igor Maximychev & Pyotr Menshikov (both then serving at the Soviet embassy in East Berlin), "One German Fatherland?", International Affairs [Moscow], July 1990, pp. 31-38; "Yedinaya Germaniya i eyo sosedii" ["A United Germany and Her Neighbors"] and Ye. Tsedilina, "Ob'yedineniye: pervyi etap" [Unification: The First Stage], Mirovaya Ekonomika i Mezhdunarodniye Otnosheniya, No. 8 (1990), pp. 68-79. On March 19 the Soviets also received the unhelpful American reply to Shevardnadze's March 2 proposal for setting up a mechanism for urgent Two Plus Four consultations on Germany. State 87148, "Secretary's Response to Shevardnadze's Proposed Procedure for Urgent Consultations on Germany," 18 Mar 90.

Germany, still suggesting a neutral solution with the departure of both American and Soviet troops. He was not tempted by Genscher's "Tutzing formula" of not extending NATO jurisdiction eastward (and perhaps did not realize that Washington and Bonn had already dropped this formula and were now taking an even less compromising stance). Shevardnadze was convinced the matter would ultimately have to be resolved, somehow, "at the highest levels." Baker also noticed that Soviet positions on arms control topics were hardening, with the Soviet military appearing to exert greater influence.

Shevardnadze pressed Genscher to accept negotiation of a German peace treaty as the objective of the Two Plus Four. He wanted the negotiators to take a pencil and go through the Potsdam Declaration of 1945 line by line. Genscher presented Bonn's arguments against a peace treaty. Baker and Genscher had a friendly discussion, though Baker did not go along with Genscher's ideas for handling the Poles or Genscher's plans for building up the CSCE, at least symbolically, by giving it responsibility for verifying arms control agreements in Europe (an idea with, from Baker's viewpoint, some serious substantive problems).⁸⁴

Perhaps the only glimmer of hope in the talks was in their tone. Baker reported back to Bush that Shevardnadze's mood, shadowed by developments in Germany and in Lithuania, "was more pensive than I have seen before." He and Gorbachev "seem to be genuinely wrestling with these problems, but have yet to fashion a coherent or confident response. They also have yet to shape their bottom lines." We Americans, Baker concluded, should therefore "not underestimate our ability to affect their choices and perhaps even the formulation of some of their

⁸⁴ On the Shevardnadze-Baker, Baker-Genscher, and Genscher-Shevardnadze talks in Namibia, see Memcon for Meeting with Minister Shevardnadze, Windhoek, 20 Mar 90 (Shevardnadze-Baker)(Ross was notetaker); Secto 2045, "Secretary's Meeting with FRG Foreign Minister Genscher, March 21, 1990," 24 Mar 90 (Baker was accompanied by Ross, Tutwiler, and EUR deputy assistant secretary Curt Kamman; Genscher was accompanied by Elbe and an unidentified notetaker); Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, pp. 109-10; Bonn 10177, "FRG Foreign Minister Genscher's Meeting with Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze, March 22, 1990," 28 Mar 90 (based on Kastrup debrief to ambassadors in Bonn); Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 181 (summarizing Genscher's report back to Kohl). In Bonn Kvitsinsky reiterated Soviet concerns about the NATO issue directly to Kohl on March 22. Ibid., pp. 179-81.

options.⁸⁵

The Western Policy Gathers Strength -- and Details

A country's army prepares to fight a battle by refining plans, so soldiers know what to expect and what to do, and gathering all the resources it can muster in order to carry out its plan. Diplomacy is not so different. Plans must be refined; political resources must be marshaled behind it. A symptom that an army is weak is if its plans are unclear or not thought through, if soldiers from different units -- even different nations -- do not understand their mission, or their operational objectives, well enough to adapt to the confusion of the battlefield. In diplomacy, perhaps even more than in battle, details matter. It is not enough to agree in principle.

In the six weeks after the March 18 GDR elections, the Western diplomatic position had become much stronger in every respect, and the Soviet position much weaker. The disparity became evident at the first major clash: the initial meeting of Two Plus Four ministers in early May.

The United States and the FRG appeared to be in complete accord on the convergence of their broad national interests by the end of February. Kohl had given repeated assurances to Bush on the matter of German membership in NATO. But Genscher had remained reluctant to come out and say that NATO's guarantees would apply to all of a united Germany and had continued to talk about an eventual disappearance of both NATO and the Warsaw Pact into some entirely new, all-European, "cooperative security structure." After Genscher repeated such musings in a speech on March 23, Kohl angrily wrote to Genscher about the mixed signals appearing to come from the German government, and the encouragement such talk might give to the Soviets.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ Secto 2017, "Memorandum for the President: Namibia, March 20," 20 Mar 90 (sent from Windhoek).

⁸⁶ See Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Unterwegs zur Einheit: Reden und Dokumente aus bewegter Zeit (Berlin: Siedler Verlag, 1991), pp. 257-68 (for March 23 speech in Luxembourg to Assembly of the Western European Union); Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 182-84, 190.

After a subsequent meeting of Genscher's special working group on foreign and security policy on March 28, and a more definitive meeting of the Federal Security Council, chaired by Kohl, on April 2, top West German officials -- from Kohl downward -- began, like the Americans, to affirm publicly the extension of NATO defense obligations, continuing participation in NATO's military command, and unconditional support for the continued presence of American nuclear and conventional forces in Germany. Kohl now formally sided with Stoltenberg's argument that the eastern part of a united Germany ought not to be demilitarized. Kohl's Social Democrat opposition meanwhile clarified its rejection of each of these principles.⁸⁷

The sense of solidarity between the US and the FRG was reinforced by Genscher's trip to Washington at the beginning of April. Genscher wanted to talk over what the Americans would say to Shevardnadze, who was about to arrive in Washington. Baker's meetings with Genscher went well, as did Bush's session with the West German foreign minister. There were no differences on the planned design for the Two Plus Four. Genscher was clear and reassuring on the NATO issues,

⁸⁷ See Bonn 11684, "Teltschik's Views on European Security Issues," 11 Apr 90. For reflections of these FRG positions in Kohl's statements at the time, see David Marsh, "Kohl Sees Unified Germany in EC Union," Financial Times, April 2, 1990, p. 4 (based on March 30 interview with Kohl); FBIS translation of Kohl interview on French TV, Antenne-2, March 29, 1990 (recorded on March 27). For an indication of CSU support for Kohl's policies on security (and Poland), see also Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 5 Apr 90 (reporting on Washington visit of CSU Bundestag faction leader Wolfgang Boetsch). The April 2 Federal Security Council meeting was chaired by Kohl and attended by Genscher, Stoltenberg, Seiters, Teltschik, Kastrup, and Klaus Naumann (then head of Stoltenberg's planning staff).

The SPD position on security policy was first redefined after the March 18 GDR election by a working group ('Fortschritt 90') headed personally by Lafontaine which called on March 20 for the dissolution of military blocs, a linkage of German unification to the development of a new all-European security system, the abolition of nuclear deterrence, and withdrawal of all nuclear weapons from German soil. At no point did the document endorse continued German NATO membership, however qualified. These and other steps announced in the document would have eliminated the basis for a continued US military presence in Germany, and the SPD drafters of the document were undoubtedly cognizant of this fact. Somewhat more moderate voices in the SPD like Willy Brandt, Hans-Jochen Vogel, Walter Momper, Karsten Voigt, Horst Ehmke, and Andreas von Bülow, who were prepared to endorse some transitional and qualified NATO membership for a united Germany, were unable to rally a party consensus which could overshadow the even more leftist views of Lafontaine, Egon Bahr, and others. See Bonn 9527, "Lafontaine Working Group Announces 12-Point Disarmament Program - Calls for Ultimate Dissolution of Military Blocs, Interim Changes in NATO Strategy," 22 Mar 90; Bonn 10020, "SPD Leadership Positions on German Membership in NATO," 27 Mar 90.

anticipating that the Soviets might offer to accept NATO membership in principle but attach unacceptable conditions to such an agreement. Not only did Genscher drop the language from his March 23 speech that had worried Kohl and the Americans, he instead cast the job of developing new "cooperative security structures" as a job for the NATO alliance. He and Baker had indeed discussed ideas for strengthening the CSCE, with Genscher listing at least nine new ideas for CSCE institutions, but the ministers came to no firm conclusions.⁸⁸

But Genscher's foreign ministry officials continued to balk. At the next important Western consultation on Two Plus Four planning, on April 10, the British (Weston) and Americans (Zoellick and Seitz) asked for agreement on all the detailed elements of the NATO position. Kastrup still refused to agree that the North Atlantic Treaty's defense commitments would apply to all of a united Germany. He conceded that Kohl had agreed to this stance but said the matter was still being discussed by the coalition, i.e., Genscher was not yet ready to join. Nor would Kastrup commit his ministry to retaining a mix of Western nuclear and conventional forces in Germany. Nor would he sign up to the U.S. and British position on the military status of the former GDR which differed from February's Genscher/Stoltenberg declaration pledging the effective demilitarization of this region.⁸⁹ But publicly Kohl was firm

⁸⁸ See Genscher's April 6 speech to the American Society of Newspaper Editors, published in *Auswaertiges Amt, Deutsche Aussenpolitik 1990/91: Auf dem Weg zu einer europaeischen Friedensordnung* (Muenchen: Bonn Aktuell, 1991), pp. 103-05; the well-informed reflection of views held among Genscher's staff evidenced in "We Need A Treaty," *Der Spiegel*, April 23, 1990; intelligence reports circulated at the time on Genscher's "Changing Assessment of the CSCE Process and German Unification"; Memcon of President Bush's meeting with Foreign Minister Genscher, 4 Apr 90; Scowcroft to President Bush, "Meeting with Foreign Minister Genscher," 3 Apr 90. Bush and Baker followed up their mediation efforts at the time of Mazowiecki's visit by going over draft text on the key border issue which Genscher brought with him which, as planned, the West Germans would privately discuss with the Poles before inserting it into the parliamentary resolutions.

⁸⁹ When Seitz complained about Kastrup's stance, Kastrup answered testily that neither Baker, nor Hurd, nor Dumas had tried to pin Genscher down yet on all of these points. First, Kastrup said, we should see what the Soviets say. After all, the principle of full German membership in NATO is the important point. Neither the Americans nor the British were satisfied with this reply. See State 154104, "German Unification: Highlights of April 10 Meeting of One-Plus-Three States," 14 May 90; Dobbins to Baker, 10 Apr 90 (passing along a report phoned in by Seitz); and Zoellick's handwritten notes from the April 10 meeting (in his office files).

and at least Genscher was quiet -- he no longer said anything publicly to contradict the chancellor.

During the remainder of April and first days of May, the United States assumed principal responsibility for insuring Western solidarity with these positions and to sustain the momentum toward rapid settlement of the German question. Since a program for institutional change in NATO and the CSCE was part of this effort, the US further took on principal responsibility for designing the appropriate initiatives, as the West Germans attended both to internal unification and to plans for further integration of the European Community.

The pressure of impending German unification had driven the French government to seize upon a more united Europe as its main hope for enmeshing a more powerful Germany in a net of European perspectives and obligations. At the end of 1989 Mitterrand began articulating his vision for a new European confederation uniting all the countries of Europe. The West German government of Kohl and Genscher, sympathetic in principle to a more united Europe, felt obliged to respond, and a turning point was in March 1990.

Kohl and Genscher were already sympathetic in principle to a more united Europe. Genscher, quoting Thomas Mann, reminded Germans that: "We do not want a German Europe, but a European Germany." A spring EC Summit, scheduled to be held in Dublin during April (Ireland had the EC Presidency), was due to consider new initiatives. Yet Kohl, uncertain about his own unification plans, had balked in January at accepting some of the more radical French proposals to proceed beyond the European exchange rate mechanism to further stages leading to a common European currency. The Bundesbank harbored serious reservations about this plan from 1989 on. After the end of February, when Kohl chose the radical path to unity, gambling on a direct economic takeover and then a direct political takeover under Article 23, Kohl and his advisers felt an even stronger need to balance their bold move with action to strengthen the European Community, and relations with France.

On March 13 Kohl spoke on the telephone with Jacques Delors, president of the European Commission. He declared his readiness to give more support to the

process of European unity and wanted to meet directly with Commissioners later in the month. Two days later Teltschik arrived in Paris for secret talks with Mitterrand's staff, led by Jacques Attali. They worked for a full day on a common French-German initiative for Europe. Not only would the FRG now sign on to rapid European economic and monetary union, but the two governments were also now ready to sponsor an initiative to negotiate the terms of a European political union. Teltschik talked to Attali again on March 20. Mitterrand was very pleased with the planned initiative. On March 23 Kohl, in a special meeting with EC commissioners in Brussels, and Genscher, in a speech to the Assembly of the Western European Union, both spoke out strongly in favor of more European integration. Kohl unveiled the plan to negotiate political union, a plan he hoped would be adopted at the upcoming summit in Dublin. On April 2 Attali and Teltschik conferred again at length, with their staffs, in Bonn to hammer out the details of the Franco-German initiative, Genscher was working on the same day with Dumas and other ministerial colleagues, Mitterrand and Kohl each approved the results, and a formal written proposal to begin negotiation of a European Political Union was submitted by the two leaders to the EC on April 18.

The atmosphere at the special EC summit in Dublin on April 28-29, 1990, was completely different from the strained meetings of December 1989. To Teltschik, it seemed that all of the EC countries had "made their peace" with the process of German unification. The Dublin summit also put the French-German proposal for negotiation of political union on the EC's agenda, thereby setting in motion a process that would lead, a year and a half later, to the Maastricht Treaty that replaced the European Community with the present European Union.⁹⁰

⁹⁰ See Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 172-73, 175-76, 179, 181-82, 195, 200, 207; Pond, Beyond the Wall, pp. 210-13; Thatcher, The Downing Street Years, p. 760. On the German attitudes toward monetary union and the opposition of the Bundesbank, see W.R. Smyser, The Economy of United Germany: Colossus at the Crossroads (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), pp. 233-48. Genscher's quote from Thomas Mann is from his March 23 address, in Genscher, Unterwegs zu Einheit, pp. 257-68. For a Genscher pledge of pro-European sentiment to Mitterrand in November 1989, see Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, p. 60. Teltschik's conversations with the French included, on the French side, Attali, Jean-Louis Bianco, and Elizabeth Guigou. For American reactions to the Franco-German initiative see,

Western solidarity was growing concerning the Two Plus Four Talks as well. The British Foreign Office had also become actively engaged in the effort to nail down the key details of Germany's continued membership in NATO. Careful planning for German unification revealed a number of crucial political and legal issues that had to be settled, from the form of a final settlement to securing Allied rights to continue basing their troops in the new Germany.⁹¹ Not all of these legal issues needed to be settled right away, or concern political leaders, but they could raise some serious obstacles to the rapid unification deemed so essential by the Americans and West Germans. Officials in both London and Paris doubted that all the legal

e.g., Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 27 Mar 90 (reporting on Kohl's visit to the European Commission, based on an account of the meeting from Delors's staff).

The EC's fundamental legal problem with incorporating the GDR was solved when Kohl chose Article 23, because there was no change in EC membership. Other legal issues, from voting rights in the European Parliament to the application of EC trade and agricultural policies, were adequately resolved within the Community by the time of the Dublin summit in April. The best accounts of how the EC adapted to unification are by David Spence, Enlargement Without Accession: The EC's Response to German Unification, RIIA Discussion Paper no. 36 (London: RIIA, 1991); and Spence, "The European Community's negotiations on German unification," in Wolfgang Heisenberg, ed., German Unification in European Perspective (London: Brassey's, 1991), pp. 28-56.

A detailed description of evolving U.S. policy toward the EC during 1989-90 is beyond the scope of this study. But to summarize: In May 1989 the Bush Administration made a significant decision to offer unqualified support for European unity, announced in a Bush speech at Boston University (Bush sharing the dais with Mitterrand). Washington therefore welcomed French and German efforts to strengthen EC institutions as a response to German unification. In parallel Washington saw the need to strengthen its own institutional relationship with the Euroepan Community. A series of initiatives for tightening U.S.-EC links were announced during the visit of the EC President, Irish Prime Minister Haughey, to Washington in February 1990. West Germany, and Genscher personally, were quite helpful in encouraging and supporting the development of these new transatlantic ties. The new structures, which were useful but more modest than the US would have preferred, were ultimately announced in a U.S.-EC joint declaration concluded at the time of the Paris CSCE Summit in November 1990. During the fall of 1990 US-EC relations entered a new and critical phase centered mainly on two issues: EC agricultural policy as an obstacle to conclusion of the GATT Uruguay Round; and efforts by some West European governments to create a new defense identity outside of the North Atlantic Alliance. The second issue was resolved for a time, more or less amicably, in 1991. The first was, after very difficult negotiations, effectively resolved by the Blair House accord concluded at the end of 1992. One of the principal benefits of the improved US-German relationship which emerged during 1989 and 1990 was the sustained cooperation between Washington and Bonn (and between Baker and Genscher) in advancing creative options for progress in US relations with the Community.

⁹¹ See Zelikow to Blackwill, "German Unification: Identifying Issues for Early US Decision," 21 Mar 90; Zelikow to Dobbins (listing NSC suggestions for decision issues), 27 Mar 90. The British offered an excellent list of questions about NATO to the U.S. government on March 27. See George & Holmes to Zoellick, "British Paper on Germany and NATO," 30 Mar 90. Seitz and Dobbins convened the interagency Germany Task Force on March 30 to organize the preparation of the necessary analytical papers.

tangles could be straightened out before the CSCE Summit or even before internal unification. They held out the chance that the Four Powers might have to retain their ultimate authority over Germany until the new German government had followed through on some of the commitments (as on the Polish-German border) that were (probably erroneously) deemed necessary to a final settlement.⁹²

The 'political directors' from America, West Germany, Britain, and France gathered in Brussels on April 10 to work on preparations for the Two Plus Four. The original plan to delay Two Plus Four talks was now an accomplished fact. All agreed that Two Plus Four ministers should not meet for the first time until May 5, almost two months after the forum was created in Ottawa.

With Kohl's decisive victory in the East, the British and French were noticeably friendlier toward the FRG. The British and French retreated from talk of a "peace treaty" between Germany and its former foes.⁹³ The French dropped their demand to have the Two Plus Four consider the rights of Berliners to vote in the next West German election. The British and French grudgingly went along with the West German-American views on how to handle the Polish border question. And all agreed to the American plan for limiting the mandate of the Two Plus Four.⁹⁴

⁹² For discussions about the legal issues at the time see Sofaer to Zoellick, "GDR Accession under Article 23 of the FRG Basic Law," 6 Apr 90; Bonn 8005, "Maksimychev's Views on German Unification and the Soviet Legal Position," 9 Mar 90; Bonn 10722, "Views of FRG Foreign Office Deputy Legal Adviser Eitel on Unification-Related Legal Issues," 2 Apr 90; Seitz through Kimmitt and Zoellick to Baker, "Draft Preparatory Paper on 'Options for a Settlement on Germany' to be Distributed to UK, FRG, and France," 4 Apr 90; Young (Sofaer's deputy legal adviser) to Zoellick and Seitz, "Summary of Impressions from German Unification Legal Consultations with British, French, and West Germans," 9 Apr 90 (elaborated in Paris 11635; London 7341); Seitz to Zoellick, "Soviet Approach to German Unification, including Current Applicability of the Potsdam Agreement," 6 Apr 90. The Germany Task Force, under the direction of Seitz and Dobbins, was also commissioning analytical papers on the various legal issues.

⁹³ On April 10 Weston simply urged that the matter be referred to the lawyers. London then formally dropped the "peace treaty" position for, they told the Americans, "both legal and political reasons." But the British lawyers still thought that Four Power rights over Germany would need to remain in force for some time after the unification of the two German states. See letter from Weston to Seitz, 23 Apr 90, and attached paper on "German Unification and A Settlement: Legal Aspects -- UK Comments."

⁹⁴ See State 154104, "German Unification: Highlights of April 10 Meeting of Officials of One-Plus-Three States," 14 May 90; Note from Dobbins to Baker, 10 Apr 90 (passing along phoned-in report from Seitz); Zoellick's handwritten notes from the April 10 meeting (in his office files); Scowcroft to President

Resigned to the inevitability of German unity, Thatcher, herself, began to play a more constructive role in a process she could not halt. On March 24 her staff arranged for her to meet a group of academics at her country home for a leisurely discussion of Germany. Her foreign policy adviser, Charles Powell, had served as a diplomat in Bonn and later said that he arranged the meeting as a way of helping the Prime Minister come to terms with what was happening in Germany. Powell's confidential notes from the lengthy session, which were themselves another effort to sway Thatcher, summarized that, "The weight of the evidence and the argument favoured those who were optimistic about life with a united Germany. ... Far from being agitated, we ought to be pleased. ... When it came to failings and unhelpful characteristics, the Germans had their share and perhaps more, but in contrast to the past, they were much readier to recognise and admit this themselves. The overall message was unmistakable: we should be nice to the Germans."⁹⁵

Thatcher was indeed nice to Kohl when he visited England at the end of March. Their talks were cordial. She concentrated on the consequences of German unification for the NATO alliance. The atmosphere was not warm, but it had

Bush, "Officials-Level Meeting of the 'One Plus Three' on German Unification," 19 or 20 (?) Apr 90 (drafted by Rice with Blackwill); informal Zoellick paper, "Thatcher Meeting – Key Points," 11 Apr 90 (read and annotated by Baker).

⁹⁵ Author interview with Powell, London, June 1993; Powell's complete notes were later published (after being leaked to newsmagazines) as "What the PM Learnt About the Germans," in Harold James & Stone, eds., When the Wall Came Down: Reactions to German Unification (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 233-39. The academics invited to Chequers on March 24 were Timothy Garton Ash, Gordon Craig, Lord Dacre (Hugh Trevor-Roper), Fritz Stern, Norman Stone, and George Urban. Powell's notes were originally meant to be seen by Thatcher herself and only a few others. Only seven copies were distributed, with instructions that they were not to be reproduced. After the notes were leaked a few months later, the subsequent investigation found that at least 193 copies of the notes were floating around the British government.

When the notes were leaked most commentary focused on the fact that Powell's notes implied that the experts had agreed that Germans had some difficult national traits. So some of the academics present wrote that they had said nothing of the kind. See, e.g., Timothy Garton Ash, "The Chequers Affair," New York Review of Books, September 27, 1990. Ash does not comment, however, on why Powell might have written such things in a piece of paper intended primarily for Margaret Thatcher. Powell might have been voicing Thatcher's prejudices to coopt her into accepting an ultimate conclusion he knew she disliked. In effect, Powell was apparently dressing up an unappealing meat with some well-liked sauce.

improved.⁹⁶ Bush then met with Thatcher in Bermuda. Sure of British understanding for the American position on NATO, Bush hoped this meeting would unite Britain with America on both the mandate and outcome of the Two Plus Four.⁹⁷

Bush laid out the American position in detail. Thatcher offered no objections.⁹⁸ Bush publicly announced their agreement that the Two Plus Four talks "will focus on bringing to an end the special Four Power rights and responsibilities for Berlin and Germany as a whole. A united Germany should have full control over all of its territory without any new discriminatory constraints on German sovereignty." In Bonn Teltschik noted with pleasure that this was the first public pronouncement from the British as well as Americans on the goal of restoring full sovereignty to a united Germany.⁹⁹

Bush then turned his attention to France. In less than a week he would meet with Mitterrand at Key Largo, in Florida. For this meeting the Americans wanted to firm up a common position on both NATO and Two Plus Four plans. Mitterrand's vision of a European Confederation had no obvious place for the United States; Mitterrand had speculated publicly about the disappearance of both NATO and the Warsaw Pact within ten years. Jacques Attali had told Scowcroft he thought NATO would not survive more than another year or two. This indifference to the Alliance

⁹⁶ See Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 188-89; Thatcher's address to the Konigswinter Conference in Cambridge, 29 Mar 90 (with Kohl sharing the dais); Bonn 11183, "The Anglo-German Summit Viewed from Bonn: Progress on Bilateral Relations, But Still No Warm Feelings for Mrs. Thatcher," 5 Apr 90. For NSC Staff speculation about the increasing convergence of policy views between Britain and France, see Scowcroft to President, "Meetings with Prime Minister Thatcher," 10 Apr 90 (drafted by Zelikow through Blackwill).

⁹⁷ See Scowcroft to President Bush, "Meetings with Prime Minister Thatcher," 11 Apr 90 (drafted by Zelikow with Blackwill). For general background, see also London 7247, "Your Meeting with Thatcher in Bermuda," 11 Apr 90.

⁹⁸ Memcon for Meetings with Prime Minister Thatcher, 13 Apr 90. Bush was joined in the meetings and working lunch, which stretched over about five hours, by Baker, Sununu, Scowcroft, Ambassador Catto, and Blackwill. Prime Minister Thatcher was accompanied by Ambassador Acland and Charles Powell.

⁹⁹ Public Papers, 1990, p. 570; Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 196.

seemed to Washington to have the ingredients of a self-fulfilling prophecy, since French neglect could weaken efforts to keep NATO strong and American troops committed to Europe's defense. They found it ironic that, as France feared the revival of German power, Paris seemed so careless about the proven, benign structures, like NATO, that could manage this development. The Americans had accepted a more united Europe and stronger EC. But the French sometimes seemed inclined more toward "post-Gaullist Gaullism" than a readiness to put aside old biases to cope with a new situation. Yet, from time to time, Mitterrand expressed an interest in building closer ties between France and the United States.¹⁰⁰

Bush sent Mitterrand a letter detailing American preferences in the diplomacy over Germany and Europe's future and recapitulating the points agreed upon with Thatcher. "In no event should we allow Moscow to manipulate the Two Plus Four mechanism in ways that could fracture Western defense and Germany's irreplaceable part in it." But also, "if NATO is allowed to wither because it has no meaningful political place in the new Europe, the basis for a long-term U.S. military commitment can die with it." This should be no threat to a stronger EC, Bush argued. He suggested they agree that both organizations could talk about political and security issues and neither "should attempt to present the other with faits accompli on matters where both have a proper interest."¹⁰¹

Mitterrand, when he met with Bush, suggested simply a common recognition that NATO would be the forum for organizing European security and "equilibrium." He pushed his European confederation idea into the background as a vision for the

¹⁰⁰ The "post-Gaullist Gaullism" phrase is Stanley Hoffmann's. Illustrations of the American perspective can be found in Scowcroft to President Bush, "Reviving the Spirit of Kennebunkport," 2 Apr 90 (drafted by Basora and Zelikow through Blackwill); Seitz through Kimmitt to Baker, "France and European Institutional Architecture," 8 (?) Mar 90; see also Basora to the File, "General Scowcroft's March 8 Lunch with Jacques Attali," 10 Mar 90. Attali then saw the Two Plus Four as a way to manage a "runaway Germany." See also intelligence reports circulated at the time on Mitterrand's desire to reorient French strategic policy.

¹⁰¹ Message from President Bush to President Mitterrand, 17 Apr 90 (drafted by Zelikow and Basora through Blackwill, text cleared by Zoellick for Baker); see also Scowcroft to President Bush, "Letter to President Mitterrand," 16 Apr 90.

long-term, building on the EC. But it would not get rid of the United States -- that would be idiotic, Mitterrand declared. Mitterrand wanted continued close contacts between America and Europe, perhaps including a treaty between the United States and the European Community. NATO should stay together with France continuing to have its special role within the Alliance, American troops had to stay in Europe, and Germany needed to stay in the Alliance. Mitterrand was worried about German attitudes, fearing that a majority of Germans might give up on NATO, or reject the continued presence of foreign troops. On the subject of the Two Plus Four talks, Mitterrand and his staff had no problem with Bush's public repetition of the same catechism announced after the meeting with Thatcher.¹⁰²

After the meeting Bush reiterated the common line in a message to Kohl and to Thatcher, just to make doubly sure that the Western position on NATO and on the Two Plus Four was crystal clear. Kohl received the message after completing two days of meetings with the French president in Paris. Kohl had carefully stayed with the agreed position on both NATO and the Two Plus Four; there were no areas of disagreement. Mitterrand had no problem with a position that ruled out any debate over Germany's membership in NATO in the Two Plus Four forum. It would be a sovereign choice for the Germans alone to decide. Kohl was euphoric about the atmosphere of his one-on-one talks with Mitterrand. Teltschik's reaction was that he could not remember a time when consultations among the allies had been "so active and so intensive."¹⁰³

¹⁰² See Memcons for Meetings with President Mitterrand, 19 Apr 90 and Public Papers, p. 597. In the first meeting with the French leader, Bush was joined only by Scowcroft and Mitterrand was accompanied by Attali. In the larger session Bush was accompanied by Baker, Sununu, Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady, Scowcroft, White House Press Secretary Marlin Fitzwater, Ambassador Walter Curley, Zoellick, Blackwill, and Seitz. Mitterrand was joined by Dumas, Attali, Admiral Jacques Lanxade (chief military adviser to the president), Hubert Vedrine (presidential spokesman), Loic Hennekine (Elysee advisor on international affairs), Elisabeth Guigou (Elysee advisor on international commerce), Ambassador Andreani, and Dufourcq. Mitterrand's tone was noticeably more positive about NATO and the American role in Europe than the tone heard by Baker in his separate conversation with Dumas.

¹⁰³ Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 210; Message from President Bush to Chancellor Kohl at the Chancellery, 25 Apr 90; Message from President Bush to Prime Minister Thatcher, 25 Apr 90 (both drafted by Zelikow and Basora with Blackwill). On the Mitterrand-Kohl summit in Paris, see Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 207-10;

By the end of April, Bush and Kohl had every reason for optimism about the solidarity of the Western camp. The French-German initiative for political union of the European Community had improved relations with Paris and improved the atmosphere in Western Europe. The Americans had seized the momentum from the East German election results in order to clear away the earlier disagreements among the Americans, West Germans, British, and French about how to proceed with German unification. They effectively locked up this debate by the end of April, capped by a special meeting of NATO foreign ministers on Germany at which the United States won general assent to the detailed position that had already been worked out with the West Germans, British, and French.¹⁰⁴

But Kohl's main attention was on the mechanics of internal unification, especially the plan for the economic and monetary takeover of East Germany. It was mainly up to the American government to tackle the other major task: to lead a visible, dramatic change in NATO outlook and defense policy, and find a consensus stance on improvements to the CSCE, which together would help persuade the Soviets (and the German public) that Europe's political and security institutions were changing with the times and that a NATO strengthened by a united Germany would pose no real threat to the USSR.

Dealing with German unification meant dealing with every other major security issue vexing Europe. It meant considering the future of American nuclear weapons in Europe. It meant a new position in the Vienna CFE negotiations rushing to conclude a treaty that would reduce and limit all the conventional military forces in Europe. Bush had already pledged a crash effort to complete these talks between the

Paris 13158, "Fifty-Fifth Kohl-Mitterrand Summit," 27 Apr 90.

¹⁰⁴ Bush conveyed the proposed policies for Germany and the Two Plus Four in a message sent to all NATO heads of government (and NATO secretary general Woerner) on May 1 and 2. NATO ambassadors had already acknowledged FRG acceptance that the defense obligations under Articles 5 and 6 of the North Atlantic Treaty would extend to all the territory of a united Germany. USNATO 2381, "Further NATO Discussion of German Unification," 18 Apr 90. On the May 3 ministerial session, see USNATO 2843, "Secretary Baker's May 3 NAC Intervention," 10 May 90; USNATO 2844, "May 3 NATO Ministerial — Part I," 10 May 90; USNATO 2845, "May 3 NATO Ministerial — Part II," 10 May 90; USNATO 2726, "Press Conference by Secretary of State James A. Baker, III," 3 May 90.

NATO allies and the countries of the Warsaw Pact, and the U.S. had forced its allies to agree that the climactic summit of the year, the 35-nation CSCE summit of all European countries scheduled for November in Paris, could not be held unless the CFE treaty was ready to be signed at this meeting. The CSCE, which included Europe's neutral states, was also holding negotiations about confidence-building measures, new guarantees for human rights (specifying conditions for free elections), and building a broader consensus behind principles of economic freedom.

In December 1989 Baker had sketched a general picture of the new European architecture. By February 1990 officials in Washington realized that their plans needed, if anything, to be even more ambitious. They began preparing plans for a wholesale review of NATO's strategy. The White House decided the stakes were so high, and the issues so diverse, that an entirely new interdepartmental group should be created to consider them: the European Strategy Steering Group. Rice and Blackwill approached Scowcroft with the idea, relying on Scowcroft's deputy, Robert Gates, to run the new body. Gates was a master at interagency coordination -- first sharpening differences between the agencies and then driving toward clear and decisive outcomes. Unlike the usual arms control working groups, this committee would include both Zoellick and Ross from the State Department. Membership of the group was kept very small, its papers very secret. The new group met for the first time on February 21.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵ See Bartholomew to Baker, "NATO Review," 15 Feb 90; Rice through Blackwill and Kanter to Gates, "First Meeting of the European Strategy Steering Group," 21 Feb 90. The members of the European Strategy Steering Group were Gates (chair), NSC staff (Blackwill, Kanter, Zelikow), State officials (Zoellick, Bartholomew, Ross, Seitz), officials from the Office of the Secretary of Defense (Paul Wolfowitz and Stephen Hadley), representatives from the Joint Chiefs of Staff (ADM David Jeremiah, LTG Howard Graves), CIA (Richard Kerr, John McLaughlin), and ACDA director Ron Lehman.

Scowcroft, Gates, and Blackwill planned the group in part, as a way of adapting to their analysis of the bureaucratic politics at work. Under secretary of state for international security policy Reginald Bartholomew and undersecretary of defense for policy Paul Wolfowitz were starting to organize such deliberations under their leadership. Blackwill wanted to see these reflections run by the White House, where he could exert more influence over them and where they could be chaired by the powerful and very capable Gates. Blackwill also thought the group had to extend beyond the usual circle of arms control officials to include Zoellick and Ross. Since State's protocol might make it difficult for Zoellick to chair a State-led group rather than the (nominally) more senior Bartholomew, running the group from the White House also made it easier to transcend State's own bureaucratic rivalries.

The most urgent question before the group was whether to proceed with plans for modernizing America's short-range nuclear missiles in Europe. Congress was about to consider the administration's budget request for this modernization. After the May 1989 NATO summit the issue had been put on hold, and fell out of the newspapers, but it had not disappeared. Everyone in Washington could see that the current modernization plan, called FOTL (for "Follow-On to Lance," Lance being the aging missile then deployed in Europe) had no future. But how to kill it?

The Americans wanted to bury FOTL in a way that did not touch off a wider debate questioning the presence of American nuclear forces, or rule out some possible modernization of air-delivered systems later in the 1990s. They also remembered their promise to start a new set of arms control negotiations to talk about these short-range nuclear systems, after the CFE treaty was completed. Kohl was understandably nervous about any action. So, at Camp David in February, Bush told Kohl that, "FOTL is dead as a doornail," but the general position on keeping nuclear weapons in Europe had to be maintained. Kohl agreed, but could not see how to avoid some sort of public debate after FOTL's cancellation became public. Kohl urged Bush not to give in to Soviet pressure, and find some way to take the initiative rather than let Congress just announce that the program was dead. Bush, Baker, Scowcroft, and Kohl weighed various solutions yet could come to no conclusion. The issue was unquestionably dangerous for the West; Scowcroft confided to a British visitor that a Soviet campaign against nuclear weapons was "tailor-made" for the current situation.¹⁰⁶

The other big question was how to adapt to German unification in the CFE talks on reducing and limiting the armies deployed in Europe. The Soviets would want some treaty, somewhere, to impose fixed limits on the size of the army of a united Germany. The unhappy precedent for such limits was the 1919 Treaty of Versailles, which had imposed a ceiling of 100,000 soldiers on the German army.

¹⁰⁶ Teitschik, 329 Tage, pp. 160-61; Memcon for Meeting with Helmut Kohl, 24-25 Feb 90. Scowcroft made the remark to Sir Percy Cradock on April 24, according to the author's notes from the meeting.

That limit had rankled as one of the treaty's humiliations, and no one in Germany minded when Germany evaded the limit and, under Hitler, threw it aside. Both the West Germans and the Americans were happy to limit a future German army, but only if and when all other national armies were limited too in the next CFE negotiation, a CFE II, to get underway after the current treaty was signed. In that way the Germans would not be singled out for discriminatory treatment. But even the current CFE talks were now stalled by growing Soviet opposition to the emerging treaty.¹⁰⁷

The State Department had hoped these and other issues could be handled with a NATO strategy review announced in 1990 and concluding with a NATO summit in 1991. The White House wanted to move much faster. The outcome needed to be visible in time to influence the diplomatic battle for Germany. A long review might also give countries time to engage in acrimonious debate over their preferred positions. At NATO, Secretary General Manfred Woerner also tended to urge more rapid action.¹⁰⁸

During March the NSC staff prepared an options paper for the short-range nuclear problem (the "how to kill FOTL" issue) that won agreement to a Bush initiative to deal with the subject. The initiative would cancel FOTL, also cancel planned modernization of the obsolete nuclear artillery shells deployed in Europe, and outline an approach to new arms control talks on short-range nuclear systems that would begin after the CFE treaty was done. With that plan settled, the FOTL

¹⁰⁷ See Bonn 9413, "Teltschik's Comments on German Unification and Future European Security Arrangements," 22 Mar 90; Bonn 11684, "Teltschik's Views on European Security Issues," 11 Apr 90; USVienna 585, "CFE: Disintegration of the Warsaw Pact and German Unification," 23 Feb 90. The issue was thoroughly discussed by American officials in a meeting subcontracted by the European Strategy Steering Group and chaired by NSC staffer Kanter on March 19.

¹⁰⁸ See Zelikow through Blackwill and Kanter to Gates, "Your meeting of the European Strategy Steering Group on March 16," 15 Mar 90 (and attached departmental papers); Zelikow to Blackwill, "NATO Strategy Review Subgroup Meeting," 29 Mar 90. Blackwill presented the NSC staff's preferred approach to other officials on March 29, urging a major NATO summit in July. Ross agreed with him. Dobbins and Wolfowitz wanted more time to deliberate on NATO's future strategy and thought there was not enough time to get agreement on a substantive summit declaration. Author's notes of the meeting. Woerner conveyed his views during an early April visit to Washington.

initiative was pulled into the planned initiative for an early NATO summit. Baker, Cheney, Scowcroft, and JCS chairman Colin Powell all agreed, at the beginning of April, to link the nuclear announcement with an ambitious NATO summit plan. All of this would be announced in a Presidential speech. Bush then previewed his plans at his April meetings with Thatcher and Mitterrand.¹⁰⁹

Officials at the State and Defense Departments still balked at the ambitious substantive agenda for this NATO summit and Bush's speech. But Blackwill won Zoellick's support for the plan, and the Pentagon's concerns were effectively overruled in another discussion of the matter, held at the White House, among Baker, Scowcroft, Cheney, and Powell.¹¹⁰ The major outstanding substantive issue was over how to handle the future of the CSCE.

Both Genscher and Thatcher had urged a stronger CSCE. This was the organization in which the Soviets and East Europeans were members. If it had a greater role in European politics, then the Soviets might be more comfortable with a united Germany's membership in NATO. Thatcher had made the conceptual case. Genscher had offered a grab-bag of institutional ideas. The Americans, especially Zoellick, wanted to pick from the menu of ideas to decide which select few NATO ought to sponsor, effectively fixing the agenda for the CSCE summit in the fall.

State's Policy Planning staff came up with an influential set of ideas.

¹⁰⁹ The cabinet officials made this decision on April 4. The decision won support from NATO supreme military commander, U.S. general John Galvin, when Galvin met with Scowcroft on April 12. Woerner led a supportive, but general, discussion of the plan among NATO ambassadors on April 17. See USNATO 2357, "April 17 Permrep Lunch: Discussion of a NATO Summit," 17 Apr 90. The U.S. mission to NATO was not well informed about the details of the secret plans being hatched in Washington. On the development of the new NATO nuclear policy see Zelikow through Blackwill and Kanter to Scowcroft, "Moving Toward a USG Decision on the Future of US Nuclear Forces in Europe," 31 Mar 90 (and attached options paper). On the different State vision for NATO summit plans, see Seitz through Zoellick and Bartholomew to Baker, "Where We Stand on FOTL, INF Arms Control, NATO Strategy, NATO Summit, and CSCE," 12 Apr 90.

¹¹⁰ The cabinet-level decision was on April 16. On the plans for Bush's speech and the dispute with the Pentagon, see Zelikow through Blackwill and Kanter to Scowcroft, "NATO Strategy and the Future of US Nuclear Forces in Europe: Issues for Decision," 4 Apr 90; Zelikow through Blackwill and Kanter to Gates, "Your Meeting of the European Strategy Steering Group on April 6," 5 Apr 90 (and attached outlines); Zelikow through Blackwill and Kanter to Scowcroft, "Your Meeting to Discuss a Possible Presidential Speech on European Security and NATO on April 16," 13 Apr 90.

Zoellick, ignoring opposition from the European bureau, put these ideas before the Gates-chaired group. But the NSC staff, especially Blackwill, harbored lingering distrust of the CSCE as a talking shop that must be kept at all costs from interfering with German unification or setting itself up as a new security organization.

Scowcroft, Blackwill, and Zelikow all had abiding objections to the theory of a pan-European collective security organization. They believed, in essence, that when everybody promises to defend everything, they end up actually defending nothing. They suspected with good reason that Genscher harbored just such ambitions for the CSCE as a solution to the 'NATO problem,' and they thought Zoellick's plans were not careful enough in walling off this danger. Zoellick, Ross, and others at State and NATO all worried that this fastidiousness could forfeit the chance for U.S. leadership to shape the needed Western consensus on what ought to happen to the CSCE. Thatcher's conceptual arguments, and Zoellick's remolding of the State ideas, finally persuaded the NSC staff to drop its opposition. Blackwill and Zelikow then refined the list of CSCE ideas with a couple of their own.¹¹¹

Bush delivered his speech on the future of NATO on May 4, in a commencement address at Oklahoma State University. He explained why, since America's fate had historically been inseparable from that of Europe, "The United States shold remain a European power in the broadest sense -- politically, militarily, and economically." Proposing an early NATO summit, he pledged that this meeting would "direct" the outcome of a review of strategy in four areas: (1) NATO's

¹¹¹ The original Policy Planning staff paper, "CSCE: Looking Ahead," was reviewed at the March 16 meeting of the European Strategy Steering Group. It was drafted by Holmes, Lynne Davidson, and George. Thatcher's arguments were especially well presented in her March 29 address to the Konigswinter conference in Cambridge. The NSC staff's suspicions about the original State ideas had more foundation than the NSC knew. Ross suggested to Baker on April 19 that the U.S. should explore the role that CSCE might play in a future all-European security arrangement and how NATO can be a component of such a system. Despite current skepticism at the NSC, the US cannot afford to be seen as retarding the formation of structures which so many Europeans view as the wave of the future." Ross to Baker, "How to Think About NATO This Spring," 19 Apr 90 (drafted by John Reichart and Bob Einhorn). This memo contained no specific proposals, and was not shared with State's European Bureau.

Blackwill and his staff had a wide-ranging discussion with Scowcroft on ideas for NATO on April 16. They then suggested that a CSCE security institution be set up as a "conflict prevention center" largely concerned with confidence-building, and Blackwill had the idea of creating an all-European parliament under the auspices of the CSCE.

political role in the new Europe; (2) conventional defenses; (3) nuclear defenses; and (4) common Western objectives for the future of the CSCE.

The conventional political wisdom on summit meetings is to downplay expectations. Since outcomes cannot be guaranteed, the press is less likely to be critical if they are not built up to expect great things. If the summit goes well, then the press and public are pleasantly surprised. That was the strategy that had worked so well for Bush at the May 1989 NATO summit. But Bush now bucked the conventional wisdom in his Oklahoma speech by promising results on a very ambitious agenda. He would be under a heavy burden to deliver the goods, and every NATO ally had the veto power to block him. Bush felt he needed to get the bold promise on the table for his dealings with Moscow and gambled that he could devise initiatives big enough to satisfy Moscow, sound enough to strengthen the Alliance, and appealing enough to command wide support from his European allies.¹¹²

The Distracted Soviets Stay in Their Trenches

The American strategy depended on Western coherence and unity and Gorbachev's reluctance to take decisive action. Though Western policy made the dilemmas before the Soviet Union sharper every day, the U.S. believed that Gorbachev would avoid stating a "bottom line." That was fine for the United States because -- with the East German election over -- time was clearly the ally of the West.

The career officials in the foreign ministry, the Central Committee staff, and defense agencies had a conservative outlook. They found the notion of a united Germany in NATO unacceptable, a reversal of a position Soviet diplomats had

¹¹² Address by President Bush at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, 4 May 90 (drafted mainly by Zelikow with Blackwill). Bush previewed his plans to all NATO leaders in individually tailored messages sent on May 1-2. See Zelikow through Blackwill and Kanter to Scowcroft, "Message to NATO Leaders," 1 May 90. The West Germans had been thinking about a slower schedule for action in NATO and had not focused on the substance of needed changes. But Teltschik comments that Bush's proposals were received positively as ideas that seemed sure to improve the prospects for a successful outcome in the Two Plus Four talks, "the right step at the right time." Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 205, 214-16. On May 2 Baker previewed the upcoming speech in a letter to Shevardnadze that also dealt with outstanding issues in the CFE talks.

maintained for forty years. To many of them, incorporation of a united Germany into the West's military bloc would steal away the fruits of victory in the Second World War, a victory won at terrible cost to the Soviet people.¹¹³ But their stance was essentially defensive and immobile. They knew what they did not want, but organized no diplomatic campaign of their own, no coordinated counteroffensive undertaken with a careful eye to German domestic politics and armed by a readiness to court a tense international confrontation. There is no evidence that Gorbachev made a fundamental decision not to mount an effective defense. But ambivalence at the top translated into debilitation and inaction below.¹¹⁴

The Americans and West Germans wanted more than bitter, frustrated acquiescence from the Soviet Union in a result Moscow felt powerless to affect. Bush, Baker, Kohl, and Genscher all wanted to find a way to reconcile the Soviet leadership to the outcome Washington and Bonn wanted. In Gorbachev's ambivalence they saw an opportunity to remodel the way Gorbachev and his advisers thought about their country's national interests to see that, if other changes were made, a unified Germany fully in NATO might pose no threat and was even better than the available alternatives.

But in that ambivalence lay dangers too. The indecision at the top could be

¹¹³ E.g., from top diplomats and military advisers, TASS, "Adamishin Interviewed on German Unification," March 21, 1990, in FBIS-SOV 90-056, March 22, 1990, p. 4; interview with Marshal Akhromeyev in Vladimir Ostrovsky, "We Cannot Agree to an Imbalance of Forces," Zolnierz Wolnosci (Warsaw), March 20, 1990, p. 7, in FBIS-SOV 90-057, March 23, 1990, pp. 17-18; TASS, "Soviet Government Statement," March 27, 1990 in FBIS-SOV 90-060, March 28, 1990, pp. 24-25.

¹¹⁴ It also created an atmosphere in which some subordinates lacked adequate guidance. Thus Portugalov, working for Falin on the Central Committee staff, who had inadvertently done so much to embolden Kohl and Teltschik in November 1989, had another long talk with Teltschik on March 28 that opposed NATO membership for a united Germany but, by alluding to a host of ideas being considered in the Soviet government, conveyed a clear message of irresolution and Western opportunity. Portugalov seemed to think he could trade West German flexibility on its alliance status for Soviet flexibility on whether the diplomatic settlement should take the form of a peace treaty. "The Chancellor, whom I spoke with immediately after [my meeting with Portugalov], expressed his satisfaction that the positions of the Soviet leadership continued to appear so open and flexible." Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 188. Portugalov said he was acting with Chernyayev's approval.

broken by the pressure of events and spin into unpredictable or even unstable paths. Recognizing the danger, and believing that the reaction to Gorbachev's reform policies was already gathering strength, top US officials believed from the beginning of 1990 onward that they were operating within a narrow window of opportunity. If the process of German unification could not be completed very soon, the U.S. and the FRG might find themselves dealing with either different Soviet leaders or radically different Soviet policies which would make unification much harder to achieve and dramatically increase the risk of major international crisis -- with incalculable consequences for Kohl's domestic political prospects. Margaret Thatcher visited Moscow in March and found Gorbachev unusually somber, even fatalistic. It was, she later told Bush, as if Gorbachev felt he had done his best and could no longer answer for the consequences.¹¹⁵

The Soviets reshuffled their diplomatic staff in April. Kvitsinsky returned from Bonn to take over from Adamishin as the deputy foreign minister responsible for European issues, including Germany. Kvitsinsky had publicly opposed the use of Article 23 as an "Anschluss of the GDR by the FRG and NATO" and strongly opposed letting a united Germany be a member of the NATO alliance.¹¹⁶

Shevardnadze himself visited Washington for lengthy substantive talks at the beginning of April. The imminent danger of bloodshed in Lithuania overshadowed all other subjects. Shevardnadze saw, in the Lithuanian crisis, the potential collapse of perestroika. He confided to Baker that, though he had often told reporters there was no alternative to perestroika, that was not true. "There is an alternative to perestroika. If perestroika doesn't succeed, then you are going to have the

¹¹⁵ Informal notes on President's telephone conversation with Prime Minister Thatcher, March 28, 1990 (Zelikow was the notetaker).

¹¹⁶ See the now reticent Kvitsinsky in Julij Kvitsinskij, Vor dem Sturm: Erinnerungen eines Diplomaten, tr. Hilde & Helmut Ettinger (Berlin: Siedler, 1993), p. 32; Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 180 (on Kvitsinsky's March 22 meeting with Kohl); EmbBerlin, "Soviets May Go Into Two Plus Four with New Delegation Head," 19 Mar 90; CIA, "Yuliy Kvitsinskij: Moscow Picks a Pro for Two-Plus-Four," LDA M 90-20023, 6 Apr 90; Bonn 10887, "Embassy Assessment of Yuliy Kvitsinskij," 4 Apr 90; Moscow 13739, "Two Plus Four: Soviets Rethinking Agenda as Kvitsinskij Replaces Adamishin," 23 Apr 90.

destabilization of the Soviet Union. And if that happens there will be a dictator."¹¹⁷ In this atmosphere there was no progress on Germany. A working group, with Bondarenko on one side and Dobbins on the other, had little to report. Baker and Shevardnadze restated their country's respective positions.

The Soviet position had not changed materially since the end of January. Shevardnadze was encouraged in the briefing papers prepared for him to take a hard line on Germany -- leaving no doubt that Moscow could and would defend its interests and those of the GDR. Unification must be a step-by-step process, with a transition period, and fully synchronized with creation of new security structures arising from the CSCE process. During the transition period, both German states could retain their current alliance memberships. After the transition, the Soviets could not accept membership of a unified Germany in NATO. Another solution must be found.

Further, the troops of all Four Powers in Germany should remain where they are. He thought the US agreed with this (Baker corrected him). Germany must continue to renounce weapons of mass destruction and accept a ceiling on its armed forces, perhaps through the CFE framework. The external issues should be settled by a peace treaty, as envisioned at Potsdam in 1945, and -- even if unification accelerated -- the special status of West Berlin would be unaffected until such a peace treaty was concluded. The two German states would also need to make treaty commitments to respect existing borders and economic obligations. The next Two Plus Four meeting should agree on the agenda and move on to substantive work. Shevardnadze openly deferred to his hardline veteran adviser, Bondarenko, saying he dared not take a single step on Germany without him.

Shevardnadze grew impatient with American intransigence. Secretary Baker had not once even mentioned the Warsaw Pact. Did he think the Pact had already disintegrated? Both alliances should be transformed. There was a time when the

¹¹⁷ Memcon of Conversation with Shevardnadze, 4 Apr 90, in Baker's office. Baker was joined by Ross and an interpreter. Shevardnadze was accompanied by Tarasenko and an interpreter.

Soviet Union had expressed interest in joining NATO. This was a painful issue and both sides had to consider what options would be accepted by the Soviet people, not just by the Supreme Soviet. Baker did not budge. Shevardnadze's tone became even tougher. No one had yet removed any Four Power authority over Germany. Not one question would be resolved without the consent of the Soviet Union. The US must give due consideration to solutions that would be acceptable to the USSR and the rest of the international community, including France, Britain, and the rest of Europe.¹¹⁸

Shevardnadze met the next day with President Bush. Bush stressed American concerns about the danger a crackdown in Lithuania would pose for the cause of reform in the Soviet Union, but he did not threaten sanctions. Instead he just referred to the prospects for new U.S.-Soviet economic cooperation. Bush had made a conscious decision not to bluster over Lithuania, fearful of promising a solution Bush could not deliver and, as Rice later observed, "afraid to light a match in a gas-filled room."¹¹⁹

Bush carefully reviewed the American stance on Germany. He voiced his doubts about the value of any pan-European collective security system, which he said had been tried before and almost inevitably failed. But he said he understood Soviet feelings on Germany and talked about the enormous Soviet losses in World War II. "We must convince you," he said, that German membership in NATO poses no threat

¹¹⁸ Memcon for Meeting with Foreign Minister Shevardnadze (Second Small Group: Regional Issues), 5 Apr 90. US participants were Baker, Gates, Ambassador Matlock, Kimmitt, Zoellick, Wolfowitz, Seitz, Ross, Tutwiler, assistant secretary of state for other regions, Bill Burns (principal deputy director of S/P), and Alexander Vershbow (notetaker and head of the Soviet office in EUR). Soviet participants were Shevardnadze, deputy foreign minister Alexander Bessmertnykh, Ambassador Dubinin, MFA department head Aleksey Obukhov, MFA department head Vladimir Polyakov, Tarasenko, Gennadiy Gerasimov (MFA press spokesman), Bondarenko, Yuriy Alekseyev, Yuriy Yukalov, Georgiy Mamedov (deputy head of the USA and Canada office), Teymuraz Stepanov (aide to Shevardnadze), Vitaliy Churkin, and I. Korchilov.

¹¹⁹ The Rice quote is in Don Oberdorfer, The Turn: From the Cold War to a New Era (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991), p. 404 and Michael Beschloss & Strobe Talbott, At the Highest Levels: The Inside Story of the End of the Cold War (Boston: Little, Brown, 1992), p. 205, accompanied by descriptions of Bush's effort to walk a tightrope in stating American policy on Lithuania.

to your country. Shevardnadze made little reply.¹²⁰

Neither was Gorbachev displaying any signs of flexibility. British foreign secretary Hurd saw the Soviet leader during an April 10 visit to Moscow. Gorbachev would not rule out using force in Lithuania. Nor did he give any ground on Germany. Indeed, he could not see how the CFE talks could progress to a conclusion without a suitable settlement of the German question. Yet Shevardnadze had indicated to Hurd that Moscow was going along with the American linkage of CFE completion to the convening of a CSCE summit.¹²¹ The Soviet position was that there needed to be new cooperative security structures for all of Europe. These presumably had to be ratified at the CSCE summit. Yet the Americans had insisted that this summit could not take place unless a CFE treaty was ready for signature.

Then, in an extraordinary speech in the mid-April, Shevardnadze seemed to back away from his more confrontational stance. It was as if another person -- not the dogmatic foreign minister of the Washington meetings -- was now speaking. Facing a domestic audience, Shevardnadze scolded those who were trapped in old thinking. The task here was not to convince Baker and Bush that the Soviet Union could defend its interest -- but to convince those at home that change was coming and that it might not be all bad.

Shevardnadze openly challenged the foundation of Soviet foreign policy (and the position on Germany) in responding to the criticisms voiced at the February party plenum. What, after all, were the critical security requirements of the Soviet Union. Emotionally, he too wanted the USSR to be great. "But great in what? Territory?

¹²⁰ Memcon for the President's Meeting with Foreign Minister Shevardnadze, April 6, 1990. Bush was joined by Baker, Scowcroft, Gates, Ambassador Matlock, Seitz, Blackwill, Rice, and an interpreter. Shevardnadze was accompanied by Ambassador Dubinin, Bessmertnykh, deputy foreign minister Anatoly Karpov, Marshal Akhromeyev, Obukhov, Tarasenko, Stepanov, Mamedov, and an interpreter.

For Soviet press coverage of Shevardnadze's Washington trip, see "E.A. Shevardnadze's News Conference," Izvestiya, April 6, 1990, p. 5, in FBIS-SOV 90-068, April 9, 1990, pp. 7-12; S. Dardykin, "After the Talks in Washington," Izvestiya, April 10, 1990, p. 4 in FBIS-SOV 90-069, April 10, 1990, pp. 8-10.

¹²¹ See London 7298, "Gorbachev-Hurd Discussion on Lithuania and Germany," 12 Apr 90; "M.S. Gorbachev Receives Douglas Hurd," Pravda, April 11, 1990, pp. 1-2 in FBIS-SOV 90-070, April 11, 1990, p. 39.

Population? Quantity of arms? Or the people's troubles? The individual's lack of rights? Life's disorderliness? In what do we, who have virtually the highest infant mortality rate on our planet, take pride?" Shevardnadze used Afghanistan as an example of the "arrogance of statehood." He cited other examples of old thinking of those who, commenting on arms control talks, wanted to abandon the effort to pursue "a policy of strength." His central conclusion: "We live in a world of realities and a world of emotions. Realities dictate one line of conduct, feelings rise up against it."

On Germany, Shevardnadze said only that "we need to find a solution which is accepted by the Soviet people and which gives them confidence that there will be no new military threat to us from German soil." Therefore, he declared "there is no more important or crucial cause for Soviet foreign policy currently than the creation, together with other states, of a new system of security in Europe," using the CSCE.¹²²

Once again there were few proposals to bring this new security system into being. Finally, in mid-April, the Soviets elaborated some CSCE proposals in a magazine article. In this article, which was leaked to the press in mid-April, Shevardnadze called for CSCE summits every two years, CSCE ministerial sessions twice each year, creation of a CSCE Secretariat, and -- most importantly -- establishment of a CSCE center for risk reduction and arms control verification, with consideration of a small pan-European peacekeeping force to assist in conflict resolution. NATO and the Warsaw Pact would continue to exist in the short-term, but evolve toward merger as the CSCE mechanism expanded. Germany could thus have "dual membership" in both NATO and the Warsaw Pact during this transitional period.¹²³ But neither Soviet leaders nor Soviet diplomats moved to press these

¹²² TASS, "Shevardnadze Gives Speech on 'Sensitive Problems,'" April 18, 1990, in FBIS-SOV 90-076, April 19, 1990, p. 1. For a pro-NATO position from Soviet intellectuals see, e.g., Vyacheslav Dashichev interviewed by Manfred Schell, "A United Germany Must Be Bound Within the Framework of NATO," Die Welt, March 20, 1990, p. 9, in FBIS-SOV 90-056, March 22, 1990, pp. 28-30; MG Geli Batenin, "Preferred Variety: All of Germany in NATO," Berliner Zeitung, May 4, 1990, p. 3.

¹²³ See Eduard Shevardnadze, "Towards A Greater Europe - The Warsaw Treaty Organization and NATO in a Renewing Europe," NATO's Sixteen Nations, May 1990, pp. 12-20; Seitz to Baker, "Shevardnadze Article to be Published in May 90 Issue of 'NATO's Sixteen Nations,'" 19 Apr 90.

proposals in foreign capitals.

The Soviets could feel their position on Germany slipping as the weeks went by without serious Two Plus Four talks and Germany's internal unification gathered momentum. The Western policy of delay was having the desired effect. Finally the Soviets were able to get the Two Plus Four ministers to meet, in Bonn, on May 4 -- nearly two months after the forum was created at Ottawa. This would be the first real political discussion of the German question. This encounter was crucial and the Soviet government -- clearly now in a weakened position -- mustered its strength for the battle.

The career bureaucrats in the foreign ministry, led by Bondarenko's German department, developed a formal and very conservative position, consistent with -- even drawn from -- the heritage of Soviet diplomacy on Germany dating back to the 1950s. Entirely separately, Shevardnadze turned, as he had in December, to Tarasenko for an alternative approach. Shevardnadze himself was torn. Good relations with the West seemed essential for the progress of perestroika. But, as the Americans saw in Washington, even Shevardnadze was not prepared to give in on the NATO issue.

The policy was too important to be determined by Shevardnadze alone, or even with Gorbachev. The matter had to be considered by the entire ruling Politburo. Shevardnadze's first position paper, based on Tarasenko's work outside the usual channels, adopted a cooperative, forthcoming stance, though it did not give in on NATO. It met adamant opposition in the Politburo, led by Yegor Ligachev, who had publicly warned in February of Soviet appeasement, of a "new Munich" on the issue of Germany.

Shevardnadze's position paper was redrafted, using more advice from the German department. This more conservative paper did not give in to the West on NATO but implied that a concession was possible if the West could meet certain conditions, like the creation of a pan-European security system. Moscow would be prepared to go along with an FRG takeover of the GDR via Article 23 -- now a moot point given the election results in the East. Shevardnadze managed to obtain

cosponsors for his approach -- Yakovlev, KGB head Kryuchkov, and defense minister Yazov.

This approach was still not tough enough for the Politburo, or indeed for Gorbachev himself. Ligachev warned about "NATO approaching the borders of the [Soviet] Union." Gorbachev sided with Ligachev, calling for confrontation. Chernyayev, who was there, remembered a "stormy" speech in which Gorbachev said: "We will not allow the GDR into NATO and that is the end of it!" Gorbachev added: "I will even risk the collapse of the Vienna conventional arms control talks and the talks on strategic weapons, but I will not allow this."

Shevardnadze and his cosponsors remained silent. The most conservative possible position carried the day. It included a foreign ministry idea for simply delinking internal unification and an external settlement. The two German states could go ahead and rush to create a new Germany. But the new Germany's sovereignty and international status would remain up in the air until the international negotiations had reached a suitable outcome, however long that might take. In this way the Soviet Union would not have its hand forced by Kohl's internal plans.

Chernyayev, who had not been asked for his opinion, sent Gorbachev a note the next morning protesting that Ligachev's argument was "rubbish" and many of the members of the Politburo lacked any expertise on Germany. This was "1945" thinking, the "pseudo-patriotism of the crowd." Chernyayev thought a negative, static defense was doomed to failure, however stubborn. "Instead of putting forward the specific and rigid terms for our consent, we are heading toward a failure." But Chernyayev's complaints were too late, and there is no evidence Gorbachev heeded them at the time. Gorbachev may have been simply trying to cover his flanks within the Politburo -- gaining room to maneuver toward a more conciliatory course on the separate issue of Lithuania. In any case, Shevardnadze now had his instructions to take to Bonn.¹²⁴

¹²⁴ The description of the May policy debate is based on author interviews with Tarasenko, Providence, June 1993 and Chernyayev, Moscow, January 1994, along with Chernyayev's published account, based on his original notes, in Anatoly Chernyayev, Shest' Let s Gorbachevym: Po dnevnikovym

Other advisors, like Falin, thought the Soviet Union could handle a confrontation. In May, Falin privately told Soviet diplomats in Berlin that an extension of NATO had to be prevented at any cost, even if the price was moving in another million troops. Asked if this would lead to a mass exodus of East Germans westward, he reportedly replied, "Good riddance -- we wouldn't have to feed them any more." This attitude did not strike his listeners as unusual, and even Shevardnadze was just searching for other options while not ruling out a possible confrontation with the West.¹²⁵

What would happen if Germany completed its internal unification and the external issues were stalemated, unresolved? This scenario had been considered, very discreetly, within the American and West German governments as early as February. Going ahead with German unification on Western terms, without Soviet support, would create an ugly and direct contest of strength, played out in the last weeks of the West German election campaign. The Soviet Union could, at a minimum, simply refuse to relinquish its Four Power rights. After all, the Soviets still had more than 350,000 well armed troops in the GDR and other means of backing up their

zapisyam (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1993), pp. 347-48. The accounts are consistent, except that Tarasenko alludes to two Politburo meetings and Chernayev only offers a detailed of one, clearly the decisive session. For a sense of Shevardnadze's ambivalence at the time, see Shevardnadze, The Future Belongs to Freedom, pp. 137-38. The Americans did not know about the Politburo debates, and had more of a sense of the fluid debates swirling around the non-governmental institutes. Marshal Akhromeyev did, however, tell Ambassador Matlock that Germany's political-military status was a "grassroots issue" in the USSR that concerned the entire military, millions of common people, and the top echelons of both the Soviet government and the Communist Party. See Moscow 14624, "Can A United Germany Remain in NATO? Many Soviets Think So, But Seek 'Unconventional Recipes' and More Ideas from the West," 1 May 90; Moscow 14438, "Two Plus Four -- Soviets Look to Ministerial and Summit; Bondarenko Takes Lead in Berlin," 27 Apr 90.

¹²⁵ Maximychev, "Possible 'Impossibilities,'" p. 112. Maximychev does not attribute the "million troops" to Falin in his published article, but later clarified the origin and circumstances of the remarks in an interview with the author, Moscow, January 1994. Understandably, Falin does not mention such talk in the memoir he wrote for German bookbuyers, but he makes no effort to conceal his vitriolic hostility to the notion of letting a united Germany become a full member of NATO. At the very least, he writes, Moscow should have insisted on Germany leaving NATO's military command (like France) and the "minimum Minimorum" should have been the withdrawal of all nuclear weapons out of all Germany. He believes 84% of the Germans would have backed such a Soviet stand. See Valentin Falin, Politische Erinnerungen, tr. Heddy Pross-Weerth (München: Droemer Knaur, 1993), p. 494.

diplomacy.¹²⁶ Would the West allow the process of unification to come to a halt?

The tentative answer, both in Washington and Bonn, was no. In March, Zoellick had privately asked Genscher's staff how they were prepared to proceed if the USSR was determined to obstruct the achievement of unity. Their answer, and the American answer, was to approach Soviet concerns with sensitivity and reasonableness. But if, after doing so, the Soviets did not respond in kind, the Germans believed they would have discharged their responsibility.¹²⁷

The West Germans and Americans thought Moscow had to be convinced, beyond any doubt, that the Soviet Union was isolated diplomatically. It must at least be clear that the costs of continued rigidity would be a deterioration in the "smooth, stable" relations so essential to the benign international environment in which the Soviet leaders could concentrate on domestic reform. To achieve this isolation, Western solidarity had to be complete. That was the purpose of the American and West German efforts during the time they had bought in March and April. Now, as ministers flew to Bonn, Western resolve would be tested.

Two Plus Four Ministers Finally Meet

Kohl had used the six weeks after the East German elections to good effect. He had worked out the general approach to economic and monetary union. On May 2 the West German government joined with the new government of CDU-East Lothar de Maiziere to proclaim agreement on the major principles.¹²⁸ The most radical path

¹²⁶ For some disturbing post-unification revelations about the high level of offensive planning and readiness among the Soviet and East German forces stationed in the GDR, see Lothar Ruehl, "Offensive defence in the Warsaw Pact," *Survival*, 33 (September/October 1991): 442-450.

¹²⁷ See, e.g., Zoellick to Baker, "Background on Two-Plus-Four for Namibia Meetings," 16 Mar 90, p. 10.

¹²⁸ On the formation of de Maiziere's coalition government, see Jarausch, *The Rush to German Unity*, pp. 128-34.

of West German takeover had been chosen, despite low-level Soviet protests.¹²⁹ Germany would be united for customs purposes; the GDR would adopt EC trade and agricultural policies; the GDR would accept the FRG's fiscal and tax structures with strict limits on East German budget deficits and an end to state subsidies of businesses; the GDR would adopt West German labor rules; and, most important, Ostmark wages could be paid in West German D-Marks on the basis of one-to-one conversion. Savings accounts held in Ostmarks could also be converted on a 1:1 basis up to a specified limit. Most economists opposed this political decision at the time, with the Bundesbank later calling it a "disaster." The West German government, hurried by the pace and driven by political objectives, clearly underestimated the costs of converting the GDR to a market economy.

But the more sober retrospective judgment appears to be that the economists too had misjudged. "Despite the importance of the conversion decision, in the long run a more accurate picture of the GDR economy would hardly have made much difference, either for the decision itself or for the future of the East German economy, given the political will to unify and the Basic Law, which decreed equal citizenship for east Germans. ... a less favorable conversion rate would have meant even greater direct transfers via unemployment relief, social security pensions, [etc.]." The Bundesbank fears of inflation may also have been exaggerated.¹³⁰

East German voters were going to the polls again on May 6, this time for

¹²⁹ A Soviet note on April 19 protesting the impending agreement on economic and monetary union was dismissed by Teltschik because it was delivered by low-level diplomats and in the form of a "non-paper" rather than, for example, a letter from Shevardnadze or even Gorbachev. On April 23 Kvitsinsky apparently disavowed his government's own demarche as premature, since the text of a planned economic and monetary union treaty was not yet available for review. Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 202-03, 205.

¹³⁰ The quote is from Ullrich Heilemann & Reimut Jochimsen, Christmas in July?: The Political Economy of German Unification Reconsidered (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1993), p. 50; for the same judgment, and the point on inflation, see Gerlinde Sinn & Hans-Werner Sinn, Jumpstart: The Economic Unification of Germany, tr. Juli Irving-Lessmann (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), pp. 51-53; and Daniel Gros & Alfred Steinherr, "Macroeconomic management in the new Germany: implications for the EMS and EMU," in Heisenberg, ed., German Unification in European Perspective, pp. 165-73. On the economic costs of taking over the GDR, a good collection of essays can be found in Leslie Lipschitz & Donogh McDonald, eds., German Unification: Economic Issues (Washington, D.C.: International Monetary Fund, 1990).

communal (local) elections. The vote would be a barometer of continuing support for Kohl's program. Kohl had gotten an announcement together in time to make an impact on that vote, especially with the generous terms promised for Ostmark conversion into D-Marks. But internally Kohl had made clear he would not raise West German taxes; nor would he let his historic bid for German unity be delayed by the macroeconomic doubts heard from the Bundesbank.¹³¹

Nevertheless the external issues were entirely unsettled. The Western allies had coordinated their positions, capped by the meeting of NATO ministers on May 3. But many experts were pessimistic. Even in the U.S. government, State Department analysts thought the prospects of continuing to keep American troops in Germany were "fairly bleak." Two Plus Four political directors had met on April 30 to prepare the way for ministers but made no progress, as the Soviets would not agree to the West's narrow proposed agenda for the talks.¹³²

The American and West German policy continued to rest on a precise understanding of their definition of success, German membership in NATO, paired with a still undefined package of changes in NATO and the CSCE, still not defined, that would help Moscow accept the Western objectives. Zoellick and Ross called this the "incentives package." Teltschik called it the "solution package."¹³³

¹³¹ See Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 203-04; Dobbins (Acting) through McCormack to Baker, "Two Germanys Announce Agreement on Principles for Economic and Monetary Union," 3 May 90.

¹³² For the "bleak" assessment see Burleigh (Acting) to Kimmitt, "Maintaining US Forces in a United Germany – An Uphill Battle," 11 Apr 90. For a survey of West German opinion read by U.S. officials that revealed areas of vulnerability, see USIA Office of Research, "West Germans Want Unified Germany in NATO, Majority Finds Pace of Unification Too Fast," 9 May 90 (survey conducted on 25-28 April). On the April 30 meeting of Two Plus Four political directors, see Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 212-13; State 139175, "April 30 Two-Plus-Four Officials Meeting," 1 May 90; Zoellick's notes from the meeting in his office files. The meeting was held in East Berlin and chaired by East German political director, parliamentary state secretary Hans Misselwitz.

¹³³ Ross and Zoellick to Baker, "Scene-Setter: Two-Plus-Four Ministerial," undated (but appears to be 1 or 2 May 90); see also the briefing papers prepared for Baker's trip to NATO and Bonn, including Seitz letter to Baker, 20 Apr 90 attaching "Strategy for Dealing With the Soviets," 19 Apr 90 (drafted by desk officer Andrew Goodman and cleared throughout the Department); Seitz through Kimmitt to Baker, "Managing German Unification: Planning for the Two-plus-Four Ministerial and the US-Soviet Summit," 25 Apr 90 (passed with a note from Kimmitt emphasizing the need to take "an active lead now" in shaping NATO's approach to all the European defense and arms control issues). A number of other briefing papers

When Baker arrived in Bonn he met with Kohl. The two men compared notes on the details of the policy positions and found they were in complete accord.

Afterward Kohl remarked to Teltschik that the American friends were "absolutely reliable. One could not wish for stronger support; he would not forget it."¹³⁴

Both Chancellor Kohl and the arriving Western ministers also met with Shevardnadze. Kohl and Genscher explained the plans for economic and monetary union and introducing a new ingredient for Bonn's "solution package": a bilateral treaty of friendship and cooperation between Germany and the Soviet Union. This could be a vehicle for addressing Moscow's anxieties about its economic or political relations with the new Germany. Though little was said about the content of such a treaty, it was the symbolism of such an agreement that Bonn hoped would carry the most weight. Shevardnadze raised the possibility of getting hard currency credit from West Germany for the USSR. Kohl said he would try to be helpful.¹³⁵

Baker spent nearly four hours engrossed in his own talks with the Soviet foreign minister. He presented the American position in great detail, including the notion of the Two Plus Four as a "steering committee" with a narrow agenda for decisions. Shevardnadze could not accept this and instead stressed the need to take time, not rush, to complete the work of the Two Plus Four. He objected to few of

were prepared, going well beyond what Baker needed at the time, but forcing a major consolidation of U.S. analysis on many details and bringing a massive quantity of information before Zoellick, Blackwill, Ross and other key subcabinet officials. For the Teltschik use of "solution package" see 329 Tage, p. 195 (entry for April 16).

¹³⁴ For more details see Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 217-18, 221 (for the Kohl quote); State 154634, "Secretary's Bilateral with Chancellor Kohl," 14 May 90. Baker was accompanied by Ambassador Walters, Zoellick, Seitz, Tutwiler, Blackwill, and an interpreter. Kohl was joined by Teltschik.

¹³⁵ Shevardnadze was scheduled to see Genscher, but not Kohl. At the last minute Teltschik asked the Soviets whether Shevardnadze wanted to see the chancellor. Sure, Kvitsinsky said, but Genscher's people had said it was not possible. Furious, Teltschik quickly arranged the meeting himself after checking with Kohl. On the meeting itself, see Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 218-21. The idea for the German-Soviet treaty was evidently conceived in the Chancellery after being suggested in an April 4 meeting with nongovernmental experts from academia and the media, including Boris Meissner. On April 23, having discussed the idea with Kohl, Teltschik tried it out on Kvitsinsky and thought he received a "euphoric" reaction. Shevardnadze referred to Kvitsinsky's report of this meeting when he met with Kohl. Ibid. pp. 192-93, 204-07. Teltschik elaborated on the thinking behind the idea in an interview with the author, Gütersloh, June 1992.

Baker's arguments but accepted none of the Western positions. Baker wrote to Bush that the Soviets "don't know how to square the circle. They're wrestling with it. I suspect that Gorbachev doesn't want to take on this kind of an emotionally charged political issue now, and almost certainly not before the [July 1990] Party Congress."¹³⁶

The next day, May 5, the Two Plus Four ministers gathered and read their prepared presentations. Knowing little about the internal debates in Moscow, having heard Shevardnadze privately seem anxious to search for solutions, all the Western ministers were surprised by the grim, unyielding tone of the Soviet presentation. Everything associated with the Cold War, Shevardnadze said, was bound up in the fate of Germany. Nor could the feelings of the Soviet people be ignored. So nothing about Germany would be agreed until everything was agreed and a complete balance of interests was achieved.

What did Moscow want from the settlement? The treaty should deal with Germany's alliance membership and with the status of troops from all Four Powers. It had to confirm the legality of all occupation measures adopted by the Four Powers and place new restraints on German domestic politics to stop any rise of Nazism. NATO membership for a united Germany was out of the question; it would "create a dangerous military-strategic situation" for the USSR and the Soviet people were "irreconcilable" on this point. Instead Shevardnadze wanted to strengthen the CSCE to include a new European center "on the prevention of nuclear danger" that would be located in Germany, build on existing Four Power military occupation regimes, and have the goal -- at least in part -- of monitoring the "military-strategic situation in Germany."

It would take time to negotiate a treaty that dealt with all these issues. So Shevardnadze deployed the idea of delinking the internal and external aspects of unification. Four Power rights would be maintained even after internal unification, to

¹³⁶ Secto 6013 (from Bonn), "Memorandum for the President, Bonn, May 4, 1990: My Meeting with Shevardnadze," 5 May 90.

insure that unification was "synchronized" with the creation of an entirely new European security system.

Shevardnadze warned his colleagues that "we are neither playing nor bluffing here," and concluded his presentation with a blunt, emotional appeal.

Attempts to gain one-sided advantages, put our partner in a position of isolation, ignore his interests, be clever, or get the better of each other have always ended badly. They are all the more out of place in issues connected with Germany and with European stability and security.

Let us play this new, and last, game in German affairs in a businesslike way and with a full awareness of all the dangers that lie in wait for Europe on its path into the 21st century. I have in my time taken part in many negotiations and meetings. Yet I consider my participation in the work of the 'Six' to be the most important and decisive task ever entrusted to me.¹³⁷

Though the Soviets had dropped any opposition to Germany's internal unification, Moscow's position on the external issues had actually hardened. The earlier notion of letting Germany belong simultaneously to both NATO and the Warsaw Pact had now been discarded. The notion of placing new international regulations on Germany's domestic politics in order to stop "neo-Nazi" movements was insulting to many Germans and the new CSCE ideas seemed to amount to a CSCE police force, based on the old occupation regime, based in Germany in order to watch the Germans. With the Soviets asking that the connection between internal unification and external settlement be broken, Bonn faced the prospect of a unified Germany functioning under some sort of foreign supervision for years to come. Even in retrospect, Shevardnadze does not regret having taken such a strong stance in Bonn because he felt NATO had not yet tried to transform itself into a different kind of alliance. In other words, the West had not yet delivered on the "NATO" design in its

¹³⁷ The text of Shevardnadze's presentation was published in Izvestiya, May 7, 1990, p. 3, translated in FBIS-SOV 90-088, May 7, 1990, pp. 5-9. For the other ministerial presentations, all of which were later released to the press, see State 159968, "Two-Plus-Four Bonn Ministerial Interventions," 18 May 90; see also Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, pp. 122-26.

"incentives package," though Bush's NATO summit plans seemed promising.¹³⁸

After the formal presentations ministers began arguing about the agenda for the Two Plus Four. Western ministers were united and firm on keeping the agenda narrow. They finally agreed to include, under the general agenda of political-military issues, the creation of suitable security structures in Europe. Genscher had suggested "new" structures; Baker offered "suitable" in order to hold open the place of the structures that already existed (such as NATO). The Polish-German border question was discussed, with no one finding any point of dispute. Then the ministers turned to their press statement. Genscher presented a draft acknowledging that German unity would proceed "without delay." Shevardnadze balked. The East German foreign minister, Markus Meckel, said that "without delay" precisely described "our situation." Finally Shevardnadze went along with Baker's compromise: Unity would occur "in an orderly way and without delay." With that the meeting came to an end.¹³⁹

At the subsequent press conference reporters directed their questions only to the American and Soviet ministers. Shevardnadze projected an upbeat tone, talking about the "useful and constructive" discussion. Asked about substance, he referred reporters to his formal presentation, his government's "positions of principle."¹⁴⁰

The first meeting to resolve the German question was over. The Soviet Union had been unyielding: a unified Germany must be a neutral Germany, outside of the

¹³⁸ For Shevardnadze's reflections see Eduard Shevardnadze, The Future Belongs to Freedom, tr. Catherine Fitzpatrick (New York: Free Press, 1991), pp. 137-39. The same point is emphasized in Kiessler & Elbe's analysis of Shevardnadze's position, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, pp. 124-25. CIA analysts took a less worried view of Shevardnadze's speech, emphasizing that Moscow would let Germany unify and noting signs of flexibility in Shevardnadze's attitude to the problem. They thought of the speech as an opening bid for future bargaining. CIA, "An Analysis of Shevardnadze's Speech at the Two-Plus-Four Talks," SOV M 90-20062, 17 May 90. For a similarly nuanced reaction from Teltschik, ever determined to see the bright side or sign of flexibility in any Soviet statements, see 329 Tage, pp. 221-24.

¹³⁹ Account based on the original notes taken during the meeting both by Zoellick and by Blackwill, in their respective office files.

¹⁴⁰ See Claus Gennrich, "Moskau will die deutsche Einheit bald," Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, May 7, 1990, p. 1.

Western alliance system. The West was firm and united behind a position that was diametrically opposed. As the ministers returned to their capitals, they reflected on the looming stalemate -- and on what they should do about it.

Chapter Nine
THE FRIENDLY PERSUASION
(May - June 1990)

A Matter of Timing

At the Bonn meeting of the Two Plus Four foreign ministers Shevardnadze introduced a new proposal that would take away the West's most important asset: speed. Since the end of January American and West German officials had decided to push for the fastest possible completion of internal unification. They hoped the Soviet Union could be kept off balance, facing one unpalatable choice after another, ultimately accepting unity on Western terms as the least bad solution. Now Shevardnadze's "decoupling" idea was saying to the Germans, go ahead and unify quickly. But the Soviet Union will just retain its Four Power occupation rights after unification until Moscow's concerns have been properly addressed. The Two Plus Four could take its time, looking toward creation of new CSCE structures and placing stringent limits on German military strength. Teltschik understood that, "it would be extremely problematical if Germany was unified but neither internally nor externally was fully sovereign.... The unity of Germany would be plagued by a large flaw."¹

With Four Power rights still in effect, the Germans would not be able to insist upon the withdrawal of Soviet troops from their soil. Germany's alliance status thus would be clouded. The de facto unification of Germany married with de jure occupation was a distasteful match, at least to the American government.

American officials were thus unsettled to learn that Genscher was seriously considering the Soviet idea. The British were worried too. Douglas Hurd wrote to Baker, concerned that Genscher was "rather seduced" by Moscow's initiative. Hurd had learned from the Dutch that Genscher, in Brussels for an EC meeting on May 7, had given the Dutch foreign minister the impression that he was interested in the Soviet proposal. The British, now closely aligned to the American stance on Germany, vehemently opposed "decoupling." In fact, if Moscow insisted on retaining

¹ Horst Teltschik, 329 Tage: Innenansichten der Einigung (Berlin: Siedler, 1991), p. 225.

its Four Power rights, the British were prepared to take a radical and somewhat dangerous step: deciding together with the Americans and the French to waive their own Four Power rights and leave Moscow standing alone as the sole claimant to occupation rights in Germany.²

The Americans believed at the time, and Elbe has since confirmed, that Genscher was reluctant to reject Shevardnadze's idea out of hand because of Genscher's worries about Gorbachev's political future. Was a tough Western stand on German sovereignty worth the risk of destabilizing a friendly Soviet government? This, Elbe has written, is why Genscher reacted cautiously to Shevardnadze's proposal and did not rule it out.³

Genscher's argument should be taken seriously. The maximal Western stance on Germany did indeed carry risks for the future of Gorbachev and perestroika. Genscher was not sure these were the right priorities. Perhaps the West should be more flexible in order to keep a friendly Soviet government in power. Genscher may or may not have understood that President Bush, and several officials in his government, had indeed decided that achieving U.S. objectives for Germany was, ultimately, more important than protecting Gorbachev. This was because these Americans thought a right-wing reaction to perestroika was already building, influenced strongly by domestic factors beyond American control, and that the future of Moscow's "new thinking" (if not Gorbachev himself) was already problematical.⁴ For months this belief had been a key reason why unification (and conventional arms

² Author interview with Pauline Neville-Jones, London, June 1992; quote is from message about his trip sent by Hurd to British diplomats in Washington for discussion with the Americans. Hurd repeated to Kohl, on May 15, the British readiness to give up Four Power rights at the moment of unification. Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 235. This contradicts Pond's assertion that the British, like the French, supported continuing Four Power supervision. Elizabeth Pond, Beyond the Wall: Germany's Road to Unification (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1993), p. 214.

³ See Richard Kiessler & Frank Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken: Der diplomatische Weg zur deutschen Einheit (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1993), pp. 126-129; Pond, Beyond the Wall, pp. 213-214.

⁴ On American intelligence estimates of the Soviet Union between 1989 and 1991 see Harvard University Kennedy School of Government Case, "The CIA and the Fall of the Soviet Empire: The Politics of 'Getting It Right,'" C16-94-1251.0.

control, and Soviet troop withdrawals from Eastern Europe) had to be pressed so quickly and why Bush had been so adamant about keeping the Atlantic security system intact. Some American officials also thought, if pressed, that if the West moved quickly and remained united, it could achieve its key objectives for Germany even if the USSR reversed course. These matters were so sensitive that they were seldom discussed candidly, even in private conversation, and rarely put down on paper. It was far easier to work from the assumption, which was also still plausible, that if matters were managed correctly Gorbachev's government could be brought around.

Neither on this occasion nor any other did Genscher have a chance to force all these hidden choices out into the open for full discussion. On the morning of May 8, in a story that Elbe believes Teltschik helped plant, the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung ran a page one article with the headline: "Genscher Welcomes Moscow's Readiness for the Separation of the Internal and External Aspects of Unification."

Kohl had already dismissed the Soviet "decoupling" idea. Angry about Genscher's reported stand, Kohl and Seiters met with Genscher and heatedly criticized him for offering a new opening to the Soviets. Genscher is reported to have said that he had not accepted Shevardnadze's "decoupling" idea but was just thinking about it. "With the Russians, that is all they need," Seiters is said to have replied. "For God's sake, let's not start something new now. We are in the middle of the stream and should move straight ahead." Kohl rebuked Genscher for undermining both government solidarity and the understandings with the United States. Kohl told Genscher that he had no time to constantly straighten out problems caused by his foreign minister. The Americans were standing with the Germans, Kohl said, and there must be no under-the-table deals with Shevardnadze.

Later on May 8 Kohl told CDU/CSU party leaders that any "decoupling" was out of the question and Genscher, meeting with his FDP party colleagues, assured them that he hoped to wrap up both the internal and external aspects of unification without delay, by the time of the November CSCE summit. Elbe later wrote that Genscher never seriously entertained the "decoupling" proposal and the whole affair

was just a "storm in a glass of water." Whatever the truth may be, Genscher was not granted the leeway to consider Shevardnadze's proposal for long.⁵

But Genscher was also making statements about NATO that troubled the U.S. government. In a radio interview, Genscher said that "the part of Germany that is in NATO -- will stay in NATO." All Western officials thought the question of NATO extending to all of Germany, not just the territory of the current Federal Republic, had been firmly settled for weeks. But this remark seemed even more worrying because, at the April 10 meeting of Allied political directors, Dieter Kastrup had refused to endorse a clear position on the NATO issue. The Western understandings seemed to need of repair, lest an open rift emerge that might confuse the Allies and embolden the Soviet Union.⁶

Zoellick called Elbe to discuss Washington's unease with Genscher's statements. Elbe said that Genscher was just trying to "pocket" Soviet willingness to let unification proceed without forcing them to admit that the result would be unification in NATO. Elbe assured Zoellick that there was no change of position; it was just a misunderstanding. To clarify matters Zoellick and Blackwill prepared a letter from Baker to Genscher on May 9 detailing the arguments against "decoupling" and, referring to Genscher's radio interview, reiterating that the West should not accept, even temporarily, any qualification on Germany's NATO membership, "for then we may never be able to change it." Baker then sent parallel letters to Hurd in

⁵ See Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, pp. 126-129; Pond, Beyond the Wall, pp. 213-214; Claus Gennrich, "Genscher begrüßt Moskaus Bereitschaft zur Trennung der inneren und äusseren Aspekte der Vereinigung," Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, May 8, 1990, p. 1; author interview with Teltschik, Gütersloh, June 1992; and Teltschik's somewhat reticent published account in 329 Tage, pp. 224-226. The quotations from the meeting between Kohl, Seiters, and Genscher are from an account conveyed informally to American officials at the time from a foreign ministry source who heard an account of the meeting from Genscher. The account is consistent with other evidence. A Chancellery official later told Pond how relieved he was that Teltschik left the full details of this episode out of his published diary. Pond, Beyond the Wall, p. 323 n. 4. Blackwill called Teltschik to confirm that the United States strongly agreed with the position being taken by the Chancellery, and Elbe alludes to Blackwill's concerns as well.

⁶ Kiessler and Elbe refer to the May 7 interview with Deutschlandfunk (Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, p. 126) without mentioning this language. American officials spotted Genscher's formulation of the NATO position, a throwback to his original "Tutting formula" in a report on the interview carried on the UPI wire in a May 7 story filed by Joseph Fleming.

London and Dumas in Paris to make sure there were no other misunderstandings.

Genscher settled the "decoupling" issue definitively on May 10, when he reported to the Bundestag that "the German people are entitled to German unity and to the external aspects of unification being settled without delay. We do not want to encumber a united Germany with unsettled questions." First Elbe told Zoellick, then Genscher assured Baker in writing, that there were no disagreements. But Genscher's message ducked the NATO issue that had been raised in Baker's letter. Hurd came to Bonn a few days later and was also reassured in general terms while also finding Genscher elusive on the details of the Allied position on NATO. Nonetheless, for the time being, the Western governments appeared united. The mood in West Germany was ebullient, with economic and monetary union agreed and the Allies on board concerning the external issues of German unity.⁷

The Americans too believed that the West had won round one. Reviewing the matter, Rice and Zelikow advised Blackwill that, "we have essentially won the battle on the first phase" of the Two Plus Four by delaying the onset of the talks, winning Western agreement to the narrow mandate, and also lining up Allied agreement that the talks should restore full German sovereignty without any new discriminatory constraints imposed on the new Germany. The Soviets however wanted long, complicated negotiations on the external issues, first with their "decoupling" idea and also by asking for full negotiation of a "peace treaty" at a conference that would include Italy, Belgium, Yugoslavia, Poland, and other neighbors of Germany.

⁷ State 148610, "Message to Foreign Minister Genscher," 9 May 90; State 154828, "Message to Foreign Ministers Hurd and Dumas," 15 May 90; Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 10 May 90 (Elbe had faxed to Zoellick a copy of Genscher's May 10 statement to the Bundestag); Letter from Genscher to Baker, 16 May 90 (delivered in Washington and transmitted to Baker in Moscow). For Genscher's Bundestag statement see Hans Viktor Böttcher, ed., Materjalen zu Deutschlandfragen: Politiker und Wissenschaftler nehmen Stellung 1989-91 (Bonn: Kulturstiftung der deutschen Vertriebenen, 1991), pp. 62-65. Genscher gave press interviews denying that he had ever supported "decoupling." E.g., Der Spiegel, May 14, 1990, pp. 28-30. On May 10 Kohl also addressed the Bundestag, but limited his remarks to a report on the special EC Summit in Dublin and the progress of negotiations with the GDR on economic and monetary union. British officials debriefed American diplomats on Hurd's May 15 talks with Genscher in Bonn. For a sense of West German confidence, and warm feelings toward the United States and President Bush's "fantastic" support for Germany, see Memcon of President Bush's Meeting with CSU Chairman and Finance Minister Theo Waigel, 8 May 90.

Gorbachev had called for such an elaborate conference on May 9, in his speech commemorating the anniversary of the 1945 Soviet victory over Germany.⁸

The Soviets wanted desperately to buy time. Yet in Washington the NSC staff were convinced that the process of unification should go even faster. The current plan was for economic union to occur in July, the Two Plus Four to finish in October and "present their results" (Genscher's May 10 phrase) to the November CSCE Summit, hold the West German federal elections in December, and then complete unification in early 1991, holding the first all-German elections later that year.

The NSC staff argued that Bonn should instead try to accomplish internal unification under Article 23 at the same time as completion of the Two Plus Four, before the fall CSCE Summit. They thought "internal unification should not be an unsettled issue when the pan-European debating society is convened."

Zoellick agreed and the Americans even quietly began to discuss contingency plans to prepare for the worst case: America, Britain, and France would indicate their readiness to give up their Four Power rights at the moment of German unification, even if the Soviets did not. As the White House staffers had argued, the Soviets "must know that, after a given date, the West will declare the game over, devolve their own Four Power rights, and deploy legal arguments to the effect that all Four Power rights -- including the Soviets' -- have now lapsed." Moscow would then have the unpopular task of insisting to the German people that they unilaterally retained occupation rights over the newly united and democratic German state. The West would prepare, very secretly, an alternative settlement arrangement to be used if a settlement including the Soviets could not be negotiated in time for a unification of Germany in the autumn of 1990.⁹

⁸ See M.S. Gorbachev, "Lessons of War and Victory," Pravda, May 9, 1990, pp. 1-2, in FBIS-SOV 90-090, May 9, 1990, pp. 38-47, esp. pp. 46-47.

⁹ Rice & Zelikow to Blackwill, "Two Plus Four: The Next Phase," 10 May 90; see also Zoellick's notes to himself, dated May 9, in his office files.

This proposal turned in part on a question of international law. Could three of the Four Powers give up their Quadripartite rights without the consent of the fourth? Zoellick, advised by State's lawyers, was doubtful. The U.S. had insisted for decades, beginning with the second Berlin crisis (1958-61), that

Just as the White House was concluding that Kohl should try to complete internal unification earlier, the chancellor was also leaning toward choosing a faster pace. Kohl was encouraged by the essentially neutral outcome of the just-concluded Two Plus Four ministerial meeting in Bonn. There was a spot of trouble domestically. On May 13 the CDU suffered losses to the SPD in the state elections held in Lower Saxony. Kohl feared that the SPD was scoring points with attacks on the cost of monetary union with the GDR. The German chancellor could not give the West German electorate time to become disillusioned with the high costs of unity. Instead, Kohl prepared to advance the date of unification, gambling that he could turn the ebbing tide of voter sentiment in six months. On May 14 Kohl announced that he might advance the date of unification and consider a combined or concurrent election in the former GDR at the time of the scheduled federal election.¹⁰

The next day, May 15, Kohl told Hurd, who was visiting Bonn, that the German train was now arriving at the station -- either the Germans got on or they let it go, in which case there would not be another opportunity during his lifetime. Foreign policy, Kohl added, was like mowing grass for hay. You had to gather what you had cut in case of a thunderstorm.¹¹ Kohl too could see the ominous clouds

one of the Four Powers (in this case the USSR) could not unilaterally abandon its rights over Berlin to the Germans (in this case the GDR). The State Department lawyers, led by Michael Young and Dan Koblitz, had not written a formal opinion stating that Four Power rights could be extinguished only if all Four Powers agreed. After all, once such an opinion was drafted it could be quite inconvenient should the United States government later decide a different view was politically essential. But the lawyers, steeped in years of effort to protect Allied rights in Berlin, clearly disapproved of any policy that endorsed the principle of unilateral abrogation of Four Power rights. When Baker traveled to Bonn, his briefing papers on this point said only that: "If the Soviets try to hold up termination of rights pending a substantive arrangement more to their liking, we may find ourselves in a bargaining situation." Secretary's Briefing Papers, "Two-plus-Four Talking Points: Termination of Four-Power Rights," 24 Apr 90.

Rice and Zelikow understood this legal argument but thought the West, in the final analysis, had to be able to counter a Soviet attempt to insist on retention of Four Power rights. So Rice and Zelikow thought a legal defense, if a thin one, would have to be constructed by adopting the old Soviet arguments of the 1950s, strengthened by the genuine self-determination of the German people.

¹⁰ See "Die CDU will jetzt gesamtdeutsche Wahlen um die Jahreswende," Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, May 15, 1990, p. 1; Eagleburger (Acting) to President Bush (for his evening reading), 15 May 90; Mulholland to Zoellick, "FRG: Kohl's Call for Early All-German Elections," 21 May 90.

¹¹ On the Hurd-Kohl meeting see Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 235; Bonn 15540, "Hurd's May 15 Visit to Bonn," 16 May 90 (based on firsthand British reports of the meeting).

gathering in Moscow.

A day after seeing the British foreign secretary, May 16, Kohl flew to Washington to talk matters over in person with George Bush. This time Genscher and defense minister Stoltenberg came with him. The two leaders had no difficulty coming to a common understanding on getting internal unification done as quickly as possible. Kohl at one point stopped and offered Bush a warm tribute. "I do not mean to embarrass you," he said. "But for us Germans and Europeans George Bush is a stroke of good luck."

With little dividing them, the two leaders concentrated on the Soviet Union. Kohl saw the Bush-Gorbachev summit at the end of May as a turning point. Looking ahead, Kohl thought three events would be crucial: the Bush-Gorbachev meeting, the July NATO summit in London, and the July G-7 Economic Summit in Houston. Kohl urged Bush to set the direction for these events and give the West the leadership it needed. Kohl promised that Bush could count on his support.

Kohl specifically pledged that in the months ahead he would be unshakable on the question of Germany's membership in NATO and the need to maintain the American military presence, both nuclear and conventional forces, in Germany. In a small session Bush asked Kohl for his honest opinion about German public support for keeping the American soldiers on their territory. Kohl's answer was that U.S. troops were indispensable to NATO and NATO was indispensable to Germany. As he looked at the future of Europe even beyond the year 2000, he saw the U.S. in Europe as a matter of course. If the Europeans allowed the Americans to leave it would be a great defeat, a defeat on the scale of Wilson's failure to keep America engaged in Europe after World War I.

Both leaders agreed that Soviet troops should leave Germany soon after unification. Kohl and Genscher wanted to let them stay temporarily, for a period of no more than three years. The date must be fixed. Bush just wanted Soviet troops to leave Germany as soon as possible. He thought a withdrawal period of three years might even be too generous. Genscher assured Bush that he wanted Soviet troops out too, and that he rejected any attempt to equate the status of Soviet and American

forces in Germany.

Kohl became emotional. "George," he said, "don't worry about those who draw parallels between U.S. and Soviet forces. We will push this through. We'll put our political existence at stake for NATO and the political commitment of the United States in Europe."¹²

The Soviets Start Asking for Money

The relationship with Bonn was now firmly set and would remain so until unification was complete. But the Soviet Union was another matter altogether. American officials would not compromise their objectives for Gorbachev's sake, but they still cared deeply about Gorbachev's future and the future of his "new thinking." Neither they nor the West Germans wanted to rely solely on their ability to isolate Moscow and turn back every Soviet diplomatic move. Thus, Washington and Bonn alike were working on an "incentives package" or "dignity package" for the Soviets that could convince Gorbachev and at least some of his supporters that Moscow's concerns were being addressed and that the USSR would remain an important player in the new European order.

The Americans began to move toward a design that rested on three assumptions. First, if the U.S. and FRG gave Gorbachev room for maneuver on issues that mattered to him -- particularly the Baltic problem-- and provided limited economic assistance to the USSR, the Soviet leader might be persuaded to close the deal on Germany. Second, there needed to be visible changes in NATO, so that the Soviet Union could accept the bitter pill of Germany's unification within the Western

¹² On the Bush-Kohl conversations see Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 236-239; Memcons for President's Meetings with Chancellor Kohl, 17 May 90. For Eagleburger's separate meetings with Genscher, see Eagleburger to President Bush (for his evening reading), 17 May 90; Dobbins (Acting) to Zoellick, "The Kohl-Genscher Visit," 18 May 90. The same concerns about the future of American troops in Germany and forthright West German support for a continued US presence dominated the President's meeting a week later with the chairman of the FDP, Otto Lambsdorff. See Memcon for President's Meeting with Otto Graf Lambsdorff, 24 May 90. During this discussion Bush suggested that, both to help get Soviet troops and give economic incentives to Moscow, Bonn should offer to build housing for withdrawn troops. The U.S. noticed that Chancellor Kohl began referring to this idea in conversations around the end of May, but this may just be a coincidence.

alliance. Third, the Germans would work out financial arrangements with the Soviet Union concerning the GDR's economic obligations and, perhaps, additional monetary assistance to the U.S.S.R. There was a kind of division of labor emerging with Bonn. It was now up to the United States to deliver reassurance and cover for the Soviet Union's acceptance of Germany unity -- superpower to superpower.

But giving Gorbachev room to maneuver in the Baltics was not an easy matter. The United States could not simply countenance whatever the Soviets wanted to do there. After the Lithuanians declared their independence in March, Gorbachev authorized military maneuvers in the republic, deployed more KGB troops there, confiscated private weapons and disarmed the local national guard, seized printing presses and Communist party property, and imposed economic sanctions -- including a cutoff of oil and natural gas. The American press was filled with calls for a forceful reaction from the United States. Bush resisted the pressure -- with the White House and State Department carefully controlling the daily responses of press spokesmen Margaret Tutwiler and Marlin Fitzwater to events in Lithuania.

Encouraged by Bush, Kohl and Mitterrand tried to defuse the crisis by sending a joint letter on April 26 to the Lithuanian leaders asking them to suspend their declaration of independence. The Americans debated hotly whether the United States, itself, should pressure the Lithuanians to accede to the German and French initiative. Gates, Blackwill, and Rice were opposed, arguing that American fingerprints should not be found on an effort to dissuade the Baltic states from seeking independence. Scowcroft, Baker, and Ross believed, however, that the U.S. could send "indirect" messages to the Lithuanians that the United States wanted to see a resolution. A delicately worded message was delivered to the Vilnius leadership by a third party emissary. Primed by the Americans, the Lithuanians endorsed the Kohl-Mitterrand proposal in order to reduce tensions. Also primed by the Americans, Gorbachev's spokesman said the Lithuanian reaction was encouraging. The Kremlin would consider reducing its natural gas embargo.

On May 1 the U.S. Senate voted to withhold trade benefits from the Soviet Union until Moscow lifted its embargo and began negotiating with the Lithuanians.

On May 3 Bush met the Lithuanian prime minister, Kazimera Prunskiene, and she agreed that independence could be postponed until 1992 if there were constructive negotiations with Moscow.¹³ So when Bush saw Kohl he conveyed his pleasure with the Kohl-Mitterrand letter, but reminded the chancellor that the United States was in no position to lean on the Lithuanians in the same way. Tensions eased for the moment. But, as the U.S.-Soviet summit approached, pressures grew on the American administration to adopt the tougher line being urged upon it by the U.S. Senate.

The Baltic crisis complicated the already difficult problem of when and how to provide economic assistance to the Soviet Union. The topic had surfaced at last when Shevardnadze spoke with Kohl in Bonn on May 4. Shevardnadze had finally asked for money.

At the instruction of Gorbachev and prime minister Ryzhkov, Shevardnadze asked for financial credits, a line of hard currency credit that Moscow could use as foreign exchange in purchasing foreign goods. These would be loans, new debts for the Soviet government, but Gorbachev needed the money. The rapid January 1990 agreement to deliver emergency food aid had defused some of the anger Gorbachev had felt toward Kohl in December 1989. Now the West Germans, again in a diplomatic stalemate, realized that it would be hard for Moscow to sustain a full-fledged confrontation over unification at the very moment that Moscow was seeking financial help. Kohl was determined to help as much as he could.

Without informing his cabinet (but telling Genscher about Shevardnadze's request on May 7), Kohl contacted Hilmar Kopper of Deutsche Bank and Wolfgang Röller of Dresdner Bank. He decided to send Teltschik and the bankers to Moscow, in secret, to explore what the Soviets needed and what could be done. On May 8 Kvitsinsky said that his government wanted twenty billion D-Marks in credits (about twelve billion dollars). Western governments should guarantee repayment of the

¹³ See Michael Beschloss & Strobe Talbott, At the Highest Levels: The Inside Story of the End of the Cold War (Boston: Little, Brown, 1992), pp. 202-207.

loans, Kvitsinsky said, to clear away any rumors that the Soviets are unreliable. This would open the way for the Soviets to get even more credits from the financial markets.

Teltschik soon learned from the bankers that the markets had lost confidence in Soviet creditworthiness because the Soviets were not making timely payments on their existing debts. It was obvious that the Soviets were experiencing an acute foreign exchange crisis, a smaller scale version of the problem the East Germans had also encountered. The West German government alone could not reverse this situation; at the very least a major multilateral Western effort would be needed. Teltschik, Kopper, and Röller flew secretly to Moscow on a West German military aircraft where they were met by Kvitsinsky, now assuming his new role as deputy foreign minister with responsibility for European affairs.

Teltschik met with Ryzhkov and Shevardnadze at the Kremlin on May 14. They were grateful for Kohl's quick response. They described a bleak economic picture. To maintain their reforms, they explained, they had to normalize the situation and keep living standards from sinking. Ryzhkov wanted an immediate extension of an unconditional credit of one and a half to two billion rubles to meet current payments and quell whispering about Soviet creditworthiness. In the longer term they would 10-15 billion more rubles to be paid off over ten to fifteen years, with no payments due for five years. At the time one ruble was equal to about one D-Mark (or about 60 cents). Teltschik, who is the key source for all that happened, promised that Kohl would do what he could. He also made it clear that such support had to be part of a package that included a solution to the whole German question. Shevardnadze agreed.

The Soviets opened their foreign exchange situation to the German visitors. They disclosed more than 24 billion D-Marks in outstanding foreign debts, a quarter owed to the Germans and most of the remainder owed, in order of importance, to the Japanese, Italians, French, Austrians, and British.

Teltschik then met directly with Gorbachev, who again linked the credit issue to continuation of his overall program of economic reform and perestroika.

Gorbachev liked the idea of a bilateral treaty of friendship with Germany. It would be a pillar of his vision of the common European home.

But on the security questions, Gorbachev said, he had to speak from the heart. It had to be handled in a way that the people of the Soviet Union did not believe the security of the USSR was endangered. He thought the best solution was to go beyond both blocs, get rid of both NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Teltschik gave no ground on the security issues, instead emphasizing the historic importance of a treaty between Germany and the Soviet Union, as well as the readiness to cooperate -- in the context of a general solution to the German question. He reminded Gorbachev that the Soviet leader had once talked about bringing Kohl to the Caucasus to visit the region where he grew up. Would Gorbachev still be willing to do this? After the meeting Kvitsinsky remained behind and emerged to tell Teltschik that, yes, Gorbachev was interested in such a visit from Kohl. Teltschik returned to Bonn the same day, convinced that Kohl was finding the right ways to address some of the Soviet Union's central concerns.¹⁴

When Kohl met with Bush in Washington a few days later, the Soviet request for money was at the top of his agenda. Privately, with only Bush, Scowcroft, and Teltschik present, Kohl disclosed the Soviet request to Bush and told Bush about Teltschik's trip to Moscow. Kohl expected the Soviets to make a similar request for credits directly to Washington, in part to buy wheat. Kohl said his government would be willing to guarantee a loan of five billion D-Marks (about \$3 billion).

Bush said he could not follow suit. Though he would not aggravate Gorbachev's problems with Lithuania, neither could he guarantee large loans to Moscow unless the Soviets changed their policy toward this Baltic republic. Bush also said that handing the Soviets more debt, without real economic reforms in place,

¹⁴ Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 221, 226-228, 230-235. Beschloss and Talbott assert that, during his trip to Moscow, Teltschik pledged to Gorbachev that Bonn would finance and provision the Soviet troops in Germany for several years, and would build housing for them when they returned to the USSR. At the Highest Levels, p. 209. There is no confirmation of this in the only published primary source, Teltschik's recollections, and Beschloss & Talbott (or their source) may be confusing the May 1990 discussion of credits with issues discussed months later.

did not seem to be a good idea. He admitted though that Gorbachev sounded desperate.

Kohl urged Bush to change his mind. But Bush stood firm. He could not grant most favored nation trading status to the Soviets either. Kohl predicted that Gorbachev would ask for money when he came to Washington for the summit meeting at the end of May. Bush still argued, though, that large loans would not be repaid under existing circumstances. Kohl disagreed. He urged Bush to help Gorbachev, not wait for him to be overthrown.

Did Kohl think there would be a military takeover?, Bush asked. Yes, a civilian group backed by the military. He urged Bush again to think about the upcoming summit. Gorbachev needed to be able to stand beside the American president as an equal. Bush said he would treat Gorbachev as an equal, moving forward on political relations and arms control. But America probably could not give Gorbachev money, not unless they changed their policy toward Lithuania. Kohl promised to warn Gorbachev about the importance America attached to the Lithuanian problem and the need for more economic reform. Both Kohl and Bush agreed that the whole discussion must remain strictly confidential. Kohl's cabinet still did not know the details.¹⁵ The issue of economic assistance was left there -- for Bush to ponder as the U.S.-Soviet summit approached.

The Conservatives Strike Back in Moscow

The Soviet government was increasingly unsettled and anxious. The Politburo had handed Shevardnadze a tough line to take at the Two Plus Four ministerial meeting in Bonn. But Shevardnadze's reports of his meeting were clear: The West was firm and united. Soviet proposals had received no support whatsoever. Still, Shevardnadze was impressed by the friendliness he encountered from the Western side. As he wrote in his memoirs: "They constantly assured me that they understood

¹⁵ Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 237-238; Memcon for Oval Office Meeting with Chancellor Kohl, 17 May 90.

the special sensitivity of the Soviet Union to the events. I recall how Baker mentioned this factor, then said, 'We must find a solution where there won't be any winners and losers, but where everybody wins.'" Tarasenko remembered that Shevardnadze felt happy after Bonn. He had done his best, and he could report that the hard-line position had failed. In the Kremlin, Chernyayev also seized on the Bonn meeting as evidence that the current line of policy was bankrupt.¹⁶ Naturally both Shevardnadze and Chernyayev could only be helped in their internal struggle to win over Gorbachev by the discussions with Kohl on financial credits.

The conservatives, however, remained convinced that they were right. Gorbachev had called publicly on May 9 for a peace treaty, negotiated not just with the Two Plus Four participants but with all of Germany's neighbors. Gorbachev's national security adviser, Marshal Akhromeyev, dismissed U.S. arguments about the value of anchoring Germany in NATO. He was attracted to the curious idea of establishing a new Four Power command in a united Germany. He warned that proceeding to unity without Soviet consent would create an "acute situation" and threaten all East-West relations. Defense minister Yazov linked any withdrawal of Soviet troops to the simultaneous removal of Western forces from German soil. Falin was even more intransigent. Presented with American arguments for German membership in NATO he replied, "Don't treat us like kids." Falin too wanted permanent controls on Germany under Four Power auspices.¹⁷

These voices were gaining influence in Moscow, particularly the views of the professional military. During Baker's February trip to Moscow Shevardnadze had offered a number of arms control concessions. General Staff representatives had not

¹⁶ Eduard Shevardnadze, The Future Belongs to Freedom, trans. Catherine Fitzpatrick (New York: Free Press, 1991), p. 139; Anatoly Chernyayev, Shest' Let s Gorbachevym: Po dnevnikovym zapisyam (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1993), p. 348; author interviews with Tarasenko, Providence, June 1992 and Chernyayev, Moscow, January 1994.

¹⁷ These opinions were conveyed to a RAND Corporation group, led by Jim Thomson, that visited Moscow in mid-May. See the report on the trip drafted by Thomson and John Van Oudenaren and sent by Thomson to various U.S. officials, "Soviet Views on Germany," 24 May 90 (Blackwill forwarded his copy of the report to Scowcroft and Gates).

been in the room. Then, when Shevardnadze came to Washington in April, those agreements unravelled. A timid and cautious Shevardnadze was accompanied this time by the generals who were clearly there to insure that the General Staff's requirements were met. At one point, Shevardnadze told Baker that the United States would simply have to deal with Akhromeyev on several key elements.

Throughout 1989 and the beginning of 1990, the Soviet military had been strangely silent about events in Germany. But as it became clear that developments in Germany and Eastern Europe were about to threaten the basic posture of the armed forces, the men in uniform seemed to find their bureaucratic footing. Chernyayev has said that it was the CFE negotiations that heightened the sensitivity of the armed forces to the Soviet Union's deteriorating position in Central Europe. The General Staff, headed by General Mikhail Moiseyev, moved decisively in the spring to circumvent the full effect of a CFE treaty's reductions and limits. The West was only later able to appreciate how the CFE treaty and the battle over Germany were a turning point in the final alienation of the Soviet military from Gorbachev, a break with fateful consequences for the future stability of the Soviet Union itself.¹⁸

Secretary Baker viewed his May 16-19 trip to Moscow as "the last high-level opportunity to complete preparations for a productive, results-oriented summit." He

¹⁸ Chernyayev quoted from remarks at a February 1993 conference at Princeton, published in Fred I. Greenstein & William C. Wohlforth, eds., Retrospective on the End of the Cold War, Center of International Studies Monograph No. 6 (Princeton: Center of International Studies, 1994), p. 22. Chernyayev also discussed Moiseev's stance on CFE, an attitude well known to U.S. officials. The Americans did not know about the plans for CFE circumvention, however, and could only reconstruct the circumstances later. The draft CFE treaty would effectively halve the Soviet armored equipment held west of the Urals. One measure to avoid making enormous reductions was to begin massive movements of armored equipment from Europe to Asia before the treaty came into effect. These movements were probably approved in 1989 and were well underway on a vast scale by the fall of 1990. Other, more flagrant, measures taken to circumvent CFE became a subject of acrimonious East-West negotiations in the fall and winter of 1990-1991. On these turning points in political-military decisionmaking, and the effects on the Soviet political system as a whole, see Harry Gelman, The Rise and Fall of National Security Decisionmaking in the Former USSR, RAND Report R-4200-A (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 1992), esp. pp. 37-40. For military anger over Germany, see also the early but perceptive analysis in John Van Oudenaren, The Role of Shevardnadze and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Making of Soviet Defense and Arms Control Policy, RAND Report R-3898-USDP (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 1990), pp. 55-61; for helpful background see also Benjamin S. Lambeth, Is Soviet Defense Policy Becoming Civilianized?, RAND Report R-3939-USDP (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 1990), pp. 35-53.

intended to concentrate on Lithuania, Germany, and arms control.¹⁹ But the talks in Moscow did not go well. After discussions with Shevardnadze on May 16-17, Baker reported to Bush that, "after really slugging it out on the arms control issues" there was only modest progress. The Soviet military was playing a bigger bureaucratic role. Shevardnadze was obliged to read his whole arms control brief in front of his delegation, as if to show he could be trusted to make the points. As in Washington, other U.S. delegation members thought Shevardnadze was not in command of his material and seemed disorganized. To Baker Shevardnadze seemed distracted "and a little overwhelmed by everything. The economic problems, the public mistrust, the sense of losing control, the fear of the nationality issue, and concerns about Germany all are weighing very heavily."²⁰

On the final day of these Baker-Shevardnadze meetings, Shevardnadze suddenly cancelled the morning meeting -- an encounter that Baker was counting on to break the logjam before the upcoming Washington summit. A frustrated Baker called Ross and Rice together and asked what they believed to be going on. Rice and Ross decided to go and find out. They arrived at the Obsonyak -- the meeting house of the foreign ministry -- to find the Soviets in the midst of an interagency meeting. Akhromeyev, Moiseyev and Shevardnadze were all there. Clearly, the Soviet leadership was in no position to negotiate with the American secretary of state.

The Soviets were immobilized and the CFE negotiations, so essential to progress on Germany and preparation for the fall CSCE Summit, were stalled. As NSC staff arms control expert Arnold Kanter put it later, "We got nowhere." The Americans tried. Bartholomew and CFE Ambassador Woolsey introduced new proposals that went beyond what their NATO negotiating partners had agreed to offer, even beyond what other agencies had agreed to back in Washington. Shevardnadze conceded the American linkage between a CSCE summit at the end of 1990 and

¹⁹ Baker to President Bush, "May Moscow Ministerial," 15 May 90.

²⁰ Secto 7013 (from Moscow), "Memorandum for the President: Moscow, May 17," 18 May 90; author's notes of debrief from Rice and Kanter after their return from Moscow.

signature of a CFE treaty, but he deferred on CFE substance to a working group where the Soviet delegates just asked questions about the new American ideas.²¹

The Americans and Soviets did begin to explore ways to use CFE limits on military personnel to address the size of the German armed forces, the Bundeswehr, in a united Germany. NATO Allies had already agreed that a follow-on CFE negotiation, to begin after the current treaty was signed, could consider putting further limits on forces in a central zone of Europe, since such geographic limits were already part of the current CFE approach.²² But the Soviet Union wanted to negotiate

²¹ Author's notes of debrief from Kanter. American CFE negotiators were usually scrupulous about never going beyond what their NATO partners had agreed to offer. That they broke NATO discipline on this occasion is an indicator of the exceptional urgency attached to progress in CFE. Baker did warn his NATO colleagues on May 14 that in Moscow he would be "probing Soviet bottom lines" in CFE by discussing U.S. ideas. "Some of these ideas have been discussed within the Alliance in general terms, but I will present these solely as U.S. views that still require Allied agreement." The U.S. suggested revised limits for combat aircraft, a higher allowance for Soviet equipment in Europe under the CFE treaty's "sufficiency rule"; a new approach on numbers of inspections; a new position on how to define armored equipment covered by the agreement, and other measures. See State 154365, "CFE: Letter to Allied Foreign Ministers," 14 May 90.

²² U.S. ambassador to CFE James Woolsey, believing he had Scowcroft's blessing, wanted to go further and tell the Soviets that Washington could accept a CFE provision specifying that "forces in central Europe, including personnel, could be dealt with" in the CFE follow-on negotiations. The commitment to follow-on negotiations was far less controversial than the offer to single out "personnel" in "Central Europe" as a category for future limits. Woolsey thought JCS chairman Powell and defense secretary Cheney liked this idea because it would reopen the February Ottawa agreement on stationed manpower that the Pentagon considered too confining. There ensued a complex debate over whether limits on "personnel" was the right way to limit any forces in a future negotiation. Bob Gates and Kanter cabled General Scowcroft and Bob Blackwill from Moscow, concerned about Woolsey's idea. They pointed out that limits on personnel in Central Europe were worthless unless they encompassed Soviet troops in the western USSR, not just central Europe, and such limits could not be verified. Nor was it clear that such a vague promise of future limits would satisfy Soviet concerns about the Bundeswehr, while such an American promise might alarm the Germans. Bob Gates' European Strategy Steering Group had already balked at endorsing such a proposal. Gates concluded: "Brent, maybe I'm missing something, but this seems premature to me at this point. We should see how significant this issue is, consult with our Allies -- at least the Germans, figure out what we're talking about more concretely, and at some propitious moment declare that personnel (Bundeswehr) will be dealt with in CFE II. But, why the rush now? Jim Baker agrees." NSC staff in Washington agreed too, and General Scowcroft sent Gates and Kanter a message saying he concurred with their assessment. The US would stick to its previous position. The CFE follow-on negotiations "would address a range of issues, including the question of further limitations on conventional forces in a central zone." "There is no need," General Scowcroft concluded, "to go further at this time with the Soviets or with Kohl." See privacy channel message from Gates and Kanter to Scowcroft and Blackwill, 15 May 90 (16 May in Moscow); Wilson through Gordon (Acting) and Blackwill to Scowcroft, "Moscow Ministerial: CFE Personnel Limits," 16 May 90; privacy channel message from Scowcroft to Gates and Kanter, 16 May 1990. The approved formula, "question of further limitations of conventional forces in a central zone" had already been agreed to in NATO when Allied foreign ministers met on May 3. Since the current CFE

limits on German forces now, not later, and they wanted to do it in the Two Plus Four talks, not in CFE. Baker completely rejected this position. Shevardnadze asked if the matter could just be discussed in Two Plus Four with special limits recorded in CFE? No, came Baker's answer.²³

Discussions concerning the political questions pertaining to Germany's future were only slightly more fruitful. On the morning of May 18, Zoellick, Rice and Seitz met with Kvitsinsky and Bondarenko to exchange working-level views on Germany. In an intense discussion Zoellick said he understood how difficult the German issue was for the USSR, both emotionally and psychologically. Washington was trying to be sensitive to this history. But long-term stability was the goal. That was why the US did not want to single out Germany or discriminate against it. Zoellick defended the American concept of the Two Plus Four as a "steering group" as a way of addressing the Soviet desire for "synchronization," with the Two Plus Four necessarily moving issues to the fora where they could legitimately be decided.

For the first time Zoellick offered the Soviets a comprehensive picture of the "incentives" package to persuade Moscow to accept German membership in NATO. It was a "nine-point package" that Zoellick had put together, working with Seitz and the NSC staff. The nine points were as follows:

- 1) Holding follow-on CFE negotiations to deal with the question of force size throughout Europe, including Central Europe. That was another reason to get the current CFE treaty done as quickly as possible, in order to move on to these other issues.
- 2) Moving up the start of new arms control negotiations on short-range nuclear forces.
- 3) German agreement to reaffirm that the FRG would neither possess nor produce nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons.
- 4) Agreement excluding NATO forces from the former territory of the GDR,

structure also had sublimits on a central zone within the larger European area, the language promised nothing new.

²³ Account based on author's notes of debrief from Kanter.

though only during a transition period.

- 5) German efforts to grant the Soviets a respectable transition period for the withdrawal of all Soviet troops from German territory.
- 6) A review of NATO strategy to take into account the changes which had occurred in Europe. Put simply, NATO's posture would be look very different in terms of both conventional and nuclear forces.
- 7) Settlement of Germany's future borders.
- 8) Enhancing the CSCE to insure a significant role for the USSR in the new Europe. The U.S. had called for a summer meeting to prepare new CSCE ideas, followed by a meeting of CSCE ministers in September, and capped by the CSCE summit in Paris (which, Zoellick added, remained conditioned on conclusion of a CFE agreement).
- 9) Finally, satisfactory treatment of the Soviet Union's economic ties with Germany, preferably in a way that benefits perestroika. This was, of course, an issue for the two German states to discuss with the USSR.²⁴

Zoellick urged Kvitsinsky to accept German membership in NATO as the most stable solution, one which would eliminate any German push to acquire an independent nuclear force of their own. The goal should be to achieve unification and termination of Four Power rights before the end of the year.

Kvitsinsky gave no ground, though he did not mention Gorbachev's "peace treaty" proposal of the previous week. The Soviets, he said, were not afraid of any attempts to confront them with a fait accompli, although there were those who talked this way. A bit ominously, Kvitsinsky added that some even thought that without Soviet consent the unification of Germany would not take place. The crux of the matter, for Kvitsinsky, was the relationship between what happened in the Two Plus Four and the development of the all-European process. Zoellick's nine points would need to be studied.

²⁴ On May 11 State's European Bureau had been asked to draft a checklist of ideas for the "package." Unable to wait for completion of this work, Zoellick went ahead and worked up the nine points offered in Moscow. The European Bureau eventually came with a checklist that refined and added to the nine points, but Zoellick decided to stay with the list that had already been tabled.

The Soviet Union still favored a separation of internal unification from relinquishing Four Power rights. Kvitsinsky said his government would want to see how any agreements were implemented by a new German government before it would give up its Four Power rights. To show what he had in mind for the Two Plus Four and German obligations, Kvitsinsky focused on the military strength of the future German armed forces. The Six, he said (the Soviets never liked the connotation of German primacy implied by the words "Two Plus Four"), could decide on a ceiling for the future Bundeswehr and where forces would be deployed in Germany. A CFE II treaty could, as the Americans desired, include these German troop limits. But the decision of the Six would have to be respected and implemented regardless of what happened at the talks in Vienna. The U.S. should stop hiding behind references to CFE or other fora. Decisions to promote European stability needed to be made now, in the Two Plus Four, as a second chance might not present itself.

Kvitsinsky made sure the Americans had no doubt that, for Moscow, full German membership in NATO was out of the question. This was not a bargaining ploy. It was unacceptable, and no Soviet parliament would approve a treaty allowing such a thing. If countries were worried about the behavior of a neutral Germany they should solve that problem by setting down rules for German behavior in the treaty being prepared by the Two Plus Four.

Do not think, he added, that internal unification would solve the problem "automatically." Such an attempt would have negative consequences for many. Kvitsinsky concluded the discussion by saying that the Soviets could hardly imagine that Germany would adopt a position against the Soviet Union, the United States, or anyone else. That would be a tragedy for everyone.²⁵

Later the same day Baker tried out similar arguments on Germany in a long meeting with Gorbachev. Discussion of Germany dominated the private one-on-one discussion between the two men. Baker explained how neither he nor President Bush

²⁵ See Moscow 17086, "May Ministerial: Counselor Zoellick's Meeting with Soviet MFA Officials Kvitsinsky and Bondarenko on Germany, Cyprus and Other Subjects," 23 May 90.

had tried to exploit or gloat over the democratic revolutions in Central and Eastern Europe. The United States had initiated the Two Plus Four process, providing a mechanism Moscow needed to help manage the issue. The US had tried to meet legitimate Soviet interests while showing the issue could not and would not unfold without Gorbachev. He detailed the "nine point" incentives package.

Gorbachev moved the conversation to his agenda. He challenged America to prove its real intentions toward the Soviet Union, given the clashes over issues like Lithuania and Germany. Then, just as Kohl had expected, Gorbachev raised the same request for money that he had made to the West Germans. Gorbachev said he needed \$20 billion in loans and credits to overcome a significant funding gap over the next few years. America had to be involved, at least symbolically, in the loan effort. The next few years would be critical in cushioning the transition to a market economy.

Baker could offer Gorbachev little encouragement. It was hard to justify spending US taxpayer money if the Soviets were subsidizing the Cubans and economically squeezing the Lithuanians. Baker was essentially making the same points Bush had made to Kohl, in Washington, the day before. On the German question, Gorbachev took detailed notes of Baker's presentation and his nine points. He approved much of it. But he said a unified Germany in NATO was impossible for the Soviet Union. It would look like a fundamental shift in the strategic balance of forces, and jeopardize his program at home. "It will be the end of perestroika," he said.

The argument went back and forth. Gorbachev said: I know that Germany will be closer to you but it just shouldn't be in the Western Alliance. If that was unacceptable to the US, then perhaps Gorbachev would seek Soviet admission to NATO. Gorbachev also put the German issue in a larger perspective. Resolving this matter, he declared, was a real test for the ability of America and the Soviet Union to find a compatible approach that took into account a balance of interests between the two countries. A solution needed to be found. Both countries needed to think more about the issue. He would talk about it with President Bush when he came to Washington.

Reflecting on this meeting in a message back to Bush, Baker had three impressions. First, he thought Gorbachev was clearly feeling squeezed and would react strongly to any step that compounded his political difficulties at home. Second, "Germany definitely overloads his circuits right now. We ought to let the process go forward, continue to try to meet Soviet concerns, but not press them to accept our objective. It's best to let it happen." Third, given the preoccupation with Germany and Gorbachev's need to point to how the German threat would be contained, "we probably will have to get more specific on how and when Bundeswehr limits are going to be achieved if we want a CFE agreement."²⁶

A few days after Baker left Gorbachev gave an interview to Time magazine and said the Soviet Union would "never agree to entrust to it [NATO] the leading role in building a new Europe." He seemed to harden his position against including a unified Germany in the Alliance and claimed that Washington seemed ready to use any pretext to delay the departure of American troops in Europe. So both in private and in public Gorbachev appeared to be inflexible on the question of German membership in NATO. Gorbachev's adviser, Vadim Zagladin, told Condi Rice in their second meeting within three months, "There used to be two Germanies -- one was ours and one was yours. Now there will be one and you want it to be yours. That would be an unacceptable strategic shift in the balance of power." Later, Zagladin told another American that the NATO issue was a "deal-breaker" unless the

²⁶ For the Zoellick-Ross drafted presentation on Germany that Baker took into his meeting with Gorbachev, see briefing paper, "One-on-One Points: Gorbachev Meeting," undated. On the Baker-Gorbachev meeting itself, see Secto 7015 (from Moscow), "Memorandum for the President: Moscow, May 18," 19 May 90. Ross, Shevardnadze, Tarasenko, and interpreters were also present for the "one-on-one" session. On the Baker discussions in Moscow generally, including details on Lithuania and START, see Beachloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, pp. 210-213. Beachloss and Talbott have the exchange over the \$20 billion credit request occurring in the May 15 meeting with Shevardnadze, not in the May 18 meeting with Gorbachev. This is possible, but I credit Baker's careful message to Bush at the time as the more reliable account. For Teltschik's reaction to Baker's presentation of the "nine-point" package, see 329 Tage, pp. 241-243. Scowcroft phoned Teltschik on May 22 to let him know there had been no breakthrough on German issues.

Alliance underwent some radical change.²⁷

Two Plus Four political directors met in Bonn on May 22. The Western allies easily achieved a common position in consultations prior to the start of the meeting. As planned, Dufourcq, the French chairman, proposed that the final settlement include: (1) a preamble including a brief political declaration; (2) separate instruments on unity and borders, Berlin, and the termination of Four Power rights and responsibilities; and (3) Four Powers taking note of other acts such as an expected Polish-German border treaty and amendments to the FRG's Basic Law that would repeal Article 23 and other provisions allowing for the accession of additional territory into Germany. Annexation of East Germany would be the last use of Article 23.

But the meeting of the political directors was inconclusive. Bondarenko, representing the USSR, insisted that the Western outline was incomplete in its coverage of political-military issues. There was no real debate over these matters; the key issues were clearly being dealt with at a higher level.²⁸

Within the Allied camp, a potentially serious disagreement had also emerged about the timing of a final settlement. British and French lawyers were convinced

²⁷ See Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 23 May 90; Seitz through Kimmitt to Baker, "Assuring Gorbachev on NATO and Eastern Europe," 26 May 90 (drafted by EUR/SOV office director Alexander Verahbow). The *Time* interviewers, editor-in-chief McManus and Strobe Talbott, gave an advance copy of excerpts from the Gorbachev interview to American diplomats on condition that the excerpts not be disclosed to *Time*'s commercial competitors. See Moscow 17109, "Gorbachev Time Interview - German Question," 23 May 90. For the Zagladin comment to Larry Horowitz (an aide to Senator Edward Kennedy), see Foley to Eagleburger, "Kennedy Advisor in Moscow," 29 May 90 (Eagleburger passed this memo on to Baker as "worth a glance"). CIA analyses also stressed the importance of change in NATO. See CIA, "Soviet Policy on German Unification," SOV M 90-20068, 25 May 90. For another indicator of anxiety in the State Department see Sicherman (a longtime speechwriter for Shultz and Baker) to Ross and Zoellick, "Rolling on Germany and Being Rolled," undated (probably 25 May 90).

²⁸ On the meeting, see note from Dobbins (Acting) to Baker, 22 May 90 (passing along a telephone debrief from Seitz); and Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 24 May 90. A number of issues concerning Berlin were meanwhile being discussed in the "Bonn Group" which had long served as a vehicle for consultations on Berlin among the three Allied powers and the FRG. See Seitz to Zoellick, "The Bonn Group and Its Current Agenda," 12 May 90. Near the end of May a special Berlin Working Group was created, based in Berlin, to review Allied legislation affecting Berlin and prepare for the smooth termination of Four Power rights. See Bonn 16565, "Berlin Working Group -- Agreement on Mandate," 25 May 90.

that the Two Plus Four could not settle the issue of Germany's borders before Germany was unified. The FRG thought both matters could be settled simultaneously. The dispute was significant, because the British and French view led to the conclusion that the unification of Germany must precede conclusion of a settlement by the Two Plus Four. This threatened just the kind of "decoupling" of unification from the surrender of Four Power rights which America and Britain had considered so dangerous when it was suggested by Shevardnadze at the beginning of May. The American lawyers sympathized with the British and French legal arguments, but knew those arguments led to a conclusion that the United States could not accept.

Interestingly, none of the lawyers appeared to grasp that the FRG's use of Article 23 could make this worrisome legal debate irrelevant. If the GDR became part of the FRG under Article 23, the unified Germany would not be a successor state to the FRG, it would be the very same state, the FRG, under international law, albeit larger. The FRG had already pledged, in 1970, that it would respect the existing borders of Poland. The FRG had the legal authority to renew this pledge at any time. The pledge would bind a future, enlarged, FRG just as it had bound the Federal Republic in the past. All the Four Powers had to do was withdraw the qualification, the lien, they had claimed against the FRG's right to make this promise.²⁹

²⁹ At issue were diverging views of the capacity of the FRG, before unification, to make binding commitments about the nature of its borders after unification. But, "from the way German reunification took place, the identity of the subject of international law called the Federal Republic of Germany was clearly not affected in any way. ... All treaties concluded by the Federal Republic of Germany, as well as its membership in international organizations, remain unaffected by the accession of the GDR." Jochen Abr. Frowein, "The Reunification of Germany," American Journal of International Law 86 (1992): 157; see idem, "Völkerrechtliche Probleme der Einigung Deutschlands," Europa Archiv, 45 (1990): 234. Even if the law of state succession applied to the controversy (which it did not, since such rules applied only to disposition of legal obligations incurred by the former GDR), this body of international law has traditionally viewed border treaties as commitments which 'run with the land' and thereby bind the successor state. To be sure, the Ostpolitik treaties had qualified the FRG's legal capacity, reserving the final disposition of borders until a "peace treaty" settled the ultimate nature of Germany in the manner envisioned by Potsdam and other postwar conventions. But since the Two Plus Four settlement would include Four Power blessing of a final border arrangement, thereby removing any qualification on the FRG's capacity to affirm such commitments, the old qualifications would become moot. The West German government at first mangled this straightforward legal analysis by using claims of incapacity in order to avoid having to negotiate and initial, or sign, a treaty with Poland before unification was complete. But Bonn could have climbed out of

Fortunately, since U.S. and West German opposition to "decoupling" was so clear, the legal controversy subsided and by the end of May only the French (and Soviets) still insisted that unification had to occur before Germany could reassure Poland in a binding fashion and Four Power rights could be relinquished.³⁰

Limiting the Bundeswehr

Genscher recognized, as did Baker, the importance to Moscow of a guarantee concerning the size of Germany's future armed forces. The two foreign ministers

the box by claiming that, if unification occurred under Article 23, the border with Poland was already settled by the 1970 Treaty of Warsaw and would be doubly settled by FRG signature of the Two Plus Four agreement. In Bonn as in Washington, deferring to flawed legal analysis made an already difficult policy problem even harder.

State's lawyers (Young and Koblitz) were impressed by the now baseless argument of FRG "incapacity" but they nevertheless recognized that a Four Power statement defining the borders, coupled with some FRG undertaking on the matter, did seem to look awfully binding. See, e.g., Young to Zoellick and Seitz, "Legal Constraints on Timing of Settlement," 27 Apr 90. American, British, French, and West German lawyers discussed the form and timing of a settlement in London on May 8. The British and French said unification must come before a final settlement of Four Power rights. The FRG disagreed. The Americans questioned the basis for the British and French arguments. The British and French then submitted papers critiquing the US listing of options for the settlement, again renewing their view of the sequencing issue. Young and Koblitz, apparently more aware of the political preferences of their masters than was the case in London, conceded that, "As long as the Poles are satisfied with steps regarding their border worked out with the FRG, we see no legal reason why the Four Powers cannot act independent of German bilateral or domestic steps." See London 9466, "Consultations on Legal Issues Pertaining to German Unification," 16 May 90; Young to Zoellick and Seitz, "Legal Analysis of British and French Comments on US Settlement Options Paper," 14 May 90.

³⁰ This misconceived "sequencing" issue could have had serious consequences if the European Bureau had not convinced Zoellick to adopt the sensible position. On the internal debate within the U.S. government see Young to Zoellick, "Position Paper on Sequencing of German Unification and Settlement," 25 May 90 (sent without EUR clearance); and attached draft paper (dated May 29), "U.S. One Plus Three Paper on Sequencing/Simultaneity of German Unification and Settlement"; May 17 L draft of "A Settlement on Germany" (circulated by L/EUR - Koblitz to other State offices on May 17); Seitz (actually signed out by Dobbins) to Zoellick, "L's Draft for 'A Settlement on Germany,'" 29 May 90 (sent without L's clearance). Zoellick's concurrence with the EUR objections is noted on the copy of the memo in his files.

Allied lawyers met again in Paris on May 31. At this meeting Young listed options for a solution without declaring a US preference. Apparently unaware of the known preferences of the President of the United States and his Secretary of State on the question of when Four Power rights should be abandoned, Young then surfaced his office's proposal that would condition a final Two Plus Four settlement on later ratification of the German-Polish treaty. The FRG's lawyer, Hillgenberg, immediately rejected this approach since, among other problems, it would make termination of Four Power rights dependent on the actions of Poland. The French representative, deputy legal adviser Edwige Belliard, continued to insist that a Two Plus Four settlement could take place only after unification so that it could incorporate commitments made by the unified German state. See Paris 16828, "Legal Experts Meeting on German Unification, Paris, May 31, 1990," 6 Jun 90.

were in agreement that this issue should be kept outside the competence of the Two Plus Four. But putting it off to future years, in the next CFE negotiation, did not seem to do enough for the Soviets. So Genscher and his ministry developed a new CFE proposal to bring to Shevardnadze when the two ministers met in Geneva on May 23. They would propose adding a new provision to the current CFE treaty, a provision specifying that no country could have more than 400,000 troops in the central zone, defined under the treaty draft as including Britain, France, Italy, East-Central Europe, and the western military districts of the USSR. This promise would not single out Germany alone, but it would effectively limit German forces while also limiting Soviet troop concentrations in the western Soviet Union (the 'transitional' Soviet troops in eastern Germany would not be counted). Genscher was reported to be ready to add these new troop ceilings to the current CFE treaty, if that would close the deal.³¹

Scowcroft and the NSC staff believed that Genscher's proposal would be a mistake. They identified several problems. First, Genscher's staff had apparently miscalculated if they thought that Moscow could live with a ceiling of 400,000 Soviet troops in the CFE treaty's "central zone," which included the USSR's western military districts. The U.S. believed there were then about one million Soviet personnel in this zone, and exempting Soviet troops in the GDR was only a partial solution (and where would they be counted after they withdrew?). Second, the United States suspected that the West German government was not of one mind about this proposal. After all, FRG defense minister Stoltenberg had told American officials that he did not want to see Germany singled out for special troop limits.³²

³¹ FRG CFE ambassador Rudiger Hartmann informed his American counterpart, Woolsey, of Genscher's plan on May 23. Woolsey liked the idea, seeing it as another opportunity to reopen the Ottawa manpower limits which he knew were so objectionable to the Pentagon. See USVienna 1494, "CFE: Genscher Initiative on Personnel," 24 May 90.

³² Stoltenberg and Klaus Naumann, then the MOD's head of policy planning, discussed their concerns with U.S. officials, including General Scowcroft, during a visit to Washington on May 1. Naumann told Blackwill that the Federal Security Council had decided the FRG would say nothing to Moscow committing Germany to manpower ceilings in the central region, especially without solid comparable ceilings on Soviet manpower. See Zelikow through Blackwill and Kanter to General Scowcroft, "Your Meeting with FRG

Third, and perhaps most important, the proposal might open the door not to a deal, but to a whole new set of debates to bog down the ongoing CFE talks. The Soviets could offer a counter-proposal (200,000 in a smaller zone?) and the West would find the negotiations stalled. Then that stalemate would, in turn, delay progress in the Two Plus Four. It is worth taking a moment to appreciate how these Americans feared such a dry, technical arms control proposal could have momentous political implications.

The United States, now backed by the other Western powers, was trying to keep the nuclear and conventional arms control issues out of the Two Plus Four. The CFE talks were handling the problem of European forces. But if the CFE talks were stalemated then this failure might stop the Two Plus Four. The delay in CFE might also postpone the Paris CSCE summit, since it was now agreed that a CFE treaty had to be ready for signature before leaders would come to Paris.

The American strategy for a narrow mandate in the Two Plus Four relied on delicate and precise timing, with all other European negotiations falling into place in time so that Germany would be unified before December, and the next FRG elections would be all-German elections. Kohl apparently feared he could lose the elections if they were held only in the Western half of Germany and unification was still unsettled. A Lafontaine victory would then dramatically alter both U.S. and Soviet prospects for negotiating the future of Germany and Europe.

Scowcroft held a meeting with Baker, Cheney, and Powell. They agreed that Genscher's idea was problematic, but Washington had to do more than just criticize it. The U.S. had to find an alternative. The potential deadlock in CFE was now a real threat to the timetable for unification. The West had to have a new proposal for addressing Soviet demands for limits on the future German army.³³

Minister of Defense Gerhard Stoltenberg on May 1,* 30 Apr 90.

³³ The arguments against the Genscher plan were laid out in a Zelikow paper, "Four options to unblock the CFE I personnel issue," 24 May 90; and Kanter and Blackwill to Scowcroft, "Your May 25 Meeting on Arms Control," 24 May 90. The account of Scowcroft's May 25 meeting is based on author's notes of the debrief he received at the time.

While the Americans were tackling the CFE problem, Kohl wrote to Gorbachev on the issue of credits. His May 22 letter said Bonn was willing to guarantee new, untied, loans to Moscow of five billion D-Marks (about \$3 billion). Larger, long-term credits would require a multilateral Western effort. Kohl said truthfully that he had already raised the matter with Bush and would soon raise it with his EC and G-7 partners too. Kohl hoped Gorbachev would approach Two Plus Four issues in this same spirit of cooperation and friendship.³⁴

The next day Genscher met with Shevardnadze in Geneva. Genscher, like Kohl and the Americans, had always been encouraged by Shevardnadze's reasonable tone in discussing the NATO issue, even if he differed on substance. In Bonn, as in Washington, Shevardnadze was believed to be searching for a compromise. On May 14 a lengthy interview was published in which Genscher confidently predicted that the Soviets would eventually go along with a united Germany in NATO. Privately both the interviewer and Genscher's advisers wondered whether Genscher really felt as confident as he sounded. It was hard to tell. But the positions were clear. "Decoupling" was flatly ruled out; there was no longer any hint of compromise on German membership in NATO and no more talk from Bonn about the disappearance of both NATO and the Warsaw Pact.³⁵

In Geneva, Genscher and Shevardnadze had a friendly discussion, the atmosphere improved by Bonn's decision to offer Moscow the DM 5 billion in credit guarantees. Genscher outlined his own package of reassurances and incentives, similar to and coordinated with the 'nine points' Baker had elaborated a week earlier in Moscow. On May 22, in Bonn, Zoellick had debriefed Elbe so thoroughly on the 'nine points' and on the Moscow talks that, as Elbe later put it, "Genscher could employ the same points in his conversation with Shevardnadze." But Genscher added

³⁴ Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 243-244.

³⁵ See the informative interview, "Nicht den Buchhaltern überlassen," Der Spiegel, May 14, 1990, pp. 28-30 (the quote about the Soviets ultimately going along is on p. 30); for the opinions of the interviewer (Kiessler) and Elbe, see Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, pp. 135-136.

special attention to some points that he knew had special symbolic and psychological importance for the Soviets, such as caring for and respecting Soviet war monuments and military cemeteries in Germany.

Shevardnadze said he had no problem with the proposed acceleration of internal unification, declaring that Moscow would not act like a "traffic policeman." Genscher urged Shevardnadze to deal with the issue of German troop limits in the CFE negotiations, not in the Two Plus Four. He persuaded Shevardnadze to agree that the matter could be handled in CFE, as a "parallel process" to discussions of the problem among the Two Plus Four. Genscher apparently did not, however, present the details of his new CFE proposal to the Soviet foreign minister. He heard out a Soviet suggestion that future German armed forces be limited to no more than 250-300,000 soldiers, airmen, and sailors. Genscher explained why he thought any agreement that singled out Germans for unique limits on their forces would be a mistake.³⁶

Genscher flew from Geneva to Paris, debriefed the French, and flew on to Washington where he met with Baker and, briefly, with President Bush. He had been encouraged by the upbeat tone of his meeting with Shevardnadze. Bonn had also sent the economics minister, Helmut Haussmann, to Moscow as well as foreign ministry state secretary Lautenschlager to talk over how West Germany would deal with East German economic obligations to Moscow, as well as start discussions on the economics of withdrawing Soviet troops out of East Germany. On the crucial question of how to handle German troop limits, Genscher told Baker he had not yet given Shevardnadze the new proposal to amend the current CFE treaty draft with additional personnel limits applying to all armies in the broadly defined central zone of Europe. What, Genscher asked, did Baker think of this plan? Baker, aware of the misgivings that had surfaced within Washington, said it was still being studied. He

³⁶ For the quote on coordination with Zoellick, see Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, p. 150; on the Geneva talks see ibid., pp. 145-47; Claus Gennrich, "Auch die Sowjetunion hält Eile bei der Vereinigung der beide deutsche Staaten für geboren," Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, May 25, 1990, p. 2; and the debriefs given to Kohl, reported in Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 249, and to Baker, reported in Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 25 May 90.

promised to finish this analysis soon.³⁷

Genscher portrayed a Soviet leadership interested in compromise. But Mitterrand had seen Gorbachev himself on May 25. Fully briefed by Bush about Baker's just-concluded talks, Mitterrand returned the favor by telling Bush all about his five hours of talks at the Kremlin, the majority of which was spent on the question of Germany. The report was bleak. Mitterrand found that Gorbachev's "hostility to the participation of a unified Germany in NATO does not appear to me as being either fake or tactical. On this subject, he is both firm and determined."

Gorbachev repeated to Mitterrand the warning he had made in the Politburo meeting at the beginning of May. If the West tried to confront the Soviet Union with a fait accompli on Germany then the Soviet government would alter its behavior on many issues, including arms control in Europe. When Mitterrand argued for German membership in NATO as the only solution, the Soviets hinted at the possibility of a French-style membership for Germany, staying out of the Alliance military command but neither the Soviets nor the French pursued the idea. Mitterrand had the impression that Gorbachev had little room for maneuver either on Germany or on Lithuania.

So Mitterrand thought it would be very hard to try to achieve unification in the fall of 1990. As he put it, in his typically oblique way: "The usual course of diplomacy will not prevent a difficult climate in the summer and in the fall." Paris communicated the same pessimism to Kohl's office in Bonn. The Canadian foreign minister, Joe Clark, received a similarly bleak impression of Soviet attitudes when he met in Moscow on May 29 with Shevardnadze and Akhromeyev. Akhromeyev warned that ignoring Soviet views on Germany would bring about a different Soviet foreign policy and a return to more offensive military doctrines. At the end of May the Soviet bureaucracy sent out a call for new CSCE structures that could replace NATO. All the signs to Soviet experts in the State Department were that Bush should

³⁷ Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 25 May 90. On May 30 Kastrup went to Moscow for follow-up discussions with Kvitsinsky, but at that time the main action had shifted to the U.S.-Soviet summit in Washington.

"not expect to see much flexibility in the Soviet position" on Germany when Gorbachev came to Washington.³⁸

Yet a few West Germans and a few Americans, knew however about Gorbachev's private requests for financial credits. Knowing this, they gave more credence to Genscher's optimistic impressions than to the pessimism emanating from Mitterrand's or Clark's talks in Moscow. It seemed clear that the crucial insight into Soviet thinking would emerge in just a few days, when Gorbachev journeyed to Washington for his summit meeting with President Bush.

The Turning Point

By the end of May, as Gorbachev contemplated his trip to the United States, he faced a turning point in the course of East-West relations and perestroika. The stakes were enormous in continued cooperation with the West. Gorbachev and Shevardnadze had explained both publicly and privately that their first priority was domestic reform. That meant cutting military expenditures and avoiding the distraction of a major international crisis.

It also appears that both Gorbachev and Shevardnadze had vague but strong, perhaps exaggerated, hopes for Western economic assistance. They believed that a temporary infusion of capital, even if it increased Soviet indebtedness, could make the difference in effecting the all-important transition to a more viable economy. They clearly thought a more prosperous future would be linked somehow to much greater trade and investment from the West. Their highest priority, domestic reform, was therefore linked inextricably with the notion of cooperation with the West.

³⁸ Attali, on Mitterrand's behalf, conveyed an identically bleak assessment of the Moscow meetings to Teltschik in Bonn. Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 247-248, 250. For Mitterrand's report to Bush see the message sent from the Elysee to the White House through special channels, 22 May 90; letter from Mitterrand to Bush, delivered on 30 May 90; and Paris 15967, "Mitterrand's Moscow Meetings with Gorbachev on May 25," 28 May 90. On reports of the Canadian visit to Moscow, see Seitz to Baker, "Shevardnadze's Talk with Foreign Minister Clarke," May 30, 1990. Shevardnadze referred to Gorbachev's Time interview in calling once again for rapid creation of totally new all-European structures to help solve the problems associated with the "building of German unity." He stressed the need for a consensus solution. E. Shevardnadze, "Europe: A Generation's Mission," Izvestija, May 30, 1990, p. 5. On the foreign ministry proposal, which Teltschik found encouraging, see 329 Tage, p. 247.

The dilemmas were acute. Until 1989 the reforms might encounter opposition at home but they seemed to have few costs to the Soviet Union's international position. The price was paid only in the devalued coin of Soviet influence in the Third World and esoteric concessions in the START and INF talks. In return, Gorbachev was the toast of world capitals, encouraging Marxist revisionists with the hope that socialism had finally acquired a human face. But 1989 had been a hard year. The first half of 1990 had been even harder. The democratic revolutions in Eastern Europe had gone further and faster than Moscow would have liked. The Warsaw Pact was mortally wounded. Still, Gorbachev and Shevardnadze seemed slow to see that the hopes for reform communism were really dead: There were no communist governments left in Eastern Europe.

The fact is that Soviet policy in Eastern Europe -- premised on the potential for reformed communism -- was now dead. But Germany and Lithuania were different. The division of Germany and Soviet dominance of its eastern half could be considered the most important achievements of half a century of Soviet foreign policy. This Soviet emplacement in the heart of Europe was the highest and last remaining measure of meaning from the vast sacrifices endured during the Great Patriotic War. Now the West, and NATO, were threatening to overrun this bastion of Soviet power. It seemed inconceivable that the USSR could submit supinely to such a reverse. Gorbachev's own political survival could be jeopardized by such a concession, and Gorbachev would face a full congress of the Soviet Communist party in July.

Then there was Lithuania. Lithuania's declaration of independence in March 1990 was a blow right at the authority which held together the Soviet Union itself. Gorbachev and Bush were both walking a tightrope. Gorbachev launched economic sanctions but held back from more violent measures. He rejected Lithuania's independence declaration, but opened talks in mid-May with Lithuanian prime minister Prunskiene on a possible "suspension" of the declaration. Bush meanwhile refused to sign a US-Soviet agreement clearing the way for more normal trade between the two countries and he refused to go along with the secret request for financial credits unless Gorbachev relaxed Soviet sanctions against Lithuania. Yet

Bush would not order retaliation against Moscow and he would not cancel the summit. Bush said privately at the time that, "I don't want people to look back 20 or 40 years from now and say, 'That's where everything went off track. That's where progress stopped.'"³⁹

Bush had also refused to go along with extending large credits to Moscow unless the Soviet Union adopted major new economic reforms. Just as he was trying to defuse the Lithuanian crisis, Gorbachev was moving on the question of economic reform too. On May 24 Soviet Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov announced a major new economic reform program, including increases in food prices. The cost of bread would triple. A wave of panic buying and public unrest followed. Gorbachev addressed the nation on television on May 27, pleading for calm. (The economic reform measures were eventually rejected by the Supreme Soviet before they could take effect.) So Gorbachev was trying to move forward but, as if to underscore his beleaguered political situation, on May 29 the Russian legislature chose Boris Yeltsin as its president despite Gorbachev's opposition.

On Germany, Gorbachev was under pressure from much of the Politburo to stay with an unyielding policy. If he chose this option he could move decisively and assert traditional Soviet national security requirements and prerogatives. He could state firmly that the Western approach was unacceptable and would lead to major international crisis. He could present a detailed alternative plan, specifying the constraints to be placed in Germany. He could threaten to walk out of the Two Plus Four process unless the West would let that mechanism address Soviet concerns.

This tough policy might have received a good deal of popular support and would be welcomed by key institutions within the government and Party. Even if all Soviet objectives were not achieved, Moscow might recover some of the bargaining leverage it had lost in the process. Kohl would be on the defensive; his governing coalition might fracture. The East German government would be frantic. Chances of

³⁹ Quoted from account in Don Oberdorfer, The Turn: From the Cold War to a New Era, The United States and the Soviet Union 1983-1990 (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991), p. 404 (Bush quote is from Oberdorfer interview with Rice).

an SPD victory in the federal elections would rise. The shock might even help cow the Lithuanians and others who sought to exploit Soviet weakness.

Yet Gorbachev undoubtedly appreciated the dangers in this course of action. Soviet-German relations would receive a tremendous shock. The West German voters would either blame themselves and turn out Kohl -- quite possible -- or, if the Soviet diplomacy struck the wrong note, create an extraordinary reaction which would destroy much of the goodwill Gorbachev had created among the German people. Soviet-American relations would also be hurt. With political tensions high, Germany's situation unstable, and arms control progress derailed, Europe could descend into a renewal of cold war. Some in the USSR were probably quite willing to accept such a development rather than be forced to sacrifice the fruits of victory in the Great Patriotic War. The issues for Gorbachev could not have been clearer: How high a price would the Soviet Union pay to stay on the path of cooperation with the West? Would the Soviet Union trade its power in Europe for Western help at home?

Bush too faced a difficult choice. Genscher feared that an uncompromising Western policy on Germany could threaten Gorbachev's political survival. Kohl, though not suggesting any compromises on Germany, had in effect warned Bush that a stingy policy denying financial credits to Gorbachev could push him out of power, to be replaced by a military-dominated ruler. As Bush prepared for the summit he saw the need to offer Gorbachev at least the promise or appearance of tangible economic support. But neither Bush nor Kohl appear to have considered tempering their policies on Germany in order to protect Gorbachev.

As Bush approached the first of three critical summer meetings, he gathered his advisers in the Cabinet Room. He was been told that the Soviets "remain off balance in the face of rapid unification. Their internal debate is continuing; they are still groping for alternatives." The U.S. officials had no doubt, though, that the German issue was fundamental to the Soviet leadership. Gorbachev had suggested it could affect his political survival. The US response was to express sympathy for "legitimate" Soviet concerns but refuse to single out Germany for discriminatory constraints or decouple unification from the final settlement of external issues

terminating Four Power rights. The Soviets would want to see whether Bush and Baker could deliver on their promise to change NATO, and the Americans realized that economic help for perestroika could be "the big wild card for bringing the Soviets along to our unification objectives."

Zoellick, Ross, Blackwill, and Rice all agreed that Gorbachev still had the power to cause real difficulties with German unification if he decided to seek a confrontation. There was even a concern that he might take some extraordinary action in Washington, such as a walkout, to demonstrate how seriously he viewed the impasse over Germany. The group noted that the crisis in Lithuania had increased the pressure -- both on Gorbachev and on the Americans. Bush appreciated Gorbachev's position, but said he would just have to convince Gorbachev that there was something good in all of this for the Soviet Union. The U.S. would demonstrate its understanding for Soviet worries but the bottom line, as Scowcroft advised Bush, was that "full German membership in NATO is not negotiable."⁴⁰

Back in Bonn, Genscher was anxious to add another persuasive offer to the U.S.-Soviet bargaining -- the new proposal for limiting the future size of a German army. When he met with Shevardnadze in Geneva he had held back his new plan for adding such limits to the current CFE treaty until he could gather more support from allies and at home. A skeptical Baker had withheld his blessing.

When Genscher returned to Bonn he pressed his plan on Kohl during a meeting on May 28. He urged quick action, so the plan could be given to the Americans to use with Gorbachev a few days later. Kohl wanted other agencies to

⁴⁰ I have not located any formal memcon for the meeting with Gorbachev in the Cabinet Room on May 29. The quotations are from the briefing paper for the meeting drafted by Zoellick and read carefully by Bush (he had checked off or underscored each point as he went through the paper); the account is also based on Zoellick's annotations of his paper showing his planned presentation; and Rice's recollection of the meeting. For the briefing paper see Scowcroft to President Bush, "Briefing on Germany - The Future of Europe," 27 May 90; copy of "German Unification -- Two Plus Four Process," 25 May 90 in Zoellick's files. Bush was also given an analytical paper prepared by CIA on "Soviet Policy on German Unification" that he also marked up. The quotation from Scowcroft is from a separate briefing paper, part of the "real" briefing book for the summit meeting, Scowcroft to President Bush, "Your Meeting with Gorbachev," undated (drafted by Rice). This and other memos fully described the serious political situation confronting Gorbachev at home in Moscow.

have more time to consider the matter and pushed the issue off till the next evening, when he would bring Genscher together with the defense minister and Chancellery staff in his residence.

Teltschik used the time to call Washington, and he spoke to Gates. He asked, were the Americans interested in pushing limits on German armed forces at the summit with Gorbachev? Kohl wanted to be helpful. Did the White House want to get a troop limit proposal from Bonn? Gates said no, Washington thought it would be premature to press such a new proposal. But he would talk with Scowcroft, and the two men agreed that Bush and Kohl would discuss the matter over the telephone the next day. Blackwill told his contacts in Bonn's defense ministry that the Americans were skeptical of Genscher's suggestion. Something should be done about German troop strength that would not single out the Germans for unique limits. But this particular proposal had substantive problems and it might actually stall both the ongoing CFE negotiation and, with it, the Two Plus Four. Finally, Washington felt this card could be saved for the diplomatic 'endgame.'

When Kohl convened his meeting on the night of May 29, Genscher reviewed his troop limits idea and said he thought Baker was positively inclined. It is not clear whether Genscher misunderstood Baker's reserve, or had decided to reinterpret it, or whether Baker had somehow communicated a different signal. Then Stoltenberg spoke in favor of staying with the current position: German troop strength would be limited only in a future CFE treaty. In those future talks Stoltenberg would support a limit of 430,000. Kohl decided to hold off on any decision. Genscher pleaded for immediate approval of his proposal to the current CFE treaty limits. He wanted to get the Americans to use the idea in Bush's meetings with Gorbachev over the next few days. That would show Gorbachev how hard the West was trying to address Soviet concerns. This, he said, was the way to get by the current dead-end in the talks. Stoltenberg was unconvinced, and Kohl promised only to discuss the matter with Bush.

The next morning (in Washington) Kohl talked to Bush. The Chancellery and the defense ministry had already passed the word that the "Hartmann initiative"

(named for the West Germany's ambassador to the CFE talks) was off. Ten minutes after Scowcroft talked to Teltschik, Bush repeated the message directly to Kohl: it was nice of Kohl to offer to be helpful on the German troop limits issue but it was premature to propose a new idea for handling the problem. Kohl said he wanted to be clear on this point, "the wind blew some rumors my way." But no proposals would be made to the Soviets until both he and President Bush had agreed to it first. Bush could rely on that, Kohl said.⁴¹

Kohl also wanted to review the bidding on two other issues, NATO and financial credits. On NATO membership, Kohl just wanted Bush to know that he could rely on complete West German support, that the West German position was completely in accord with the American view. Whatever happened, Kohl promised he would stand side by side with Bush.

On the sensitive issue of credits, Kohl again urged Bush to try to find a way to help Gorbachev. Bush doubted there would be any breakthrough on Germany at the summit, but he returned to his earlier conversation with Kohl about credits for Moscow. He noted Gorbachev's interest in this question when Baker had visited Moscow. Bush said he was still constrained by Soviet behavior toward Lithuania. He would instead try to move forward on arms control issues.⁴²

Later that day, May 30, Gorbachev arrived in Washington. He had just come from Canada. Mulroney had talked privately with Gorbachev in Ottawa, almost entirely about Germany. Mulroney then warned Bush that Gorbachev had described

⁴¹ The Bonn-Washington exchanges over German troop limits are detailed in Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 249-253; the account dovetails with the author's notes at the time of debriefs about the call to Gates and Blackwill's discussion with the West German defense ministry; also with Bonn 17082, "German Policy on Bundeswehr Limits in CFE Context," 31 May 90; and Memcon for President Bush's Telephone Conversation with Chancellor Kohl, 30 May 90. In Washington, later on May 30, Kanter chaired an interagency meeting reviewing more formal U.S. analyses of options for limiting German troops. The group agreed Washington should wait for a proposal from the Germans and not raise the topic with Gorbachev unless the Soviets presented a proposal of their own. The only substantive ideas that commanded agreement were so lackluster that the NSC staff told Scowcroft they were not worth any further discussion with anyone. See Wilson through Kanter and Blackwill to Scowcroft, "CFE - Bundeswehr Personnel Limits," 31 May 90.

⁴² Memcon for Telephone Conversation with Chancellor Kohl, May 30, 1990.

the German question as a litmus test for U.S.-Soviet relations and had shown no flexibility. Gorbachev seemed to think the Germans were being manipulated by America into an unreasonable position on NATO membership. Mulroney thought Gorbachev needed more time, and needed to see how much NATO could change to become less threatening to the Soviet Union.⁴³

On the morning of May 31 Gorbachev was formally welcomed in a ceremony on the South Lawn of the White House. Guns boomed; a fife and drum band dressed in the 18th-century uniforms of the Continental Army paraded for the leaders. After the opening ceremony Bush and Gorbachev walked from the South Lawn into the Oval Office for a private meeting, joined only by Scowcroft, Chernyayev, and their interpreters.

Gorbachev promptly turned to the issue of American economic help for perestroika. A U.S.-Soviet trade agreement was essential. It was the one matter under discussion that might make a favorable impact at home, he said. He knew Lithuania was still a problem for the Americans. Gorbachev pledged to avoid a violent solution by pursuing a peaceful dialogue with the Lithuanian leaders. Bush was noncommittal. In another room, Baker and Shevardnadze were replaying the same discussion. Shevardnadze was particularly emotional, admitting that he had rarely spoken like this before but a U.S.-Soviet trade agreement was just "extremely important" for Gorbachev's standing at home, to defend the Soviet leader's policy of cooperation with the West.⁴⁴

Gorbachev returned to the Soviet embassy for a luncheon with American intellectuals and celebrities. In the late afternoon he returned to the White House for the first large meeting of the two delegations. The main subject was Germany and the future of Europe. Bush wanted to tackle this difficult subject right at the start.

⁴³ Memcon for Telephone Conversation with Prime Minister Mulroney, 30 May 90. Bush had also spoken on the phone with Mulroney for a partial debrief of the Canadian-Soviet talks on May 29, and Bush had already described his attitudes to Mulroney in another conversation on May 24.

⁴⁴ See Oberdorfer, The Turn, pp. 414-415; Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, pp. 217-218.

Naturally he knew the open issue of the trade agreement was still hanging in the background.

Bush began the Cabinet Room discussion by delivering a carefully prepared presentation on Germany that reviewed the "nine points," the ways in which the West would try to address legitimate Soviet concerns about the unification of Germany within the NATO alliance. Bush then reiterated and defended the U.S. position on the NATO issue and the workings of the Two Plus Four. He stressed to his Soviet audience how NATO was a stabilizing force for Germany, helping Germans feel confident about their security, making it less likely that they would unsettle their neighbors or seek their own nuclear weapons.⁴⁵

Gorbachev presented his alternative. A united Germany could be a member of both military alliances, or it could be a member of neither of them. Moscow could live with either possibility. In a rambling presentation, Gorbachev said that letting a united Germany join only NATO would "unbalance" Europe. He repeatedly referred to the need for a long transition period. Perhaps by the end of this period Germany could be anchored in both NATO and the Warsaw Pact. As part of the transition, both alliances would be transformed into political organizations. "You are a sailor," he told Bush. "You will understand that if one anchor is good, two anchors are better." Gorbachev felt that if the US and the USSR could decide on how to proceed, the Germans would surely agree.

Bush thought the fundamental difference between the two governments was that the Soviet Union was deeply suspicious of Germany and America was not. But Bush thought Germany could potentially be a strong friend to the Soviet Union, just as it was a friend of the United States. Germany had built a true democracy. Bush recalled how he had tried to avoid embarrassing the Soviet Union. He had not gloated when the Berlin Wall opened. But a unified Germany in NATO was the most stable solution for Europe's security.

⁴⁵ Bush stayed close to a prepared presentation entitled "The Future of Europe: Germany, NATO, CFE, and CSCE." His talking points were drafted by Ross and Rice, then edited and refined by Blackwill, Zoellick, and Zelikow.

Gorbachev agreed that the US presence was stabilizing. This presence was linked to NATO. Fine. New structures could come later. But first NATO must change. Gorbachev said he understood the feelings of the Germans. But he could not forget the attitudes of his own people. He repeated his idea of membership for a united Germany in both alliances. The Two Plus Four could conclude a settlement renouncing Four Power rights. Then there would be a transition period, lasting for years, during which the alliances would be transformed. Gorbachev seemed to imply that agreement on this transition process and its outcome could clear the way to completion of the CFE treaty.

The foreign ministers then weighed in. Baker talked about plans for the NATO summit in July, and he reviewed the 'nine points.' Shevardnadze returned to the idea of German membership in both alliances. Gorbachev added that perhaps any country could join either alliance. After all, Stalin, Roosevelt, and Churchill had all been part of a coalition. Gorbachev casually wondered if the Soviets should apply to join the North Atlantic Alliance. Bush, with a smile, wondered how Marshal Akhromeyev -- sitting across the table -- would like serving under an American NATO commander.

Baker talked about the possibility of some sort of agreement between NATO and the Warsaw Pact to show how friendly relations had replaced hostile confrontation. Gorbachev described how the alliances could turn into more political bodies, exchanging views, as NATO doctrine changed. But Germany could not be in just one structure; that would upset the European balance.

President Bush then introduced a different argument that lower-level American and West German officials had started to employ. Under the CSCE principles in the Helsinki Final Act, all nations had the right to choose their own alliances. So Germany should have the right to decide for itself which alliance it would join. Was this not so?⁴⁶

⁴⁶ The language appears in Principle I of the "Principles Guiding Relations Between Participating States" in 'Basket I' of the Helsinki Final Act of 1975, dealing with security questions, as follows: "They [the participating states] also have the right to belong or not to belong to international organizations, to be

Gorbachev nodded and agreed matter of factly that this was true.

The Americans were startled. They could see Akhromeyev and Falin, on the Soviet side, shuffling in their seats. Blackwill whispered to Zoellick, sitting next to him, that he would pass a note to the President about this. Zoellick agreed. Blackwill jotted down a quick note to the President that, surprisingly, Gorbachev had just supported the US position that nations have the right to choose their own alliances. Could the President get Gorbachev to say it again?

Bush could. "I'm gratified that you and I seem to agree that nations can choose their own alliances," he said.

Gorbachev answered, "So we will put it this way. The United States and the Soviet Union are in favor of Germany deciding herself in which alliance she would like to participate," after the Two Plus Four settlement is concluded.

Bush suggested an alternative formula. "The United States is unequivocally advocating Germany's membership in NATO. However, should Germany prefer to make a different choice, we will respect it." This way America did not appear to be agnostic about the matter.

Gorbachev said he agreed with this formula. Meanwhile many of his aides could not conceal their distress. Zoellick recalled the sensation as "one of the most extraordinary I've ever seen," of a palpable feeling -- conveyed through expression and body language -- that Gorbachev's advisors were almost physically distancing themselves from their leader's words. Then Gorbachev appeared to return to the familiar Soviet stance, describing the notion of a prolonged transition period during which Europe would change in order to accommodate a unified Germany. Gorbachev slipped Falin a note asking him to explain why the Soviets considered a pro-NATO solution unacceptable. Falin scribbled, "I am ready," and sent it back. Gorbachev nodded and, as Falin launched into his presentation, Gorbachev conferred with

or not to be a party to bilateral or multilateral treaties including the right to be or not to be a party to treaties of alliance; they also have the right to neutrality." Within the American government Zoellick had seized upon this principle months earlier as a way to strengthen the West's position, since the CSCE document, though not legally binding on signatories, was one of the few bodies of principles clearly agreed to by both sides.

Shevardnadze. When Gorbachev reentered the discussion he proposed that Shevardnadze work with Baker on the German issue. Oddly, Shevardnadze at first openly refused, right in front of the Americans, saying the matter had to be decided by heads of government. Gorbachev asked him again. Shevardnadze relented and agreed to explore the matter with Baker.

As the meeting ended, Bush and his advisers agreed there was no misunderstanding. Gorbachev had indeed agreed that a united Germany could choose to be a full member of NATO. Back at the Soviet residence in Washington, however, Falin remembers Gorbachev complaining about Shevardnadze's passivity, supposedly unhappy that the foreign minister had done nothing to explore what kind of variations the Americans might be prepared to accept on the NATO issue.⁴⁷ Perhaps Shevardnadze, having been rebuffed by Gorbachev and others in the Politburo earlier in the month, was reluctant to stick his neck out. If Gorbachev, who had overruled Shevardnadze then, wanted to make concessions now, let him do it and take the responsibility. But Gorbachev had now made a concession and the Soviet delegation knew it. Immediately after the meeting, walking on the lawn of the White House, Akhromeyev practically assaulted Chernyayev, interrogating him about Gorbachev's comments. Had they been written down as part of his briefing papers? Why did Gorbachev say what he said? Chernyayev replied that the comments were spontaneous and he did not know why the Soviet leader had chosen to make them on

⁴⁷ I have been unable to locate a memcon for this meeting in the American archives, but part of the Soviet memcon is quoted in Chernyayev, Shest' Let s Gorbachevym, p. 348. Other details are drawn from author's interviews with participants at the meeting (Chernyayev, Blackwill, and Zoellick); Zoellick's handwritten notes from the meeting; Blackwill's handwritten notes from the meeting; Valentin Falin, Politische Erinnerungen, trans. Heddy Pross-Weerth (München: Droemer Knaur, 1993), pp. 492-493; Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, pp. 219-220 (though the Open Skies discussion they mention actually took place in a different meeting); and Oberdorfer, The Turn, pp. 417-418.

Participants on the American side in this May 31 meeting were Bush, Baker, Sununu, Scowcroft, Gates, Zoellick, Blackwill, and an interpreter. (It is possible that Seitz or Ambassador Matlock may also have been present.) Gorbachev was accompanied by Shevardnadze, Ambassador Bessmertnykh (who had recently replaced Dubinin), Chernyayev, Akhromeyev, Falin, Anatoly Dobrynin, and possibly one or two other officials, as well as the interpreter.

the spot.⁴⁸

Gorbachev and Shevardnadze's behavior at the meeting seemed, and still seems, quite unusual. It is actually very rare in diplomacy to change someone's mind while talking to them at the table. The best interpretation consistent with the available evidence is that, Gorbachev's resolve had been weakening, little by little, before he arrived in Washington. Nothing that the Soviet Union tried on Germany seemed to be working. The tough Politburo line agreed upon in early May had led directly to Shevardnadze's failure in Bonn. The Soviet leader had made all the old arguments to Baker, then to Mitterrand, then to Mulroney, but finally, with Bush in Washington, something gave way.

Bush's invocation of the CSCE right to choose one's own alliance system, his argument that the Germans should be free to decide whether they would join NATO, may have caught Gorbachev off guard. Chernyayev recalled later that it did not seem logical to reject this idea since Gorbachev had already granted that a united Germany would be fully sovereign, and Gorbachev had often adopted the rhetoric of free choice and national self-determination. So when Bush struck the wall of resistance from this different angle, it suddenly cracked.

Gorbachev went on with his schedule: a formal dinner at the White House in the evening, a breakfast with congressional leaders the next morning, June 1. Gorbachev kept pressing for the trade agreement. On Germany, Gorbachev outwardly seemed as tough as ever. He told the American congressmen that "we are being squeezed out" of Europe and that "pressure is being applied for a unilateral advantage of the other side." Should an imbalance develop in Europe, Moscow would even have to "reconsider" and "reassess" its arms control positions. Gorbachev explained his economic difficulties and asked the congressmen to back a trade agreement. The agreement would not bring quick results, since "the trade relationship between us now is so primitive" but Gorbachev said "I think it is very

⁴⁸ Based on Rice interview with Chernyayev, Moscow, June 1994, made available to the author.

important that you make this gesture mostly from a political standpoint."⁴⁹

The summit was still shadowed by the issue of a U.S.-Soviet trade agreement. Gorbachev returned to the White House later in the morning. He and Bush talked some more about the trade agreement. Bush had checked views around the administration and on Capitol Hill. Opinions were divided, but Baker recommended going ahead with the deal. They would try to negotiate some links to behavior in Lithuania, but Baker felt the U.S. had to deliver this support to reform. Shevardnadze had been persuasive. Bush agreed. It is probable that Gorbachev's apparent move on Germany contributed to Bush's decision that America needed to help the beleaguered Soviet leader.

Bush took time out to call Kohl and tell him about the previous day's discussion of Germany. Bush mentioned Gorbachev's "screwy" idea of simultaneous membership in two alliances but he thought Gorbachev was really as concerned with the nature of NATO as with whether Germany should be a part of it. In other words, Gorbachev could clearly be influenced by a genuine effort to change the nature of the alliance, to ease its anti-Soviet orientation. Bush had read Article 2 of the North Atlantic Treaty to Gorbachev, which described NATO's broad political mission. Bush thought Gorbachev's views were not fixed, and that the upcoming NATO summit could be vitally important. Offhandedly, Bush mentioned that Gorbachev "kind of agreed" that Germany should have the right to decide whether to be a full member of NATO.

Kohl wanted to know where matters stood on providing economic aid to the USSR. Bush replied that though the trade agreement was being discussed, the proposal for credits had not come up. Bush thought Gorbachev might wait for a more private setting the next day at Camp David. Kohl reaffirmed his stance on the NATO issue, explaining at length why he thought the FRG should not even discuss the

⁴⁹ The conversation was recorded by CNN, with Gorbachev and the congressmen apparently unaware that the TV cameras were broadcasting their conversation live to the world and to Bush, who was watching in the Oval Office. Oberdorfer, The Turn, pp. 418-419; Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, pp. 221-222.

possibility of leaving the Alliance.

Bush noticed that Kohl had not caught the point about Gorbachev conceding the German right to choose to be in NATO. He asked Kohl directly, do you have any problem saying that, under the Helsinki Final Act, Germany has the right to belong or not to belong to NATO? Kohl agreed, but was still preoccupied with the economic issue. Bush interrupted again. He explained what Gorbachev had said about Germany's right to choose. Kohl remained caught up, however, in the discussion of the Soviet economy for the rest of the conversation. It was as if the information was so startling that, unless Bush put a headline on it, it simply did not register.⁵⁰

Bush returned to his talks with Gorbachev. Arms control discussions dominated the discussions during the day on June 1, with some hard-won progress on START and a little movement on CFE. But in the press and among Bush's advisers, suspense was growing about the fate of the U.S.-Soviet trade agreement. The White House had scheduled a ceremony at the end of the day on June 1 to announce the agreements that had been concluded. Gorbachev arrived. A few top officials on both sides huddled privately outside the East Room where the ceremony was to take place.

"Are we going to sign the trade agreement?" Gorbachev asked.

Yes, Bush replied. Further, he would meet Soviet demands and drop U.S. insistence on explicit conditions tying the agreement to events in Lithuania. He would condition it only on Soviet passage of their new law allowing liberalized emigration (a long-standing American position). The White House staff frantically scurried to find a copy of the trade agreement to sign. With Bush and Gorbachev impatiently looking over their shoulders, Jim Cicconi, the President's staff secretary, and Rice, worked feverishly to include comments about the agreement in Bush's remarks. After delaying the scheduled start of the ceremony, the two leaders entered the East Room and made the announcements. Bush did not stress the linkage of the trade agreement to a new Soviet emigration law in his public remarks, just mentioning in passing that

⁵⁰ Memcon for Telephone Conversation with Chancellor Kohl, 1 Jun 90.

we "are looking forward to the passage of a Soviet emigration law." It was, Beschloss and Talbott later commented:

a classic example of Bush's preferred way of dealing with Gorbachev -- and a good illustration of why that way was often so effective. Bush had granted the Soviets something they desperately wanted, and he had made the favor conditional on a major concession on their part. Yet by treating the whole issue in such a low-key, almost offhand manner -- and by not rubbing Gorbachev's nose in the Soviet concession -- he had managed to impose exactly the sort of linkage between U.S.-Soviet trade and the Kremlin's policies toward its own citizens that previous Soviet leaders had always found not only objectionable but unacceptable.⁵¹

There was nothing to announce on Germany.

Later that night, Bush's aides thought of a way to capitalize on Gorbachev's concession on Germany. At Scowcroft's request Blackwill, Rice, and Zelikow drafted a statement for the President to deliver at the joint press conference that would close the summit on Sunday morning, June 3. The statement would help nail down Gorbachev's assent to the principle that any state was free to choose its alliance status, even if the U.S. and Soviets had different ideas about what that choice should be. Bush would say:

On the matter of Germany's external alliances, I believe, as do Chancellor Kohl and members of the Alliance, that the united Germany should be a full member of NATO. President Gorbachev, frankly, does not hold that view. But we are in full agreement that the matter of alliance membership is, in accordance with the Helsinki Final Act, a matter for the Germans to decide.

To make sure Gorbachev was "in full agreement" with this statement Rice passed the draft language to Soviet ambassador to the U.S. Alexander Bessmertnykh for his review. Bessmertnykh, a seasoned diplomat, naturally discussed Bush's planned statement with Gorbachev and his staff.

Meanwhile Bush and Gorbachev flew to the presidential retreat in the Catoctin

⁵¹ Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, p. 224; account is also based on Oberdorfer, The Turn, pp. 418-423; and Rice's recollection of the events.

mountains of Maryland, Camp David, for relaxed and private discussions, mostly about regional issues around the world. Gorbachev then, as Bush had expected, did raise the question of American extension of financial credits to Moscow. Bush said he wanted to help, but needed to see more economic reforms, movement on Lithuania, and a reduction of subsidies to Cuba. Progress on Germany would also create the right political climate for Bush to seek money from the U.S. Congress. Bush did pledge that the G-7 would consider a broad multilateral assistance program, including substantial credits, at their Houston summit in July, to be held right after the NATO Summit in London.

Reviewing developments in the Third World, Gorbachev and Bush seemed to their aides to be genuinely conversing and exchanging ideas without inhibitions or pretense. At dinner, Gorbachev seemed untroubled, serene. With the trade agreement signed the atmosphere was warm and friendly. Yet Blackwill and Rice waited tensely through the night for the Soviet reaction to the draft Presidential announcement. Finally, early Sunday morning, Bessmertnykh passed the word to Blackwill: Gorbachev had no objection to the President's planned remarks. Bush proceeded to make his statement, just as prepared.⁵²

None of the reporters appeared to notice the significance of Bush's statement. No American officials called attention to it. They sensed that Gorbachev had finally turned a corner in his approach to the German question. But the situation was tentative and shaky. If the Americans whooped and gloated, Gorbachev -- embarrassed politically -- might quickly retrench and positions would harden, as happened after the February meeting with Kohl. The concession was in the record and the Americans would work behind the scenes to consolidate progress until the Soviets themselves were ready to acknowledge the fundamental shift in their position. In the same low-key spirit Bush carefully reported on this key passage in his statement in phone calls to Kohl, Thatcher, and Mitterrand but did not dramatize the

⁵² Author's recollections; Oberdorfer, The Turn, pp. 423-429; Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, pp. 224-227; "News Conference of President Bush and President Mikhail Gorbachev of the Soviet Union," June 3, 1990, in Public Papers, p. 874.

concession. Bush instead emphasized the need to follow up with a successful NATO summit in July. None of the other leaders appeared, at least at first, to grasp the significance of the Soviet move or inquire about it. (Teltschik, however, noted that this was "a sensation.") Mitterrand did remark shrewdly that Gorbachev would be counting on achieving his security objectives through West Germany's domestic politics. Bush then followed up with written messages. Again Bush's tone was that, "We, of course, will have to see whether this reflects real flexibility in the Soviet position."⁵³

But, as Chernyayev recalled, the Americans were right to take the exchange on Germany's right to choose very seriously.⁵⁴ When asked later by the American scholar Hannes Adomeit just when the Soviet Union agreed to membership of a united Germany in NATO, Chernyayev "unhesitatingly" answered, "On May 30, at the Soviet-American summit in Washington."⁵⁵

It was a turning point. From this time on, Gorbachev never again voiced adamant opposition to German membership in NATO. Both he and Shevardnadze instead began to press for the West to deliver on the 'nine points,' especially change in NATO at the Alliance's upcoming summit in London. Those deeds and the domestic calendar, dominated by the July Party Congress, would determine when the time was ripe to acknowledge publicly a new Soviet approach to the German question. In the meantime there would be no discussion of Germany in the Politburo; no debates among the collective leadership that might tie the hands of either

⁵³ See Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 255-258; Memcon for Telephone Conversations with Chancellor Kohl and Prime Minister Thatcher, 3 Jun 90; Memcon for Telephone Conversation with President Mitterrand, 5 Jun 90; Message from President Bush to Chancellor Kohl, sent through special channels, 4 Jun 90; Message from President Bush to Prime Minister Thatcher, sent through special channels, 4 Jun 90. Bush told both Kohl and Thatcher about the private discussions of credits and economic aid. A further indicator of the significance West German officials attached to the Washington summit is in the extensive treatment given to this meeting in Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, pp. 147-152.

⁵⁴ Author interview with Chernyayev, Moscow, January 1994.

⁵⁵ Hannes Adomeit, "Gorbachev, German Unification and the Collapse of Empire," Post-Soviet Affairs, 10 (1994): 197, 229 n. 28.

Gorbachev or Shevardnadze. The German issue was thus contributing to a broader decision to discard the old apparatus used for governing the Soviet state.

After the Washington summit both Baker and Shevardnadze needed to go from Washington directly to Copenhagen for the conclusion of the CSCE conference on the human dimension, the major CSCE human rights event of the year. A sign of the close relations between the two men was that Shevardnadze accepted Baker's offer to make the flight on the American's aircraft, so they could converse en route -- though not about Germany. They returned to that topic after a day of speechmaking in Denmark. Shevardnadze had already taken time out during the day for a brief discussion with Genscher, but he settled back in the evening for another long talk with the American secretary of state.

Baker raised the topic of Germany by asking whether Shevardnadze was interested in the idea of some agreement between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. This was something the Soviets had suggested. What did Moscow want? Shevardnadze said no specific proposal was ready, but perhaps it would include ideas like a commitment to 'no first use' of nuclear weapons. Baker warned this idea might be difficult, but one had to see a proposal. Shevardnadze promised to provide a proposal within ten days.

Shevardnadze added that the U.S. should come out and say what Baker said privately, which is that the Soviet Union was no longer perceived as an enemy. Baker took the point. Shevardnadze then returned to the idea of the transition period which he and Gorbachev had developed in Washington. There had to be decisions on how long the period would last and what role it would have. Perhaps knowing that the US believed German events were now on a fast timetable toward unity and all-German elections by the end of the year, Shevardnadze then made a startling assertion.

He said the Soviets had intelligence confirming their suspicion (which Shevardnadze had briefly voiced to Baker in Washington) that the Germans would not be moving as quickly to unification as expected. There's been "some very hot stuff that's been cooking," Shevardnadze said. He knew about Kohl's plans to complete

internal unification by the fall of 1990. But he wasn't sure it would happen because they had heard from many members of the East German government and Moscow had it on good authority that they would not accept Kohl's plans. They thought Kohl was artificially stepping up the pace. So many people thought the pan-German elections would be in 1991, not 1990. Shevardnadze wasn't positive this would happen, but he wanted to brief the Secretary on what he knew. So this suggested that the idea of a longer "transition period" might make sense.

Baker was reserved. He certainly hoped the Soviets did not want to hold up German sovereignty if a political and economic union is going forward. That would cause deep German resentment. If the internal unification took longer, then an external settlement might not be as pressing. But Baker hoped Shevardnadze would not create an artificial transition period simply to drag out the conclusion of the external aspects of unification. That progress really should be related to progress on political-economic union. If it isn't the Soviet Union would end up isolating itself, especially if it tried to prevent sovereignty after unity. That would be a bad result.

No, that would not happen, Shevardnadze said. Their relations with Germany would be based on equality and respect. Then he said: Even if Germany remains in NATO, or for that matter wants to become a member of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), we are going to develop our relations with them and we are not going to create artificial difficulties. If the Soviets were really trying to impair the process, Shevardnadze added, they would not have consented to the Two Plus Four mechanism. They would have kept the Germans out of the process and treated this as a purely Four Power matter under the 1945 Potsdam declaration. But the Soviets did not want to try to struggle against the current by "going upstream."

Having confirmed the Washington understanding and achieved this elaboration on it, Baker then turned to a key Soviet concern: limits on future German armed forces. Shevardnadze was willing to work from the American idea of promising to set limits on German armed forces in a future CFE negotiation. Shevardnadze had told Genscher, and he now told Baker, that he would be satisfied with a West German declaration of the level that they would accept in this future treaty. The Soviets

would not let this matter delay conclusion of the current CFE treaty being negotiated in Vienna. An appropriate promise, from the Soviet perspective, would be to limit German armed forces to 200-250,000 (about half the size of the existing West German armed forces). The West Germans, he said, were talking about 280-300,000. That was where the positions now stood.⁵⁶

Shevardnadze was clearly moving toward a compromise settlement. He was prepared to accept the basic Western approach for handling the problem of German troop limits, with the Germans pledging a number now that would only be codified later, when all the other nations of Europe also accepted limits on their armed forces too. Shevardnadze actually thought the Germans were more forthcoming than was really the case. Genscher and his aides were indeed willing to talk about a 280-300,000 figure for future German armed forces, but neither Chancellor Kohl nor the defense ministry had agreed (or ever agreed) to a number this low. Either Shevardnadze had misunderstood the West German position or Genscher or one of his diplomats had conveyed promises they could not keep.⁵⁷

Baker believed that the stalemate had been broken. The muddled views of the East German foreign minister, Markus Meckel, could safely be ignored.⁵⁸ If

⁵⁶ Author interview with Tarasenko, Providence, June 1992; Memcon for Meeting between Baker and Shevardnadze, Soviet Residence in Copenhagen, 5 Jun 90. The only others present were Ross, Tarasenko, and the two interpreters.

⁵⁷ It is hard to trace where Shevardnadze might have gained the impression that Genscher was willing to accept the low troop limit number Shevardnadze described to Baker in Copenhagen. Genscher and Shevardnadze had discussed German troop limits in Geneva on May 23. Elbe has Shevardnadze then proposing a number of 250-300,000. Kiessler & Elbe, *Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken*, p. 146. But Shevardnadze two weeks later proposed to Baker the lower number of 200-250,000. Elbe does not mention whether his side had offered any number. Teltschik has Genscher urging a 350,000 ceiling as he debriefed Kohl on May 28. On May 29 Stoltenberg stood by the figure of 400,000 (including 30,000 naval personnel) and Kohl had refused to resolve the dispute at that time. As late as June 5 Stoltenberg was still standing by a number between 380-420,000, while Kohl had not yet revealed his hand. Teltschik, *329 Tage*, pp. 249-251, 258. Two other possible sources of Soviet misinformation were Kastrup, who had conducted talks in Moscow at the end of May, or West German CFE ambassador Rudiger Hartmann. Little evidence is available on what these diplomats were saying to the Soviets about the troop limits issue at the end of May.

⁵⁸ For the muddled views, see State 190169, "Secretary's Meeting with GDR Foreign Minister, June 5, 1990," 12 Jun 90.

Gorbachev had agreed with traditional definitions of Soviet security, he would have made a stand in Washington. He did not. There was still work to do, particularly on the NATO Summit. But Baker now believed that if they delivered a "transformed NATO," and a reasonable outcome at the Houston economic summit, the Soviet Union would be prepared to seal the German deal. Tarasenko remembered later that Gorbachev and Shevardnadze had a long talk in June. They worried about their slipping influence, knowing that the GDR had become little more than a curiosity in the politics of German unification. Perhaps the Soviets hoped against hope that their "intelligence" about moves to slow German unification would prove to be right. But, failing that, there was little of real import that the Soviet Union could now do. Facing the fact that, as Shevardnadze put it, the current had become very strong, neither he nor Gorbachev was willing to swim against it.

Chapter Ten
THE FINAL PACKAGE
(June - July 1990)

German Intentions

The U.S.-Soviet meetings in Washington and Copenhagen may have signaled a turning point, the end of real Soviet opposition to a united Germany's full membership in the NATO Alliance. The Americans wondered about Shevardnadze's surprising prediction that unification was about to be disrupted by the new East German government. But top American officials felt sure that Shevardnadze was wrong. They knew that Chancellor Kohl had met privately with East German Prime Minister de Maiziere on May 28 and secured his agreement to the fast timetable. The economic union treaty would be ratified by the Bundestag in June and go into effect on July 2. Accession under Article 23 would take place before the end of the year, in time for all-German federal elections to select the next chancellor.¹

Chancellor Kohl himself flew to Washington in early June, his third such trip in about three months, for a low-key meeting with President Bush. Arriving without Genscher or the larger entourage that he had brought with him in May, the Chancellor wanted a direct discussion of the strategy to be used in pursuing unification to a successful conclusion. The Americans were especially curious about how Kohl wanted to handle the issue of limits on German troop strength.

NATO foreign ministers had just met at Turnberry in Scotland. There the West German arms control commissioner, Josef Holik, circulated with Genscher's approval yet another proposal for handling future German troop limits. Holik's plan would put binding ceilings to cap the size of the armed forces of all countries in Central Europe. The Soviets and other NATO and Warsaw Pact countries, outside of Central Europe, would simply promise not to increase their military manpower in Europe and everyone would agree to join the Central European states like Germany in

¹ See Zelikow to Scowcroft, "The President's Meeting and Dinner with Chancellor Kohl on June 8," 7 Jun 90.

accepting negotiated manpower ceilings during the next phase of conventional arms control talks. Bush's staff did not treat this foreign ministry proposal as a definitive view of the West German government. Instead they wanted Bush to find out what Kohl wanted, and get a few Americans and West Germans together to hammer out a common line.²

On this trip to Washington Kohl had an interesting request. He wanted to tour Arlington National Cemetery, the ceremonial resting place for many veterans and soldiers who had fallen in America's wars. Scowcroft walked among the white tombstones with the German chancellor, who mused about history and past conflicts. Scowcroft was struck by Kohl's detailed grasp of military as well as political history.³ In the evening of June 8 Kohl came to the White House for a small dinner with Bush, Baker, and Scowcroft. Kohl's main message was very clear. NATO membership for Germany was essential; it was non-negotiable. But NATO must show it was ready to adapt. He wanted to help work on the plan for the NATO summit, sending Teltschik to Washington for private talks if that would help. Secrecy was vital. Kohl was also intrigued by the idea of offering to conclude a NATO-Warsaw Pact nonaggression pact.

Bush was not interested in such a "nonaggression pact." Making some agreement with the Warsaw Pact, he thought, might actually prop up this disintegrating Soviet-dominated alliance. The Warsaw Pact had just concluded a summit meeting in Moscow. There both the Hungarian and Czech leaders had spoken bluntly of their desire to move away from any further military alignment with the Eastern bloc. The Warsaw Pact was clearly turning into no more than a political

² Ibid. In Vienna the East German representative was still pushing a variant of the idea the West German ambassador, Hartmann, had floated in May. At Blackwill's request, Zelikow called the acting American CFE negotiator and urged him, on behalf of the White House, not to explore this subject any further with the East Germans or anyone else. See USVienna 1566, "CFE: GDR Rep on Germany, NATO and Bundeswehr Personnel Limits," 2 Jun 90. For more insights into the internal tensions within the West German government over the German troop limits question and how to handle the Soviet Union, see also USVienna 1627, "CFE: Visiting FRG Official on the Germans, the Soviets and CFE," 9 Jun 90.

³ Author interview with Scowcroft, Washington, January 1994.

organization, if it could even hold together on that basis. But Gorbachev did seem to want some NATO-Warsaw Pact treaty that could be presented as keeping the door open to a new all-European security structure that would take the place of both old alliances.⁴

Bush and Baker differed on this question of some sort of NATO-Warsaw Pact agreement. Bush spurned any agreement with the Warsaw Pact. But Baker had been toying with the idea for weeks. He had discussed it with his NATO counterparts and was reluctant to let it go if it might help. Baker conceded that the West should not give legitimacy to the dying Warsaw Pact. Yet if some sort of innocuous agreement between the two alliances might persuade the Soviets to accept full German membership in NATO, Baker wanted to consider it.

On the problem of German troop limits Bush and Kohl took it for granted that nothing should single out the Germans for special constraints and that the issue should be kept out of the Two Plus Four. Kohl seemed unaware, or uninterested, in the proposal his arms control commissioner, Holik, had floated at the Turnberry NATO meeting. But Kohl understood that the Soviets would need some sort of German commitment to limit their armed forces. He accepted this, commenting on the searing memory Russians had of the twenty million people they had lost during the Second World War. Kohl said his problem was to fix upon the right number for the future Bundeswehr. He had not done this yet, in part because he was still puzzling over what to do with the current East German army. But Kohl promised he would arrive at a number, consulting with the Americans, some time during the next few weeks.

Kohl and Bush also reviewed the status of economic aid to Gorbachev. Kohl was proceeding with his unilateral guarantee of five billion D-Marks (about \$3 billion) in new private loans. But the big Soviet request was for credits of about \$20-25 billion. That was the number Gorbachev had used in May with Teltschik and Baker.

⁴ On this Warsaw Pact summit or, more formally, the meeting of its Political Consultative Committee, see Julij A. Kvizinskij, Vor dem Sturm: Erinnerungen eines Diplomaten, trans. Hilde & Helmut Ettinger (Berlin: Siedler, 1993), pp. 33-36. East German prime minister de Maiziere, who was present at the June 6 meeting in Moscow, debriefed Seiters, Schäuble, and Teltschik on June 8. Horst Teltschik, 329 Tage: Innenansichten der Einigung (Berlin: Siedler, 1991), p. 261.

This was a matter for the autumn that would have to be discussed by the group of seven leading industrial nations, the G-7, at their July summit in Houston. Bush explained how he had warned Gorbachev that the US would face big problems in supporting major loans to the USSR without changes in Soviet policy toward Cuba or Lithuania.⁵

With a fairly clear understanding between Bush and Kohl about what needed to be done in coming weeks, Kohl returned to Germany. The agreed acceleration of the internal timetable for unification became evident to the German public. As Kohl and de Maiziere had agreed, the CDU-East announced on June 12 their support for federal elections in December to be held as an all-German vote. The FDP, led by Lambsdorff and Genscher, fully agreed with Kohl's plan.⁶

Kohl continued to worry about whether voters were willing to pay the high cost of unification. After all, polls in late May showed only about 28% of West Germans said they were willing to make financial sacrifices to achieve unification, and a majority of them feared a rise in unemployment and damage to the currency. The opposition, led by SPD chancellor-candidate Lafontaine, was steadily pressing the political logic expressed by these numbers.⁷

So Kohl feared that a letup in the pace would kill the momentum toward unification at a time when the international pieces of the puzzle were falling into place. After economic union took place in July, the novelty might wear off amid dispiriting debates in the West about the costs of unity. East German euphoria would still be high if elections were held soon, before the scale of likely unemployment began to bite. The SPD understood this calculus very well, but they could do little to slow the momentum. Electoral considerations and the sense of a historic opportunity

⁵ Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 262; Memcon for President Bush's Meeting and Dinner with Chancellor Kohl, 8 Jun 90 (prepared by Zelikow from Scowcroft's notes).

⁶ See, e.g., "Alle werden sehen: Es geht," Der Spiegel, June 18, 1990, pp. 18-22.

⁷ See, e.g., Emnid poll results published in Der Spiegel, May 28, 1990, pp. 39, 42, and interview with Lafontaine in the same issue, pp. 26-29.

combined to solidify Bonn's conviction that all-German elections should be held in 1990.

The timetable depended of course on concluding the Two Plus Four process in 1990. The Chancellor remained publicly adamant that internal and external aspects of unification were inseparable. The entangled set of planned agreements meant that, in only a few months, a final settlement on Germany would need to be concluded, any outstanding difficulties with Poland would be resolved, a CFE treaty would be completed, and the CSCE Summit would be held to bless these results.⁸

Designing a Settlement Document

Work to prepare a Two Plus Four settlement was continuing. The big problem for the West was how to sequence the various pieces of the agreement. The British and French lawyers still mistakenly believed that a Polish-German border settlement could become legally binding only after the unified Germany had been established and this unified Germany then concluded and ratified a treaty with the Poles. They had not grasped that the use of Article 23 as the legal instrument of unification solved this problem, since all of the FRG's legal commitments would be unaffected by its annexation of the GDR. These squabbles, mentioned in Chapter Seven, were still threatening to bring back the very "decoupling" of internal unification from an external settlement that the West had rejected when Shevardnadze had proposed it at the beginning of May.

The American lawyers, while sharing some of the same misconceptions about the FRG's capacity, at least recognized that the Four Powers had their own authority to declare the borders of a united Germany. As a result, the lawyers concluded, the argument really "comes down to a political question of what is acceptable to the

⁸ For good analyses of these developments, along with insight into the important choices involved in how the ruling coalition sought to structure the election procedures, see Bonn 18417, "German Unification: Momentum Building Fast for All-German Elections This Year," 13 Jun 90; and Bonn 19136, "East and West CDU Want Unification in December Immediately After FRG/GDR Parallel Elections," 20 Jun 90.

parties."⁹ Zoellick thus used the legal arguments to back his fixed conclusion that Washington and Bonn would both insist upon a final external settlement at the time of unification. The West Germans were pursuing their own efforts to ease any Polish concerns, including revisions of the German Basic Law and citizenship laws to rule out any fear of German revanchism. But working-level officials in London and Paris remained unconvinced, at least for the moment.¹⁰

Two Plus Four political directors conferred again on June 9 at the Schloss

⁹ L paper, "U.S. One Plus Three Paper on Sequencing/Simultaneity of Unification/Settlement," 4 Jun 90 (drafted by Don Koblitz). Zoellick wrote out his own detailed recapitulation of these arguments for use with his Allied colleagues.

¹⁰ Since May the Kohl government had expected to first issue joint declarations from the West and East German parliaments, followed by the declarations with confirmation of intentions by each government, and then -- immediately after unification -- Germany would definitively settle the border question with a binding treaty. The joint parliamentary declaration was passed, as promised, on June 21. It is reprinted in Hans Viktor Böttcher, ed., Materialen zu Deutschlandfragen: Politiker und Wissenschaftler nehmen Stellung 1989-91 (Bonn: Kulturstiftung der deutschen Vertriebenen, 1991), pp. 75-76. Although the substance of a Polish-German agreement was still being debated, by early June FRG officials believed the Poles only wanted to see the "contents" of the treaty agreed before unification and were no longer demanding that the treaty be concluded or initialed before unification occurred. On June 12 the Poles announced that the bilateral negotiations with Bonn were "stalemated," but State Department officials thought the issues were actually fairly narrow and that the Poles would stay away from contentious security questions or demands for reparations as long as they were satisfied with efforts to settle border issues in the Two Plus Four. That prediction was correct. See Bonn 17862, "Two-Plus-Four Talks: Polish Border Issue," 8 Jun 90; Seitz to Zoellick, "Non-border Polish Issues at Two-plus-Four Talks," 16 Jun 90; and Bonn 19525, "June 21 Joint Bundestag/Volkskammer Declaration on the Polish Border," 22 Jun 90. But see also Warsaw 9216, "Polish Approach to Two-Plus-Four Talks," 13 Jun 90. On the dilemmas facing Bonn in deciding how or whether to amend the citizenship provisions of their Basic Law (Article 116), see CIA, "German Unification and the Politics of Article 116," EUR M 90-20153, 15 Jun 90; draft memo from L (Young) to Zoellick and Seitz, "FRG Nationalities Law and the Polish-German Treaty," 15 Jun 90.

State's lawyers had stepped into line behind the simultaneous unification/settlement approach after the June 9 meeting of Two Plus Four political directors. For their views of the continuing British and French opposition to this sequencing, see L-prepared Two Plus Four preparatory paper, "Sequencing of Unification and Settlement," 13 Jun 90; Young to Zoellick and Seitz, "Review of UK Compromise Sequencing Outline," 14 Jun 90. But see George to Zoellick, "Sequencing," (undated but apparently June 14 or 15). From the Policy Planning staff George worried about how the Poles would fit into the Two Plus Four process. He asserted that "we will be on solid ground if we can present L's approach that suggests that termination of Four Power rights regarding borders will not be effective until a Polish-German treaty is ratified." Without such a "conditional termination" position he warned that Warsaw might insist on signing the Two Plus Four settlement. The argument misunderstood how even L's position had evolved to the belief that "conditional termination" was legally unnecessary. The argument also seemed to accept an inflated view of Poland's legal requirements. Since Poland was worried about getting a binding German position on the record, not about Poland's own undertakings, the issue was whether Germany could make any legally binding commitment short of waiting for signature and ratification of a bilateral treaty between Poland and a united Germany. State's lawyers were now recognizing that the FRG's signature on a Two Plus Four settlement document was enough to do the job.

Niederschönhausen in East Berlin. The delegates stayed away from the "sequencing" problem and concentrated more usefully on settling the borders of a united Germany. Every country agreed that the settlement had to deal with borders.

The political directors were able to agree that a united Germany would "comprise the territory of the Federal Republic of Germany, the German Democratic Republic and the whole of Berlin." Both German governments duly promised to renew this pledge in a binding treaty with the Poles, renounce territorial claims against any country, and promise to amend any parts of the West German constitution (the Basic Law) that might seem inconsistent with this pledge. (The articles dealing with possible paths to unifying Germany, like articles 23 and 146, would therefore be deleted after unification was accomplished.) The Four Powers would take notice of these commitments and "state that the provisional character of Germany's borders has ended." Although there were no disagreements about what the borders should be, much time was taken up crafting language to avoid prejudicing the lawyers' argument about "sequencing." Seitz drily reported to Zoellick that "this minuet consumed at least three hours."¹¹

Despite the concessions being quietly made by Gorbachev and Shevardnadze in Washington and Copenhagen, the rest of the Soviet government and the East Germans renewed their proposals to have the final settlement deal at length with political-military issues, with all the old provisions for restricting German military forces and expelling all foreign forces, East or West, out of Germany. The Soviets also proposed a number of other treaty provisions, such as further German reparations for mistreatment of Russians during the Second World War and prohibitions against neo-Nazi political movements in the FRG. The Americans understood that, if they agreed to such limits on German political behavior, they would in effect become legal guarantors for appropriate German behavior, giving the Four Powers incalculable future leverage over future German security decisions or offering ammunition to

¹¹ Seitz to Zoellick, untitled report with attached papers, 11 Jun 90. Seitz led the U.S. delegation at this meeting.

German domestic opponents of strong defense policies.

The Western representatives told the Soviets bluntly that they were not interested in these ideas and the two sides just agreed to disagree. They scheduled another meeting of political directors to try to iron out some of these differences on June 20, just before the next scheduled meeting of ministers on June 22.¹² The West kept probing Eastern positions, but learned little. The Soviets appeared immobile, perhaps waiting to see what NATO would do at its upcoming summit meeting.

The new East German prime minister, CDU-East leader Ulrich de Maiziere, visited Washington in June. It was the first, and last, time an East German head of government would meet with an American president. Bush and de Maiziere had a friendly conversation, and the East German leader clearly relished the historic occasion. But Bush wanted de Maiziere to know that the Americans thought that the East Germans were not playing a constructive part in the Two Plus Four talks.

De Maiziere had also met with Gorbachev in Moscow. He came away with the impression that Gorbachev would have trouble accepting German membership in NATO unless certain undefined elements were added to the package. Whatever the Soviet Union's economic problems might be, economic assistance would not be enough to pacify the anxiety of the Soviet people.

Bush made clear that, whatever was done to reassure the Soviets, there could be no "parallel" treatment of Allied and Soviet troops. The Allied presence was wanted. The Soviets were not. De Maiziere had little quarrel with this. Indeed, when Baker remonstrated with him about East German positions in the Two Plus Four de Maiziere just shrugged and said there was no need to convince him. (He was alluding to the fact that his foreign minister, Markus Meckel, was from the SPD-East party, part of his ruling coalition.) De Maiziere said he knew nothing about Meckel's proposal, to Baker in Copenhagen, for creating a special neutralized security zone in

¹² The U.S. delegation included Seitz and Rice from the NSC staff. The Soviet team was led by Bondarenko and the East Germans by Hans-Jürgen Misselwitz. The other Allied faces were familiar: Weston from London, Dufourcq from Paris, and Kastrup from Bonn. See draft State cable, "June 9 Two-Plus-Four Officials' Meeting: Detailed Report of Discussions," 12 Jun 90; Seitz to Zoellick, 11 Jun 90; EmbBerlin 3684, "June 9 Two-Plus-Four Officials Meeting: Points for Use in Briefing NAC," 11 Jun 90.

Central Europe. De Maiziere said he never supported ideas he first heard about in the press.¹³

Another glimpse of Gorbachev's thinking came from Margaret Thatcher. She journeyed to Moscow to see the Soviet leader on June 8. Just before she left she spoke with Baker, in Great Britain for the NATO meeting in Scotland. Thatcher, like Bush, was suspicious of any NATO-Warsaw Pact agreement, a "curious" idea. Baker said that Shevardnadze had promised to provide a detailed proposal. She commented scornfully that the Soviets would not soon provide details. They were not that kind of government. They work, she said, from one day to the next. They seemed to be armed only with slogans.

Baker thought the Soviets were just throwing balls into the air to see if any would be caught. He would, however, make an effort to give them "political cover" for the hard decisions they had to make on Germany and NATO. Baker warned Thatcher to expect a Soviet request for financial credits. Thatcher was at least as skeptical as the Americans. She thought, with the Soviet economy in its current condition, any new loans of money would be wasted. She preferred technical assistance to help the Soviets reform, what the British called a "know-how fund."¹⁴

Returning from Moscow, Thatcher was able to give fresh firsthand impressions of the situation. Thatcher told Bush how Gorbachev talked of creating a market

¹³ Memcons from Cabinet Room Meeting and Luncheon Meeting with Prime Minister de Maiziere, 11 Jun 90. Prime Minister De Maiziere was not accompanied either by Meckel or by any of Meckel's key advisers. Bush sent messages to Kohl, Mitterrand, and Thatcher reporting on this meeting, as a vehicle for reiterating American preferences in giving a narrow mandate to the Two Plus Four, no singularization of Germany, and no "parallel" treatment of foreign troops stationed in Germany. Bush wanted everyone else to lean on the East Germans too. Messages sent through special channels, 12 Jun 90. The message to Kohl is accurately described in Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 274. For more on De Maiziere's notion of his GDR government as a "bridge" to the USSR, see "De Maiziere schlägt gemeinsame Tagungen von NATO und Warschauer Pakt vor," Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, May 30, 1990, p. 2. On Meckel's stance at Copenhagen, and the Allied reaction, see also Ulrich Albrecht, Die Abwicklung der DDR: die 2 + 4 Verhandlungen, ein Insider-Bericht (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1992), p. 80; and on the shared West German dismay with Meckel's stance in the Two Plus Four, see Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 285. For Soviet coverage of De Maiziere's meeting with Gorbachev, see "Vstrechi M.S. Gorbacheva," Vestnik, no. 13 (71), July 15, 1990, p. 18.

¹⁴ State 200531, "Secretary Baker's Meeting with Prime Minister Thatcher, June 8 at Turnberry, Scotland," 21 Jun 90.

economy and creating a new constitutional relationship with the republics. He had clearly been impressed by his visit to the United States, she added. He was full of anecdotes about his experiences in America. He seemed to feel he had established a very good personal relationship with President Bush.

Thatcher and Gorbachev had spent most of their time on the security of Europe and the problem of Germany and NATO. She had stood by Kohl's schedule for rapid unification, synchronized with a settlement of external issues. She thought Gorbachev's thinking was still continuing to evolve, with evident inconsistencies and contradictions. But, somewhat to her surprise, he never ruled out German membership in NATO, though he had wondered aloud about different types of membership -- from the French model to that of Denmark or Norway. He kept talking about a pan-European security organization to transcend the present alliances. Yet he seemed to realize this was not practical.

Thatcher was now, like Baker, ready to see merit in the idea of a NATO-Warsaw Pact joint declaration. She, like Baker, saw the potential for something less than the "nonaggression pact" Kohl had spoken of, something that would help Gorbachev without "giving away anything significant ourselves." Gorbachev had also mentioned the idea of a CSCE center for preventing conflict. Thatcher urged President Bush to press forward quickly on possible diplomatic opportunities before Soviet thinking congealed immovably around a firm, negative position. She felt sure they would now ultimately accept a united Germany in NATO "and that we need not, in practice, pay a high price for that."

Gorbachev had also pronounced himself heartily sick of the Lithuanian problem. Thatcher thought it did not rank high on his list of priorities. Thatcher had visited Ukraine and Armenia and was struck by the strength of nationalist sentiment. All in all, Gorbachev had no early respite in sight. "Equally," she said, "it is hard to see that anyone else could have a better chance of surmounting the problems and

getting through in reasonable order."¹⁵

But what if the Soviets did not go along on Germany? Months earlier the few American and West German officials to consider this dire contingency had come to the very private conclusion that they would not let the Soviets block the process. If Moscow refused to sign a settlement by the time Germany unified, the Western powers would proceed to relinquish their Four Power rights on their own -- without the Soviets.

This contingency plan presented a very serious legal issue. State Department lawyers had begun analyzing this issue in April and had been deeply uneasy about any move that might suggest the end of Four Power rights without unanimous consent. Now that the hour of decision was closer, the lawyers at State again analyzed this problem, understanding that "the decision on whether to proceed without the Soviets is a political question of the first rank." The Western countries could come up with legal arguments to defend their position. But "a neutral observer is unlikely to regard these arguments as particularly strong ones."¹⁶

Waiting for NATO to Act

¹⁵ Account is based on Margaret Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years* (New York: HarperCollins, 1993), pp. 804-807; message from Prime Minister Thatcher to President Bush (sent through special channels), 11 Jun 90; detailed debrief from the original British reporting cable given, on instructions, to Zelikow on June 12; and debrief given to Teltschik, described in *329 Tage*, p. 266. The major meeting with Gorbachev reportedly lasted about two and a half hours, with Thatcher accompanied only by Charles Powell and Gorbachev joined only by Chernyayev. See also the message from Prime Minister Thatcher to President Bush (sent through special channels), 17 Jun 90 (replying to Bush's message on the de Maiziere meeting).

For more on American consultations with the French government during this period, see Basora to File, "Attali/Scowcroft Meeting Today," 15 Jun 90. The French were more anxious about both the upcoming G-7 summit and about German behavior. Attali wanted more pressure placed on Bonn on their dealings with Poland along with a firmer German renunciation of weapons of mass destruction. Scowcroft offered little sympathy, since the U.S. was satisfied with the West German positions on both matters. For a glimpse of some unofficial French views, less concerned about Germany but more about accommodating natural German influence in new NATO and EC structures, see Memcon for Meeting between former French president Valery Giscard d'Estaing and President Bush, 13 Jun 90.

¹⁶ See Young to Zoellick and Seitz, "Renunciation by the Western Allies Without Soviet Concurrence of Four-Power Reserved Rights Regarding Germany," 14 Jun 90; Seitz to Zoellick, "Four-Power Rights and Three-Power Responsibilities in Berlin," 6 Apr 90.

With the moment of truth drawing closer, Genscher accelerated his efforts with the Soviet Union. Shevardnadze had asked him to make a real symbolic pilgrimage of respect for the Soviet Union's tragic history with Germany, by meeting in Brest. The city had been part of the Polish province of the Russian empire and had become infamous for Soviets as the site of the humiliating 1918 treaty Germany had forced upon the new Soviet state as Lenin, desperate to survive an ongoing civil war, made his separate peace with the German enemy. Brest-Litovsk had become part of an independent Poland. Twenty-two years later, after Stalin had divided Poland with Hitler, Brest-Litovsk had become a border fortress in the extended Soviet empire. The fortress was a first target for German attack on the day Hitler's Reich invaded the Soviet Union, June 22, 1941. In that fortress on that day was Shevardnadze's older brother, Akaky. Along with hundreds of other Soviet soldiers, Shevardnadze's brother had died that day. Now, at this moment of judgment over Germany's future, Genscher would journey with Shevardnadze to Akaky's grave.

Brest also had a certain negative symbolism for the Poles. The city had been Polish for several centuries before it went into the Russian empire during the 1795 partition of Poland between Russia, Prussia, and Austria. It had become Polish again between 1919 and 1939 until it went back to the Russians in another German-Russian deal. Teltschik at the Chancellery was worried about the effect on Poles of a German-Russian meeting at this site, and Genscher personally assured the Polish foreign minister that no offense was intended by the choice of a city which meant so much to Shevardnadze.

The talks on June 11, 1990, accomplished less than the pictures did, pictures broadcast of this symbolic visit to the polished black tombstone, one among many. The five hours of talks had been comprehensive but seemed to go over old ground. Shevardnadze did for the first time explore the alternative ways Germany could affiliate itself with NATO, but the Western position was now well settled and Genscher offered him no encouragement. A main theme was a convergence on crafting some sort of agreement between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Shevardnadze envisioned a transformation of both alliances, for NATO to go down the path toward

demilitarization (and even disappearance) now being laid for the Warsaw Pact. Shevardnadze suggested the alliances agree on a number of principles. Some seemed harmless -- promising not to view each other as enemies, committing themselves to develop the Helsinki CSCE process. Others were more significant -- renouncing any first use of nuclear weapons, committing to drastic disarmament and purely defensive military postures, and defining geographic zones in which forces would be thinned out. A joint NATO-Warsaw Pact parliamentary assembly could be created. New information exchanges or confidence-building measures could be devised. These ideas were just preliminary, Shevardnadze said. He wanted to discuss them more with Baker too.

Genscher was skeptical about arrangements between the two alliances. He preferred developing relations between the individual countries which made up the alliances. Other ideas needed further study. But Genscher agreed on the need to reshape relations for the new era. Everyone hoped the upcoming NATO Summit wold be an important opportunity to begin this process.

Shevardnadze still held out for a transition period with Four Power rights remaining in force long after internal unification had occurred. Shevardnadze could not state how long this transition period might last. Genscher rejected such "decoupling." Why, he asked, was the transition period necessary?

Shevardnadze said that during the transition period agreement would be completed on a changed relationship between the Warsaw Pact and NATO. There would be some resolution of the problem of the military presence of the Four Powers in Germany. Shevardnadze wanted Soviet troops to remain in Germany as long as American, and even British and French, forces stayed in the FRG. The transition period would also need to include a later agreement on the size of German armed forces and clear disposition of the international agreements of the German states (i.e., the GDR's obligations toward the USSR). Finally, the transition period would last while the question of a new European security structure was answered. The Soviet Union needed to be certain about these questions before it could give up its right to keep forces in Germany.

Genscher argued that Germany, once unified, should be fully sovereign. Genscher also stressed this point at the post-meeting press conference, and his staff noted that Shevardnadze chose not to challenge him publicly on this point. Genscher's staff also told American officials that their minister had strongly rejected any effort to equate the presence of U.S. and Soviet forces in Germany.

The size of Germany's future armed forces was the subject of a one-on-one discussion between the two ministers. This issue was clearly critical. Genscher said an arrangement needed to be negotiated in Vienna to limit the forces of a united Germany, but do so without discrimination or singularization. Once a deal was struck at the CFE talks in Vienna, it could be noted in the Two Plus Four talks. Genscher said he was flexible on the form -- the agreement could declare an intent to limit forces in future talks or even be made part of the current CFE treaty. They did not talk about specific numbers. As with Baker in Copenhagen, Shevardnadze seemed to accept this approach. So the three key issues seemed to be the NATO issue, the timing of when Four Power rights ended (the "transition period"); and the limits on Germany's future armed forces.¹⁷

Meanwhile Gorbachev wrote to Kohl, thanking him for arranging the financial credits, but also explaining that he thought the external aspects of German unification would have to be settled at the CSCE summit toward the end of the year so that the interests of other European countries could be considered and all the results plugged into the "all-European process." There was no hint of important movement on the substantive issues. In a political setting, speaking to deputies of the USSR's parliament, the Supreme Soviet, Gorbachev displayed little sign of any change in his stance on Germany. But in a give-and-take with the parliamentarians Gorbachev

¹⁷ On the West German debate over the choice of Brest as the site for Genscher and Shevardnadze's meeting and on the talks themselves see Richard Kiessler & Frank Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken: Der diplomatische Weg zur deutschen Einheit (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1993), pp. 154-157; Teitschik, 329 Tage, pp. 267-268, 272-274; Bonn 18254, "Genscher-Shevardnadze Discussions in Brest," 12 Jun 90. This cable reported Kastrup's debrief, at Genscher's orders, to the US charge and British and French ambassadors in Bonn. Kastrup also provided a less detailed, and less candid, report to NATO. See USNATO 3465, "FRG's Kastrup Briefs the NAC June 13 on Genscher-Shevardnadze Meeting in Brest," 14 Jun 90.

emphasized his hope that NATO might change significantly at its upcoming London summit.¹⁸

Kohl wrote back to Gorbachev, telling him that the Western side actually wanted to wrap up the external aspects of unification before the CSCE summit. Kohl wanted further negotiation on the arrangements for the five billion D-Mark credit that had been agreed in May, and Gorbachev's reply back to Kohl set dates for those talks and for Kohl's visit to Moscow in the middle of July -- coming after the results would be known from the NATO and G-7 summits and coming after what promised to be a difficult Communist Party congress for the Soviet leader.¹⁹

Genscher and Shevardnadze met again on June 18, this time in the West German city of Münster. Genscher's FDP colleague in the cabinet, Jürgen Möllemann, hailed from Münster and helped arrange a tumultuous welcome for the Soviet visitor. Again the theme was a new relationship between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Again Shevardnadze emphasized how much depended on the results of the London NATO summit.

Shevardnadze had reduced his ideas for a NATO-Warsaw Pact agreement to writing and had sent his more formal proposal to all CSCE foreign ministers. The two ministers discussed this proposal, and many of the related ideas for new political structures. Genscher liked the emerging idea for a joint NATO-Warsaw Pact declaration on European security and hoped to persuade the Alliance to include this point in the communique issued from the NATO summit.

¹⁸ See Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 265; Question and Answer session with Gorbachev at the Supreme Soviet, broadcast live on Moscow Television Service, June 12, 1990, in FBIS-SOV 90-114, June 13, 1990, pp. 45, 46-47, and Gorbachev's prepared address to the Supreme Soviet, *ibid.*, p. 53. Beschloss and Talbott characterize Gorbachev's June 12 remarks as a "cave-in" being made to look "principled and tough." They then interpret a routine Bush comment on these remarks as his reaction to Gorbachev "playing the good loser." Michael Beschloss & Strobe Talbott, At the Highest Levels: The Inside Story of the End of the Cold War (Boston: Little, Brown, 1992), p. 231. But a closer study of what Gorbachev said reveals no significant departures from the past Soviet stance, except in the tone of his exchange during the Q and A session. The notion of East Germany remaining an "associate member" of the Warsaw Pact is not notably different from the earlier idea of having a united Germany retain membership in both alliances. At this same time, we know from Thatcher's account, Gorbachev was also still toying with ways to dilute Germany's membership in NATO.

¹⁹ Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 275-276.

The Soviets were still searching for some way to give the former GDR a special status outside of the "NATO zone." But Shevardnadze was now relying on radical changes in NATO and the Warsaw Pact. From the Soviet side this could sound like alliances with so little difference between them, or so little content, that simultaneous membership in both NATO and the Warsaw Pact would be possible. From the Western side it could mean that NATO became so benign that membership in the organization could not possibly be deemed threatening by the Soviet Union.

The CSCE, the pan-European organization, would be enhanced. Everyone had agreed on that for months. Shevardnadze's suggestions for doing so were surprisingly modest. He did not advocate a great leap forward into a new European security system. Using ideas the Americans, West Germans, and British had all mentioned, Shevardnadze suggested the creation of a secretariat that would give permanent institutional support for high-level meetings, a conflict prevention center (duties unclear), and a center to monitor military activities (duties also unclear). The proposal at the Bonn Two Plus Four meeting, six weeks earlier, for a Four Power-based center based in Germany to watch over German military activities had apparently been dropped. There was little new discussion of how to limit future German armed forces.

Shevardnadze's discussion of a "transition period" had become confused. He certainly had no objection to West German annexation of East Germany via Article 23 and said so publicly. West German diplomats were apparently so worried about Soviet attitudes (since they were regularly talking to the likes of Bondarenko) that Kastrup expressed his surprised pleasure for this "astonishing" concession, though Soviet political leaders had conceded this point at least a month earlier. But privately Tarasenko had pulled Elbe aside and given him a paper that he and Teymuraz Stepanov on the planning staff had put together. The paper abandoned the demand to keep Four Power rights in force until after the "transition period." In other words, the paper reflected the position Shevardnadze had taken privately with Baker at Copenhagen. Tarasenko told Elbe not to worry because the Soviet position would end up tracking this paper. Elbe trusted Tarasenko, knowing his close relationship to

Shevardnadze, and understanding how Soviet bureaucratic conflicts divided the foreign ministry. Tarasenko's prediction proved to be accurate.²⁰

Perhaps the Two Plus Four ministerial meeting itself would offer clearer insight into where the Soviets stood. Ministers were scheduled to gather in Berlin on June 22. Political directors from the six participating states convened in Bonn on June 20. The language on borders was quickly polished off, ready for the approval of ministers. Then they turned to other issues.

Zoellick, chairing the meeting, had worked on a draft outline for the entire settlement. The other Western allies concurred with this outline. The Soviets, however, balked at language returning Berlin to the Germans or giving up other Four Power rights. Nor did agreement seem any closer on the contentious political-military questions.²¹

As Baker arrived in Berlin he sought out East German prime minister de Maiziere to follow up on the session with Bush and again urge the GDR leader to moderate his country's support for Soviet positions in the Two Plus Four. He had little success. Obviously nervous about Soviet resistance on the NATO issue, de

²⁰ Account based on Kiessler & Elbe, *Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken*, pp. 157-159; author interview with Tarasenko, Providence, June 1992; Kastrup's debrief to Teltschik in *329 Tage*, pp. 276-278; Kastrup's debrief to NATO in USNATO 3565, "FRG Political Director Briefs the NAC June 19 on Genscher-Shevardnadze Meeting in Muenster," 19 Jun 90 and the official Soviet debrief provided to the Americans and reported in State 209211, "Soviet Nonpaper on Shevardnadze-Genscher Meeting in Munster," 27 Jun 90. Kastrup did not mention the Elbe-Tarasenko conversation to anyone.

Elizabeth Pond, citing anonymous West German foreign ministry sources, has written that Tarasenko handed Genscher a 'non-paper' in Muenster that 'foreshadowed the final deal. United Germany could stay in the NATO alliance; Nato structures could not extend to the former GDR so long as Soviet troops remained there, but that territory would nonetheless fall under the guarantee of the Western alliance' Elizabeth Pond, *Beyond the Wall: Germany's Road to Unification* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1993), p. 217. Neither Tarasenko nor Elbe confirm that the Soviet 'non-paper' went so far. Pond's sources' were almost certainly mistaken. All the other evidence on the Münster meeting is against this claim. Further, Genscher would probably have reported such a sensational communication either to Baker or to Kohl. In Berlin a few days later Shevardnadze, even privately, was not even able to repeat the concession he had earlier made to Baker in Copenhagen. Genscher himself was describing the Soviet stance on NATO as unacceptable in briefings to the West German cabinet as late as July 1.

²¹ See EUR/CE (Goodman) to various working-level officials in the State Department, "Negotiating History of Two-plus-Four," 21 Sept 90, pp. 6-7. On the U.S. draft outline, see Zoellick's markup of "A Basic Outline for Elements of a Final Settlement," passed to Zelikow on June 18; Foulon (Zoellick's staffer) to Zoellick, "Draft Settlement Outlines," 13 Jun 90.

Maiziere even claimed that he had just returned from Paris and Mitterrand too had only been "casual" about the question of Germany's alliance status. Mitterrand had seemed more interested in the development of new all-European security structures at the CSCE Summit. But, Baker pressed, did Mitterrand really say these new structures would replace the existing ones? De Maiziere conceded that Mitterrand had not gone so far. De Maiziere, however, thought the West should plan to replace the current NATO system.

Baker disagreed. De Maiziere equivocated. Finally de Maiziere came to the heart of the matter. The situation with the Soviets was getting more difficult. Other aspects of unification were moving quickly and the East German people now counted on unification happening soon. But the Soviets had said unification would be "problematic" without a settlement of the external aspects. Soviet Defense Minister Yazov, in Berlin for a Warsaw Pact defense ministers' meeting, had just reiterated this position personally to de Maiziere. If the external issues were not solved de Maiziere worried that the situation could become quite difficult. Unity amid such discord might be bad for Germany. The Soviets were starting to suspend their previously scheduled troop withdrawals from the GDR. De Maiziere could not rule out the possibility of fighting breaking out between Soviet troops and East German civilians.

Baker reviewed the U.S. stance. Although there might be a transition period for Soviet forces the stationing of foreign troops would be a matter for the sovereign German state to decide. That, De Maiziere replied, was the crux of the matter. The Soviets said such German authority was unacceptable. The Four Powers should strike a deal. The Soviets could not imply that they had lost the gains of World War II.²²

This encounter turned out to be a preview of the entire ministerial meeting. Despite the ceremonial viewing of the dismantlement of Berlin's Checkpoint Charlie, the famed entry point to the American sector, East and West remained quite separate at the negotiating table.

²² State 222614, "The Secretary's June 22 Meeting with GDR Premier De Maiziere," 10 Jul 90.

The ministers easily blessed the language on borders. The Polish foreign minister would be invited to the next Two Plus Four meeting in Paris to endorse this agreement. But when the ministers turned to other settlement issues the familiar debates were renewed. The flexibility and reasonableness that had been evident in Washington and Copenhagen evaporated. Meckel, the East German foreign minister, led off the Eastern attack, noting that the draft outline of the settlement said nothing about political-military issues. He noted the need to deal with the military status of Germany, and put ceilings on and secure the withdrawal of the forces belonging to all of the Four Powers. Shevardnadze promptly agreed.

Shevardnadze's own lengthy, prepared intervention set the tone by reminding delegates that the date was the 49th anniversary of the "fascist" attack on the USSR. The presentation seemed to be built on the guidance that had been prepared for Shevardnadze in April -- guidance that he had not used. That advice had cautioned the foreign minister to make absolutely clear that Germany in the Western alliance was unthinkable. First, he said, the alliances must be transformed. Next he turned to the Soviet draft for a settlement document. Though he was flexible on form, agreeing that no peace treaty was needed, there was no flexibility on substance. The Soviet draft contained a number of provisions that were utterly unacceptable to the Western countries. It was, Elbe remembered, like stepping into a "cold shower."

The Soviets were not merely passive objects for Western diplomacy. Deputy foreign minister Kvitsinsky, sitting at Shevardnadze's side during the Berlin meeting, thought the Soviets were being taken for granted by the West. He thought Shevardnadze was carrying "unimaginable" burdens at an "insane" pace, flying here and receiving people there. Kvitsinsky had become Shevardnadze's deputy in May and realized, aghast, that the Soviet foreign policy situation was just "miserable." Kvitsinsky feared what a few Western officials had secretly contemplated: that the Western powers might just negotiate their own settlement with Germany, excluding the Soviets, as they had done in concluding the postwar peace treaty with Japan. The West had now built up terrific momentum. So Shevardnadze was meeting constantly with Western ministers. "All that happened because we had to try, under the worst

time pressure, to achieve an optimal result in a game in which we, from day to day, had lost one trump card after another." Use of the one clear remaining trump, the Soviet military presence in Germany, would have caused such a crisis that this option was ruled out by the Soviet leadership.²³

But the Soviet diplomats had a position, the one the Politburo had approved in May and which Shevardnadze had first introduced in Bonn. So Kvitsinsky was determined to slow the tide of events by firmly asserting this stance again, with a draft treaty. An expert working group headed by Bondarenko prepared the draft. Kvitsinsky wanted his minister to deliver a shock, to force the Western ministers to take account of the Soviet position on a transition period and needed change in Europe's security structures. It was this tough attitude which had already intimidated De Maiziere and inspired Meckel to try to build bridges.

Before reflecting on these tactics, it is worth examining them in detail to see just how general differences translated into concrete treaty provisions. In the Soviet draft:

- The settlement document would be an interim one only. Four Power rights and responsibilities would remain in force after unification. In 1992, nearly two years after internal unification, a conference of Two Plus Four foreign ministers would examine German behavior under the interim settlement and then decide when or how to terminate Four Power rights over Berlin and Germany as a whole. The following provisions would be included in the interim settlement.
- All East German international agreements would remain in force for at least a five year transition period after unification. During this time a united Germany could seek bilateral modifications. However, the division of Germany between the Warsaw Pact and NATO "shall not be changed, and the competence of the Warsaw Treaty and NATO respectively shall not extend to territories that did not fall within their scope." The settlement would also promise various improvements of the CSCE process.
- Troops of all Four Powers would remain in Germany for at least the five year transition period after unification. While they stayed, their status would be governed by previous agreements concluded by the GDR or FRG.

²³ Kwizinski, Vor dem Sturm, pp. 39-40.

- Ceilings on German armed forces would be imposed both in quantity, no more than 200-250,000 for all branches combined, and in quality, so German forces would be "structurally modified to render them incapable of offensive action." These ceilings would be implemented within three years after unification.
- After these ceilings were implemented, the troop contingents of all of the Four Powers would all be reduced to no more than half of their former strength. Subsequently they would either be withdrawn or retained only "within token levels." All U.S., British, and French forces would be forbidden from entering the territory of the former GDR.
- The current West German Bundeswehr and East German National People's Army would be confined to the former territories of their respective states. After three years new restrictions would confine these forces to the permanent bases used by these forces to the western and eastern portions of a united Germany (the draft spelled out the lines of demarcation), effectively creating a demilitarized zone through the middle of Germany. Then this settlement would remain in effect until (a) both NATO and the Warsaw Pact were dissolved or (b) Germany withdrew from both alliances.
- After unification, Four Power rule of Berlin would end but the troops of all Four Powers would then leave Berlin within six months. All Allied institutions in Berlin would be closed. (This meant, of course, that Berlin would be left for years in a region of Germany where Soviet troops remained and from which all Western forces were still excluded.)
- There would be a prohibition on German military action that would extend to bar any military activities of third states conducted on German territory directed against "anybody."
- There would be a ban not only on German possession of nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons but also on German participation in decisionmaking concerning the use of such weapons. (This provision would actually reduce the existing West German participation in NATO organizations.)
- There would be categorical German acceptance of all prior Four Power decisions on denazification, demilitarization, and democratization within the respective zones of occupation. These decisions could not be reexamined by German legislatures or courts. (This would exempt Soviet occupation confiscations or other acts from any German review. In effect it would give supreme property rights under German law against any other claimants, whatever the merits, to persons and institutions deriving property rights from Soviet confiscations.)

- The settlement would restrict German domestic political activity to prevent any resurgence of Naziism or national socialist political movements.

Shevardnadze was anxious to conclude this interim settlement document in time for the November CSCE Summit. Therefore he also proposed that the periodic Two Plus Four meetings be replaced by a standing negotiation process to meet continuously until the work was done.

While Shevardnadze was speaking, Baker passed Genscher a note asking, "What does this mean?" Genscher wrote back: "Window dressing." Baker nodded in agreement. But the presentation was so formidable, and so detailed, that it had to be taken seriously even as it clashed so jarringly with their private impressions of Shevardnadze's stance. Hurd opened the Western critique of Shevardnadze's proposal. Baker was especially blunt. He said that, after reading the plan, all he could say was: "So much for German sovereignty." He also rejected the procedural idea of trying to keep the Two Plus Four process running continuously. Genscher also said the final settlement should terminate Four Power rights and not leave issues unsettled. Germany must be fully sovereign at the time of unification. Singling out Germany for all these special limits would violate this principle. Mutual confidence, not mutual mistrust, must be the basis for the agreement.

The session then broke for lunch. At lunch Baker tried to divert attention from the specifics of the Soviet paper. He suggested that the group concentrate for now on making a list showing what issues needed to be addressed and the forum in which they should be handled.

After lunch Meckel, as chairman, put forward Baker's idea with strong support from Genscher. More damagingly for the West, Meckel called on ministers to leave the Two Plus Four table only when they had agreed on a future security architecture for Europe and the timetable for its construction. He also circulated a paper calling for ceilings on German armed forces (300,000) and a transitional period to last until "final agreement is reached on a European security system." Shevardnadze urged the ministers to look at the proposed Soviet draft again and adopt the idea of a standing negotiation. Otherwise the next Paris ministerial would find

much undone and could take an unpleasant turn.

Baker and Genscher pushed at least to prepare a list of the areas of disagreement, and where each matter should be handled. Genscher noted that CFE would resolve force issues, the NATO Summit would deal with the Alliance's future, and the CSCE Summit would address the future of that institution. Baker also asked for agreement that the goal of the exercise would be to achieve full German sovereignty at the moment of unification, done in such a way that Germany would not be singled out for special limits. Hurd backed him. How, Shevardnadze asked, could we speak of a unified Germany without singling it out? With that inconclusive coda, the meeting ended.²⁴

Speaking to the press at a joint news conference, the ministers downplayed the points of controversy at the meeting. Shevardnadze did repeat publicly, however, the importance he placed on the upcoming NATO summit meeting in London. Portraying the constructive Soviet approach, Shevardnadze in his statement went so far as to emphasize that "we intend to have final agreement that will resolve all aspects of German unity before the end of the year." This statement was literally inconsistent with the position he had just tabled, and entirely incompatible with the spirit of the draft Soviet settlement. Either Shevardnadze did not understand this position, or he sought to conceal it from public scrutiny. Yet this was odd, since the Soviet draft proposal had been made available to the press. Elbe could tell himself that this was why Tarasenko had given him the "non-paper" in Muenster. It was to assure the West Germans not to take the coming Soviet position at face value.²⁵

²⁴ Account based on Kwizinskiy, Vor dem Sturm, pp. 40-46 (including the text of the Soviet draft treaty); Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, pp. 160-163; State 248717, "June 22 Two-Plus-Four Ministerial in Berlin: Account," 28 Jul 90; Blackwill's handwritten notes from the ministerial meeting; text of Shevardnadze intervention distributed by Soviet delegation; and Secto 10012 (from Baker's aircraft), "Briefing Points on June 22 Two-Plus-Four Ministerial for Use at NATO Permrep Meeting on Jun 25," 23 Jun 90. For Teltschik's reactions to the Berlin meeting see 329 Tage, pp. 284-286.

²⁵ On the press conference see Department of State, "Press Conference Following Berlin Two-Plus-Four Ministerial," East Berlin, 22 Jun 90. For Elbe's thoughts see Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, p. 162. Zoellick subsequently backgrounded American reporters quite fully on the positions presented by all sides at the meeting. In that session Zoellick, speaking on background, said that: "The train to German unification is leaving the station -- it's well on the track and fundamentally the Soviets

Kvitsinsky's strategy had to rest on a critical proposition: if the Soviet government seriously threatens a major confrontation then the West will rethink its objectives and plans. But the proposition had two flaws, one serious and one fatal. The serious flaw was that the detailed Soviet counterattack was prepared so slowly and launched so late. Even in early May, thanks to the hard driving actions of Kohl and Bush, the West had consolidated its ranks and built up enough strength from internal developments to turn back the first presentation of this approach. Now, in late June, Western solidarity was nearly rock solid both at the level of general principle and of specific details. They, and much of West German elite opinion that would affect the West German political debate, genuinely thought the debate had already moved well beyond the kind of points being raised by Shevardnadze in Berlin.

The fatal flaw, however, was that other Soviet officials had effectively undermined a credible threat of confrontation. Gorbachev had shown the crack in Soviet resistance in Washington. Then Shevardnadze's private discussions, especially with Baker in Copenhagen, had further revealed his underlying readiness to find a compromise solution. Just as Central Committee staffer Portugalov had (inadvertently) undercut Soviet diplomacy at key points in late 1989, Tarasenko's non-paper to Elbe in Muenster had (this time quite deliberately) undercut the effect of Kvitsinsky and Bondarenko's move in Berlin. Tarasenko had been annoyed in December 1989 when Shevardnadze had accepted Kvitsinsky's tougher approach to the German question. This time, in June, Tarasenko effectively sabotaged the deputy foreign minister's plan with Shevardnadze's approval. Shevardnadze was not ready to concede. He anxiously awaited what NATO would do at its summit and had his own agenda of other issues to be settled. But Shevardnadze's agenda was much closer to what the West was actually trying to accomplish, consistent with its timetable for

are going to have to face the choice of whether they want to get on the train or isolate themselves." He further implied, refusing to elaborate, that Shevardnadze's proposal could have been aimed at a Soviet domestic audience. Department of State, "Background Briefing by Senior State Department Officials," 22 Jun 90. For typical West German press reactions, see Christoph Bertram, "Stagnieren unter Zeitdruck," Die Zeit, June 29, 1990, p. 6; "Schewardnadse plädiert für 'Übergangsfristen' nach der Einheit," Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, June 23, 1990, p. 1.

rapid unification and the restoration of German sovereignty.

Obviously the American officials were surprised and concerned about Shevardnadze's performance. Baker confronted Shevardnadze with his questions at a private two and a half hour meeting that night, at the Soviet Residence in Berlin. As in Copenhagen, only Ross, Tarasenko, and the interpreters were with them. It was probably the most intense of all the US-Soviet exchanges on the subject of Germany during the year of turmoil which had begun in the fall of 1989.

Baker was direct. He told Shevardnadze he was surprised by the Soviet paper. He had been hopeful after Copenhagen and had briefed President Bush accordingly. Now the paper moved in the opposite direction and very clearly singled out Germany for unique, discriminatory restrictions. The Soviet paper separated unification and German sovereignty. It linked the US and Soviet military presence, even though Gorbachev had recognized the need for America to stay in Europe and Germany. It was hard to figure this all out. "What's happened between Copenhagen and here?" The US had tried to be responsive to Soviet concerns. Shevardnadze also knew President Bush had stretched pretty hard to conclude the commercial trade agreement in Washington. But this Soviet paper represents such a dramatic departure from what Baker understood in Copenhagen that he really hoped Shevardnadze would tell him what was going on. President Bush would want to know. The US was reviewing the issue of economic support for the Soviet Union. It would be hard. At a minimum, "you really need to level with me now about what's going on with regard to Germany. I can deal with the true picture, but I need to know what it is."

Shevardnadze briefly defended the document. Then he conceded that in working on this Soviet proposal "we were guided by our domestic situation." The mood in the country was not good. It would be irresponsible not to take this into account. True, the Soviets now wanted the American military presence to stay. But it was hard to explain all this to the Soviet people. The European process needed to be more dynamic, Shevardnadze continued. A lot would depend on the kind of statement that came from the NATO Summit in London. Progress on the CFE and CSCE issues was important too. He had admitted that the Soviet proposals were not

the ultimate truth. A solution must be found. But "we are facing a crisis situation, a political crisis as well as an economic crisis, and it's not easy to convince our people today of what we're doing." There was "tremendous" opposition.

Maybe later there could be an adjustment, Shevardnadze conceded. But it was very important that they see a statement from London that demonstrated change in NATO. They needed to be able to tell the Soviet people that they faced no threat, not from Germany, not from the US, and not from NATO. He referred to an article published by one of his critics entitled, "Free Cheese Can Only Be Found in a Mouse Trap."²⁶

Baker understood. He could not go into all the U.S. plans for the NATO summit but he felt sure Shevardnadze would be pleased with the outcome if Washington could persuade its allies to accept America's proposal. Baker's only worry was that, with this position now public, it would be harder for Shevardnadze to compromise and walk away from it.

Shevardnadze understood, but he countered again by emphasizing the importance of the London NATO Summit.

Baker then felt he needed to show a flash of steel. "In the final analysis, Germany will unify and we are prepared, with others, to grant Germany the sovereignty it deserves and is due. We are going to make every effort to accommodate your security concerns as we move forward and I hope you will not be isolated in opposition to German sovereignty." After offering some arguments to use in defending a suitable outcome to the Soviet people, Baker repeated that, "at the end of the day we take the position that Germany is going to be fully sovereign and they

²⁶ The article had to have been Vladimir Ostrovskiy, "The Only Free Cheese is in a Mousetrap," Rabochaya Tribuna, June 12, 1990, pp. 1, 3 in FBIS-SOV 90-115, June 14, 1990, pp. 5-7. It presented the views of Oleg Baklanov, a party secretary on the CPSU Central Committee who had held responsibility for defense industry matters, was an adviser to Gorbachev, and was named by Gorbachev in 1991 to head a revived Defense Council, the top national security decisionmaking body of the state. Gorbachev came to regret the elevation of this conservative, since Baklanov became a primary plotter of the August 1991 coup attempt against the Soviet president. See Harry Gelman, The Rise and Fall of National Security Decisionmaking in the Former USSR, RAND Report R-4200-A (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 1992), pp. viii-ix.

are not going to be singled out." And, in friendship, Baker told Shevardnadze that, to answer the question about why the US would stay, it was because the US presence had always been based on the consent of the countries concerned. Maybe it was too much for the public to accept, but the reality was that there was an important difference between the US presence and the historical Soviet presence.

Baker had thus hinted that, if no external agreement was reached by the time of unification, the U.S. and the Western allies might terminate their Four Power rights unilaterally, leaving the Soviets isolated. There had been no formal U.S. government deliberation to lead to this policy decision. NSC staffers had looked at the question and privately reached this conclusion, but within State the issue had been clouded by the substantial international law arguments against it. It is not clear whether Baker had discussed this specific contingency with President Bush. Yet no one at the top of the U.S. government doubted for a moment Bush's resolve on the goal of restoring full German sovereignty, and there was no reason to doubt that Bush would follow the U.S. position to the logical conclusion Baker had just spelled out.

Baker was taking a chance. He could not be sure that the West Germans, French, and British were ready to follow such a confrontational course if the crisis came. Plans for such a contingency had not yet been agreed.

Emotions rising to the surface, Shevardnadze raised the stakes even higher. The domestic situation was very difficult. He said the easiest thing was for both Gorbachev and him to leave the stage altogether. But they knew who would replace them and they knew what order they would produce, and they knew what would happen in Europe, and not only in Europe, and so they knew they would have to pass through this test. Shevardnadze admitted the Soviet proposal was an unhappy surprise. But some decisions in Moscow had to be made collectively. Alluding to the May Politburo decision, he said this was not just a document of the President and Foreign Minister.

Baker now became conciliatory. He had asked Shevardnadze at lunch to be specific about what he needed. The US would endeavor to take care of Soviet concerns in the proper fora. All the issues need not be handled in the final settlement

document. He and President Bush had outlined a program of Western action in the American "nine points."

But, Shevardnadze answered, the "nine points" were known only to a few people in the USSR. That was why the NATO message from London would be so important. It would be seen by everybody. If the statement that comes out of London opened up the possibility of building relations between states that have been parties to the alliances, that would be very positive.

Baker, without elaborating, said he felt sure Shevardnadze would be happy with the London NATO summit. Shevardnadze said he valued this assurance very highly.

The ministers then turned to limits on future German armed forces. Shevardnadze said Genscher wanted to place the limits on German forces directly into the current CFE treaty as part of a limit that would apply to all countries in Central Europe.²⁷ This approach seemed feasible to the Soviet government.

Baker was cautious, perhaps remembering the negative White House reaction to this idea when it was first floated in May. He renewed the idea, discussed at Copenhagen, of a current promise to embed a particular ceiling in a future treaty that would put similar ceilings on the troops of other armies. As at Copenhagen, Shevardnadze was willing to consider this option too.

Shevardnadze also returned to the question of economic aid for the USSR,

²⁷ Genscher had floated an earlier scheme for revising the CFE treaty to handle German troop limits, sometimes called the Hartmann plan, with the Soviets in May. He had done so without approval for this position either from the West German cabinet or from the NATO allies that would have to agree to a new CFE position. Both the West German cabinet and the U.S. government then vetoed this "Hartman plan" in late May and early June. See, e.g., text accompanying notes 30-33, 36, in Chapter Nine. As will be discussed later, in late June the U.S. thought the West German government had developed a new plan, usually called the "Holik plan," that did not involve direct revision of the CFE treaty itself. By the end of June, in the consultations preceding the NATO summit, the U.S. discovered that Bonn indeed envisioned amending the CFE treaty with its new manpower limits. The White House opposed the move and the FRG then dropped it. The FRG then turned in early July to a different variant of the "Holik plan" that would not tinker with the vital but fragile CFE treaty. Teltschik cleared this new approach with Scowcroft at the Houston G-7 summit before Kohl traveled to Moscow in mid-July. Shevardnadze's comment in Berlin reveals that Genscher apparently went ahead (probably in Brest or Münster) and offered the Soviets the original version of the Holik plan that, within a week, was to be rejected by Washington and then abandoned by Bonn. There is no evidence that Genscher had sought or obtained the Chancellor's or the cabinet's approval for this action.

looking ahead to the G-7 summit in Houston. America wanted to help, Baker said. There were some serious legal problems. But above all the Soviet Union would need to go forward with fundamental economic reform. No one wanted to repeat the mistake made with Poland in the 1970s when a lot of money was transferred but there was no reform. Others would also ask about Soviet defense spending.

Finally, to provide some 'good news,' Baker reviewed one part of the upcoming US proposals for the London NATO Summit: the ideas for strengthening the CSCE. The list included regular ministerial meetings, a regular schedule of review conferences, a new CSCE secretariat to coordinate these activities, a CSCE elections commission, a CSCE conflict reduction center, and a new CSCE parliament based on the parliamentary assembly of the Council of Europe and including representatives from all CSCE states. He did not know if America's allies would agree to the list, but it went a long way toward Soviet concerns on this subject.

Shevardnadze promised to keep the information strictly confidential. These were very serious steps. If these were accepted and adopted, the Soviets would be able to say that the CSCE process was based on a very serious foundation. It would lay the basis for substantive guarantees of security and stability. He valued this information very much. He really regarded it as very important. Baker added that the U.S. still did not see the CSCE as a replacement for NATO. Shevardnadze understood.

The two men then parted. Baker thanked Shevardnadze for staying up so late. Shevardnadze said that maybe the meeting with Baker had been no less important than the Two Plus Four meeting itself.²⁸ On the plane trip back to Moscow Shevardnadze

²⁸ Memcon for Meeting with Foreign Minister Shevardnadze, 22 Jun 90, Soviet Residence, Berlin (prepared by Ross). As he did on the margins of Shevardnadze's meeting with Genscher in Münster, Tarasenko assured Ross, like Elbe, not to take Shevardnadze's public statements at face value. Quotation marks in the text are applied to passages that appear in the memcon to have been taken down practically verbatim. The material presented as direct quotations from Baker and Shevardnadze in this meeting in Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, p. 233, are not actual quotations from what was said, but quotations from what someone else — apparently Ross — later told the reporters was said, with Ross simplifying the quotes and thus making them more vivid.

During this meeting there was a brief but interesting discussion of Boris Yeltsin. Baker left the room briefly and Ross used the lull to suggest that Shevardnadze, and Gorbachev, should try to work

had a lot to think about. To Kvitsinsky, Shevardnadze seemed pensive and troubled. As the officials took stock of what had happened Shevardnadze passed the draft treaty text he had presented in Berlin, which had caused so much controversy, back to Kvitsinsky (who had not attended the meeting with Baker) and asked him the rhetorical question: "What, out of this paper, will probably be left?"²⁹

As Baker flew back to Washington he walked back to the reporters sitting in the back half of the coach cabin on his plane. Speaking on background, to be quoted only as "a senior administration official," Baker urged the journalists to consider the Soviet proposal as "a document that has been thoroughly reviewed on an overall interagency basis in Moscow. Someone made the point, I think, that it was at least in part for domestic Soviet consumption and I think that's very valid. ... I think that the [July] Party Congress plays an important role in this and I don't think it should be seen as unusual that he might have more flexibility after the Party Congress than he would before."³⁰ After the Party Congress, of course, Shevardnadze would also know the outcome of the NATO summit.

Preparing for the NATO Summit

President Bush had raised expectations for this NATO summit when he described an ambitious agenda for it in his May 4 speech at Oklahoma State University. He had promised the summit would show the Alliance adopting a more political, less military, role, promised that it would change the posture and strategy of both conventional and nuclear forces, and promised that the summit would chart a new course for the CSCE. Both the Defense Department and the State Department had hoped for a more modest agenda, one that would just launch a review of NATO

closely with Yeltsin and secure his cooperation in their policy initiatives. Baker returned during this exchange and added his support for this suggestion. Shevardnadze's reaction was positive but noncommittal.

²⁹ Kvizinskij, Vor dem Sturm, p. 47.

³⁰ Department of State, "Background Briefing by Senior Administration Official," Berlin Tegel Airport en route to Shannon, Ireland, 23 Jun 90.

strategy so the Alliance could take the time to deliberate over such important changes. But the White House, and Baker's circle, favored a more decisive event. In this judgment they had the valuable support of NATO's Secretary General, Manfred Woerner, who could appreciate the difficulty of the task but also, as a West German politician, could sense the need for dramatic action. The Summit Declaration, he told Bush, should not just pose questions. It should provide answers to the questions about NATO's future purpose.³¹

But bureaucratic preparations for the NATO summit were disjointed. Every bureaucracy in Washington seemed to be reflecting on some aspect of NATO's future -- but there was no overall strategy to hook the pieces together. The Defense Department was thinking about nuclear strategy and forces. Other conventional military issues were being considered at the Pentagon or in the arms control process.³² Delegates at the ongoing negotiation on new confidence and security-building measures were discussing new ideas for CSCE in Vienna.

Several sets of ideas had been put forward by political figures. Genscher, in April, had listed ten different ideas, from pan-European human rights institutions to a European environmental agency. The West Germans had focused on CSCE as a route to address Soviet concerns about unification, and they pressed a long menu of ideas on their Allied colleagues. Prime Minister Thatcher had listed British suggestions for the CSCE in a speech on April 10. In early May Secretary Baker sent a letter to his NATO colleagues, soon repeated to all other CSCE foreign ministers, citing "some

³¹ Wörner and Scowcroft, joined by Zelikow and Wörner's staffer James Cunningham, had discussed summit plans over dinner on May 6. The next morning Wörner met with Bush at the White House. See Memcon for Meeting with Manfred Wörner, Oval Office, 7 May 90. In this meeting Bush even wondered whether NATO, as a symbolic gesture, should change its name.

³² On the state of NATO nuclear discussions in early May see "Agreed Minute" from Meeting of NATO Nuclear Planning Group, Kananaskis, Canada, 9-10 May 90; Seitz through Kimmitt and Bartholomew to Baker, "TASM, SNF Negotiations, Germany, and Unification," 14 May 90. The capable U.S. chairman of the High Level Group for nuclear defense planning was assistant secretary of defense Stephen Hadley. On the relatively modest State Department agenda for the NATO summit, hoping to shield the Alliance from any new controversy, see Dobbins (Acting) and Clarke (assistant secretary of state for political-military affairs) through Kimmitt and Bartholomew to Baker, "Gameplan for Spring NATO Meetings and NATO Summit," 22 May 90.

ideas which we think have promise." These included more regular ministerial and official-level meetings, regularizing the schedule of CSCE review conferences, negotiating specific new mechanisms for conflict resolution at the upcoming (January 1991) Valletta meeting on the peaceful settlement of disputes (a British idea), and developing new CSBMs including a mechanism for clarifying unusual military activities (based on a Dutch idea). Baker further suggested, to general assent, that negotiations on CSCE initiatives and preparation for the CSCE summit should begin in July in Vienna.³³

NATO allies began debating the "Basic Elements" of a common Allied approach to CSCE's future. The West Germans, with Italian support, tabled the broadest range of ideas, with language suggesting that the CSCE would become the central structure in the new Europe including "an all embracing European security architecture." Bonn was pushing for almost any CSCE move that could be reduced to writing while the Americans tried "to keep their CSCE aspirations earth-bound."³⁴ Soviet proposals for further extension of CSCE continued to dwell on the creation of all-European security structures to replace both alliance systems.³⁵

In Washington, Seitz led an interagency review of options for strengthening

³³ See speech by Genscher, "The Future of a European Germany," to the American Society of Newspaper Editors, Washington, D.C., 6 Apr 90; State 158722, "CSCE: Message from the Secretary," 17 May 90 (sent to all CSCE posts; updated an April 24 version for NATO allies with a review of developments and U.S. policy on Germany); Message from Foreign Secretary Hurd to Secretary Baker, 1 May 90; Dobbins to Zoellick, "CSCE: Update on Preparations for Copenhagen Meeting," 4 May 90.

³⁴ See Dobbins to Zoellick, "U.S./FRG Perspectives on CSCE at NATO," 19 May 90 and attached paper circulated by the German NATO delegation, "CSCE-Summit Working Group," 16 May 90. The stimulus to expand the CSCE's elaboration of common political principles to include market economics and election guidelines had come from the United States in 1989. As a result two CSCE meetings were ultimately scheduled to develop such principles. The Bonn CSCE meeting on economic cooperation in Europe, held in March 1990, had been quite successful in articulating a surprisingly broad area of agreement on market principles for the economic organization of society. The Copenhagen meeting on election guidelines was scheduled for June. See Vojtech Mastny, ed., The Helsinki Process and the Reintegration of Europe, 1986-1991: Analysis and Documentation (New York: New York University Press, 1992), pp. 187-257; John Fry, The Helsinki Process: Negotiating Security and Cooperation in Europe (Washington: National Defense University Press, 1993), pp. 143-156.

³⁵ For an excellent portrait of how Soviet thinking on CSCE had evolved, see Eduard Shevardnadze, "Europe: A Generation's Mission," Izvestija, May 30, 1990, p. 5.

the CSCE at the end of May. He was surprised and pleased to find that the NSC staff's usual disdain for CSCE had been replaced by strong support for new institutions.³⁶

But all of the bureaucratic activity had produced few concrete results, and that made NATO Secretary General Manfred Wörner a very worried man. NATO's most important meeting in its history was fast approaching. The Soviet foreign minister had virtually put the fate of German unification within the alliance in the alliance's own hands. And yet the bureaucracy was grinding on as it had done for forty years during the deep freeze of the Cold War. Wörner wrote to Baker at the end of May warning him that the Summit "has already been widely and publicly billed as the most significant reappraisal of the Alliance's role since the mid-1960s and as responding to the biggest political changes since NATO's foundation." But Wörner did not have any particular policies to recommend. Nor did U.S. diplomats at NATO. Ambassador Taft was primarily concerned that more urgent activity might "increase the chances of early and significant differences with the Allies."³⁷

Bush was publicly committed to an ambitious summit. In mid-May Blackwill and Zelikow prepared both a list of summit initiatives and a draft Summit Declaration. Upon seeing them, Scowcroft said that they were "really forward-looking." But Scowcroft expected bureaucratic wrangling at NATO to kill or water down the most ambitious ideas. These ideas were:

Enhancing NATO's political role:

- To involve, for the first time, the former enemies of the Warsaw Pact directly in NATO's activities and deliberations. The Alliance would invite the USSR

³⁶ See Dobbins (Acting) through Kimmitt and Bartholomew to Baker, "CSCE: 'Institutionalization' and the U.S.-Soviet and NATO Summits," 22 May 90; Seitz to Zoellick, "Results of May 25 PCC on CSCE," 2 Jun 90. For development of CSCE political norms on respect for fundamental freedoms and the rule of law, see Baker speech, "CSCE: The Conscience of the Continent," Copenhagen, 6 Jun 90; Seitz through Kimmitt to Baker, "Results of the CSCE Copenhagen Meeting," 2 Jul 90. The American delegation to Copenhagen was headed by Ambassador Max Kampelman.

³⁷ See USNATO 3203, "Letter to Secretary Baker from SYG Woerner Concerning the Turnberry Ministerial and the London Summit," 30 May 90; USNATO 3188, "London Summit Declaration: Woerner's Outline," 30 May 90; USNATO 3211, "The London NATO Summit and Next Steps in Conducting the Alliance's Review of Military Strategy," 31 May 90.

and East European governments to come to NATO and establish diplomatic liaison missions with Ambassadors accredited to the Alliance. Their representatives could then work directly with Western representatives and staff at Alliance headquarters on issues of common concern.³⁸

- Invite Gorbachev to address NATO and propose that the SACEUR, General Galvin, visit Moscow for talks with senior Soviet military authorities.

After Soviet forces left Eastern Europe and a CFE treaty was implemented, NATO could:

- End the current 'layer-cake' system of national corps sectors in Germany and replace it with truly multinational corps, including US forces, deployed in locations that might be different from their wartime areas of operations. The units in these corps would be assigned in peacetime to NATO's integrated military command rather than just earmarked for his command, thereby giving a German general (commanding Allied Forces Central Europe, AFCENT, under SACEUR) much more authority over the peacetime deployment of Allied troops in Germany.³⁹

³⁸ Zelikow had first suggested inviting Warsaw Pact countries to establish diplomatic liaison missions idea to Rice, who encouraged it, and to Blackwill, who was skeptical. Zelikow then raised the idea in an April 16 discussion with Scowcroft. Rice again supported it. By mid-May Blackwill was persuaded that the liaison missions idea could become the foundation for establishing a new set of relationships between NATO allies and the individual states of the Warsaw Pact (though not between NATO and the doomed Pact itself), while also addressing the desires of East European states to begin developing closer ties to NATO.

The initial Blackwill/Zelikow list of initiatives had also included a proposal that formal ties be established between NATO and the European Community, linking the NAC and EPC processes as well as NATO's Secretary General and the European Commission's President in a network of regular contacts. But this idea, with its focus on relations within Western Europe, detracted from the West-East emphasis of the summit declaration and so it was not pursued. The idea has some small historical interest, however, because it reflected a judgment that NATO should seek to build some sort of bridge formally connecting it with the European Community. After Blackwill's departure from the NSC staff in July 1990, Zelikow (later with Blackwill's successor, David Gompert) continued to support new NATO-EC linkages during the debate over European security architecture and the role of the WEU in late 1990 and 1991.

³⁹ NATO defense authorities were already moving to consider more use of multinational units both for political reasons and because national troop reductions would mean that some of the old national corps (such as the Belgian or Dutch corps) would no longer be viable. Zelikow developed this particular idea so that new Allied deployments would mark a clear break from the legacy of American military occupation of Germany and thereby make the US military presence in Germany sustainable for many years to come, embedding US units in multinational formations and increasing German authority over the forces deployed on their soil. This approach was encouraged by reported praise for a multinational corps approach coming from the West German chancellery. Bonn 14094, "More on the Future of the Bundeswehr and NVA," 4 May 90. Kanter and Heather Wilson, in the NSC Staff's Defense and Arms Control Directorate, were more cautious, preferring not to get ahead of the NATO military planning process which -- at that time -- had only endorsed the concept of multinational corps in very general terms. The Defense Department had

- Move away from the old strategic doctrine of forward defense toward a new doctrine emphasizing mobility, building on concepts being developed in the Pentagon and in NATO's military command structure.⁴⁰
 - Future conventional arms control negotiations would seek national limits applied throughout Europe, and NATO would promise to seek deep cuts by each participant in CFE II talks of up to one-half of their conventional armed forces in Europe.⁴¹
-

also not taken a decision on whether to allow US units to be subordinated to a multinational corps command.

A decisive role was then played by the American supreme commander of NATO forces, General John Galvin, in a June 7 discussion with General Scowcroft. Scowcroft, aware of his staff's idea, asked Galvin what he thought of the multinational corps concept. Galvin voiced his strong support, saying it would make the American presence more acceptable over the long haul. Galvin added that the multinational corps could function with active units, in peacetime, and that the concept was workable as long as the component divisions remained cohesive national units -- even if a US division was under a non-American corps commander. Galvin thought the Summit needed to make real, bona fide, changes. Galvin had plainly done the homework to support an ambitious approach to the multinational corps concept. Account based on author's notes from the meeting and subsequent discussion with General Galvin.

⁴⁰ From the defense and arms control office of the NSC staff, Kanter and Wilson offered further elaboration on these ideas with specific language referring to enhancement of the Allied Command Europe Mobile Force and greater Allied reliance on regeneration of inactive forces.

⁴¹ The approach was based on a model that would set a common cap on the amount of forces any country could maintain within a particular subregion of Europe (using the CFE demarcation of sub-zones). In early May Zelikow prepared a paper analyzing CFE II arms control options which contained an option for deep cuts using such national ceilings. If, for example, ceilings in each CFE subzone were set at 200,000 troops (100,000 in one of the subzones), several countries would cut their forces to as little as one-half their residual strength after CFE I was implemented. (The option would also be applied to the more verifiable measurements of military equipment, such as tanks.) So, under the "deep cuts" option explained in this CFE II Options paper, the Soviet army would be allowed only about 500,000 troops and 5,000 tanks west of the Urals mountains. The Bundeswehr would be cut down to 200,000. But US troops in Central Europe, already scheduled for reduction to less than 200,000 would be unaffected (although their equipment holdings would be reduced). France would make significant cuts, but would achieve military parity with Germany. British forces would not be cut at all. Neither would those of Poland. As a result, net Soviet advantages allowed under CFE I would be substantially reduced. U.S., British, French, and German forces would alone be adequate to outnumber all Soviet forces in the European portion of the USSR. Soviet military advantages against East European neighbors would also be greatly reduced.

Blackwill was sufficiently persuaded by this analysis to insert the "substantial reductions by as much as one-half" language into the draft NATO summit declaration circulated in early June and eventually discussed with State and Defense. The analysis in the CFE II options paper was informally circulated to other agencies in late May and early June. A copy first surfaced in more formal documents as Annex A, "Options," (see especially options 4 and 5) to the longer paper at Tab II attached to Blackwill and Kanter to Gates, "Your Meeting of the European Strategy Steering Group on June 18," 15 Jun 90. The original draft summit declaration used an earlier, more complex, approach calling for reductions of about one-half the levels allowed under the CFE treaty, under which "no single state can maintain disproportionate military power in Europe" by adding another limit barring any participating state from having more than one-fifth of the combined total of conventional forces allowed to all the participating states in Europe.

In considering NATO's nuclear strategy, Blackwill and Zelikow suggested:

- Replacing NATO's strategic doctrine of "flexible response" with a new doctrine, which might be called "minimum deterrence for permanent peace." In substance, the nuclear weapons employment guidelines would abandon reliance on the early first use of nuclear weapons in a conflict (while not endorsing the doctrine of 'no first use' itself).
- NATO would radically and unilaterally reduce its stockpile of US theater nuclear weapons to no more than 1000 warheads, eliminating three-fourths of US nuclear weapons then located in Europe. All US nuclear artillery shells would also be withdrawn unilaterally, with the Soviets asked to reciprocate.⁴²
- The West would announce its position for the upcoming SNF arms control negotiations. The goal of the talks would be the phased global elimination of all American and Soviet SNF missile forces (but not including air-delivered systems).

The laundry list of institutional ideas for CSCE should be trimmed to just a few:

- New schedules for regular meetings of leaders and ministers -- an idea included on almost every country's list of initiatives.
- Creation of a small CSCE secretariat to be located in Prague.
- Creation of a CSCE center for crisis management to base both the information clearinghouse functions envisioned by State (and the West Germans) and any new mechanism for the conciliation of international disputes.
- Establishment of a CSCE parliament, the Assembly of Europe, to be based on the existing Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg (also the location of the EC's European Parliament), to include representatives from all CSCE member states. It corresponded to Soviet interest in such an institution, and used the Council of Europe structures in which Shevardnadze

⁴² Scowcroft discussed SNF reductions with NATO SACEUR General Galvin on June 7, with this initiative very much in mind. Galvin had no problems with the elimination of nuclear artillery and even short-range surface-to-surface missiles, but he preferred at that time to have the withdrawal or elimination of nuclear artillery handled in an arms control treaty so that NATO could respond if the Soviets did not reciprocate. Account based on author's notes of the meeting.

had earlier displayed some interest.⁴³

Zelikow drafted a possible NATO Summit declaration to show how the initiatives could be embodied in a short (4 or 5 pages, 21 paragraphs) and nonbureaucratic document, vividly phrased and easy to understand. Blackwill told him, "Picture Gorbachev as the person who will be reading this."⁴⁴

At the end of May the Departments of State and Defense were formally asked to present ideas for the NATO Summit. The NSC staff did not share its own list of initiatives -- hoping to protect them from Washington's internal bureaucratic knife. Gates reconvened his European Strategy Steering Group to begin polling State and Defense for their ideas on June 4 (the day after Gorbachev's departure from Washington). The discussion was general and unfocused. Bartholomew, representing State, warned against gimmicks, "newfangled ideas," just to boost NATO's political role. Seitz said NATO had to be something more than "just a club of jolly good chaps." But Lieutenant General Howard Graves, representing the Joint Chiefs of Staff, came ready to outline possible moves away from the old NATO conventional strategy of "forward defense" to a strategy of "forward presence." The uniformed military was also ready to talk about the use of multinational corps.

Gates summarized the emerging consensus. No one questioned the need for

⁴³ On the CSCE parliament idea, Shevardnadze's interest in the Council of Europe was reported in Strasbourg 61, "Shevardnadze on the Council of Europe (COE)," 14 Mar 90. The idea of greater use of the Council of Europe in bridging East-West differences was being actively promoted by the Council's Secretary General, Catherine Lalumiere. In March Zelikow had called Blackwill's attention to WEU Secretary General Willem Van Eekelen's view that the COE might be superior to the CSCE in reaching the CSCE's announced goals. See London 4473, "WEU SYG Van Eekelen on German Unification, NATO, and the CSCE," 6 Mar 90. Blackwill then came up with the idea of a CSCE parliament and suggested it to Scowcroft on April 16. Since Zelikow liked the COE's long-time association with the promotion of human rights and thought the Europeans would hardly tolerate creation of another parliament when they already had two of them, he recommended attaching Blackwill's idea to the existing COE parliamentary assembly. Later, in his May 30 *Izvestiia* article, Shevardnadze actually suggested a parliamentary assembly of Europe in terms almost identical to the NSC staff's budding proposal.

⁴⁴ See "Possible Presidential Initiatives to Announce Publicly at the NATO Summit," 23 May 90, and "London Declaration on a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance," passed informally to Scowcroft and Gates, also attached to Blackwill and Kanter to Gates, "Your Meeting of the European Strategy Steering Group on Monday, June 4," 2 Jun 90. The description of this submission in Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, pp. 234-235, is inaccurate on both dates and substance.

the NATO summit in London to close the book on one phase of history and open another. The defense and arms control ideas needed to be set down in writing and refined. The political side was harder. Officials needed to keep their eye on the #1 strategic issue: how to end up with a unified Germany in NATO. He hadn't heard many concrete ideas. Gates asked Blackwill and Kanter to organize working groups to further develop ideas for both political and defense topics at the summit.

Gates turned to another topic: limits on the Bundeswehr and CFE. A State Department paper had argued that to make progress in CFE and the Two Plus Four talks, "the US should act as the catalyst in forging an Allied consensus [on Bundeswehr limits] that addresses Soviet concerns."⁴⁵ Blackwill and Zelikow were opposed to the specific State ideas and Scowcroft thought efforts to crank up such proposals were premature. Scowcroft and Gates had already intervened with these views into West German deliberations at the end of May,⁴⁶ Bush had made the same point to Kohl, and on May 29 the German government had reportedly decided against tabling any new proposals for personnel limits in the current CFE talks.⁴⁷ Worried about Bartholomew's plans for consultations in Europe, Gates wanted everyone to understand that President Bush considered it premature to float any new proposals for limiting the German armed forces. When Bartholomew said he would just be listening to Allied ideas, first Blackwill and then Gates made themselves even clearer. Not a single idea could be raised until the German Chancellor and the President had approved it. The ideas floated earlier from the West German foreign ministry were a

⁴⁵ See Wilson through Kanter and Blackwill to Scowcroft, "CFE — Bundeswehr Personnel Limits," 31 May 90. The State paper was entitled, "Dealing with Soviet Desires for German Limits," and attached as Tab VI in Blackwill and Kanter's June 2 memo to Gates cited in note 44. Kanter agreed that any proposal must be "made in Germany" but backed the kind of proposed limits officials in his working group were prepared to support. Blackwill and Zelikow objected to those ideas on substance, origin (American rather than German), and timing (too soon).

⁴⁶ See text accompanying notes 30-33, 36, in Chapter Nine.

⁴⁷ Bonn 17082, "German Policy on Bundeswehr Limits in CFE Context," 31 May 1990.

false step; they had now been put back in the box.⁴⁸

On June 7 Warsaw Pact leaders met in Moscow and issued a communique promising to "review the character, functions and activities of the Warsaw Treaty" and start the Pact's "transformation into a treaty of sovereign states with equal rights, formed on a democratic basis." The results of the review would be announced before the end of November. Privately, as East German Premier de Maiziere mentioned to Bush in Washington four days later, several East European ministers were already forecasting that this review would lead to a dead end. Among the more outspoken was the newly elected (in May) noncommunist Hungarian Prime Minister, Joszef Antall, who told newspaper reporters that "our country won't remain as a member of this organization under any circumstances. We aim at dissolving the military organization of the Warsaw Pact by 1991 step by step. The organization can neither be modernized, nor be made democratic."⁴⁹

The day after the Warsaw Pact meeting, NATO foreign ministers issued a communique of their own after meeting in Turnberry, Scotland. The document was unremarkable. The tone was conciliatory enough: "We extend to the Soviet Union and to all other European countries the hand of friendship and cooperation." But new initiatives were clearly being left for the NATO summit in London the next month. The ministers further agreed privately that the summit should not try to announce the

⁴⁸ Account based on Zelikow's notes from European Strategy Steering Group meeting, 4 Jun 90. See also Blackwill and Kanter to Gates, "Your Meeting of the European Strategy Steering Group on Monday, June 4," 2 Jun 90. Some evidence of how State decided to handle the Bundeswehr issue can be gleaned from the contingency points on the subject which Zoellick, working with Bartholomew, prepared for Baker at the time. They advised Baker to treat the matter as a decision for Germany but, if the Germans suggested numbers in the "mid-300,000 range" Baker was to urge the Germans to be cautious and weigh the effects of such low levels on German defenses, the precedent such deep cuts would set for other Allies to cut forces, and future German resentment of such low limits. See card prepared for Baker, "Re: Response to FRG on German Force Levels," in Zoellick's office files.

⁴⁹ See "Warsaw Pact States' Declaration," Pravda, June 8, 1990, p. 1A, in FBIS-SOV 90-111, June 8, 1990, pp. 10-11; Reuters dispatch from Bonn, "Hungarian Premier Says Warsaw Pact Should be Dissolved," June 16, 1990 (reporting on an interview for the West German newspaper Welt am Sonntag). Antall also promised complete support for German unification. While in Moscow Antall also said he saw no reason for NATO to disband. "Unlike the Warsaw Pact, NATO is not in crisis. Therefore, the dissolution of the NATO military alliance is not linked to the question of the future of the Warsaw Pact." Alex Bandy (AP dispatch), "Hungary to Seek Dissolution of Military Part of Warsaw Pact," June 6, 1990.

details of a Western position for new arms control talks on short-range nuclear forces. They were nervous about triggering a new public debate in Germany, like the one which followed the announcement of the 1979 dual-track INF decision, and they wanted to give Allied officials time to work out the details of a proposal dealing with such weapons.

The Turnberry communique did seal the agreement of all Alliance members to the specific terms of German unification detailed in President Bush's May 2 letter to their leaders and reviewed by Baker at the special NATO ministerial session on May 3. A unified Germany, all now formally agreed, had to "be a full member of this Alliance, including its integrated military structure ... The security guarantee provided by Articles 5 and 6 of the North Atlantic Treaty will extend to all the territory of a united Germany." As the diplomatic impasse over German unification reached its peak, Kohl's government would be able to point to the unanimous wish of his Allies as he fended off pressures for compromise at home or abroad.⁵⁰

Deliberations in Washington on a NATO Summit package were picking up speed. Blackwill and Kanter had run their working group sessions. On June 11 Gates again convened subcabinet officials to review progress. There was a debate over whether to propose a NATO-Warsaw Pact joint declaration. Dobbins from State supported the idea, which he knew Baker favored. Wolfowitz from Defense, backed by NSC staff, were more skeptical.

As an alternative, Gates suggested an invitation to the East European states and the Soviet Union to establish liaison missions at NATO. "Wow," was Bartholomew's first reaction. We would bring the East Europeans into the Alliance structure? Create some form of associate relationship? "Liaison" was too clever.

⁵⁰ See "Message from Turnberry," communique issued by the Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council at Turnberry, United Kingdom, 7-8 Jun 90; Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, pp. 153-154. Elbe thinks the Turnberry meeting was "a decisive chess move of West German diplomacy." He attaches more weight to the importance of the conciliatory expressions of goodwill, recounting how Baker "in a formulation that until then would have been 'Genscher-typischen,'" called for a revolution in NATO's thinking about the East. Elbe then gives Kastrup credit for telling Genscher that the NATO bureaucracy-produced communique was not good enough, and thus prodding Genscher to insist on a communique that "extends the hand of friendship."

Blackwill then explained the idea, how it tried to respond boldly to Gorbachev's evident preoccupation with NATO's posture and the Soviet fear of being isolated from the new Europe. Just as the U.S. had an ambassador accredited to the European Community, so there could also be Polish or Soviet ambassadors to NATO. There were obvious downsides, but the Europeans were looking for bold initiatives from the U.S. President.

Zoellick intervened to keep the idea of the NATO-Warsaw Pact declaration alive too. Shevardnadze had promised to send some specific language. This was an important issue to the Soviets. Baker's view, he said, was that we should not be paralyzed by the old notion of the Warsaw Pact, which was now moribund. It might be better to prop up the Pact to get Germany in NATO than just let it fall. There was no need to throw the declaration idea out the window.

After a discussion of the CSCE and NATO military strategy, the group returned to the issue of limits on future German armed forces. On June 8, at the Turnberry ministerial meeting, the West German arms control commissioner, Holik, had circulated the new foreign ministry idea closer to the existing Western position. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Holik suggested that Germany could commit itself to a national ceiling on troop strength if other nations would promise that they too would eventually accept similar national ceilings. German national limits would become binding only when all other states accepted binding national limits too. State liked the idea. Defense was uncomfortable with it, since individual national ceilings were especially confining. The NSC staff, having led the opposition to Genscher's May idea (the so-called "Hartmann plan" discussed in Chapter Nine), found this new approach more interesting.⁵¹

First the American officials needed to understand the status of the Holik proposal within the Bonn government. Zoellick passed along Elbe's assurance that

⁵¹ On the "Hartmann plan" see text accompanying notes 30-33, 36, in Chapter Nine. Blackwill, Kanter, and Zelikow briefed Gates on their reaction to the new "Holik plan" on June 11, according to Zelikow's notes of the meeting. Initial views of other agencies emerged at a meeting of Kanter's working group on June 7, according to Zelikow's notes of that discussion.

the new proposal was worked out in the Cabinet and had Kohl's support, though Kohl still needed to win defense minister Stoltenberg's support. Gates also knew that Kohl, on June 8, had told Bush of his readiness to accept a way to handle the Bundeswehr problem that did not single out the FRG for special limits. Throughout the month of June American and West German opinion coalesced around the "Holik plan" for German manpower limits. But the West German position remained murky on a key point: when would the German and other individual national manpower ceilings actually be set down on paper and codified in a treaty? The FRG initially indicated that national manpower ceilings on all parties would be part of "CFE I," the ongoing CFE talks. This viewpoint again seemed to threaten putting too great a burden on the current CFE negotiations -- which had to be finished in time for the November 1990 CSCE Summit. But putting off agreement on German and other limits to future talks was not likely to satisfy Moscow.

Traveling in Europe in mid-June, Bartholomew was told that Kohl's government had not yet approved the "Holik plan" for handling the Bundeswehr issue in CFE. He was told that neither Kohl nor Stoltenberg had decided to endorse that particular strategy.⁵² Yet Britain and France were already ready to support the original "Holik proposal" and were willing accept national limits on their own armed forces in a follow-on 'CFE I-a' negotiation.⁵³

The final offer that emerged from these June deliberations and later communications between the White House and the Chancellery was a variant of the "Holik plan." This variant won the agreement of both Kohl and Stoltenberg and was well received in Washington. It would put off all agreements on national manpower ceilings to a limited follow-on negotiation ("CFE I-a"). But, to satisfy the Soviets, the Germans would offer a non-binding promise stating the troop limit they intended to accept in this future negotiation. Further the Germans would offer this assurance in the ongoing CFE talks -- though their promise would not be codified in the CFE

⁵² But Genscher apparently presented the proposal to Shevardnadze anyway. See note 27 above.

⁵³ See Kimmitt (Acting) to President Bush (for his evening reading), 18 Jun 90.

treaty itself. In this way the Soviets would have an assurance about future German troop strength, but the Germans would not actually be legally bound by this assurance until all the other countries accepted national troop ceilings too. Thus the Germans would not be the only country singled out for limits on its armed forces.⁵⁴

Gates informed his group that the NSC staff would take the first crack at drafting a NATO summit declaration. (Gates knew such a draft had been readied weeks earlier.) He promised to circulate the draft for discussion at the next meeting. If there was any State resentment about this drafting assignment, Zoellick helped to mute it by promptly praising Gates for taking on this job. Zoellick also stressed that the draft declaration had to look different and non-bureaucratic, look like a message that really came directly from Bush to other heads of government, not from one diplomat to another.⁵⁵ Gratified by Zoellick's support, the next day Blackwill privately gave Zoellick a copy of their draft, making him the first person to see it outside of the White House. Blackwill also promised that the draft would not be circulated further until Zoellick had provided his comments on it.

Gates reconvened his group the next day to work harder on defense and arms control ideas. Zoellick, having seen the NSC staff ideas, urged a stronger commitment to multinational corps. Gates joined him. Though Wolfowitz was hesitant, Graves from the JCS was supportive. For Gates, the issue was now "how" to develop multinational corps structures, not "whether" to do it. President Bush was worried that people would equate the U.S. and Soviet presence. The multinational approach would plainly distinguish the US presence in Germany from the Soviet one.

⁵⁴ On the original "Holik plan" and the ultimate variant which was discussed between Bonn and Washington early in July, see Rice (actually Zelikow) through Blackwill and Kanter for Gates, "Your European Steering Group Meeting on Follow-on Conventional Forces Negotiations and the NATO Summit," 28 Jun 90; EUR briefing paper for Paris Two Plus Four Ministerial, "Limiting German Manpower Levels: The U.S. Perspective," undated. As EUR explained in this paper, "The new feature of the German position is the proposed side assurance on the size of the Bundeswehr that would be given in conjunction with the signature of a CFE-I agreement, but not as part of it" (emphasis in original).

⁵⁵ Account based on author's notes of the June 11 meeting. For background to the meeting, see Zelikow through Blackwill and Kanter to Gates, "Meeting of the European Strategy Steering Group on June 11," 9 Jun 90.

Blackwill and Zoellick piled on more arguments.

Zoellick pressed the idea of subordinating American and other forces to NATO command structures in peacetime, not just in the contingency of a war. Was that possible? Graves was receptive, but said more analysis was needed on the precise command arrangements. That was fine with Zoellick. Gates again emphasized the President's openness to new ideas. The U.S. was prepared to contemplate this kind of command structure. The President could be positioned with the principles that could pull the Alliance through this period of incredible change. Wolfowitz and Graves agreed: The goal would be multinational corps under the operational control of NATO in peacetime (and hence with a German general in the chain of command above all foreign forces in Germany, commanding Allied Forces Central Europe under the American Supreme Allied Commander for all of Europe). The declaration could promise to examine how to reach this objective.⁵⁶

After an inconclusive discussion of the future of conventional arms control, the group turned to the status of US nuclear forces in Europe. No one questioned the need to revise the strategy of flexible response. They speculated about what label could describe a new strategy. Zoellick noted that the East Germans wanted NATO to adopt the doctrine of no first use. Wolfowitz and Blackwill were opposed. Why not consider it?, Kanter asked.

Wolfowitz reiterated arguments Kanter already knew well. NATO's goal was not to make Europe safe for conventional war. A greatly reduced level of conventional forces would make conventional defenses more fragile, less certain. The Alliance should not rely on a purely conventional deterrent. Ron Lehman, the director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, agreed. Blackwill added that

⁵⁶ The notion of "operational control" was a carefully worded phrase with a meaning quite different from use of the term "command." The foreign officer would not be inserted into the American chain of command. As in previous coalition military operations (such as the Second World War) the U.S. officer would respect allocation of operational responsibility to an allied general without being legally obligated to obey his orders. The allied commander's authority over the American officer would be derived from a lawful American order to accept the temporary operational supervision of an allied officer. If the U.S. officer disobeyed the foreigner he could be punished only if it was found that his actions thereby disobeyed the earlier order of the American superior officer.

a U.S. "no first use" proposal would cause a political crisis with the British and French who would be placed under pressure to reconsider their own nuclear doctrines. Gates pressed for something the President could say to show NATO was adapting to the new military circumstances. There was clearly general support for moving to a strategy that ended reliance on the early first use of nuclear weapons.

Before the meeting Blackwill had devised new language, a sentence for the draft summit declaration that would read: "Indeed, in this new Europe, Alliance nuclear weapons will truly become weapons of last resort." Blackwill had asked Zoellick to be the one to introduce the "last resort" language. It would carry more weight coming from State. Zoellick agreed. At the meeting he suggested using the phrase, "last resort" to describe the new strategy of no early first use. Gates, following the script, said he liked the idea. Wolfowitz murmured his assent. Everyone also agreed that America could announce its unilateral plans for deep cuts in the stockpile and the withdrawal of all nuclear artillery shells from Europe.

Gates then set the schedule for further work. Baker, Cheney, Powell, and Scowcroft would consider the draft summit declaration next week. Gates's group would meet one more time to prepare the way. Gates promised an NSC staff draft of the declaration would be ready for that next meeting and, for secrecy, said the draft declaration would be handed out only at the meeting itself.⁵⁷ This critical meeting of Gates' group was scheduled for June 18.

Meanwhile, Shevardnadze finally sent out the details of his proposed NATO-Warsaw Pact joint declaration. It was neither empty nor innocuous. The Soviet bureaucracy saw the joint declaration as the bridge away from the old alliances to an entirely new security system. Their draft declaration proposed that the Alliance agree to:

- creation of a joint NATO-Warsaw Pact pan-European collective military

⁵⁷ An extraordinary concern about secrecy had dominated all the deliberations of the European Strategy Steering Group. Even the existence of the group was not publicly known at that time. The account of the June 12 meeting is based on author's notes. For background and copies of the working group papers being discussed, see Zelikow through Blackwill and Kanter to Gates, "Meeting of the European Strategy Steering Group on June 11," 9 Jun 90.

- alliance open to all CSCE states;
- new "multilateral forces" which would include forces of neutral states to maintain peace between East and West;
- eliminate the automatic requirement of NATO allies to come to each other's aid in the event of attack;
- limit NATO defense obligations if an ally used force in Europe and promise adoption of sanctions against the ally;
- exclude the former GDR from NATO treaty protection;
- no first use of nuclear weapons;
- withdraw all US nuclear forces in Europe;
- withdraw all US conventional forces from Germany as Soviet troops left the GDR;
- create demilitarized zones in Central Europe (but not affecting the USSR); and
- withdraw naval and air forces that could be used for "surprise offensive actions and large-scale operations" from Europe.

The Soviet foreign ministry had plainly prepared this proposal in the same spirit as their preparation of Shevardnadze's proposed settlement document at the Two Plus Four meeting in Berlin a week later. It was a detailed, immoderate presentation of Soviet views that was meant to make the West stop short and prepare for a long negotiation.

This draft was a blow to the State Department. They had hoped to support a NATO-Warsaw Pact declaration because the idea plainly mattered to Shevardnadze, the West Germans liked it, and they thought it could do little harm. But practically all the content in this declaration was anathema to the Americans. No wonder Shevardnadze supported such a declaration, if it effectively restored all of the Soviet policy preferences for Germany's and Europe's future.

The draft played into the hands of the NSC staff, since they had been suspicious of the idea all along. They advised General Scowcroft that "the problems

with the Soviet proposal are so pervasive, and so tied to the basic approach of the document, that we believe it is not a useful basis for further discussion. ... There are at least a dozen major ideas in the Soviet proposal which we consider so unacceptable as to be nonnegotiable."

Interestingly, the version of the declaration sent to the Americans was different from the version the Soviets gave to other NATO governments. The American version was longer and more detailed, a draft text. Others just received a more diplomatic summary of the document. Washington of course immediately circulated its copy. Most Allies at NATO reacted negatively. But the West Germans still held out some hope for the idea. The British, like the European Bureau at State, were also inclined to accept a NATO-Warsaw Pact document if it could be made sufficiently dull and unobjectionable.⁵⁸

When officials gathered in the White House Situation Room on the afternoon of June 18 to examine the draft NATO summit declaration, they had already offered individual comments to Blackwill on the previous week's draft. Zoellick had seen it first, liked it, and offered some minor comments -- most of which had now been incorporated. Before the group gathered, Blackwill told Gates he thought there were seven really important initiatives in the draft declaration. If all seven were approved the document would get above the threshold. But all of them had to be adopted in order to build up enough cumulative weight for the Declaration to have the desired impact on Moscow. For Blackwill the "big seven" were:

- inviting former enemies to open permanent liaison missions, headed by ambassadors, at NATO;

⁵⁸ Letter from Shevardnadze to Baker, 13 Jun 90; transmitted to certain diplomatic posts in State 193792, "Soviet Proposed NATO-WTO Declaration," 15 Jun 90. For an analysis of the Soviet proposal, see Zelikow through Blackwill and Kanter to Scowcroft, "Soviet Proposal for Joint NATO-Warsaw Pact Declaration: A Preliminary Analysis," 18 Jun 90. On NATO discussion of the proposal, and the variations in the text, see USNATO 3579, "Soviet Proposal for a NATO-WTO Joint Declaration," 20 Jun 90; USNATO 3591, "June 20 NAC Discussion of Soviet Proposal for a NATO-WTO Joint Declaration," 21 Jun 90. For British views of a NATO-Warsaw Pact declaration, see Seitz to Zoellick, "June 20 One-plus-Three Meeting: British Ideas on a NATO-Warsaw Pact Declaration," 18 Jun 90 (with British paper attached).

- promising to seek cuts of up to one-half of the conventional forces of states participating in a **CFE II** negotiation;
- reshaping NATO conventional forces with a dramatic new emphasis on **multinational corps** under multinational control;
- elimination of US nuclear artillery, the deep stockpile reductions, and announcement of a new nuclear doctrine of use as a "last resort";
- announcing ambitious new goals for the upcoming **SNF arms control** negotiations (along with massive unilateral reductions and the doctrine of 'last resort');
- pledging that NATO would devise a new military strategy that would replace both 'flexible response' and 'forward defense'; and
- pointing to the new **CSCE institutions** the Alliance would work to create, including a new CSCE center for the prevention of conflict.

Gates agreed that the draft could not afford to lose any of these ideas as it was watered down in interagency discussion.

Gates opened his meeting on June 18 with a Pentagon briefing on the future U.S. military commitment to Europe. The U.S. presence needed a real corps of two divisions, but its exact size would be based less on warfighting needs than on judgments about the appropriate proportion of US participation in NATO's forces and the need to have an evident readiness to receive and utilize reinforcements.

Then the group began discussing the latest draft for the proposed NATO summit declaration. Gates warned about the danger of a leak. Zoellick explained the political context. The key American objective was to win Soviet acquiescence to German unification on Western terms. If the Allies missed this chance they might not get another one.

Gates agreed. The U.S. had to "show the beef" and give Gorbachev the ammunition he needed to defend a decision to accept the unification of Germany in NATO. They then turned to the specific initiatives.

Permanent liaison missions to NATO Headquarters. Despite doubts and questions from several fronts, the NSC staff, working with Zoellick and Ross, pushed

this through. But State was not satisfied. They still thought the Alliance should agree to the idea of a NATO-Warsaw Pact Joint Declaration. Seitz, Zoellick, and Ross argued against the NSC staff and Pentagon. The issue was left for cabinet officials to decide.

CFE II. State preferred to concentrate in the short-term only on a limited CFE I-A negotiation that would presumably take care of the Bundeswehr issue in agreeing on national troop ceilings for all the CFE participants. The State officials were more anxious to offer Moscow a quick resolution of the Bundeswehr problem through a limited accord rather than put the matter into the more ambitious negotiation the NSC staff wanted, talks that might last for years.⁵⁹ The declaration language on this point was again left for the cabinet officials, the "principals," to resolve.

On the NSC staff's proposed promise to seek cuts in national forces "by as much as one half in some instances" to prevent any country from maintaining disproportionate military power in Europe, officials were surprisingly ready to go along. But Bartholomew warned that that some Allies would have difficulty committing themselves to such deep reductions. Gates urged the group to be willing to assert controversial positions. If Allies vehemently objected than the US could reconsider its stance.⁶⁰

Multinational corps. Admiral Jeremiah was prepared to go along with a clear move toward peacetime organization of multinational corps in NATO. Speaking for General Powell, he was even ready to go along with unprecedented integration of these corps into NATO's peacetime command structure. But, he said, General Powell

⁵⁹ See Seitz and Clarke through Kimmitt and Bartholomew to Baker, "Arms Control in Europe: CSCE Mandate Talks?", 15 Jun 90. Ambassador Woolsey and the CFE delegation in Vienna were cautious; they also wanted to avoid any early talks on a new CFE mandate but they shared the NSC staff's skepticism about trying to go for a quick CFE I-A accord. See, e.g., USVienna 1724, "CFE and the London-NATO Summit," 19 Jun 90.

⁶⁰ The NSC staff analysis to support the 'up to one-half' deep cuts approach was the Zelikow-drafted Annex A (option #5) to the revised NSC staff (Kanter/Wilson) paper on "CFE II Objectives." For the version of this paper being considered on June 18 see Tab II attached to Blackwill and Kanter to Gates, "Your Meeting of the European Strategy Steering Group on June 18," 15 Jun 90.

balked at the final step of committing US units to the peacetime "operational control" of a non-US general. This issue too was left for principals to decide.

Nuclear artillery. Bartholomew again tried to avoid specific commitments for nuclear cuts at the Summit, citing Allied nervousness. The promises to eliminate nuclear artillery through unilateral cuts and the pledge to withdraw three-fourths of the total stockpile of nuclear weapons based in Europe were both passed to principals for final decision. Significantly, the Pentagon had posed no objection to either move.⁶¹

SNF arms control. Here the officials agreed to be responsive to Allied worries and not try for a summit announcement of clear goals for the future talks, such as the total phased elimination of American and Soviet short-range missile forces, either from Europe or worldwide. They would just promise to develop a new arms control framework that would take into account the need for far fewer nuclear weapons.

New military strategy. Zoellick defended the language which declared that "nuclear weapons in this new Europe will truly become weapons of last resort." The phrase was designed to express the sense of reduced reliance on nuclear defenses and the move away from plans for early first use. Lehman and Blackwill noted that this new doctrine did not mesh easily with traditional British and French doctrine for their nuclear forces. Blackwill thought the US should be willing to live with that. The alternative of saying "no early first use" would invite confusion and immediate attention to the question of 'no first use' itself. Lehman was still worried. Zoellick lost his patience. Did the group realize how many of the initiatives were still bracketed, how close we were to losing the declaration's big ideas? Hadley then settled the issue by offering a compromise formulation that preserved the new

⁶¹ Wolfowitz visited U.S. military commanders in Europe during mid-June. NATO and U.S. supreme commander General John Galvin was opposed to unilateral withdrawal of Lance missiles or nuclear artillery, wanting to hold these moves back as bargaining chips for an SNF arms control negotiation. But neither the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) nor JCS chose to press this case in Washington. See OSD notes from informal discussion between Wolfowitz and General Galvin, General McCarthy, General Saint, General Dugan, Admiral Howe, and General Leland, June 1990, in Pentagon files.

approach.

But Lehman also objected to the language which called flatly for replacing 'flexible response' and 'forward defense' with new Allied strategies. Again there were worries about London's reaction. Hadley and Gates offered to soften the language with a promise to "move away from" the old strategies. This was agreed.⁶²

New CSCE institutions. The group quickly agreed to the list of new institutions in the NSC staff's draft. With this agreement the meeting ended.⁶³

On June 19 the "principals," Baker, Cheney, Powell, and Scowcroft, gathered informally in Scowcroft's office to decide the fate of the declaration. The declaration was not new to any of them, of course. Their deputies in the Gates group meetings had briefed these cabinet officials on progress and had received whatever guidance was needed. Their decisionmaking style was to let lower-level officials do what they could. Then the principals would concentrate only on the issues that were left. President Bush was also aware of what was going on. He had communicated his wish for an ambitious declaration. But Bush did not intervene directly in these deliberations. He had delegated a task and the needed authority to his subordinates; his philosophy was then to step back and let them do their work.

The principals moved briskly through the draft text. The cabinet members approved the invitation to Warsaw Pact countries to "come to NATO, not just to visit, but to stay" with permanent liaison missions to the Alliance. Baker and Ross renewed the push to add a move toward a NATO-Warsaw Pact declaration. Baker knew that both the Germans and the British were willing to go along with this idea. Ross drafted a new paragraph where NATO made a solemn commitment to non-aggression

⁶² In Wolfowitz's discussion with US military commanders, cited in the previous note, Galvin and his colleagues had no problem with an explicit revision of NATO military strategy to move away from flexible response and forward defense, including a shift away from early use of nuclear weapons. The NSC staff work on these subjects had been strongly influenced by ongoing efforts by the Pentagon and U.S. military authorities in Europe to develop new concepts for Europe's defense.

⁶³ Account based on author's notes of meeting with Gates and meeting of group on June 18. For background on the meeting see Blackwill and Kanter to Gates, "Your Meeting of the European Strategy Steering Group on June 18," 15 Jun 90; Zoellick to Blackwill, "Attached Draft," 14 Jun 90.

and invited the Warsaw Pact to reciprocate. This idea captured some of the spirit of the joint declaration idea and Kohl's notion of a "nonaggression pact" without actually trying to negotiate such a treaty. All agreed to Baker's proposal. It was not a joint declaration; but a reciprocal exchange of declarations. So the process could not become bogged down in negotiating an unacceptable Soviet draft.

Turning to the issue of future conventional arms control, the group agreed to pledge to seek "further far-reaching reductions of the offensive capabilities" of forces in Europe, but the principals decided to drop the provocative promise of reductions "by as much as one half in some instances." Baker's approach reflected Seitz and the European Bureau's preference to focus on a more limited follow-on negotiation that would resolve the German troop limits problem without being encumbered by more ambitious goals.

The critical factor dooming the more ambitious conventional arms control idea was Scowcroft's caution. Although the radical plan had been developed by Scowcroft's own staff, upon reflection Scowcroft, as Seitz had earlier, judged that the more ambitious conventional arms control strategy was premature and could turn out to be unnecessary. The passage of time has shown that Scowcroft and Seitz were probably right (and Zelikow was probably wrong).⁶⁴

The principals endorsed all the other major initiatives. General Powell went along with the strong language moving NATO toward multinational corps in peacetime, led by corps commanders reporting through NATO's multinational structure (which included the German commander for forces in Central Europe). The Alliance would further commit itself to the complete elimination of nuclear artillery

⁶⁴ The nature and scope of CFE follow-on negotiations continued to be debated within the government. The NSC staff, joined by OSD and ACDA, preferred to hold open options for an ambitious and more open-ended follow-on negotiation. See Rice (actually Zelikow) through Blackwill and Kanter for Gates, "Your European Steering Group Meeting on Follow-on Conventional Forces Negotiations and the NATO Summit," 28 Jun 90; State 214255, "NATO Summit and Future Conventional Arms Control," 30 Jun 90 (instructing embassies to hold open the option for ambitious follow-on talks); see also USVienna 1866, "CFE: Summit Discussions over Follow-On Negotiations," 2 Jul 90; USNATO 3790, "HLTF: Draft Language for London Summit Declaration," 2 Jul 90 (indicating the NATO International Staff preferences for handling this issue which were ignored).

shells.⁶⁵ A specific promise to reduce the Europe-based stockpile of nuclear weapons by three-fourths was dropped for fear it would put a spotlight for the German public the number of warheads that would remain (more than a thousand).⁶⁶ The Bush administration later decided to go ahead and withdraw most nuclear warheads in Europe back to the United States anyway, unilaterally.

Baker, Scowcroft, Cheney, and Powell firmly supported "a new NATO strategy making its nuclear forces truly weapons of last resort." They further approved the agreed language announcing that Alliance military strategy would be "moving away from 'forward defense' toward a reduced forward presence and modifying 'flexible response' to reflect a reduced reliance on nuclear weapons."

With those decisions the text of the US proposed declaration was settled.⁶⁷ President Bush readily approved the outcome of the process he had set in motion. In late May the NSC Staff had developed a short (21 paragraph) non-bureaucratic declaration that would change NATO's relationship with its Warsaw Pact adversaries, revise the nature of its military deployments, overturn its past military doctrines, and suggest how the CSCE should be turned into a permanent feature of Europe's political landscape. In less than a month, through an extraordinary interagency effort, a thoroughly analyzed American proposal had been readied which preserved the same

⁶⁵ Thatcher had just informed President Bush of her government's plan for SNF arms control. Promising the unilateral withdrawal of artillery would have immediately ruled out adoption of the British-preferred approach to the future negotiations, and the American leaders were unwilling to dismiss London's thoughtful views out of hand. For the British views, see, e.g., Message from Prime Minister Thatcher to President Bush (sent through special channels), 17 Jun 90.

⁶⁶ Hadley told other officials that his NATO High Level Group, and the Nuclear Planning Group, were ready to accept the unilateral elimination of nuclear artillery shells and radical reductions in the theater stockpile. All understood that NATO was moving toward complete reliance on offshore and air-delivered systems. Account is based on author's notes of the meeting of Kanter's working group on June 7.

⁶⁷ Participants in the June 19 principals meeting were Baker, Cheney, Powell, Scowcroft, Ross, Hadley, Graves, and Blackwill (and possibly Gates). We have not located any written notes for this meeting. But Ross, Hadley, Graves, and Blackwill all came to Zelikow's office immediately after the meeting to dictate how the draft declaration had been revised. This account is based on that debrief, on author's notes of the meeting with Scowcroft just prior to the principals' discussion, and on Zelikow through Blackwill and Kanter to General Scowcroft, "Your Meeting with Your Counterparts on the NATO Summit, Tuesday, June 19," 19 Jun 90.

style and length (now 22 paragraphs) and menu of initiatives. Forty-eight hours after the cabinet-level review in Washington, the draft summit declaration was delivered to Helmut Kohl, Margaret Thatcher, Francois Mitterrand, and Manfred Wörner. It remained to be seen whether President Bush could win the agreement of the fifteen other NATO countries to his plan for transforming the North Atlantic Alliance.

Bringing the Allies Along

For weeks the NSC staff were convinced that an extraordinary summit declaration of the kind they thought was needed could not be produced through the usual NATO bureaucratic process. Ordinarily states would table proposals for language at NATO headquarters. These proposals would then be combined by NATO's International Staff (under a NATO assistant secretary general) into a draft, with bracketed alternative positions and national footnotes. This draft would then be reviewed painstakingly line by line and word by word in NATO's Senior Political Committee by career diplomats from the sixteen national delegations. Then the draft would be considered by each country's delegates to the Alliance, meeting as permanent representatives to the North Atlantic Council.

The White House thought that a political declaration from the heads of government at a historic moment should be free of jargon, nuanced expression, and "lowest common denominator" content that usually emerged from the traditional process. Such a process rarely strengthened ideas; it watered them down. This was not because the diplomats were always stolid and unimaginative (though that was true often enough). Even the brightest and most creative diplomats lacked the authority to take risks, deviate from established routines, or abandon traditional national reactions to new approaches. Early reports from NATO only seemed to confirm these fears.

At the May 1989 NATO Summit the problem was solved by crafting a discrete initiative on one subject, conventional arms control, and grafting this onto the remainder of the declaration. Language over the other key subject, short-range nuclear forces, was haggled out by ministers at the summit. But this solution would not work for a declaration that had to move comprehensively on a range of subjects. Nor could secrecy be maintained if most of the major US initiatives were tabled at

NATO weeks in advance.

So, conceptually, the White House perceived a difficult political problem in getting the "design" it felt was needed out of the London summit. The NSC staff, especially Blackwill, therefore conjured up a whole policy aimed at getting the desired design approved. The internal part was accomplished in Washington through the group Gates chaired. For the international part of the plan the White House idea was to circumvent the entire NATO process with a direct proposal from President Bush that included the full text of the declaration. As the President's own proposal, the US-proposed declaration would not be turned over to career officials for revision. It would be negotiated only at the NATO summit itself, and only at the political level -- by foreign ministers or heads of government themselves.

Blackwill's plan rested, conceptually, on three theories of persuasion: (1) if the U.S. pushes hard for its desired outcome, at this moment in history, one or two leaders might dislike a passage here or there but it would not be possible to rally a countervailing coalition behind a comprehensive alternative; (2) if Bush proposes the plan directly to his counterparts and confines any discussion to the level of ministers at the summit meeting itself, the Allies would likely raise only those concerns that genuinely trouble the political leadership; and (3) if Bush trusted Baker to handle the negotiation of the document at London Baker could be relied upon to preserve its essential content.

It was a risky plan. The NATO bureaucratic process existed for a reason. It attempted to assure heads of government that, when they arrived, most of the work would already have been done and most disagreements would already have been ironed out. The leaders could concentrate on a few key issues with confidence that a document was already practically ready for issuance. If Bush bypassed this process he had to gamble that he could swing other governments behind him. If several governments arrived at the summit unhappy with the document and prepared to renegotiate numerous provisions, there was no guarantee that an adequate product could be worked out in time. There was no guarantee that the public would not witness the spectacle of open disagreement between the leaders and a fractious result.

With the expectations that had been attached to the London Summit, such an outcome would have been disastrous. Even under the best of circumstances some governments, and practically all of their NATO representatives, were likely to resent such a high-handed American approach and contemplate possible outlets for this resentment.

Still, this was the course President Bush and Scowcroft resolved to adopt. They were backed by Baker and his closest advisors, Zoellick and Ross. Baker's role was critical. He would have the major burden for defending the American draft. But the NSC staffers and the State officials had a good deal of faith in Baker's skill in conducting such a negotiation, knew that Baker understood what the document had to accomplish, and so they devised a plan that played to their side's strength.

President Bush would begin by sharing his draft with a few key leaders. Meanwhile the NATO process would be allowed to rumble along, unaware of the American initiative being discussed by a few heads of government.⁶⁸

On June 21 President Bush sent letters explaining his plan and enclosing his draft declaration to Kohl, Thatcher, Mitterrand, Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti, and Wörner. To preserve secrecy each letter was sent through special channels, without using embassies to deliver the messages.

Bush wrote, "We are at a pivotal moment." The Soviets would decide whether to acquiesce amicably in the unification of Germany as a full member of NATO. The American people were forming judgments about the relevance of NATO to the new Europe. The new democratic leaders of Eastern Europe were still unsure what to think about NATO and its part in European security. "In sum, this NATO summit is likely to fix the image of what our Alliance stands for during this period of

⁶⁸ On the development of the NATO consultation plan, see the "Next Steps with Allies" portion of Zelikow through Blackwill and Kanter to Scowcroft, "Your Meeting with Your Counterparts on the NATO Summit, June 19," 19 Jun 90; "Future Work" portion of Zelikow through Blackwill and Kanter to Gates, "Meeting of the European Strategy Steering Group on June 11," 9 Jun 90; and the notes from Zelikow to Blackwill minuted on USNATO 3188 and USNATO 3211, 31 May 90 in Zelikow's files. For a sense of the state of preparations in NATO's International Staff (with a draft declaration accompanied by three separate annexed declarations on arms control, CSCE, and defense), see Roberts (secretary of NATO's Special Political Committee) to NATO SPC Members, "Summit Declaration (DSD/1 Revised)," 21 Jun 90.

historic change.⁶⁹

Teltschik was jubilant as Bush's letter arrived at the Chancellery in Bonn. "Bush," he noted in his diary that night, "has gone on the offensive."

With [this proposal] he has surprised all the other NATO partners, ourselves included. There exists no corresponding plan in the federal government. But the proposal makes clear the extent of German-American agreement and Bush has once more proved himself to be extraordinarily helpful. We are now sure that the NATO summit will be a success and will formulate the right message for Gorbachev.⁷⁰

Wörner, in Brussels, was equally ecstatic. He quickly wrote back that when he received the message he was tempted to break out the champagne. The package was "excellent," just the "clear message that we need at London. In short, I am enthusiastic about the draft." Wörner went on: "You are correct in noting that the declaration is ambitious, but as we agreed before, ambition is called for."⁷¹

Margaret Thatcher, however, was not so happy with this "lively draft." She worried that the US proposal did not strike the right balance with NATO's fundamentals and a solid military strategy. "We should not adopt a declaration which contains some eye-catching propositions before we have really worked out the underlying strategy." She opposed the change in NATO nuclear strategy and opposed the promises for future conventional arms control.

Thatcher also thought the tone of the declaration would make people think there was no longer any danger, so she also opposed the invitation to the East to set up missions at NATO. She did not want let recent foes so close to the innermost councils of Western defense and preparedness. She preferred to concentrate on CSCE and negotiation of a NATO-Warsaw Pact joint declaration. Thatcher therefore

⁶⁹ Messages from President Bush to Chancellor Kohl, Prime Minister Thatcher, President Mitterrand, Prime Minister Andreotti, and Secretary General Wörner, 21 Jun 90.

⁷⁰ Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 281-282.

⁷¹ Message from Wörner to President Bush (sent through special channels), 25 Jun 90. Wörner suggested the addition of language to the declaration restating the Western position on German unification, and this was done. The quotation of Wörner's note in Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, p. 235 is not actually a quotation of Wörner, but a quote of how someone else recalled Wörner's reaction.

suggested that officials from the U.S., Britain, France, the FRG, and Italy get together and come up with an entirely new draft. "That will be the best way to ensure that there is Allied unity at the summit itself."⁷²

Blackwill reflected on how to proceed and discussed the problem with Zoellick. Wörner had suggested tabling the US proposal at NATO on June 29. "Too early," Blackwill wrote. (The summit would be on July 5-6.) He feared the American draft "would leak, and worse, be pawed over" by the many diplomats assigned to NATO. With Zoellick's concurrence, Blackwill instead suggested to Scowcroft that President Bush send his message directly to the remaining Allied heads of government on July 2 in order to enlist their support and further isolate Prime Minister Thatcher. Then the text would finally be tabled at NATO only on July 3. At that time Ambassador Taft would reveal that the "President's text" would be discussed only in London, by heads of government and foreign ministers. Taft would propose a special session of foreign ministers in London, on July 5, to go over the draft. Bush, Baker and Scowcroft approved.⁷³

Wörner was willing to go along with the US preference for managing NATO discussion of the summit declaration. He had just talked to Thatcher, though, and knew of her reaction. So he cautioned the Americans that Washington had now embarked on "a very high risk strategy for the summit." Allied concerns about both substance and procedure would be aroused and getting the needed agreement would not be easy. If the plan misfired, there would be a failure no one could afford. So it was essential that, having launched this high-level effort in this extraordinary way, the

⁷² Thatcher had been uneasy about Bush's April decision, announced in May, to push for an early and decisive NATO summit. She explains her reaction to Bush's proposed summit declaration, especially the disagreement over NATO nuclear strategy, in *The Downing Street Years*, pp. 810-811; see also Message from Prime Minister Thatcher to President Bush (sent through special channels), 25 Jun 90. The U.S. proposal had not caught London by surprise. The British embassy in Washington was extraordinarily, even uniquely, knowledgeable about the development of the U.S. ideas and had provided useful advice about some of them.

⁷³ Bush did send a copy of the draft declaration to Canadian prime minister Mulroney on June 27. On the choreography at NATO see Blackwill to Scowcroft and Gates, untitled, 25 Jun 90; USNATO 3675, "Further Comments on Summit Declaration," 25 Jun 90; State 211592, "Managing NATO Discussion of Summit Declaration," 29 Jun 90.

U.S. government had to display "considerable toughness and determination" to see the declaration through.⁷⁴

Bush made another attempt to persuade Thatcher to accept the U.S. ideas. He sent a message to her on July 1 responding point by point to each of her concerns. On the question of nuclear strategy, he argued that "I worry that if we say nothing about the future of flexible response and our strategy for deterrence at this summit, we will just allow the advocates of no first use and denuclearization to set the terms for the debate, including in Germany." Flexible response had, as a matter of necessity, relied on early use of nuclear weapons. That necessity would clearly depart with the massive reductions of Soviet military power in Europe required by the CFE treaty nearing conclusion in Vienna.

Bush went on to add: "If I am asked in London at a press conference after our summit whether NATO will adapt its nuclear strategy in response to these changes, I could say we are studying it. But then we have failed to offer leadership. If I say flexible response would continue, unaffected by these new circumstances, then it will be much harder to maintain a consensus behind NATO's nuclear deterrent. And if I say NATO's strategy will be different, don't we have to say something to define this new direction?"

The bottom line was this, Bush explained: "If we do not make bold moves at the London summit ... we will fail to meet the public test we both agree the declaration must pass. ... In their private meeting in Berlin, Shevardnadze told Jim Baker no less than four times how important the NATO summit would be in shaping Soviet attitudes on the vital questions that Moscow must answer during the next few months. I am also aware that Helmut Kohl will be in Moscow on July 15-16. He should take with him a clear Alliance position on just how we will (and will not)

⁷⁴ See USNATO 3771, "Discussion with Secretary General Woerner on Managing NATO Discussion of Summit Declaration," 29 Jun 90. Wörner had to cancel NATO meetings and suspend a process which had already produced a revised draft declaration with more lengthy annexes. See USNATO 3750, "London Summit Declaration: June 28 I.S. Draft," 28 Jun 90. On the Wörner-Thatcher discussion see USNATO 3784, "SYG Woerner's June 29 Discussion with Prime Minister Thatcher on the NATO Summit Declaration," 29 Jun 90.

adapt to the new realities in Europe."

Thatcher's idea of convening a drafting group to prepare a fresh draft was rejected. "We will be able to work on the specific language of the document in London." Prime Minister Thatcher was now left to decide whether she was willing to risk an Anglo-American clash at this vital meeting of NATO leaders.⁷⁵

Kohl and Mitterrand had talked about Bush's proposal over breakfast while they were in Dublin for an EC summit meeting. Mitterrand agreed with most of it, though he worried that the multinational corps idea would strengthen NATO's military structures and he thought the changes in nuclear strategy went too far. Teltschik called Blackwill to convey Kohl's pleased reaction to the proposal. Blackwill in turn urged Teltschik to help line up French and German support in London so that Thatcher would be isolated.

Briefed by Teltschik, Kohl talked to Genscher. They decided to send Kastrup, Teltschik, and Naumann from the defense ministry to Washington in order to work together with the Americans on the summit declaration. Scowcroft called Teltschik, though, and warned him that such U.S.-German consultations would only inflame British hostility and suspicion about the preparation of the document. Wörner had called Scowcroft with more worries about reactions among other NATO allies. Scowcroft and Teltschik agreed that Bonn would just send some written suggestions.⁷⁶

Teltschik then sent a West German draft declaration that used many of the American ideas but pressed for a more formal NATO-Warsaw Pact nonaggression pact, softpedaled NATO multinational corps (to avoid antagonizing the French) and changes in NATO military strategy (to avoid starting any public debate over nuclear

⁷⁵ Message from President Bush to Prime Minister Thatcher (sent via special channels), 1 Jul 90. Thatcher discusses this exchange of messages in her memoirs and asserts that, because of her messages, "some of the more eye-catching and less considered proposals were dropped." Thatcher, The Downing Street Years, p. 811. This assertion is incorrect. The only proposal to be significantly diluted under British pressure was the promise of "further, far-reaching reductions" in a future conventional arms control treaty to be negotiated after CFE was signed. That dilution was negotiated in London at the drafting session of foreign ministers.

⁷⁶ Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 287-289.

weapons). The Chancellery draft included the current German troop limits proposal, the "Holik plan," but in the original form which called for everyone to negotiate national troop limits during the current CFE negotiations. The Americans still preferred not to burden the ongoing CFE talks or hand the Soviets a golden opportunity to be able to tie up both a Two Plus Four settlement they did not like and a CFE treaty they did not care for either.

Scowcroft wrote back to Teltschik that the "Holik plan," in this form meant that all twenty-three participating countries in the CFE negotiations "would have to agree on the size of the Greek armed forces, the Turkish armed forces, and so on for every country in Europe. We are especially worried that trying to accomplish this formidable task in the current CFE negotiations could indefinitely delay the conclusion of a CFE treaty (a development the Soviet military might actually welcome). It is also possible that Gorbachev could use this notion and its inherent complexity to delay resolution of the Two Plus Four process."

Teltschik took these arguments seriously. The West German defense ministry, like the Americans, also preferred to negotiate all of the national limits in future talks, after the current CFE treaty was signed and the fate of Soviet troops in Europe became clear. Defense minister Stoltenberg told Kohl for the first time, on July 2, that he could accept a limit of fewer than 400,000 troops for Germany's future armed forces.⁷⁷

The top West German leadership then met to finalize a position on how much to limit their armed forces. They agreed to accept the American and defense ministry preference of negotiating these and all the other national limits in a follow-on CFE discussion, not in the negotiations for the current treaty. The Germans could introduce their future stance as a unilateral commitment during the current talks.

⁷⁷ See Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 289-293; Message from Teltschik to Scowcroft (sent via special channels), 27 Jun 90; Message from Scowcroft to Teltschik (via special channels), 30 Jun 90. See also Bonn 20259, "Kohl and Genscher on Force Levels of a United Germany in Vienna CFE Talks," 28 Jun 90. Scowcroft also called Teltschik on June 29. They agreed there were no basic differences in their approach, but Scowcroft reiterated the White House determination to avoid any drafting work on Bush's proposal until leaders arrived in London. 329 Tage, p. 291.

They disagreed only about the number. Genscher wanted 350,000; Kohl and Stoltenberg preferred 400,000. Kohl feared that an offer of 350,000 would eventually mean a compromise outcome of 280,000 — too low. Genscher then sought out Teltschik later and explained that there was no danger of watering down the position, because the German number would not be negotiated -- it would just be a unilateral statement. Kohl and Teltschik conferred again and Kohl settled on an ideal of 370,000, but decided he would be willing to go as low as 350,000 if all other questions could also be settled.⁷⁸

The Americans were also discussing their NATO summit plan with the French President. Mitterrand, aware of Kohl's positive reaction, wrote to Bush. He liked the tone of the declaration and liked the way the Americans had replaced the idea of a NATO-Warsaw Pact joint declaration with an offer of reciprocal declarations of their "will for non-aggression." Mitterrand objected, however, to including new initiatives on NATO multinational corps. Mitterrand also wanted to keep from making "overly precise proposals" on permanent CSCE institutions until the Paris CSCE Summit. His staff later developed a lengthy substitute draft on CSCE to replace the US-proposed language, though they had no quarrel with the American list of institutional initiatives.

Mitterrand joined with Thatcher in questioning the American-proposed changes in NATO nuclear strategy. He thought a "last resort" concept was inconsistent with effective deterrence. He thought the threat of using nuclear weapons, to be effective, had to be a threat of early use. Since France was not part of NATO's integrated military command, Mitterrand would not try to tell other members of NATO what military strategy they ought to adopt. But French doctrine, "which complements, I think usefully, the strategy of NATO," relied on the threat of early first use of

⁷⁸ Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 293-296. On the morning of July 3 Kohl discussed the troop limits issue with Genscher, Stoltenberg, Seiters, Kastrup, Naumann, and Teltschik. Then, after a full cabinet meeting to discuss the 1991 budget, Genscher met privately with Teltschik, and this was followed by the further discussion between Teltschik and Kohl. Though the West Germans had agreed that the treaty codifying national limits on all the armed forces in Europe, including the German Bundeswehr, would be concluded after the current CFE treaty was signed, there was continuing uncertainty on the extent to which they would be bound now to accept these limits later.

nuclear weapons.

French officials also conveyed their dissatisfaction with the offer to bring Warsaw Pact ambassadors to NATO Headquarters. They did not want to see NATO take on such a political role. Mitterrand's interpretation of his understanding with Bush at their April Key Largo meeting was that NATO should be limited to "the examination among Allies of the security problems related to the [military] balance in Europe."⁷⁹

Bush quickly responded to Mitterrand's concerns in a message sent on July 1. He offered no changes in his proposed declaration, promising only that "we can work on specific adjustments to the declaration when we get to London." But he pledged that nothing in the draft "is meant either to challenge France's traditional relationship to the Alliance or reduce France's flexibility as it considers its future defense arrangements in Europe."⁸⁰

On the whole, the reaction from key Allied leaders was mixed. Every major idea in the draft text was opposed by at least one of Bush's counterparts. Every major idea was supported by at least one of the leaders. As Blackwill reported to Scowcroft and Gates, "it is perhaps not surprising that the net effect if we took all the changes would be to drain the Declaration of its substance." The Americans agreed that the only course was to press ahead without making any changes in the US proposal and just try to carry the day when foreign ministers attacked the text in London.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Message from President Mitterrand to President Bush (sent via special channels), 29 Jun 90. Mitterrand's security adviser, Admiral Jacques Lanxade, met with Scowcroft on June 29. Lanxade also met privately with Blackwill. For background, see Hutchings through Blackwill for Scowcroft, "Your Meeting with Admiral Lanxade, June 29," 28 Jun 90. NSC staffer Basora was traveling to Paris and, with U.S. embassy officer Kim Pendleton, met with Mitterrand's counselor Hubert Vedrine on July 2. Basora then conveyed a detailed description of the Elysee's attitude toward the declaration, including the text of France's lengthy proposed counter-draft to replace the US language on CSCE. Paris 19892, "Elysee Comments on NATO Draft Declaration," 3 Jul 90.

⁸⁰ Message from President Bush to President Mitterrand (sent via special channels), 1 Jul 90.

⁸¹ See Blackwill to Scowcroft and Gates (via electronic mail to their assistants, Florence Gantt and Diane Edwards), "Allied Responses to Our Draft Declaration," 30 Jun 90.

As planned, Bush's proposal was tabled at NATO headquarters on July 2. NATO diplomats grumbled about the American insistence on deferring any drafting to the summit itself. Spanish president Felipe Gonzalez had urged Bush directly to let NATO ambassadors redraft the declaration. But, at NATO headquarters, Wörner stoutly resisted pressure to start drafting and quashed an International Staff "annotation" of Bush's proposal. Ambassador Taft concluded that "we are in pretty good shape." As Washington hoped, many of the diplomats' objections would, Taft thought, "not appeal to foreign ministers as much as their bureaucracies hope." Yet there would still be "plenty of tough negotiation in London." Taft later added, "There will be some hard feelings, but we have what we wanted."⁸²

Meanwhile Bush was preparing himself for the London summit. His senior advisers traveled to the Bush summer home in Kennebunkport, Maine, on July 2 and gave a series of briefings on policy toward Germany and Europe and on the status of the various initiatives. Bob Zoellick set the tone in an opening briefing on "The NATO Summit: German Unification and the Soviet Audience." As Zoellick's paper explained, "This NATO summit is NATO's major opportunity within this sequence [of events in 1990] to define its positions on the key political and security issues in play during the sprint to the CSCE Summit and All-German elections."⁸³

⁸² See Message from President Gonzalez to President Bush (sent via special channels), 3 Jul 90; USNATO 3804, "London Summit Declaration: July 2 NAC," 2 Jul 90; USNATO 3805, "Strategy for the London NATO Summit -- The President's Intervention and Managing the Declaration Drafting Process," 2 Jul 90; USNATO 3831, "The London NATO Summit Declaration -- July 3 Discussions Among NATO Permreps on Drafting Procedure," 3 Jul 90. Taft recommended that, in London, political directors go over the draft before ministers worked it themselves. This advice was not heeded. He also underscored the need for a strong chairman in the ministerial negotiation, recommending Dutch foreign minister Hans van den Broek -- a welcome suggestion in Washington, where officials recalled Van den Broek's skill in managing the ministerial negotiations at the May 1989 NATO Summit. The Norwegian foreign minister would, ordinarily, have served as the chairman, but Wörner helped arrange to put Van den Broek in the chair.

⁸³ See Zelikow through Blackwill and Kanter to Scowcroft, "Briefings on the NATO Summit at Kennebunkport on July 2," 28 Jun 90; and Scowcroft to President Bush, "Preparing for the NATO Summit: Briefings in Kennebunkport on July 2" (probably forwarded to Bush on June 29 or 30). The Zoellick briefing paper was an attachment to Scowcroft's memo. Bush's package also included an EUR paper, "NATO and Its Future Political Role;" an NSC staff paper on "Conventional and Nuclear Arms Control;" a copy of a memo from JCS Chairman General Powell to Zelikow, "Pre-Summit Briefing at Kennebunkport - Defending Europe," 27 Jun 90; and another EUR paper on "NATO Summit: CSCE Proposals," 28 Jun 90. There is no written record of the conversations in Kennebunkport on the morning of July 2. But the

To rally backing in London from some smaller allies and friends, on July 3 Bush telephoned the Belgian, Dutch, and Danish prime ministers. In each telephone conversation Bush found firm agreement on the critical importance of the summit and received the assurances of support that he hoped to hear.⁸⁴

Heads of government assembled in London on July 5 amid the palatial surroundings of Lancaster House, which had been the site of the successful 1979 negotiations for the settlement which turned Rhodesia into Zimbabwe. Wörner opened the session by explaining that President Bush's draft declaration would be the basis for further work, with foreign ministers personally taking charge of the negotiation of the text.

President Bush addressed the gathering, explaining each of the initiatives in the draft, warning them that the summit "may be our last chance to indicate the changing nature of our Alliance before the Soviets and Eastern Europeans and others make their decisions on German unity and CFE and for the CSCE summit."

Prime Minister Thatcher promptly replied, however, by voicing her concern about the declaration's promise of new conventional arms control to seek "further far-reaching reductions" of offensive capability and criticizing the change to a nuclear strategy of "last resort." As she put it: "Although a great deal of what President

briefing materials adequately capture both the tone and substance of the discussions. Joining Bush at this briefing were Quayle, Baker, Cheney, Powell, Brady, Scowcroft, Bartholomew, Wolfowitz, Zoellick, Seitz, Ross, Blackwill, Zelikow, and the White House staff secretary, James Cicconi.

⁸⁴ On the phone calls, see the Memos of Telephone Conversations between the President and Prime Minister Martens, Prime Minister Schlueter, and Prime Minister Lubbers. All the calls were made from Kennebunkport. For other allied reactions to the President's message, see Message from Ambassador [Maynard] Glitman (in Brussels) to Blackwill (via special channels), 30 Jun 90; Message from Ambassador Glitman to Blackwill (via special channels), 2 Jul 90; Message from Ambassador Glitman to Blackwill (via special channels), 3 Jul 90; Message from Ambassador Wilkins (in The Hague) to the White House (via special channels), 3 Jul 90; Message from COS Oslo to the White House (via special channels), 2 Jul 90; Message from Ambassador Rowell (Luxembourg) to the White House (via special channels), "GOL Response to President's Message on NATO Summit Declaration," 3 Jul 90; Message from Ambassador Cobb (Reykjavik) to the White House (and State) (via special channels), "Icelandic PM's Reaction to President's Proposals for London Summit," 29 Jun 90. Special communication channels were used to preserve secrecy. But, given past controversies over the use of non-State channels during the Reagan administration's secret negotiations with Iran, NSC staff took care to reassure ambassadors that Secretary of State Baker was aware of these White House communications.

Bush says about nuclear weapons is very very welcome, I am concerned that we don't misinterpret the same words. To me the expression 'weapons of last resort' is very clear. Last resort: last means last and nothing else and yet I am told that it is not so, that the expression is ambiguous. But I have often read confusing words in communiqus and found them very confusing; but to be told that clear words are confusing is, to me, a new dimension of diplomacy. Of course, as colleagues round this table will know, I never had much use for diplomacy anyway, and I've got on very well without it. ..." She understood the need for the Alliance to "match the moment," but "not at the expense of our future defence and security."

Chancellor Kohl spoke next, helping to offset the effect of Thatcher's address by lining up directly behind the United States. "I would like to support President Bush in what he has said here. The message to go out from the NATO Summit meeting here is of enormous importance for Central and Eastern Europe." More leaders spoke. Then the assembly adjourned for lunch. When they reconvened the speeches continued but the real work had moved to another room in Lancaster House, where the foreign ministers began haggling over the text of the declaration itself.⁸⁵

The foreign ministers worked over the four and a half pages of text until after midnight. The White House reliance on Baker's negotiating skills paid off. With Dutch foreign minister Hans van den Broek chairing the session with his usual agility and forcefulness, the text of the declaration emerged relatively unscathed from the hours of debate. British foreign secretary Hurd did what he could to adjust language on the defense and arms control points, but he was not instructed to force an open breach in Allied councils. He did pare back the declaration's promise of further far-

⁸⁵ Account drawn from Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 298-301; author's notes of the meeting; and NATO's verbatim transcripts of the summit meeting, document C-VR(90)36. The account of this session, and Thatcher's remarks, in Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, pp. 235-236 is inaccurate and misleading. They report an exchange between Baker and Thatcher which did not take place, at least not during one of the London summit sessions, and misconstrue her reference to Alan Clark's book, Barbarossa, as anti-German. She actually referred both to Clark's and to Casper Weinberger's recent book as parables on the theme of preparedness. Teltschik, who was there, also noticed no particular animus against Germany in Thatcher's remarks. Beschloss and Talbott incorrectly summarize the summit declaration and mistakenly assert that Kohl had dropped his old opposition against singling Germany out for special troop limits.

reaching reductions in conventional forces in Europe to the more anodyne promise that future measures might further limit such forces.⁸⁶ Yet the brevity and non-bureaucratic tone of the declaration was preserved, as were almost all the principal initiatives. Van den Broek, presenting the new text to heads of government the following day, could triumphantly claim that "we have been able to accommodate [Allied] viewpoints without losing the imagination and punch of the message which this Declaration conveys."

The proposal for a NATO-Warsaw Pact joint declaration that "we are no longer adversaries" was endorsed and strengthened -- as the West Germans and British had hoped, but it was still short of a "nonaggression pact." France fought the idea of inviting Eastern countries to send their ambassadors to NATO, but it was a losing fight. When the issue was referred to the heads of government French foreign minister Dumas accepted a compromise which dropped the specific reference to ambassadors, but retained the declaration's landmark plea to the states of the East "to come to NATO, not just to visit, but to establish regular diplomatic liaison with NATO." These seeds quickly sprouted. By the end of the following year they had grown into creation of a new organization linked to the Alliance and designed to include the East in NATO's deliberations -- the North Atlantic Cooperation Council. This institution was, in turn, to lead by 1994 to creation of the "Partnership for Peace" to bring former Warsaw Pact adversaries even closer to NATO with the possibility of even adding new members to the Alliance.

Taking advantage of the West German decision to adopt the American-preferred variant of the "Holik plan" for handling future German troop limits, the summit declaration included a statement of the new position. The declaration promised that "a commitment will be given at the time of signature of the CFE Treaty concerning the manpower levels of a united Germany."

⁸⁶ When this language was referred to heads of government for final approval, Genscher intervened to say that this correction must have been a typing error. Surely it should have read "reduce," not "limit." Hurd, who had forced this compromise, drily assured the group that, "I don't think there is a mistake in the drafting."

The declaration's promise of fundamental changes in the posture of NATO's conventional forces was retained. Led by the French, allies forced out the language committing to the peacetime integration of national forces into multinational corps under NATO's integrated military command. But the pledge to "rely increasingly on multinational corps made up of national units" was retained, and became an important feature of NATO's military reorganization. Also left intact were the assurance that much smaller and restructured units would replace the force structure of the past.

The proposed offer to eliminate all nuclear artillery shells from Europe, if the Soviets would reciprocate, was adopted by the allies. Adopted too was the language, which Thatcher and Mitterrand had so disliked, promising a change in NATO nuclear strategy to make "nuclear forces truly weapons of last resort." Both "forward defense" and "flexible response" were explicitly consigned to the past. A review to elaborate these new strategic principles was put in motion (with conclusions that were ultimately adopted in November 1991 at a NATO Summit in Rome). All of the institutional innovations for the CSCE proposed in the U.S. draft were adopted as well.⁸⁷

The only jarring note was struck by Mitterrand as heads of government finished their endorsement of the declaration's text. Near the end of the meeting he delivered a curious presentation which essentially distanced himself, and France, from the entire result -- which seemed to prejudge the future of the Alliance's military strategy.

Mitterrand had long thought that a comprehensive review of NATO military strategy would be a drawn-out process in which France might work to find a way to participate constructively. He was irritated by the abrupt American effort to force the direction of this review and bulldoze their proposed text through the Alliance. His pique at the US success in this effort (and President Bush's refusal to accept his

⁸⁷ See "London Declaration on a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance" (full text), 6 July 1990, reprinted in Survival, 32 (September/October 1990): 469-472; Teitschik, 329 Tage, pp. 301-304; record of NATO Summit heads of government session on July 6, NATO document C-VR(90)36, Part II; and fact sheets on NATO summit initiatives issued in London by the White House Press Office, 6 Jul 90.

warning against changing NATO's nuclear strategy) was evident for months after the summit ended.⁸⁸

Mitterrand's annoyance took immediate form in a prompt statement after the summit that France would pull all of its near 50,000 troops out of Germany by 1994, would not join any multinational units, and would not allow any multinational units to be stationed in France. Mitterrand did not bother to inform the Franco-German Defense Council, which existed to consider common security concerns, of his decision before he announced it. This extraordinary move did not affect NATO implementation of the summit initiatives. It did, perhaps, undermine German faith in the credibility of French commitments.

The hasty French call to withdraw their troops from Germany was quietly superseded in 1991, when France developed the idea of a Franco-German corps in order to press its conception of a European defense identity in the closing phase of negotiations over the Maastricht Treaty on European political union. The whole affair now appears to reflect little more than erratic statesmanship borne out of France's frustration, and impotence.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Discussing French attitudes in a July 16 meeting of the "Gates group," Bartholomew and Hadley thought some French officials had hoped to have the NATO leaders announce a major restructuring of NATO responsibilities between U.S. and European defense components, although Paris had not actually proposed this idea. Everyone wanted to find a way to bring France into the review process put in motion by the London Declaration though not, as Wolfowitz commented, at the expense of kicking the U.S. out of Europe. He thought, quite rightly, that some of the French security ideas tended to prophesy an American departure and then offer solutions that would help realize such predictions. Bartholomew described French attitudes at this time as "a form of existential pessimism." Author's notes of European Strategy Steering Group meeting, 16 Jul 90.

⁸⁹ See, e.g., Joachim Fritz-Vahnhame, "Die Geschichte machen die anderen," *Die Zeit*, July 20, 1990, p. 4. In mid-July Blackwill met with Mitterrand's chief security adviser, Admiral Lanxade, and they agreed on the need for a confidential bilateral dialogue on strategic issues. The dialogue would be between a couple of officials from the Elysee and the White House, in part because Lanxade disliked State's Bartholomew and in part because of the notoriously poor relations between Baker and Dumas. Though Blackwill left the government in July, the U.S.-French plan went ahead and discussions began in the fall of 1990, boosted by the cooperative spirit which prevailed between Bush and Mitterrand and between their chief security advisers, Scowcroft and Lanxade, during the Gulf crisis. With relations between Baker and Dumas continuing to go downhill and Scowcroft and Lanxade working well together, the effort was orchestrated entirely between the NSC staff (in particular Basora, Zelikow, and later David Gompert) and Mitterrand's advisors in the Elysee (especially Lanxade, Pierre Morel and Caroline de Margerie). There were several productive meetings in both Washington and Paris. Tensions eased and the two countries began to recognize their opportunity to end the old transatlantic feud over allied nuclear strategy. New

The Americans, West Germans, and most other allies were very pleased, however, with the summit's outcome. The full text of the declaration was published in the New York Times. European press reaction was overwhelmingly, even extravagantly, positive. But the most important reaction would be that coming from Moscow.

The Final Offer

As the Boeing 707 jetliner carrying President Bush, Air Force One, flew from London to Houston Bush, Scowcroft, and Blackwill worked over a draft letter to Gorbachev telling him directly what they thought they had just accomplished at the NATO summit. The letter complete, it was transmitted to Moscow from the airplane's radio. When the letter arrived in Moscow the American diplomat running the embassy that day, Mike Joyce, rushed it to the Congress of People's Deputies where Gorbachev was defending his policies. Chernayev came out of the meeting to take the letter from Joyce. He read it quickly and then looked up. "This is indeed an important letter." He then brought it in to his chief.

The letter said plainly just what the Allies had done in London, and how each of the NATO initiatives responded to Soviet concerns. In other words, the letter said: We promised you that we would move in our 'nine points'; now we have delivered on our promise. As Bush put it:

I listened carefully to what you said during those most helpful discussions [in Washington].

Working solely from a draft text I circulated to my NATO counterparts, we a few hours ago issued a declaration that promises the Alliance's transformation in every aspect of its work and especially of its relationship with the Soviet Union. As you read the NATO declaration, I want you to know that it was written with you importantly in mind, and I made that point strongly to my colleagues in London.

Mr. President, we have important decisions before us as we work

debates arose in the spring of 1991 over the development of a European defense identity, but these disputes were mild by comparison with the tensions in the summer of 1990.

toward Europe's reconciliation. ... I hope today's NATO declaration will persuade you that NATO can and will serve the security interests of Europe as a whole.

I have been watching the developments at your Party Congress these past days with the greatest interest and have admired the way you have handled the burgeoning democratic process in your country. As you know, I have stressed repeatedly to the American people how much I support your efforts in this regard.

Mr. President, we have witnessed remarkable changes in the world and in our relationship. I hope that what has perhaps been the most important NATO summit meeting in its history will push U.S.-Soviet relations to an even higher plane in the period ahead.⁹⁰

With this letter and the NATO declaration from London, the United States, West Germany, and their allies had delivered what amounted to their final offer for settlement of the German question. Their final position on German membership in NATO was clear. They had explained just how far NATO was willing to go in adapting to meet Soviet concerns. They had described how they were willing to handle the issue of German troop strength.

The only other element in this final bid was economic. Gorbachev had asked both the West Germans and Americans for large-scale aid. Bonn was taking care of the Soviet request for an immediate credit line of 5 billion Deutschmarks (about \$3 billion) and the credits were finally extended, to run over a twelve-year period, on June 27. The West Germans also knew they would be assuming the short-term costs of maintaining Soviet forces in eastern Germany that had been borne by the GDR. In 1990 these costs were expected to amount to another 1.4 billion D-Marks (or about \$850 million). But Gorbachev wanted a broader Western program of assistance on a large scale -- at least \$15-20 billion. This would require a Western consensus, since the aid would come mainly from international financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund. Such consensus for large-scale aid did not exist.

⁹⁰ Zelikow had drafted the letter in London before the summit had ended. For the final text of the letter and the account of its delivery, see Message from Moscow to White House, sent via privacy channels, 7 Jul 90.

Bush had already indicated, both to Kohl and to Gorbachev, that America could not easily endorse this larger program of assistance. It would be economically unsound until Moscow was prepared to adopt a genuine reform program and it was unsustainable politically in Washington until the Soviets dropped their blockade of Lithuania and curtailed their massive subsidies to Cuba. Kohl had worked hard to help Gorbachev. He had won Mitterrand's backing for more ambitious aid, though the backing was almost entirely rhetorical, and at a June 25-26 EC summit Kohl, with Mitterrand, urged his European counterparts to join in endorsing a major aid program for Moscow.⁹¹

Thatcher was a strong supporter of Gorbachev. But she could not support any aid program until the Soviets undertook the economic reforms that would make such assistance worthwhile. As she recalled later, "I took most satisfaction ... at this Council from stopping the Franco-German juggernaut in its tracks on the question of financial credits to the Soviet Union." She did not think that giving former communist countries, or the communist USSR, even more debt "would do them any favours." Above all, she did not want Western money to become "an oxygen tent for the survival of much of the old system." Kohl and Mitterrand pressed their case over dinner on the night of June 25. Thatcher opposed them. She found the utter lack of any serious economic analysis appalling, and argued that, "No board of directors of a company would ever behave in such an unbusiness-like way. We should not do so either." She insisted that a proper study had to be done of the situation before a decision could be made to dispense large sums of money. The argument continued into the EC session on the morning of June 26, but Thatcher's approach prevailed.⁹²

Kohl did not really respond to the economic arguments. There is no evidence that the Germans had done any serious analysis of how or where the \$15-20 billion in

⁹¹ The West Germans had continued financial negotiations with Moscow during June over the five billion D-Mark credit and the arrangements for picking up existing East German obligations to the Soviet Union. On these talks and on the Kohl-Mitterrand discussions of aid to Gorbachev, see Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 274-275, 279-280, 283-284.

⁹² Thatcher, The Downing Street Years, pp. 762-763.

credit would help perestroika. That, for Kohl, was not really the point, any more than he had done a serious analysis of the form or effect of a European political union before he had become a cosponsor of that enterprise. After all, his primary motive in both cases was political, making powerful symbolic gestures. Kohl supported a move to political union because he believed in the European ideal and believed the Germans had to now show themselves to be placing Europe ahead of German nationalism. Gorbachev wanted help. An aid program would help keep Gorbachev in power. A friendly Gorbachev seemed vital for pulling off Kohl's gambit for completing the rapid, untroubled unification of Germany.

If the EC could not be persuaded to support giving the large-scale credits, Kohl could get the next best thing: Gorbachev would see that Kohl had done his best to get the money. As Teltschik noted after the Dublin summit: "For Kohl it was important to keep his word that he would push for support to the Soviet Union in multilateral fora. With Mitterrand's help this became a main issue at the European summit. That is surely helpful for the whole atmosphere between us and the Soviet Union."⁹³

In Houston, Kohl and Mitterrand urged their colleagues to be forthcoming in responding to the Soviet request for large-scale credits. Bush had already communicated a willingness to help but, like Thatcher, thought the first constructive step would be to study the situation and determine what assistance was needed and what Moscow would have to do. The American and British reluctance was shared by the Japanese and Canadians. So the G-7 leaders in Houston, picking up the suggestion

⁹³ Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 288. The Dublin summit also went beyond the general commitment to political union agreed in April to schedule the convening of an intergovernmental conference (IGC) that would negotiate a treaty establishing a European Union. Whatever one's view of this enterprise, it is hard to dispute the factual accuracy of one aspect of Thatcher's account of this decision. The leaders made this decision although they "were either unable -- or perhaps at this stage unwilling -- to spell out precisely what political union meant for them. Top marks for calculated ambiguity, however, must have gone to Sir Andreotti, who suggested that although we must set up an IGC on political union, it would be dangerous to try to reach a clear-cut definition of what political union was." The chairman, Irish prime minister Charles Haughey, concluded the discussion by assuring the gathering that certainly the worrisome or objectionable dangers Thatcher had warned about would, whatever they were, "be excluded from political union." Thatcher, The Downing Street Years, p. 762.

that emerged from the Dublin EC summit, asked the International Monetary Fund to begin a crash study of Soviet economic needs to be completed by the end of the year. This landmark study did lay the foundation for a future program of assistance. But that was all Moscow would get for now.⁹⁴

The West had made its best and final offer to secure Soviet acquiescence for the rapid unification of Germany on Western terms. Kohl would return to Moscow in mid-July, just before the next Two Plus Four ministerial meeting, to be held in Paris. But there was now broad consensus: the terms of the Western offer were no longer negotiable. The key decisions now rested with the Soviets; the allies waited for Moscow's reply. They did not have long to wait.

⁹⁴ Account based on author's recollections and Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 289, 305-310. Gorbachev had written to Bush on July 4 about the upcoming G-7 summit in Houston. He thanked Bush for having agreed to grant GATT observer status to the USSR, noted that the December 1989 USSR-EC trade agreement had begun to operate, and praised the just-concluded Washington summit as a "genuine 'breakthrough'" in US-Soviet economic relations. He therefore asked Bush, as chairman of the G-7 meeting, to direct the summit toward "working toward long-term agreements on large-scale credit and investment cooperation which in effect would be a serious factor of stabilization and a transition to the market economy in the USSR." Bush's July 6 letter on the NATO summit promised a more detailed reply later on G-7 matters, and Bush later conveyed the G-7 decision to initiate an IMF study of the Soviet economy, while observing that Western aid prospects "would be enhanced by your decisions to take more radical steps toward the construction of a market economy, by shifting substantial resources from the military sector, and by reducing your support to nations that promote regional conflicts." Japan's concerns about "the Northern Territories" were also noted. See Burns through Rice and Deal to Scowcroft, "Letter from the President to President Gorbachev on the Houston Summit," 13 Jul 90.

Beschloss & Talbott have Kohl arguing for aid to Gorbachev at the NATO summit in London and say Bush, eager to avoid alienating Kohl, did not object. At the Highest Levels, p. 236. Actually Kohl did not push the credit issue in London and Kohl was well aware of Bush's objections since they had discussed the matter both in person and over the telephone in May and June. Beschloss and Talbott also have Gorbachev pleading for aid in a letter to the G-7 leaders and threatening that "'without this radical step, a further renewal of our society will be possible.'" They then interpret this blunt threat as Gorbachev's effort "to extract a bribe for consenting to a united Germany in NATO." But they misread the letter. The words "radical step" in the quote from Gorbachev's (July 4) letter were not referring to Western aid. When the letter said "without these radical steps," the phrase "radical steps" referred to Gorbachev's internal reforms. Western aid is mentioned only obliquely in this message. If Gorbachev was attempting to "extract a bribe," he was not relying on this letter to convey such a demand (and he did not get the bribe).

Chapter Eleven
THE TRANSFORMATION OF EUROPE
(July - November 1990)

Gorbachev Decides to Move

During the second week of July, before Chancellor Helmut Kohl arrived in Moscow for a scheduled visit, Gorbachev decided to settle the German issue and put it behind him. To understand this decision we must first set the scene in Moscow at the beginning of July. For about a month the Soviet government was developing a dual personality on German issues, one public and the other very private.

Formal, public policy on Germany had been fixed, in its essentials, for about two months. That was when the Politburo adopted the position Shevardnadze took with him to the first meeting of Two Plus Four ministers in Bonn. The Politburo's stance in May was not all that different from the policy the Soviet government had adopted, together with East German leader Hans Modrow, at the end of January. The only concession to internal developments in Germany was to decide that Germany's internal unification should simply be decoupled from the satisfactory settlement of all external issues. Shevardnadze proceeded in June to table a draft NATO-Warsaw Pact declaration that would dismantle both alliances, effectively neutralize Germany, and obtain the withdrawal of all foreign forces from German soil. Then, at the Two Plus Four ministers' meeting in Berlin, Shevardnadze presented a draft settlement for Germany that was consistent with the established policy line.

Gorbachev's own resolve on the NATO issue showed its first major crack at the Washington summit meeting with Bush at the end of May. Since then his own stance had been passive in public and uncertain in private. Portugalov, on the Central Committee staff, later emphasized the crack in Washington as a turning point. "What happened," he later told Beschloss and Talbott, "was so unprofessional, so unexpected, that all of us were startled. Of course, now it looks like 'tout est pour le mieux.' But then it looked awful, scandalous. We could and should have asked Kohl to accept a French-style military status for Germany. That was not done because Shevardnadze was pressing Gorbachev with his 'concessions to the Americans' line.'"

Falin was even more bitter, calling Shevardnadze "the Americans' most powerful agent of influence."¹

After the Washington meeting Shevardnadze began adopting a very private stance, unknown to almost anyone else in his government, of promising cooperation and stalling for time until the West could deliver on its promised transformation of the NATO alliance. On July 4, at another meeting of Two Plus Four political directors, the Soviet representative, Bondarenko, offered nothing new but did confide that Shevardnadze had not even been seen around the ministry for several days.² Nor were many officials in the Soviet government aware of the diplomatic activity swirling around Gorbachev's requests for substantial credits from America, the FRG, and other Western countries. Gorbachev and Shevardnadze made sure, however, that their hands were not tied by any further discussion of Germany or other European security issues in the Politburo. "All decisions after Bonn [the early May Two Plus Four ministerial] were taken out of the Politburo's hands," Tarasenko recalled. The moves in July were never discussed there. The opposition would have been too great. Once he moved, Tarasenko adds, "Shevardnadze played such a quick game -- others could never catch up."³

The world of the Soviet leaders was dominated in early July by the 28th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. This conference was widely anticipated as the Party conservatives' "best and perhaps last chance to reassert control before the country sped off in a new, democratic direction." The conservatives had just dominated a Russian party conference, with a major part of the assault made up of attacks upon a ruinous foreign policy. A leading critic, the general commanding the Volga-Urals military district, declared that, "Germany is being reunited and will probably be a member of NATO. ... Only our own scientist-

¹ Michael Beschloss & Strobe Talbott, At the Highest Levels: The Inside Story of the End of the Cold War (Boston: Little, Brown, 1992), pp. 238-39.

² Seitz to Baker, untitled, 4 Jul 90.

³ Author interview with Tarasenko, Providence, June 1992. Falin, from an entirely different perspective, confirms the circumvention of all the usual organs of collective leadership. Valentin Falin, Politische Erinnerungen, trans. Heddy Pross-Weerth (München: Droemer Knaur, 1993), p. 495.

chaps twitter on about the fact that no one intends to attack us. (Applause) That formula is calculated to appeal to the feeble-minded. (Applause)"⁴

Gorbachev had already taken the chance to defuse one of his major policy problems. Lithuania's drive for independence had shadowed his reform efforts at home and his relations with foreign leaders. The Soviet blockade of Lithuania had been a leading obstacle to winning Bush's support for credits and other assistance. But on June 29 Lithuania accepted a variant of the Kohl-Mitterrand proposal and suspended their declaration of independence. The next day Gorbachev lifted the Soviet blockade.

The Party Congress began on July 2. Gorbachev defended his program against conservative attacks. Responding to the criticism that he had "lost" Eastern Europe, Gorbachev answered that he had decided not to use "the methods we used in the past." It is notable that he said as little as possible about Germany. Gorbachev instead emphasized his fundamental choice for cooperation and "the inclusion of our national economy in the world economy." Shevardnadze defended his foreign policy record to the assembled delegates, amid shouted boos. Kvitsinsky, who was there, remembers that Shevardnadze only barely averted "an explosion in the assembly hall." Shevardnadze reportedly felt angry and dejected that Gorbachev did little to defend him at the meeting. Gorbachev's main concern was to secure a mandate for his domestic reform program, and his hopes for dramatic change were at their height.⁵

⁴ On the conservatives "last chance," Robert Kaiser, Why Gorbachev Happened: His Triumphs, His Failure, and His Fall, rev. ed. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991), p. 337. The quotation from the conservative attack is from Moscow Television Service, "Makashov Addresses 19 June Russian Conference," June 19, 1990 in FBIS-SOV 90-120, June 21, 1990, p. 92.

⁵ For Kvitsinsky's account of the debates see Julij A. Kvizinskij, Vor dem Sturm: Erinnerungen eines Diplomaten, trans. Hilde & Helmut Ettinger (Berlin: Siedler, 1993), pp. 37-38; for a good general summary of the Congress's first week see Kaiser, Why Gorbachev Happened, pp. 336-48. Gorbachev's lengthy opening speech to the Congress is excerpted in Mikhail S. Gorbachev, Gody Trudnykh Reshenii, 1985-1992: Izbrannye (Moscow: Al'fa Print, 1993), pp. 218-22. For Shevardnadze's embattled appearance see Moscow Television Service, "Shevardnadze Speech," July 3, 1990 in FBIS-SOV 90-129-S, July 5, 1990, pp. 7-10; ibid., "Foreign Minister Shevardnadze," July 7, 1990 in FBIS-SOV 90-131-S, July 9, 1990, pp. 47-50. Chernyayev and Tarasenko believed Falin, from his post on the Central Committee, was stirring up some of the attacks against Shevardnadze. Author interviews with Chernyayev, Moscow, January 1994 and Tarasenko, Providence, June 1992. For some circumstantial confirmation note how Falin, in his memoirs, describes his position on

Gorbachev had planned well in lining up his supporters and handled the second week of the Congress with consummate tactical skill. After he threatened to resign, Gorbachev was reelected to the post of Party General Secretary by a 3 to 1 margin. His candidate for deputy party leader, the Ukrainian Vladimir Ivashko, soundly defeated Yegor Ligachev in an even more lopsided tally.

It was the Indian summer of perestroika. Gorbachev told Kohl a few days later that he felt his party congress had paralleled the fiery and epochal gatherings of the October revolution, that the eleven days of the congress kept making him think of John Reed's book, Ten Days that Shook the World. The Soviet leader was flushed with his recent victory over Ligachev and his "ultras."⁶ To deal with Yeltsin's criticism that he was moving too slowly toward a market economy, Gorbachev was preparing to cut a deal with Yeltsin to prepare a new market reform plan, one that would compete against the bureaucracy's proposals being developed by Prime Minister Ryzhkov. The working group created to draft the plan included Gorbachev advisers such as Sergei Shatalin and Yeltsin advisers like Grigory Yavlinsky and it drafted a truly ambitious "500-day plan" for dramatic reform. An All-Union treaty would be prepared to attend to the nationalities question. Gorbachev was bubbling over with plans to remake his country.⁷

separating internal and external issues as: "Unification - yes, annexation [Anschluss] - no." Falin, Politische Erinnerungen, p. 490 (though actually this slogan implies Soviet interference in the "internal" issues too -- the old Article 23/146 debate). Then note how Yegor Ligachev used the exact same formulation in one of the attacks on Shevardnadze during the Party Congress. TASS, "Ligachev, Shevardnadze Cited," July 7, 1990 in FBIS-SOV 90-131-S, July 9, 1990, p. 57. For more illustrations of the attacks on Shevardnadze and more of the debate on Germany, see Pravda, July 11, 1990, pp. 5-6 in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, 42, no. 33 (1990), pp. 18-19; Moscow Television Service, "Mikulin on Foreign Policy," July 5, 1990, in FBIS-SOV 90-130-S, July 6, 1990, p. 10 (Major General Ivan Mikulin was an active duty officer serving with Soviet forces in Hungary); ibid., "Baklanov on Peace Initiatives," pp. 13-14 (Central Committee Party Secretary Oleg Baklanov); TASS, ibid., p. 16 (for reportage of public defense offered by Kvitsinsky and Falin). The Shevardnadze disappointment with Gorbachev is reported in Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, p. 234.

⁶ Horst Teltschik, 329 Tage: Innenansichten der Einigung (Berlin: Siedler, 1991), p. 325.

⁷ For the quote to Kohl see Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 325. For the second week of the Congress see Kaiser, Why Gorbachev Happened, pp. 348-56. A fine impression of the atmosphere in Moscow during this period is conveyed in David Remnick, Lenin's Tomb: The Last Days of the Soviet Empire (New York: Random House, 1993), although the book contains little about the 28th party congress itself. On the 500-day plan, and the differences between it and the Ryzhkov plan, see Ed Hewett, "The New Soviet Plan," Foreign Affairs, 69:

Yet colder weather was already coming. The national security establishment had begun visibly moving sharply to the right in the spring of 1990 and had not been reconciled to the new agenda. The West could see the aspects of the turn that they could detect -- the retrenchment in arms control talks, the growing divergence of Shevardnadze from the security institutions he claimed to represent in these negotiations, the accumulating evidence of massive circumvention of the CFE treaty's intended limits. But there was much more the West could not see. They could not see the disillusionment and rightward turn that would overtake Gorbachev himself during the autumn of 1990, leading to Shevardnadze's bitter resignation in December. They noted the estrangement of Yeltsin and his Russian government but could not foresee the desperate maneuvering and pull to the right that would characterize Gorbachev's last year in power, the last year of the Soviet Union itself. That was all in the future.

In the present were the last rays of hope, and Gorbachev's hopes were focused on his plans at home. With the party congress over, and Kohl already scheduled for a visit to Moscow, Gorbachev probably reflected that it was time to move decisively and put the German issue behind him.

The NATO summit announcement was a catalyst. Shevardnadze had referred to it over and over in his private talks with Baker and Genscher. He recalled in his memoirs how "in the extremely inflamed atmosphere of the [Party] Congress it was difficult to breathe. My personal fate was on the line. ... The Congress gave vivid testimony to the growth of opposition to our policy. In my circumstances, it was especially important to see some encouraging response from 'the other side' (the West). Otherwise, we would be in an untenable position. When the news came out about the NATO session in London, I knew there had been a response."⁸

Shevardnadze was waiting in his office for the first word of the London communique. Tarasenko was with him. Tarasenko remembered that when they

(Winter 1990/91): 146.

⁸ Eduard Shevardnadze, The Future Belongs to Freedom (New York: The Free Press, 1991), p. 141.

received the text from the wire service, they "immediately, within an hour," analyzed it and wrote an official reaction for the Foreign Ministry. "If we hadn't done that," Tarasenko recalled, "Marshal Akhromeyev would have had time to put his own spin on the document." Gorbachev and Shevardnadze wanted to place the Soviet reaction in a larger context, one that could relate the NATO move to the controversial public debate over policy toward Germany. For the same reasons Gorbachev's interpreter and aide, writing under a pseudonym, also quickly published a positive appraisal of the NATO initiatives in the Soviet press.⁹

So Shevardnadze shaped the initial Soviet government reaction to the London Declaration, applauding it as "realistic and constructive." While too early to judge whether the declaration marked "a turning point and a day of renewal," Shevardnadze considered it "certain, however, that the decisions adopted move in the right direction and pave the way to a safe future for the entire European continent." Now, with NATO states actually opening the door to new contacts for Eastern states with the Alliance, "one can say that things began to move." The promised changes in NATO military strategy "signals a sober evaluation" of the new environment in Europe, especially the moves away from forward defense and flexible response. "Admittedly, this signifies potentially important decisions."¹⁰

⁹ Author interviews with Tarasenko, Providence, June 1992 and with Pavel Palazchenko, Moscow, January 1994. Palazchenko's praise for NATO's good "first step" was published under the pseudonym P. Vorob'yev as "Zhit' Bez Vraga: NATO peresmatrivaet vboyu rol'" [To Live Without An Enemy: NATO Reviews Its Role], *Trud*, July 25, 1990. According to both Tarasenko and available American records, Beschloss & Talbott are incorrect in saying that Baker forwarded an advance copy of the London declaration to Shevardnadze. They were perhaps misled by references to Baker's oral preview of the U.S.-proposed CSCE initiatives conveyed when the two men met privately in Berlin. At the Highest Levels, p. 237. Shevardnadze's and Tarasenko's worries become clearer upon reading how conservatives on the Central Committee staff like Falin and Portugalov were framing the NATO summit for the Soviet public, see press reports in FBIS-SOV 90-128, July 3, 1990, p. 4 and FBIS-SOV 90-129, July 5, 1990, pp. 4-6. For Akhromeyev's later appraisal of the London NATO announcements, see S.F. Akhromeyev & G.M. Kornienko, Glazami Marshala i Diplomata (Moscow: Mezhdunarodniye Otnosheniya, 1992), pp. 260-61. Akhromeyev actually considered the London NATO decisions paramount among the three reasons why the Soviets withdrew their objections to full membership in NATO for a united Germany.

¹⁰ "Comments by Soviets On NATO," New York Times, July 7, 1990, p. 5; TASS, "Shevardnadze on NATO Communiqué," July 6, 1990, in FBIS-SOV 90-131, July 9, 1990, pp. 2-4. See Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 13 Jul 90.

The most negative reaction to the London NATO declaration came from East Germany. The initial,

The Americans and West Germans thought Gorbachev would probably wait, stringing out the process. If he was going to give in they thought he would avoid such a painful decision until the last possible moment -- perhaps waiting to see how the Two Plus Four talks progressed. The allies did believe, though, that they had narrowed Soviet options almost to the vanishing point. The Soviets could no longer hope to obstruct the next stage of internal unification. Due to extraordinarily able and energetic efforts by Bonn, the economic and monetary union took effect, as scheduled, on July 1. East Germans began exchanging Ostmarks for Deutschmarks. West German goods flooded East German shops. East-West German border checks disappeared. The stunning metamorphosis of East Germany into a new society had begun.

Negotiations of the second state treaty between the FRG and GDR on political union started on July 6 and were moving quickly. Bonn thought the treaty would be complete in August and ratified in September.¹¹ Use of Soviet troops to stop unification seemed completely untenable. The NATO summit seemed to knock away any hope of trying to rally West German opinion behind a perception that NATO, the US, or its nuclear weapons were the real obstacles to unification. This was especially

grudging, East German reaction was from the Foreign Minister, Meckel, not Prime Minister de Maiziere. Meckel's SPD-East, agitating for complete denuclearization and withdrawal of all foreign forces, was disappointed with the London declaration. The West Germans and Americans were, in turn, disappointed with Meckel. Reflecting a year later, Meckel admitted to Elizabeth Pond that the Americans considered him "more Soviet than the Soviets," but explained that he was just trying harder to address Soviet security concerns. The West Germans also noted, with raised eyebrows, that Meckel was appointing relatives to ministry posts and had insisted on sending a new East German ambassador to the United States although the GDR was on the verge of extinction. Elizabeth Pond, Beyond the Wall: Germany's Road to Unification (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1993), p. 220. For more insight into East German attitudes see Ulrich Albrecht, Die Abwicklung der DDR: die 2 + 4 Verhandlungen, ein Insider-Bericht (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1992), pp. 93-94. For the West German Chancellery's annoyance with Meckel, see Bonn 21593, "Chancellery Views on Issues Related to German Unity, 11 Jul 90; for the American view see Rice to Scowcroft, "Your Meeting with GDR Foreign Minister Meckel, July 13," 12 Jul 90.

¹¹ The major primary source on the negotiation of the treaty working out the circumstances of political union is the account of the chief West German negotiator, Wolfgang Schäuble, Der Vertrag: Wie ich über die deutsche Einheit verhandelte, ed. Dirk Koch & Klaus Wirtgen (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1991), pp. 101-264. See also Bonn 21850, "Chancellery Briefing on Second State Treaty," 12 Jul 90. In the briefing Foreign Office State Secretary Jürgen Sudhoff was asked by British ambassador Malaby just how this second state treaty would take cognizance of progress in the Two Plus Four talks. Sudhoff seemed to have no idea.

true since the Soviet leadership was on record with a positive assessment of the NATO moves. Western unity seemed complete; there were no longer any visible divisions to exploit on issues related to Germany. And for nearly two months Soviet diplomacy had seemed immobile or defensive. With Western momentum at its height, it was hard to see how the Soviets could revive their efforts enough to turn the tide.

The hypothesis which best fits available evidence is that Gorbachev was constantly measuring his position tactically, softening it in private with Western leaders and then hardening it for public consumption. His principal focus was on domestic affairs, and he wished to manage the international situation so as to support his program while keeping his enemies appeased as long as necessary. Meanwhile Shevardnadze, having been rebuffed by the Politburo in his May attempt to pursue a more flexible line and pressured by the hard-line views of career officials in the ministry, remained cautious -- especially in his public or formal communications.

Chernyayev recalled later that Gorbachev had decided he would settle the German issue when Kohl came to the Soviet Union. Gorbachev himself had decided that he no longer feared NATO, and no longer really believed that German membership in NATO posed a real threat to the USSR. His greatest worries were about domestic political reaction to giving in on the NATO question. Chernyayev underscored the gravity of the decision by explaining that, "If there had been a coup against Gorbachev in August 1990, this [German] question would have been in the forefront. ... Look at the Central Committee, two-thirds of them were against Gorbachev and Shevardnadze. There was a genuine danger of a coup. So domestically the London [NATO] summit was extremely important. It was the kind of thing used to stabilize Gorbachev's ship." Gorbachev himself reflected to Bush in September 1990 that "enormous efforts were required, tremendous work and political will" to deal with the German issue, "to overcome the old approaches which seemed

unquestionable, to act according to the changing reality."¹²

With the Party Congress at an end, Gorbachev decided that the time was ripe to move decisively and cut his losses on Germany. Kohl's July 14 visit would be the first major diplomatic window for action after the congress. It would allow Moscow to move on the German question before the next gathering of Two Plus Four ministers in Paris, on July 16. On the last day of the Party Congress, Gorbachev sent a message to Kohl. Would the German leader like to start his visit in Moscow but then go on with Gorbachev to visit Gorbachev's home region, the Caucasus? Of course Kohl would be happy to accept this offer. Teltschik saw this as a signal. If Gorbachev intended a confrontational visit, surely he would not be inviting Kohl to his hometown. Teltschik was right.¹³

Kohl Receives a Nice Surprise

The West Germans were "dead-tired" (Teltschik's phrase) after three summits in two weeks (EC summit in Dublin June 25-26, NATO summit in London July 5-6, G-7 summit in Houston July 9-11). But they did not need to work hard on the policy positions they would bring to Moscow. All the essential elements of the West's final offer were already fixed: the scope of the Two Plus Four talks, the position on termination of Four Power rights and immediate restoration of full German sovereignty, the details of full German membership in NATO, the ways in which NATO would adapt to the new environment, and the manner in which German troop strength would be dealt with. Teltschik and Scowcroft had again gone over the details of the troop strength issue in Houston. Now the Americans and West Germans were in full accord. The West Germans had also told Moscow of their

¹² Author interview with Chernyayev, Moscow, January 1994. Chernyayev also thought that, if there had not been a coup, it is possible that Gorbachev might have been forced to resign during December 1990. For Gorbachev's comment to Bush at their September meeting in Helsinki, see the excerpt from the Soviet memcon quoted in Anatoly Chernyayev, Shest' Let s Gorbachevym: Po dnevnikovym zapisyam (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1993), p. 358.

¹³ Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 310.

willingness to conclude a Soviet-German nonaggression treaty. But the substance of this treaty would not affect Bonn's alliance commitments in any way and negotiation of its text had not begun. The Western positions on all these issues were set.

On economic incentives the West had also delivered what it was prepared to deliver: the West German credit of DM 5 billion had been arranged. Positive signals had been given about a broader program of assistance but nothing would be forthcoming until after the IMF study was completed, in 1991 at the earliest. Nothing definite could be promised except a receptive attitude.

The only loose end was the exact number to be used in promising the limit on troop strength Germany would accept in later conventional arms control talks. The formula was understood: a political declaration, given in the current CFE talks, about the number Germany would accept in the follow-on talks when all the other participants would accept similar limits on their forces too. Kohl had narrowed the number down to 350-370,000. The Americans were relaxed about this range, since their own analyses had led Scowcroft to conclude that Washington would have no problems with any number in the 350-400,000 range. Since May the White House and Chancellery had agreed that a specific number should be held back for the 'end game.' Teltschik had told Scowcroft in Houston that Kohl was now prepared to give Gorbachev a number if the Soviets accepted full German membership in NATO. Was this a problem for Washington? Scowcroft told him this approach was fine.¹⁴

The day Kohl and Genscher returned to Bonn from Houston the Chancellor chaired a last cabinet meeting to review the bidding. Genscher reported on the status of the Two Plus Four negotiations. He also mentioned that he had had little luck in trying to bring East German foreign minister Meckel around to a more supportive

¹⁴ Account based on Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 307; EUR paper, "Limiting German Manpower Levels: The U.S. Perspective," undated but apparently written during second week of July (copy in Zoellick's office files includes Zoellick's annotations about Bartholomew's views); and author's July 12 notes about debrief on Baker-Genscher and Scowcroft/Blackwill-Teltschik consultations in Houston. Baker arranged to have the NSC staff confer with DOD to arrive at a US-preferred troop number that he could pass to Genscher, with nothing written down. As mentioned in the text, US preferences dovetailed with the range being considered in Bonn, though the working-level analyses leaned, like the West German defense ministry, more toward the upper end -- 380-400,000.

stance. (The Americans, who met with Meckel in Washington on July 13, had not had much luck with him either.) Genscher described the current Soviet proposals on political and security questions as unacceptable, although Shevardnadze had indicated that these positions were not the last word.¹⁵

The Chancellery played down public expectations for Kohl's trip. No breakthrough was expected, they said. The Germans were privately more hopeful, especially in light of the invitation to visit Stavropol and the Caucasus, but still uncertain about just what to expect.¹⁶ Two days after returning to Bonn from Houston, Kohl took off for Moscow.

On Saturday evening, July 14, the Germans again reviewed their negotiating position. It seemed clear to Teltschik that this was probably the most important foreign trip ever taken by the Chancellor. They focused on what seemed to be the two biggest obstacles on the road to unity: getting the complete termination of Four Power rights and responsibilities and securing agreement to full NATO membership for a united Germany. But they felt their positions on both issues were clear.

But Kohl still had not set the final number for the future size of the Bundeswehr. On the plane to Moscow he and Genscher clashed. Swinging back toward the defense ministry's preferences, Kohl suggested 400,000. Genscher insisted on 350,000. Kohl accused the FDP of seeking a professional army, since he believed 350,000 was too low a number to be able to sustain a continuation of conscription. Genscher considered the accusation insulting. Kohl asked the FDP to hold a presidium in order to decide a party position on the issue. Genscher refused to call a presidium for an issue he thought was so obvious, and threw the suggestion back at Kohl. Why didn't he call a CDU party gathering to decide the issue? But as

¹⁵ Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 312-13. On Meckel and the Americans, the East German told Scowcroft he welcomed the London summit outcome but wanted more progress toward the elimination of nuclear forces stationed in Germany. The two men also disagreed about the need to keep allied troops in Berlin and to include eastern Germany in NATO as part of a united Germany. From author's notes of meeting between Meckel and Scowcroft, 13 Jul 90 (records of Meckel's meetings at the State Department were not available).

¹⁶ See Bonn 21593, "Chancellery Views on Issues Related to German Unity," 11 Jul 90; Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 312, 315.

quickly as Kohl had started the argument, he put it aside. Teltschik wrote in his diary that Kohl frequently saw such arguments as a means to an end. Once he had aired the dispute, it was easier to settle it. Apparently an acrimonious quarrel with the foreign minister was not itself all that worrisome. After all, the men were coalition partners, not friends. The two sides essentially split the difference and arrived at a figure of 370,000.¹⁷

Meanwhile in Moscow Falin was making a last desperate effort to influence Gorbachev to adopt the more conservative line. He sent him an "energetic" memo warning him that this meeting was the last, decisive opportunity to protect Soviet interests. He worried that Gorbachev, preoccupied with the Party Congress, had not concentrated on the meeting with Kohl. He finally called Gorbachev and asked for just ten or fifteen minutes of his time. Gorbachev promised to call him later in the evening. Finally, fifteen minutes before midnight, Gorbachev did call back. "What do you want to tell me?"

Falin outlined three points. First he wanted Gorbachev to oppose annexation via Article 23. He could not bear the "moral and political costs" of obliterating the GDR's economic structures and he feared that the takeover would criminalize what the GDR had done over the course of forty years. A "hundred thousand people" might be hauled before the dock. Second, Falin wanted Gorbachev to stand against participation of a united Germany in NATO. At least Gorbachev should insist on a French-style membership that would take Germany out of the Alliance's integrated military command and expulsion of all nuclear weapons. Third, all questions concerning Soviet property rights should be handled in political decisions, to keep the Soviets from being entangled in endless debates about environmental damage or other claims, as was already the case in Czechoslovakia and Hungary.

Gorbachev asked a few questions. Then he concluded the conversation by

¹⁷ Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 316-17.

saying, "I will do what I can. Only I fear that the train has already left."¹⁸ Gorbachev and Shevardnadze did not bring their planned position with Kohl to a debate in the Politburo. After the Party Congress the whole status of the Politburo was clouded. In any case the leaders had concluded that they could not afford to bring policy on Germany back to another debate before the collective leadership. They would have to go on their own.¹⁹

Kohl arrived on July 14. As the German party dined that night in Moscow, they received the report on Manfred Woerner's meetings with the Soviets earlier that day. Woerner had come to Moscow right after the NATO summit in order to convey personally NATO's direct offer of friendship to the Soviet government. He had been warmly welcomed. His interlocutors had avoided raising difficult questions and had offered almost unqualified praise for the Alliance's London Declaration. Kohl, Teltschik noted, felt confident that the upcoming talks would go well.²⁰

Kohl and Gorbachev met the next day, July 15, at a guesthouse of the Soviet Foreign Ministry. A palatial neo-Gothic styled building on Alexei Tolstoy street, the house had belonged to a wealthy mercantile family until after the October revolution, when Georgi Chicherin -- commissar for foreign affairs in the 1920s -- had diverted it to its new function.

The first meeting had only Kohl and Teltschik on one side and Gorbachev and Chernyayev on the other, along with the interpreters. After opening exchanges on the importance of friendship between the two countries. Kohl mentioned that he had been too young to have fought in the Second World War, but they had both been old enough to have lived through the memory of these years. Perhaps they could now do

¹⁸ Falin, Politische Erinnerungen, p. 494. Chernyayev confirms Falin's last-minute efforts to turn Gorbachev around but he says that by this time Falin and the Central Committee staff had little influence on the Soviet president. Author interview, Moscow, January 1994.

¹⁹ Author interviews with Chernyayev, Moscow, January 1994 and Tarasenko, Providence, June 1992.

²⁰ Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 319. Kvitsinsky later attached a good deal of importance to Wörner's trip. Kwizinski, Vor dem Sturm, p. 51 (though mistakenly dating the visit as occurring on June 14 instead of July 14).

something about that history. Gorbachev agreed. He had been ten years old when the war began and could remember it well. It was no longer important who had won and who had lost. They were now together in one world. When Gorbachev spoke of the two countries, he spoke of Russia and Germany, not of the Soviet Union.

Kohl then reviewed the outcome of the recent summits and the situation in the GDR, which was getting worse from day to day. Kohl said he wanted to settle three sets of issues in order to allow for timely conclusion of the Two Plus Four talks and the CSCE summit. These were the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the GDR, the membership of a united Germany in NATO, and the future limits on Germany's armed forces. When the Two Plus Four process ended, Germany's full sovereignty must be restored.

Gorbachev replied that now was the point in time to clear up these questions and make the decisions about further work.

Interestingly, Gorbachev then emphasized the progress in Soviet-American relations. It was especially important, he said, that Bush had decided to strengthen U.S.-Soviet ties. The convergence of the Chancellor with the American administration was very important. He was disturbed, he said, that the Americans thought at first that "we may be thinking about dislodging the U.S. from Europe. In a meeting with Bush I stated firmly that the presence of U.S. forces in Europe is stabilizing."

Kohl then stressed what an important role Bush had played at the NATO summit and the G-7 summit. Washington felt no misgivings about progress in German-Soviet relations. It must be very clear that good German-Soviet links were linked to good ties with America.

Gorbachev agreed that NATO had moved toward becoming a more political alliance. There was now a new situation. "Now the political context is better than two to three months ago," Gorbachev said. He referred to "the present transformative movement of NATO, the strengthening accent on the political sphere of activities. In London a large step was taken on the road to throwing off the chains of the past." The same was true for the declarations of the West German government

and the Chancellor. Kohl had taken the German people step by step toward solutions to problems. What had happened in the past could not be forgotten, but now it was possible to change things for the better.

Gorbachev then gave Kohl a paper entitled, "Reflections on the Content of a Treaty of Partnership and Cooperation between the USSR and Germany." The paper would address the planned bilateral treaty. Then Gorbachev turned to Two Plus Four issues and, without further ado, began delivering the decisive concessions that would move the talks forward.

First, a united Germany should be made up only of the FRG, GDR, and Berlin in their current borders, he said. Second, Germany would have to renounce ABC weapons. Gorbachev knew that the Chancellor already held this position. Third, the military structures of NATO would not be extended to the territory of the GDR. Transitional arrangements would be agreed for a temporary Soviet troop presence. Last, the Four Power rights would end.

Perhaps because he wanted to be sure the last point did not imply the lifting of Four Power rights after a transition period, Kohl quickly asked whether Germany, at the time of unity, would be fully sovereign. That was obvious, Gorbachev replied. But an agreement needed to be reached to allow Soviet forces to stay in Germany for a "three to four year period." Kohl agreed.

On the key question of NATO membership for a united Germany, Gorbachev made it clear that, de jure, the question was clear. De facto it was complicated because NATO should not extend its authority ("Geltungsbereich") to the territory of the GDR. Gorbachev said, "A unified Germany will be a member of NATO. De facto the former territory of the GDR will not be a sphere of NATO activity as long as Soviet forces are located there. The sovereignty of a unified Germany in any case will not be in doubt." The leaders agreed again that a transitional stationing of Soviet forces for three or four years would not be a problem. Kohl offered West German assistance in helping the soldiers return to the Soviet Union or adjust to civilian life.

So Gorbachev had quietly explained how Germany could remain a member of NATO. Kohl showed no visible reaction. But Teltschik wrote later that his pen was

flying over the paper and he had to tell himself to try to concentrate, to keep getting every word the translator was saying. But he knew there could be no misunderstanding. Indeed, Gorbachev reiterated the position.

Then came what Teltschik called Gorbachev's "second surprise": the Soviets were ready to terminate Four Power rights immediately on concluding a final settlement in the Two Plus Four talks. Soviet troop stationing rights for a further three or four years would be addressed in a separate agreement.

To insure there was no misunderstanding Kohl summarized what he had heard and Gorbachev recapitulated his position, point by point. The meeting ended after nearly two hours of talks. As Teltschik wrote in his diary: "The breakthrough is accomplished! What a sensation! We had not expected such clear promises from Gorbachev. All the signals were certainly positive, but who had predicted such a result? For the Chancellor this conversation is an unbelievable triumph." Kohl gave little overt clue of his feelings, letting the mask slip only with a long look at Teltschik that showed his satisfaction.²¹

The two leaders then were joined by their ministers, who had been holding their own parallel discussions. Gorbachev announced that the day's meeting was extraordinary and would have an important place in the history of the bilateral relations between the two countries. More relaxed and loquacious, Gorbachev then talked about the situation in the Soviet Union for the first time that day. It was now that Gorbachev evoked the memory of John Reed and his book and spoke of a new revolutionary period. The Party Congress that had just ended had, he declared, been extraordinarily important not just for the Soviet Union but also for Europe and the world. The coming weeks would see decisions leading the USSR toward a market economy. The prime minister would present a plan to the Supreme Soviet in

²¹ Both the German and Soviet notes of this meeting have, in effect, been published. The account in the text draws on both. Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 319-24 provides the account of Kohl's notetaker, based on his diary. Chernyayev's memcon was published in Gorbachev, Gody Trudnykh Reshenii, pp. 223-33. Both accounts are consistent. Direct quotations from Gorbachev are from the Soviet memcon and are given as quotations in the original. See also Chernyayev, Shest' Let s Gorbacheyym, p. 358.

September. The summer months would be full of activity, including preparation of an All-Union treaty.

Gorbachev also made his first mention of economic matters. The DM 5 billion credit had come, he said, at the right moment. Kohl commented that the whole morning's conversation had gone extremely well. It was a historic moment in world politics.

Gorbachev had not pressed Kohl for more money as part of the deal. But separately his deputy prime minister, Stepan Sitaryan, had raised the issue of aid with Kohl's finance minister, Theo Waigel, and gotten nowhere. Waigel made it "unmistakably clear" that nothing was available from the FRG beyond the DM 5 billion credit agreed in May. More aid would have to come from concerted international action, screened through the International Monetary Fund process set in motion at the G-7 summit in Houston. Sitaryan complained that the IMF would be too slow; the USSR had a "mountain" of foreign debts and an immediate need for billions of dollars. Waigel did not budge, though Sitaryan continued to press the issue throughout Kohl's visit.²²

Gorbachev invited his guests to lunch. The atmosphere was convivial, with due recognition paid to the estimable qualities of Russian vodka and German beer. Tribute was offered to German footballers. Gorbachev and Ryzhkov were grateful that the FRG had started to pick up the GDR's old financial obligations for hosting the hundreds of thousands of Soviet troops stationed in East Germany. Lunch was followed by a brief press conference, where the statements were upbeat but vague. Then the Germans went to the airport.²³

In the car Teltschik told Kastrup and the West German ambassador to the USSR, Klaus Blech, that the prospects for a breakthrough on the issue of NATO seemed good, but he did not tell them that it had been accomplished. He did not

²² Theo Waigel & Manfred Schell, Tage, die Deutschland und die Welt veränderten: Vom Mauerfall zum Kaukasus, Die deutsche Währungsunion (München: Bruckmann, 1994), pp. 31, 37.

²³ Ibid., pp. 34-37.

want to take the chance of a leak to the press that might spoil the effect of a surprise. The sensational news, he thought, should come from Chancellor Kohl himself. Most accounts of unification, even from the Soviet side, date the breakthrough from the negotiations in the Caucasus. This is because only a small circle were aware that Gorbachev had offered the major moves at the outset of the meetings in Moscow, before there had been any real negotiations at all.

After a two-hour flight the Germans arrived in Stavropol. They were taken to the seat of the republic's government, where Gorbachev had worked for nine and a half years. Gorbachev gave a guided tour, showing his old office. Reminders of the Great Patriotic War were everywhere, in a monument in the square outside, in the group of veterans Gorbachev and Kohl met with as they strolled outside.²⁴ Gorbachev recounted how he had first met Shevardnadze in Stavropol in 1979, and how they had agreed on the need to work together to rescue their country. This was especially clear to them after the invasion of Afghanistan. Out of this time, he said, perestroika was born.

Then the leaders were convoyed back to the airport, to board helicopters for their next destination, in the Caucasus countryside. Farmers and their wives came to the men in suits as they left their helicopters, bringing a traditional greeting of bread and salt. Gorbachev showed Kohl how he should tear off the bread, salt it, and eat it. Both leaders chatted with the farmers for half an hour and then took off again. At sunset they arrived at a hunting lodge in the mountains. Raisa Gorbachev was waiting for them, picking flowers. Everyone changed into casual clothes and surveyed the beautiful countryside. Dinner conversation was light politics and clever anecdotes. It was midnight before Teltschik returned to his room and began drafting the press conference to be used the next day.

During their traveling, Gorbachev had asked Kohl privately how far he was

²⁴ The constant historical presence of the Second World War was felt on the German side too. Press spokesman Hans Klein's book about this trip recounts or evokes anecdotes or episodes from the war on, literally, dozens of different occasions. See Klein, Es begann im Kaukasus: Der entscheidene Schritt in die Einheit Deutschlands (Berlin: Ullstein, 1991).

willing to reduce the Bundeswehr in a united Germany. As planned, Kohl gave him the figure of 370,000. Gorbachev said he expected a greater reduction. Kohl argued that he needed an army of at least this size in order to sustain conscription and avoid relying on a purely professional soldiery. Kohl told Teltschik about the exchange during the evening. Kohl later told Elizabeth Pond he thought the conscription argument had clinched the issue.²⁵

Late that night, after the drinks and dinner were over, the Germans gathered in a billiard room of the lodge to talk about the day's events. Kohl joined them and finally told them all what had happened in Moscow earlier in the day. The basis for agreement was at hand. The group moved to another room. The Chancellor told them how Gorbachev had made clear that Germany could remain in NATO. The precedents of the 1950s were in his thoughts. This would not be the tradeoff of reunification and neutrality that Stalin had proposed in 1952, he said. "This was a price I was not ready to pay!," Kohl exclaimed.

Much remained to be done. But Kohl no longer bothered to conceal his delight. "Never in my life have I had to work so hard," he said. "But never in my life have I also been so happy."²⁶

On Monday morning, July 16, Kohl reviewed Teltschik's draft statement. Then the group gathered at a long table.²⁷ The leaders moved quickly to substance. The agreements from the previous day's private conversation were reviewed. Genscher intervened: the final settlement of the Two Plus Four had to be completed

²⁵ On the Kohl-Gorbachev exchanges on this point, see Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 337-38; and Pond, Beyond the Wall, p. 324 note 26.

²⁶ On this late-night conversation, see Klein, Es begann im Kaukasus, pp. 234-35. Klein put the passages quoted in the text in quotation marks as the Chancellor's actual words. Participants in this discussion were Kohl, Genscher, finance minister Theo Waigel, Teltschik, Klein, Kastrup, and Gert Haller from the finance ministry.

²⁷ Gorbachev was joined by Shevardnadze, deputy Council of Ministers chairman Stepan Sitaryan, deputy foreign minister Kvitsinsky, Soviet ambassador to the FRG Terekhov, press spokesman Arkady Maslenikov and an interpreter. Kohl was accompanied by Genscher, Waigel, Teltschik, Klein, Ambassador Blech, Kastrup, Haller, Walter Neuer from the Chancellery staff, and the interpreter.

before the CSCE summit, and a choice of alliance had to be made, and it had to be clear that the Germans wanted full membership in NATO. Gorbachev made himself clear. If a united Germany had full sovereignty, it obviously could choose its alliance membership. That meant NATO, but there was no need to emphasize this point, Gorbachev added. Soviet troops were to stay in eastern Germany during a transition period, but this would be regulated by a treaty with the Germans and the Soviet military presence would not call into question the full sovereignty of a united Germany. Genscher recapitulated what he had heard. Gorbachev agreed, repeating it point by point -- as he had with Kohl in their small meeting the day before.

Gorbachev repeated that he expected NATO "structures" not to be extended to the former territory of the GDR as long as Soviet troops were stationed there. Then it would be easier for the Soviets to understand that Germans had the right to choose their alliance and that their choice would be NATO. Kohl and Genscher were firm that these restrictions would last only while Soviet troops remained in Germany. After the Soviet troops left Germany could make its own sovereign decisions. Everyone agreed this was clear.

Shevardnadze wanted the group also to agree that, even after Soviet troops departed, NATO would not extend structures that were primarily for stationing of nuclear systems. Gorbachev was content to let the matter rest without trying to create explicit qualifications on German sovereignty. There would just be an understanding that Soviet security would not be impaired. The Bundeswehr in the former GDR would not be integrated into NATO and neither NATO nuclear weapons nor NATO bases would move in.

To avoid the misunderstandings which had roiled allied and East-West discussions of the issue earlier in the year, Genscher made it clear that there could not be differing security zones for two parts of a united Germany. NATO's security guarantees in Articles 5 and 6 of the Washington Treaty would apply to all of the territory of a united Germany. But this point was independent from extending the stationing of NATO troops throughout all of Germany. He and Kohl agreed that, while Soviet troops were still in the former GDR, Bundeswehr units stationed there

would not be integrated into NATO.

As for the length of the transition period during which Soviet forces could remain in Germany, Gorbachev spoke of five to seven years. Kohl reminded Gorbachev that, the previous day, he had suggested three to four years, a period Kohl considered realistic. Gorbachev appeared to be satisfied.

The two sides then reviewed the FRG's assumption of East German economic commitments, especially for the support of Soviet troops in the former GDR. There was a general discussion of economic opportunities and Kohl's hopes for further support of reform. Gorbachev agreed that Prime Minister Ryzhkov would write to the Germans about the GDR's financial obligations. A settlement seemed possible. Kohl said he would be ready for such discussions. They agreed there would be two treaties, one to govern the temporary presence of Soviet troops and the other to settle the financial arrangements concerning their departure.

Moving on to the issue of future troop limits for a united Germany, Shevardnadze immediately gave the 350,000 figure which he may have gotten earlier from Genscher. Then Genscher explained the government position, that they would declare in Vienna during the CFE talks what limit they would accept in the follow-on negotiations when the other participating states accepted similar limits. He gave the number they would accept where Kohl had fixed it: 370,000. Kohl added that he expected the reductions to this level would be complete by the time the Soviets withdrew their forces from Germany, i.e., in three or four years. As mentioned above, Gorbachev had been persuaded the day before by Kohl to accept the 370,000 and he declared his agreement.

After a placid discussion of the border question (the Two Plus Four had already agreed to reaffirm the Oder-Neisse boundary and the two German parliaments had already reiterated this intention), the group turned to the question of what they would say to the press. Kohl summarized the main results using the draft press conference statement Teltschik had drafted the night before. Gorbachev agreed. Kohl invited Gorbachev to a return visit to Germany, which the Soviet president accepted. The two leaders, Gorbachev commented, had come a long way in the last

two or three months.

The talks had gone on for four hours. Teltschik was surprised that Gorbachev had agreed so easily to allow units of the Bundeswehr to be stationed on the former territory of the GDR immediately after unification and that these troops could be (re)integrated into NATO as soon as the Soviet troops had departed. NATO's security guarantees would cover all of Germany on the day of unification. This, he thought, brought the German position back to the original American and defense ministry preference of early February. After the previous day's breakthrough in Moscow, all the outstanding questions about Germany's military status were clarified. There was no longer any doubt that, on the day of unification, Germany would regain its full sovereignty.²⁸

Teltschik was convinced that it was Gorbachev personally, assisted by Shevardnadze, who had made all the most important decisions. Indeed Gorbachev had completely dominated the two days of discussions from the Soviet side, impressing the Germans with his mastery of the issues.²⁹ But the tenor of the discussions could leave little doubt that Gorbachev had made up his mind how to settle these issues before Kohl's plane had landed in Moscow. There were no serious disagreements on any issue. Indeed, the argument on the way to Moscow between Kohl and Genscher on the troop limit issue was clearly more heated than the final discussion of the matter between the Germans and the Soviets. (Although Kohl and

²⁸ On the meetings in the Caucasus, the best sources are Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 319-39; and Waigel & Schell, Tage, die Deutschland und die Welt veränderten, pp. 37-52. The other major published eyewitness account is Klein, Es begann im Kaukasus, which tends to corroborate the more precise material in Teltschik while providing much more material on the atmosphere surrounding the meetings.

²⁹ Talking to the American charge in Bonn, George Ward, at a July 19 reception, Teltschik noted the German surprise at the breakthrough in Moscow but commented on the lack of debate over major issues. Gorbachev's own dominance seemed so complete that it appeared he was just making policy at the table, brusquely overruling subordinates on a few occasions. Bonn 22864, "Teltschik's Comments on Recent Kohl-Gorbachev Meeting," 23 Jul 90. Kastrup, briefing allied ambassadors at NATO, made the same points. He had been struck by Gorbachev's mastery of his brief, his complete understanding of issues such as the point about Articles 5 and 6 of the Washington Treaty. It was remarkable, Kastrup commented, to see Gorbachev in action. USNATO 4094, "FRG Political Director Kastrup Debriefs the NAC on Kohl-Gorbachev Meetings in the Soviet Union," 19 Jul 90.

Genscher worked quite well together once they began dealing with the Soviets rather than each other.)

Further, there were no significant new requests made by the Soviets in connection with the deal. In particular, no new economic assistance was requested or given. The Soviets recognized that the West's final offer was on the table; and the leadership had decided beforehand they had no choice but to accept it. Having already made this choice, Gorbachev was not grudging and the tone was neither bitter nor acrimonious.

Gorbachev had plainly made a strategic decision to move on Germany. Given that choice he wanted to start off relations with a united Germany on the strongest possible footing, making Kohl's visit as warm and personal as he could. The key signal may well have been when he decided to invite Kohl to go with him to his homeland in the Caucasus. That decision is a clue as to when Gorbachev made up his mind how he was going to deal with Germany. And Gorbachev made this decision in the days just after the NATO summit, passing the invitation to Bonn on July 11, while Kohl was in Houston.

After the talks broke up, Kohl and Gorbachev went to lunch. Teltschik broke away to put the finishing touches on the press conference statement. His draft needed few changes.

The group convoyed a few hundred yards to a sanatorium called Zheleznovodsk where the press had gathered. Gorbachev briefly opened the news conference. Then Kohl delivered his statement. He noted that the two countries had agreed to include a treaty governing their future political relations and observed that all understood the Two Plus Four talks must be finished in time to present the results to the November CSCE summit in Paris. He then itemized eight points of agreement:

1. The unification of Germany comprises the Federal Republic of Germany, the German Democratic Republic and Berlin.
2. When unification is accomplished the rights of the Four Powers and responsibilities will be completely removed so that a unified Germany at the time of its unification receives its full and unrestricted sovereignty.

3. A unified Germany in exercising its unrestricted sovereignty freely and by itself can decide if and which alliances it wants to belong to, that conforms with the CSCE Final Act. I have explained the view of the government of the Federal Republic of Germany that the unified Germany would like to be a member of the NATO alliance and I am sure that this is in accordance with the view of the German Democratic Republic.

4. The unified Germany will conclude with the Soviet Union a bilateral treaty to carry out the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the German Democratic Republic that should be concluded within three to four years. At the same time we should conclude a transitional treaty with the Soviet Union that would cover the consequences of the introduction of the Deutsche Mark in the German Democratic Republic within this time period of from three to four years.

5. As long as the Soviet troops remain stationed on the former territory of the German Democratic Republic, the NATO structures will not be extended to this part of Germany. The immediate application of Articles 5 and 6 of the NATO treaty remains from the beginning undisturbed. Unintegrated units of the Bundeswehr, that means units of the Territorial Defense, can be stationed immediately after unification on the territory of the German Democratic Republic and Berlin.

6. For the period of the presence of Soviet troops on the former territory of the German Democratic Republic, troops from the three Western powers should stay in Berlin after unity, according to our concept. The Federal government will ask the three Western powers about this and will seek to conclude agreements with respective governments to regulate the stationing (of the troops in Berlin).

7. The Federal Republic of Germany declares itself ready during the period of the Vienna negotiations [CFE] to give a declaration of its commitment to reduce the level of the armed forces of a united Germany during a period of three to four years to 370,000 men. The reduction should come into force the day the first Vienna agreement takes effect.

8. A unified Germany will renounce the production, storage and use of ABC weapons and remain a member of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.³⁰

These points obviously built on preexisting positions that had been discussed and

³⁰ Elbe goes out of his way to stress this point. Richard Kiessler & Frank Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken: der diplomatische Weg zur deutschen Einheit (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1993), pp. 171-72.

agreed upon with the United States.

Gorbachev then delivered a more extended statement, describing the warm atmosphere of the Soviet-German talks, but then paying particular attention to the "stimulus from London" where NATO had made a "historic turn." So, he said, "I should say it straight, that were it not for this second element it would have been difficult for Herr Chancellor and me both yesterday and today to work effectively in a spirit of mutual understanding and arrive at what he has already said."³¹

The press conference over, the Germans flew home, tired but happy.

"Really, It's Like Heaven and Earth"

The international reaction to the news from the Caucasus was a mixture of surprise and relief. Headlines around the world announced the news of a breakthrough. Allied leaders issued welcoming statements. On his first day back in Bonn Kohl briefed his cabinet, phoned Bush to brief him personally, and sent letters reporting on the meetings to Thatcher, Mitterrand, and Andreotti.

The Americans were certainly surprised by Kohl's announcement, just as Teltschik was when he heard Gorbachev say the words in Moscow. The signals had been positive, but the West had not expected Gorbachev to settle the issue so definitively, so soon after the Party Congress. The Soviet-German itinerary had taken the Germans to remote locations in the Caucasus during their first day of talks, so that as a practical matter Kohl or Genscher were not able to communicate securely to Washington and tip the Americans about what was coming even if they had wished to. Events just moved too quickly.

American reporters traveling with Baker to Paris could observe firsthand the

³¹ Kohl statement from AP wire; Gorbachev remarks from FBIS translation of live TV broadcast on Moscow Television Service, 16 Jul 90.

Baker and other US officials believed at the time (and Baker later mentioned to Shevardnadze) that there was a distinct similarity between the 'eight points' announced in the Caucasus and the 'nine points' Baker, and then Bush, had presented to the Soviets in May. Although the substance of Kohl's eight points does resemble the earlier US formula, there is no direct evidence that the American points were actually used by Teltschik in drafting this statement.

surprise of US officials and quickly concluded that the Germans had left Washington behind in striking a deal with the Russians. Some reporters even used the phrase, "Stavrapallo," to characterize the result, evoking memories of the secret 1922 security bargain struck between Weimar Germany and the new Soviet state. Pond, who thinks the significance of the American role was actually better understood by the Germans than by American journalists, commented wryly that, "Official assertions that the whole process of unification had been very much a joint American-German effort were met with incredulity."³²

Americans and other allies studied Kohl's announcement and subsequent German and Soviet statements and were well pleased. There were some questions about just what was meant in saying that "NATO structures" would not move east along with NATO's commitment to defend all of a united Germany. There were also some concerns about the German foreign ministry's vagueness in trying to keep their 370,000 troop pledge from becoming the unique binding limit that the deal was meant to avoid.³³ But the Americans thought these matters would really be nailed down in preparing the Two Plus Four final settlement document itself, and that proved to be the case.³⁴

³² Pond, Beyond the Wall, p. 223. As it dawned on American officials that journalists were forming this impression of U.S. incapacity (in part because the journalists did not know about some of the American efforts but also because many journalists just did not understand the story), U.S. officials on both sides of the Atlantic began frantically preparing chronologies to document their efforts. Zoellick and Ross then backgrounded extensively on the subject in Paris. But journalists could detect the tone of defensiveness, and the first impression stuck. Pond commented years later that, for a variety of reasons, "the assumption is now firmly embedded in conventional wisdom that the Bush administration did little to manage the end of the cold war and simply benefited from it as the apple fell into its lap." Pond's own conclusion was that she agreed with the "standard German government view (but maverick American view) that the Bush administration did in fact act decisively in helping to shape events in Germany, and that the outcome would have been very different were this not the case." *Ibid.*, pp. 153-54.

³³ Kastrup, for example, was reported to have told NATO ambassadors on July 18 that the 370,000 figure would be a commitment entered into by the two Germanies within the ongoing CFE negotiations. As such he thought it would be binding under international law, although the format needed to be examined. USNATO 4094, "FRG Political Director Kastrup Debriefs the NAC on Kohl-Gorbachev Meetings in the Soviet Union," 19 Jul 90. Kastrup's understanding of the details of this issue was shaky. Also shaky were his replies to questions about "NATO structures" from Dutch, Belgian, and British delegates.

³⁴ Author's recollections.

The next ministerial meeting of the Two Plus Four in Paris, which began little more than a day after the Kohl-Gorbachev talks ended, obviously became a bit anticlimactic. But it was the necessary follow-up to the political understandings reached during Kohl's visit. The Polish foreign minister had also been invited to attend the second of the two ministerial sessions in Paris. Shevardnadze and Genscher reported on the agreements reached during their just-concluded talks in the Soviet Union. Shevardnadze said that, although he thought agreement had been reached on the fundamental issues, the problem now was to turn it into a Two Plus Four settlement document ready for approval at the next meeting of ministers -- to be held in Moscow less than two months later, on September 12.

To kick off work on the settlement document, the chairman of the meeting, French foreign minister Dumas, pulled out a list that had been prepared at the last meeting of political directors, a fortnight earlier, of the issues on which there was no agreement along with each country's view of the forum in which the problem should be addressed. The list had twenty items.³⁵ Following the Western concept of the Two Plus Four as a "steering group," Dumas proposed that the ministers go through the list and decide which matters should be decided in what fora. After he began Shevardnadze objected. So much had changed in light of the Soviet-German talks. Surely, he thought, the experts should revise the list while the ministers ate lunch.

Everyone except East German foreign minister Meckel thought this was a splendid idea. Meckel complained that questions still needed to be settled between the two Germanies. It became clear later that the East Germans were annoyed because they still had little direct information about the Soviet-German talks. They had received a hasty debrief from Kvitsinsky and practically nothing from the West Germans. Meckel had worked up ambitious plans for East German initiatives and activity in the Two Plus Four, based on the SPD-East's ideas for settling German unity, such as expelling all nuclear weapons from Germany. The balloon was now

³⁵ See Seitz (who headed the US team at the last political directors meeting) to Baker, 4 Jul 90 and the attached "List."

punctured. As one participant in the East German team remembered, "The objective of running an independent East German foreign policy ended with the agreement in the Caucasus."³⁶ Genscher told Meckel, in effect, to do what he could, and the disputed issues were handed back to the political directors, who became bogged down in procedural issues.

The political directors met for an hour but accomplished little. They consumed most of their time disagreeing about how to formulate the procedural solutions for matters on which the substance was itself not in dispute. The East Germans were not ready to agree to language affecting the future status of their territory. The group was able to agree, however, to gather again to tackle these issues in Bonn on July 19.

When ministers reconvened in the afternoon they welcomed their Polish colleague, who delivered a lengthy speech. Foreign minister Skubiszewski had met earlier in the day privately with Genscher, however, and there were no real substantive disputes. The paragraphs to be used in Two Plus Four handling of the border question had been agreed upon in June. Poland no longer insisted on conclusion of a Polish-German treaty before unification. Genscher promised that the FRG would conclude a bilateral treaty with Poland as soon as possible after unification. The Poles declared themselves content.³⁷

³⁶ Albrecht, Die Abwicklung der DDR, p. 86; see ibid., pp. 85-86, 118-21. Albrecht was a West Berlin academic recruited by the social democrat Meckel to head his planning staff. The 38-year old former minister Markus Meckel, who distrusted the old East German diplomatic bureaucracy, was also aided by Hans-Jochen Misselwitz and Carl-Christian von Brahmuehl, a psychotherapist who was the younger brother of one of Genscher's closest aides in the 1980s, a diplomat murdered by the Red Army Faction. Meckel and his team, strongly influenced by the West German peace movement and Egon Bahr, were skeptical of all the Two Plus Four "establishment" politicians and diplomats. The attitudes were fully reciprocated. For the West German foreign ministry's blunt appraisal, see Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, pp. 180, 189-201. Whatever the disagreements over substance, the East German foreign ministry under Meckel represented a minor party in a CDU-East dominated government that was going out of existence. Its positions bore no calculated connection to the underlying power or influence of Meckel or his government. Nor was this deficit made up by the persuasive or analytical skills of the individuals – just the opposite. So Meckel and his team were never taken seriously by any of the other governments involved in the Two Plus Four negotiations.

³⁷ On the handling of the Polish question in Paris see Albrecht, Die Abwicklung der DDR, pp. 109-15. On July 3 Mazowiecki had written to Kohl, sticking by the demand for pre-unification negotiation of a Polish-German treaty although he knew Kohl had already rejected it. Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 296. The next day

The substance of the border question itself had not concerned American decisionmakers for months. They did care, though, about how it would affect the timing of the final settlement and full restoration of German sovereignty. The British and, to a lesser extent, the French continued to believe that the border issue could be deemed settled only when a Polish-German border treaty took effect. The Americans and Germans thought this was a bad political strategy and was not required under international law. The British had most recently suggested that all Four Power rights expire at unification except for those pertaining to the settlement of Germany's border. The U.S. was not interested in reserving any Four Power rights after unification.³⁸

The ministers in Paris were able to put this issue aside by stating simply that the Four Powers considered the borders of a united Germany, which would be detailed in the final settlement, "definitive and state that their definitive character cannot be called into question by any action of an external nature." Genscher then added, as a minute to the meeting, that the FRG subscribed to the statement of the Four Powers. In other words, the Two Plus Four document would itself settle the matter and the FRG's signature of the settlement would bind Germany to the agreed borders. Genscher made it clear that the Two Plus Four final settlement would supersede any references to an eventual 'peace treaty' or 'peace settlement' in the Potsdam Declaration or other postwar documents. The final settlement would indeed

Polish political director Selac joined the other Two Plus Four officials in Berlin to press for new language modifying the paragraphs covering borders that had been agreed in June. He was rebuffed. But Selac thought Poland might settle for a narrow treaty just covering borders, dropping out the more complicated economic issues between the two countries, if the treaty could be produced around the time of unification and ratified before the final settlement took effect. Kastrup told Seitz only Bush would be able to persuade Kohl to accept this. Seitz to Baker, 4 Jul 90. The American leadership had other things on their mind, and were not interested in reopening the border issue. On July 13, just before leaving with Kohl and Genscher for the USSR, Kastrup told Seitz that a Polish-German border treaty could be signed quickly after unification. The amount of time that would be needed could be measured in days, not months. Dufourcq told Seitz the same day that Skubiszewski would go along with a Polish-German treaty signed after unification. Seitz to Zoellick, 13 Jul 90. The momentum of events, and perhaps the NATO summit, had apparently caused the Poles to settle during the second week of July for what they had won in June.

³⁸ See L briefing paper for Paris meeting, "Sequencing of Unification, Ratification and Settlement," 10 Jul 90.

be final.

Poland formally conceded that although Four Power approval of these borders was not the same as a Four Power "guarantee" of the borders, nonetheless the problem was solved. The ministers then held their press conference, with Skubiszewski invited to speak first to declare his satisfaction with the session's results.³⁹

Baker and Shevardnadze met the next morning for more than two hours. They relaxed a bit and Shevardnadze offered the most detailed explanation he would ever give Baker of how he and Gorbachev had decided to move when they did to settle the German question.

Shevardnadze stressed how much he appreciated the efforts the United States had made to obtain the London Declaration. Without that "one declaration it would have been a very difficult thing for us to take our decisions on Germany." Those statements had allowed the USSR to adopt a new policy on German unity. "And it is no exaggeration for me today [to say] that we adopted a new policy on German unity. If you compare what we're saying to you and to Kohl now, with our Berlin document [of June 22], it's like day and night. Really, it's like heaven and earth."

Shevardnadze went on to say flatly: "The London session and our Party Congress is what made this possible." Before the Congress it was impossible to speak of terminating Four Power rights, or make new decisions on Germany's alliance status, or have even made the decision to withdraw Soviet troops from Germany. Shevardnadze admitted that they already knew before the Congress they would have to withdraw their forces from Germany, but "the balance of forces and

³⁹ On the meetings in Paris, see Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, pp. 180-81; Eagleburger (Acting) to President Bush (for his evening reading), 18 Jul 90; State 253095, "Official-Informal," (draft detailed report on morning ministerial session prepared by EUR/CE notetaker Andrew Goodman), 2 Aug 90; State 253099, "Official-Informal," (draft report on political directors meeting), 2 Aug 90; and EUR/CE draft cable, "July 17 Two-plus-Four Ministerial in Paris, Afternoon Session with Polish Foreign Minister: Detailed Account," 3 Aug 90. Of the various briefing papers prepared for Baker, most important was Zoellick to Baker, "Two-Plus-Four Ministerial, July 17, 1990, Paris," undated (probably July 15 or 16, 1990).

On the Polish position going into the Paris meeting, see Warsaw 10940, "Skubiszewski Statement on 'Two-Plus-Four,'" 13 Jul 90; Warsaw 10942, "Poland and the German Question: Two Plus Four Plus One," 14 Jul 90; Bonn 22115, "FRG Views on Polish Border Issue," 16 Jul 90.

the balance of senior political figures was very different before the Party Congress." But even after the Congress it would not have been easy to move if it had not been for "the London statements." He told Baker: "You've really made an effort to take into account all our problems and our concerns, and that's what made so much possible."⁴⁰

Baker then explained how the U.S. had managed the preparation of the London Declaration in order to keep it from being watered down. He described the unprecedented procedures which had been used and recounted how he had used Shevardnadze's own statements on the importance of the summit document in order to move his allied colleagues. "We wanted it to be a hard-hitting document that you could use, and use in a sense during the Party Congress."

Naturally the U.S. had watched the outcome of the Party Congress with interest and appreciation. He and President Bush had especially noted Shevardnadze's significant speech. "The bottom line, the President and I have felt for over a year, [is] that you and President Gorbachev have a vision and a sense of history that corresponds to ours. This is an historic opportunity to bring about the reconciliation of the East and West -- an opportunity never presented before." They had already seized this opportunity and Baker hoped they would continue to do so.

Shevardnadze agreed, hearkening back to the vision of the future both men had shared at their meetings in Wyoming in the fall of 1989. He gave credit to the Germans too, for understanding Soviet concerns. The handling of the Bundeswehr issue had been especially important.

Baker was glad the US approach to the various recent meetings had helped make it possible for the two sides to move forward. "Frankly," he confided, "I was quite worried, notwithstanding what you told me, when you tabled that paper that you gave ... in Berlin." It seemed the political constraints might be too great. Now it was important to keep moving quickly. To be sure, President Bush was enjoying a

⁴⁰ Shevardnadze is even more unequivocal in his memoirs. "Without the decisions passed by the NATO Council in London, membership of Germany in NATO would have been unacceptable to us." Shevardnadze, The Future Belongs to Freedom, p. 145.

very long period of public approval. But, "in the nature of things, that's not likely to continue forever." Domestic concerns would rise to the fore. So Baker urged continued rapid movement "between now and the end of the year" and then apologized for his "digression."

Of course, Baker could not know how prescient his prediction would be. He did not know that two weeks later Iraq would invade Kuwait or that, by the end of the year, Shevardnadze would no longer be foreign minister. But Shevardnadze was equally inclined to think about the longer-term.

Shevardnadze said he had no problem with the current German leadership. It was future leaders, five or ten years from now, that concerned him. "In principle, we have decided we will build a new relationship with a unified Germany." But, in his view, the quality of US-Soviet relations would remain the key security assurance for his country. The two men then reviewed specific issues, from ideas for technical assistance for the Soviet economy to completing the work in the CFE talks.⁴¹

As Shevardnadze had hoped, preparation of a Two Plus Four settlement document began to accelerate. The Two Plus Four political directors gathered in Bonn on July 19 and, after eight hours of talks, were able to agree on where and how all disputed issues were to be addressed. Although the East Germans still lacked instructions on many issues and delayed work, the officials were able to decide which issues should be handled by sovereign German decision, or in the final settlement document, or in some another forum. The scope of the final settlement was thereby narrowed, as the West had hoped.

Final negotiation of the text of the agreement was planned for the first week of September. All parties hoped the document would be ready for approval at the next meeting of Two Plus Four ministers to be held in Moscow the following week. Genscher and Shevardnadze spoke to each other over the telephone in late July. Shevardnadze had made clear his desire to wrap up quickly all remaining issues

⁴¹ Memcon for Meeting between Baker and Shevardnadze, Ambassador Curley's residence in Paris, July 18, 1990. As usual, the only other participants were Ross, Tarasenko, and the interpreters.

related to German unity.⁴²

The Western countries also soon had reason to be doubly grateful that the most difficult decisions were behind them. On August 1 Iraq invaded and occupied Kuwait and the Gulf crisis began, dominating the policy agenda of leaders around the world. As Teltschik noted:

The immediate USA reaction and its energetic engagement make it clear how happy we can be that the most important foreign policy questions linked to German unity have been clarified. In the first half of the year the energies of the world powers were concentrated practically exclusively on Germany. It was our luck that no other decisive event diverted the attention of our American partner. I ask myself if we would have been so fortunate as to so smoothly get through the necessary decisions at the American-Soviet summit, the special summit of NATO and the world economic summit if the Gulf conflict had begun about two months earlier.⁴³

On August 10 NATO foreign ministers gathered together in Brussels for a special meeting. This time their topic was the war in the Gulf, not Germany or the future of the alliance. Near the end of the ministerial meeting, Genscher reported to his colleagues that the date of German unification would need to be advanced to October due to the rapidly deteriorating economic conditions in the GDR. No one even commented on his remarks; the other ministers were too preoccupied with the new crisis. Bush telephoned Kohl twice in August; both times the only topic was the Gulf crisis. "How much things have changed," Teltschik wrote after one of these talks, "not one more word in the discussion on German questions!"⁴⁴

The Germans were drawn to problems closer to home. Although individual

⁴² See State 253097, "Official-Informal" (July 19 Two-Plus-Four Political Directors' Meeting: Detailed Account), 2 Aug 90; Bonn 22679, "July 19 Two-Plus-Four Political Directors' Meeting in Bonn: Briefing NATO Permreps," 20 Jul 90; Seitz to the Record, "Telephone conversation with Dieter Kastrup, FRG Political Director, 7/26/90," 26 Jul 90; Bonn 23949, "Views of Genscher Advisor on Unification Issues," 1 Aug 90 (reporting on 7/31 conversation with Elbe). See also London 14412, "Highlights of Legal Experts' Meeting on German Unification," 26 Jul 90.

⁴³ Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 346 (entry for August 13, 1990).

⁴⁴ Author's notes from August 10 NATO ministerial meeting; Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 350 (entry for August 22, the other call was on August 30).

East German consumers were better off, the economy of the GDR was crippled by monetary union. East German consumers were buying Western goods, so GDR manufacturers had lost their domestic market. The GDR's most important trading partner was the Soviet Union. But the USSR could not pay for East German imports once they were priced in hard currency. Complete collapse would follow quickly unless the GDR could rapidly be absorbed into the entire West German network of social and economic assistance.

The extreme East German economic crisis prompted GDR Prime Minister de Maiziere to suggest in early August that all-German elections be pushed up yet again, to October rather than December. Kohl's governing coalition, nervous about how continued East German economic unrest might affect voters' judgment of unification, favored the change. But moving the date would have violated the FRG's Basic Law and the SPD would not agree to amend the Basic Law. Alternatives, such as a staged vote of no-confidence, had severe drawbacks of their own. So the December election date remained fixed.

But pressure mounted for quicker unification. The SPD-East began pressing for GDR accession to the FRG in mid-September, if not sooner. Soberer heads, including Genscher, made it clear that accession had to wait at least for conclusion and ratification of the Second State Treaty on the terms of political unification, allow time for recreation of the five old Laender, and await signature of a Two Plus Four accord. The Germans hoped all these events could occur in September, with unification to take place the following month and all-German elections still scheduled for December.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ A good analysis of the domestic politics surrounding the Second State Treaty was presented at the time in "Gebot der Schonung," Der Spiegel, July 16, 1990, pp. 18-20. The economic crisis in the GDR was covered continuously by the West German press, much of which was critical of the government's underestimation of the costs and consequences of rapid economic union on Western terms. E.g., "Gefährliche Spirale abwaerts," Der Spiegel, July 23, 1990, pp. 62-63; "Wir sind keine Zahlmeister," Der Spiegel, July 30, 1990, pp. 64-65; "Alles bricht zusammen," Der Spiegel, August 6, 1990, pp. 18-28. For American tracking of these developments see Eagleburger (Acting) to President Bush (for his evening reading), 3 Aug 90; Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 10 Aug 90; author's notes of Genscher remarks at August 10 NATO ministerial; Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 13 Aug 90.

The Second State Treaty on political unification had proven to be a more complex undertaking than the Germans had realized when negotiation of the agreement began in early July. The leaders of the talks for Bonn were Interior Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble and Rudolf Seiters, Schaeuble's counterpart on the Chancellery staff. The East German side was led by Gunther Krause from the GDR prime minister's office.⁴⁶

To get some sense of the kind of issues involved even in a relatively "simple" takeover of a major country, here is a sample of the major issues in the inter-German talks over the Second State Treaty.

- the timing and manner of Article 23 accession (which would affect the timing of all-German elections);
- financial rights and distribution of tax revenue among and to the new East German laender (an especially thorny issue since money given to poor West German laender might now be diverted to the even poorer new eastern German laender);
- transitional legislation on social issues like abortion rights (where East German law had been much more permissive);
- cataloguing East Germany's thousands of international obligations and establishing which of these would be assumed by the FRG;⁴⁷

⁴⁶ The best primary source for the negotiations of the monetary and political union treaties is again Schäuble's own account, which includes a section by his East German counterpart. See Wolfgang Schäuble, Der Vertrag; see also Werner Filmer & Heribert Schwan, Wolfgang Schäuble: Politik als Lebensaufgabe (Munich: Bertelsmann, 1992); Antonius John, Rudolf Seiters: Einsichten in Amt, Person und Ereignisse (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag, 1991).

⁴⁷ As an example of the difficulty presented by this issue, one of the many agreements the FRG did not assume from the GDR was an East German treaty which included provisions related to the GDR's restitution and indemnification of Jewish victims of the Holocaust. The apparent FRG decision to jettison these obligations caused a strong reaction among the world Jewish community which was felt instantly in Washington. After several discussions of the problem with Bonn, Baker called Genscher. Baker explained that the issue "could cause a firestorm on the Hill against the [Two Plus Four] Final Settlement we are negotiating" and Genscher undertook to find a solution. Baker to President Bush (for his evening reading), 30 Aug 90. Another problem with the US also arose from the hasty FRG decision not to apply the existing NATO status of forces agreement to US forces in Berlin. The ultimate satisfactory resolution of both the Jewish claims and US stationing issues are detailed later in this chapter.

- deciding whether to locate the capital of a united Germany in Berlin or leave it in Bonn;
- setting guidelines for adjudication of thousands of decades-old claims of West German citizens to property in the GDR;
- arranging trusteeship of the newly created Treuhandanstalt for East German state enterprises destined for privatization;
- application of European Community law to the GDR;
- and a host of other questions ranging from administration of East German universities to language protecting the rights of the GDR's small Sorbian minority.⁴⁸

Despite the number of issues to be settled, the unification treaty was completed on schedule at the end of August after four rounds of East-West German talks.

What remained was completion of the documents which would establish the international status of a united Germany. The Two Plus Four document, of course, still needed to be completed. But first the Germans had to tie off some loose ends: the bilateral agreements with the Soviets and with their Western allies to end the legacy of postwar occupation.

New Relationships with the Soviets and the Americans

Bonn had promised to negotiate a new treaty of friendship between a united Germany and the Soviet Union, a document symbolizing a new era of cooperation between the two historic adversaries. The idea had originated in the Chancellery and Kohl had followed through on that promise when he visited the USSR. Kohl had thought of this treaty almost as a personal document between the two leaders, suggesting that it be negotiated by Teltschik and Chernyayev. Chernyayev, thinking that this represented some sort of "Genscher complex," promptly passed the matter

⁴⁸ See Schaeuble, *Der Vertrag*; Konrad Jarausch, *The Rush to German Unity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 169-75; Dobbins to Zoellick, "The Second FRG-GDR State Treaty," July 16, 1990; EmbBerlin 4671, "Outline of the Unification Treaty," 23 Jul 90; Bonn 23253, "Second State Treaty Between the FRG and GDR: Interior Minister Schaeuble's Comments," 25 Jul 90.

along to Shevardnadze and Kvitsinsky and, on the West German side the details of the treaty quickly engaged Bonn's foreign ministry too, with Kastrup taking the lead.⁴⁹ There were actually treaties on three different subjects to be negotiated between the Germans and the Soviets, with the FRG negotiating as the agent for a united Germany.

First there was the general treaty on future political relations with the USSR, the treaty Kohl and Teltschik had emphasized. But there was also a need to agree upon the succession of GDR economic obligations to the Soviet Union, and sign treaties governing the status and withdrawal of Soviet forces in and from Germany as well as the "transition" financial arrangements for these forces. The West Germans and Soviets had about six weeks to complete all of this work, since they felt these accords needed to be ready by the time the Two Plus Four settlement was to be approved at the September ministerial meeting in Moscow.

The "general treaty" proved to be the easiest of all. Its terms set a program for annual German-Soviet summits and biennial meetings of foreign and defense ministers. Other articles covered everything from cultural cooperation to care for Soviet war monuments. Far and away the most significant article was the "nonaggression commitment."

In this article, Article 3, both countries promised never to use their armed forces against each other or anyone else "except for the purpose of individual or collective self-defense." They pledged never, regardless of the circumstances, to be the first to use armed force against any state. Both countries also promised not to aid any country which had committed aggression against the other. But nothing in the treaty undermined Germany's established commitments in NATO strategy or force deployments. Indeed, Article 21 specified that "the present Treaty will not affect the rights and obligations arising from existing bilateral and multilateral agreements which

⁴⁹ Chernayev, Shest' Let s Gorbachevym, pp. 358-59.

the two sides have concluded with other States.⁵⁰

The "general treaty" therefore served its purpose of providing a symbolic break with the past, but plowed no important new ground. The United States was never anxious about the contents of this treaty. While in Berlin in early September to conclude the preparation of the Two Plus Four settlement, Zoellick and his delegation actually declined a West German briefing on these bilateral negotiations because they were short of time, trusted German intentions, and saw no worrisome security issues. The "general treaty" was finally signed by Germany and the USSR on November 9, the anniversary of the opening of the Berlin Wall, as a capstone for Gorbachev's triumphal trip to the newly united German nation.⁵¹

More difficulties were encountered in disposing of East Germany's many economic obligations toward the USSR. The USSR and GDR were bound by numerous published and unpublished treaties, protocols, and constitutional documents. Like most COMECON trade agreements (COMECON was the East bloc trade organization), the two countries had to negotiate governmental terms for all major commercial exchanges since the value of their money and the prices of their goods bore no necessary relation to any underlying market reality. They were, in essence, elaborate barter arrangements.

Quite early in the unification process, in order to reassure Moscow, the FRG had pledged it would honor the GDR's long-term economic obligations toward Moscow. Only later in 1990, as it explored GDR files with the new government, could Bonn fully evaluate just what these obligations entailed. In June, after initial negotiations undertaken in connection with the FRG-GDR monetary union, the West

⁵⁰ Treaty between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on Good-Neighbourliness, Partnership and Co-operation, signed in Bonn, November 9, 1990, reprinted in Jonathan Osmond, German Reunification: A Reference Guide and Commentary (Harlow, Essex: Longman, 1992), pp. 292-96.

⁵¹ The Germans initially considered signing the 'general treaty' in October, to coincide with a planned Franco-Soviet agreement. But they realized that it might anger the Poles if, having promised to conclude the border treaty as soon as possible after unification, the Germans proved themselves able to conclude a treaty with Moscow weeks or months before they finished the treaty with Warsaw. So they signed the 'general treaty' during Gorbachev's November visit, during the same week they concluded their treaty with the Poles.

Germans hoped to maintain East German deliveries of goods but begin to price them in D-Marks, hoping to fix some exchange rate between the Western currency and the "transferrable rubles" Moscow used as a medium for some of its foreign exchange. The West Germans hoped that after a couple of years conditions would evolve enough to allow trade based entirely on market terms. West German costs in maintaining a transitional Soviet troop presence in Germany would, it was hoped, be offset by deliveries of Soviet commodities.⁵²

There was also the treaty to govern the interim stationing and status of Soviet forces in Germany. Here the most difficult problem was the financial terms for the "transition treaty" for support and withdrawal of these forces in Germany. Both in this agreement and the economic one, the key issues were the amount of money the FRG was prepared to spend in assuming the old East German obligations and resettling the Soviet troops back home.

Kastrup and Kvitsinsky met on August 14-15 to prepare the way for extensive talks between Genscher and Shevardnadze on August 16 and 17. They had exchanged draft treaties and begun work on the structure of the documents. There would be four treaties in all: the "general treaty" on political relations; the "transition treaty" on financial arrangements for withdrawing Soviet forces; a treaty on the trade obligations of the GDR; and a treaty governing the interim status of Soviet forces in the former GDR.

Time pressure became intense. The final scheduling decisions were made for unification and the all-German elections. But the FRG-Soviet bilateral negotiations began to stall. On August 27 Genscher received a startling letter from Shevardnadze. The Soviet military had apparently declared that it was technically impossible to withdraw their forces from the GDR within three or four years, as Gorbachev had promised. Instead it would take at least five to seven years (the timeframe the Soviets had initially proposed in Stavropol before Kohl reminded Gorbachev of his promise).

⁵² See CIA to State (George), "GDR Obligations to the USSR," 23 Feb 90; Bonn 18446, "An Outlook on Economic Relations between a United Germany and the Soviet Union," 14 Jun 90.

Shevardnadze remembered that the three to four year period had been agreed in July, but he said Gorbachev had linked his promise to getting enough material and financial support for the Soviet forces from the German side. There the German proposals were, according to Shevardnadze, completely insufficient. If a solution could not be found on the issue of support, then the date for the withdrawal of Soviet troops would have to be changed.

Shevardnadze's letter also listed a series of objections to the security provisions in the "general treaty." There were complaints about the economic and financial treaties. Shevardnadze also pressed for a number of additional German commitments on security questions in the Two Plus Four settlement document. The Soviet foreign policy and security bureaucracies had clearly caught their breath and weighed in with their demands.

The next day Kvitsinsky met with Teltschik in Bonn. He said that both the union treaty's handling of the nationalities issue and the quarrels over economic reform had placed the Soviet leadership in another critical domestic situation. This was the background, he said, for the Soviet stance on the 'transition treaty.' The attitude of the Soviet military was especially critical. There had to be money for transport costs, new housing, and for the support of Soviet troops in the GDR. Kvitsinsky also spoke of the need to extend the period of withdrawal out to six years.

Feeling the pressure, Kohl met on August 29 with Genscher, finance minister Waigel, and economics minister Helmut Haussmann. They felt that the 'general treaty' would be concluded on schedule. But they wondered where in the federal budget to find the money for these new demands. Genscher kept up the pressure, reminding Kohl and the others that the final settlement had to be concluded with the Soviets in less than two weeks, by the time of the Moscow Two Plus Four ministerial on September 12. Kohl decided that the West Germans would be generous on the issue of housing construction for returning troops but remain tough on the question of costs while they were stationed in Germany. Bush, meanwhile, was also asking Kohl for money, money to help those countries most affected by joining in the economic sanctions against Iraq.

As if all this were not enough, the Soviets came in with a new request for the transfer of subsidized food, like the one Bonn had provided in at the beginning of the year. Since the subsidies would be used to purchase produce from East German farmers, and since this produce could not easily be sold in Western markets anyway, the FRG quickly agreed to the new assistance, worth about DM 1 billion (about \$600 million), in effect an agricultural subsidy for East German farmers.

Kohl met with Teltschik on September 5. They both now felt overwhelmed by the scale and variety of the ongoing negotiations and by the constant time pressure.⁵³ The 'general treaty' seemed to be under control, with Genscher handling the issues. The economic treaty was initialed by economics minister Haussmann and deputy prime minister Sitaryan on September 6.

The "transition treaty" was clearly the most difficult problem, just because of the amounts of money being demanded by the Soviet side. On September 5 the new Soviet ambassador in Bonn, Terekhov, had spelled out the Soviet numbers: DM 3.5 billion for stationing costs; DM 3 billion for transport costs, DM 11.5 billion for building 72,000 houses as well as necessary schools and stores, DM 500 million for retraining, and up to DM 17.5 billion for Soviet-owned real estate in the GDR: a total of DM 36 billion (more than \$20 billion). These numbers far exceeded the West German planning assumptions in July, when experts from the finance ministry, foreign ministry, and Chancellery had expected the package to cost DM 1.25 billion in the first year and a total of DM 4.25 billion over the four year withdrawal period. Now the Soviets were demanding a sum eight times this large, and the Moscow Two Plus Four ministerial was only a week away.⁵⁴

Kohl phoned Gorbachev on September 7, their first direct conversation in the nearly two months since their meetings in the Soviet Union. Both were satisfied with

⁵³ Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 357-58.

⁵⁴ For the general chronology of events, see Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 348-58. On the sanguine West German estimates in July, see Bonn 23949, "Views of Genscher Advisor on Unification Issues," 1 Aug 90 (discussing July 31 meeting between charge Ward and Frank Elbe).

progress on the 'general treaty' and looked forward to signing it after unification. But the treaties governing the withdrawal and financial arrangements for Soviet forces in the GDR were still problems. Kohl gave his offer: a total of DM 8 billion, concentrated on housing construction (Bonn officials expected these contracts to go to East German firms, so at least this money would come back to Germany).

Gorbachev, who had been so friendly and reasonable in Moscow and the Caucasus, was now stern and unyielding. Kohl's numbers, he said, would lead to a dead end. His accounting showed that the housing and necessary infrastructure for returning soldiers would alone cost DM 11 billion, and the transport and maintenance costs had to be added in as well. All these matters were linked inextricably to each other.

Then Gorbachev delivered a hard punch. He made it clear to Kohl that the final settlement in the Two Plus Four talks could not be concluded without results in the bilateral negotiations and without a solution to the financial questions.

Kohl hoped that, with goodwill, the two sides could find a way out. Gorbachev said he thought the situation was very alarming. Kohl pointed out how he was delivering the new billion D-Mark agreement on food supplies and consumer goods.⁵⁵ He urged Gorbachev to join him in trying once again to solve these problems and speak again about them on Monday, September 10.

Teltschik, the source for this account, thought the conversation was "really dramatic" and was surprised at how hard Gorbachev had pushed Kohl for further financial assistance. The Soviet leader was "visibly disappointed" with Kohl's DM 8 billion offer and the Germans had understood perfectly how he had linked this issue to the complete result of the critical diplomacy during the coming week. Teltschik, shaken, was now sure that "our offer could not be the last word."⁵⁶

Intensive negotiations followed over the weekend in Moscow between finance

⁵⁵ These negotiations were concluded in Moscow on September 9 and resulted in the quick delivery of 255,000 tons of beef and 60,000 tons of butter. Teltschik, 329 Tage, p. 361.

⁵⁶ Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 359-60.

minister Waigel and deputy prime minister Sitaryan. Sitaryan had named a total figure of DM 16-18 billion. The Soviet numbers still seemed extremely high, and Waigel proposed a total figure no greater than DM 11-12 billion. So when Gorbachev and Kohl spoke again on Monday, September 10, the haggling resumed. Kohl referred to the possibility of future economic assistance to the USSR. Gorbachev replied candidly that the matter had less to do with help for the Soviet Union than it had to do with the process of German unification. He was fighting many battles with his government, his military, and his financial officials. He called for agreement on a sum of DM 15 billion.

Kohl saw that he had to make a decision. He offered to supplement the standing German offer of DM 12 billion with an interest-free credit of DM 3 billion. (The West German finance ministry had already prepared for this fallback.) Gorbachev was happy. Finance ministry state secretary Horst Koehler flew to Moscow to work out the details.

Kohl called Bush the next day to brief him on the outcome of these discussions. Bush had stayed out of the bilateral argument about money between Kohl and Gorbachev. Significantly, Kohl did not seek Bush's help in trying to bargain Gorbachev down or prepare options for how to respond if Bonn did not give in and the Soviets carried out their threat of suspending progress in the Two Plus Four talks, although such a confrontation would have instantly spilled over into becoming a general East-West crisis. Overwhelmed by events and anxious to please Moscow, the West Germans never really developed an effective policy for resisting Soviet economic demands in the bilateral negotiations.⁵⁷

With the basic agreement on financial issues in place, the last remaining bilateral problem between the FRG and USSR was to complete the treaty on the terms for interim stationing and withdrawal of Soviet troops in Germany. This treaty,

⁵⁷ Teltschik, 329 Tage, pp. 361-63; Bonn 28719, "Kohl and Gorbachev Agree on Amount of FRG-Soviet 'Transition' Treaty," 11 Sep 90. Bush and Kohl had spoken on September 5 and 6, principally about Gulf crisis issues and the upcoming US summit meeting with Gorbachev in Helsinki. Bush and Gorbachev met in Finland on September 9. Bush and Kohl talked again on September 11 and reported to each other on the results of their discussions. The Gulf conflict had dominated all of these conversations.

initiated on September 27, was not particularly controversial and achieved the principal German objectives. Withdrawal was to be complete in four years, by the end of 1994. Soviet military activities were circumscribed and German sovereignty over all of eastern Germany was firmly established. The Germans resigned themselves to the need for significant environmental cleanup efforts at vacated Soviet installations, with the treaty urging only that Moscow "avoid further damage." A German-Soviet commission was established to resolve disputes over the treaty's implementation.⁵⁸

As the Germans hastily forged the basis for post-unification relations with the Soviet Union, they also confronted questions of future dealings with their allies too.

In the aftermath of the NATO summit in London and Kohl's successful visit to the Soviet Union, West German leaders felt a sense of deep gratitude to the United States and warmly appreciated Washington's role in the achievement of German unity. Genscher prepared and circulated an article, published in August, which he circulated in late July to all German media and foreign newspaper offices in Germany. The article, entitled "The Americans and Us," praised the American nation and its current leaders in extravagant terms. "Never has America's influence on developments in Europe been as great as it is today," the article concluded, "not in the sense of domination but of partnership. ... The attitude of the United States during this historic period is the crowning of the German-American friendship, which will endure. Thank you, America."⁵⁹

The United States had an early chance to test these good feelings. There were over two dozen significant bilateral issues presented for American-German relations by the coming unification of Germany. For example:

- Allied rights to station troops in Germany under the Presence Convention of

⁵⁸ See Bonn 31589, "FRG-Soviet Stationing/Withdrawal Treaty: Analysis," 4 Oct 90; Bonn 31573, "FRG-Soviet Treaty on Stationing and Withdrawal: A Synopsis," 4 Oct 90. The Germans repeatedly consulted with and informed the American government in exhaustive detail about the progress of these negotiations.

⁵⁹ Note for Secretary Baker, Seitz, Tutwiler, Ross, Dobbins, and Blackwill from Zoellick, "Article by Minister Genscher on U.S.-German Relations," July 20, 1990.

1954 expired, under the convention's terms, with a German "peace settlement."⁶⁰ Germany would have to decide on a new basis for permitting a continued allied military presence, and consider whether to amend the agreement regulating the status of these forces on German soil. Other changes would be needed in NATO's Air Defense Identification Zone for Germany and the Four Power military liaison missions which operated throughout the country.

- The basis for the allied troop presence in Berlin had an independent source: Allied sovereign control over the city. When this expired, again a new basis for the continuing presence of such forces would need to be agreed with Germany. Access to Berlin for allied troops, their status, their training rights, and their command structure would all need to be redesigned, while the costs of the presence would need to be handled on an entirely new basis.
- American, British, and French airlines had enjoyed special aviation rights in Berlin under the occupation regime. These rights, along with special inner-German service rights, would need to be renegotiated too, as well as new mechanisms for handling air traffic control in the city.
- Various property claims from U.S. citizens and the international Jewish community were pending against the GDR. These needed to be settled, along with various property issues relating to Berlin and the future of entities like the RIAS (Radio in the American Sector) broadcasting station and the Berlin Document Center archives of Nazi-era material.

The US formally requested bilateral negotiation of these issues at the beginning of August (and the British and French made similar requests, though the status of French troops stationed in Germany was dealt with under bilateral arrangements outside of the NATO Status of Forces Agreement).⁶¹

⁶⁰ Convention on Relations between the Three Powers and the Federal Republic of Germany, May 26, 1952, 6 UST 4251, TIAS No. 3425, 331 UNTS 327 (as modified by the Paris Accords of October 1954).

⁶¹ See generally Paul Stares, Allied Military Rights in Germany and Berlin (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1990). For more detail see State 250137, "Working with the FRG on Bilateral Issues," 31 Jul 90; State's European Bureau maintained a constantly updated "Checklist of Bilateral Issues with Germany" that provides a running reference for the status of these questions. For background on specific issues, see Germany Task Force Paper (DOD-State drafted), "Stationing Rights and the SOFA," 29 Mar 90; Germany Task Force Paper (State-DOD drafted), "Berlin Garrison," 29 Mar 90; Joint Staff (J-5) Information Paper, "Military Liaison Missions (MLM)," 22 Feb 90; L-Young to Zoellick and Seitz, "Legal Options for Basing Rights and a SOFA in the FRG and Berlin," 18 Apr 90; Seitz to Zoellick, 1 Jun 90 attaching EUR/CE-Seymour through Dobbins to Seitz, "Checklist for U.S.-FRG Bilateral Agenda: Berlin and Other Four-Power Issues," 30 May 90; Seitz to Zoellick, "Action Plan for Berlin," 23 Jul 90.

Most important, for the United States, was a smooth transition in the stationing rights and status of allied forces in western Germany and Berlin. German public views about the continued presence of US and other allied forces on their soil were mixed. There was a solid support for a continued presence, but this support could be undermined by noisy disagreements during a negotiation about their continued rights or status.⁶² The U.S. government as a whole began to collect its thoughts on how to proceed in a meeting at the Pentagon on July 20. Officials agreed that extension or renewal of past agreements would be best and easiest, although the military liaison missions, an anachronism of the occupation era, should be replaced by some other form of contact with Soviet military authorities.⁶³

American (and British) officials were therefore dismayed when West German lawyers, at a late-July meeting of Western legal experts, offered a different approach to the stationing and status issues. These officials tabled a draft document that would curtail the existing NATO Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) and supplemental agreement covering the status of allied forces. The West German lawyers wanted to negotiate an entirely new stationing treaty. The U.S. charge in Bonn, George Ward, promptly conveyed US concern about opening this "Pandora's box" to Genscher's top aide, Frank Elbe.

Elbe explained that he, Kastrup, and FRG legal advisor Oesterhelt preferred to

Several sets of intelligence issues also arose from the unification of Germany. These matters were considered and addressed by a small interagency committee, co-chaired by William Working and Zelikow on the NSC staff, and including Dobbins and Peter Burleigh from State, Rich Haver from OSD, and representatives from the Joint Staff and the intelligence community. Bob Gates supervised the process. The policies agreed in this group were then discussed and settled satisfactorily with the relevant FRG officials. The British government was also consulted.

⁶² Roger George, on State's policy planning staff, worried that the Soviets or factions in West Germany could link the future of allied and Soviet forces in various ways, while noting that Germans might not fully appreciate the economic contribution made by the American presence. George to Zoellick, "US Forces in Germany," 28 Jun 90.

⁶³ See Shostal through Dobbins to Seitz, "Pentagon Meeting on FRG and Berlin Stationing," 21 Jul 90. For the Pentagon perspective, see Weinrod (OSD/ISP) to Hadley, "Meeting with PDAS Dobbins on German Unification/Two-plus-Four Issues," 19 Jul 90. S/P's George questioned whether a relatively simple extension of the NATO SOFA would adequately address the German desire to appear to put the Western basis on a fresh footing, breaking with the past. George to Zoellick, "Stationing Issues," undated (late July 1990).

make as few changes as possible in the documents governing the allied military presence. But the SPD and Greens might pressure for a different policy. Early in 1990 the SPD had announced with some fanfare the positing of a "Great Questionnaire" about allied basing rights. SPD deputy chairman Helga Daeubler-Gmehlin was again arguing publicly that existing allied stationing rights violated German sovereignty. Elbe promised to look into the matter further. The US also determined that the FRG's defense ministry preferred the 'simple' approach, at least to get through the period surrounding unification.

Nevertheless the lawyers in the West German foreign ministry continued to pursue an entirely new agreement which, deputy legal adviser Eitel argued, must be "free of any elements of old thinking." Separate agreements would be worked out with each of the six allied countries with troops stationed in Germany, rather than prepare a multilateral document, and then each of these interim agreements would need to be ratified by the West German parliament -- all in little more than a month. Working-level officials at the Chancellery were aware of the Foreign Ministry position but seemed to have no particular opinion about it. As details of the FRG legal position became clearer, the American embassy in Bonn became more and more alarmed, urging Washington to raise urgently with political leaders "an FRG position that, if pursued, portends serious substantive, legal and political problems for our bilateral relations."⁶⁴

Washington agreed. On August 16 Baker sent a letter to Genscher detailing the US concerns. He asked Genscher to agree to extension of the existing agreements in a multilateral solution rather than a series of bilateral accords. He asked him not to set a deadline for beginning more fundamental renegotiation of the interim arrangements. He saw no need to renegotiate the standard NATO SOFA at any time. He also hoped for rapid movement on a stationing agreement for allied forces in

⁶⁴ See Bonn 23949, "Views of Genscher Advisor on Unification Issues," 1 Aug 90; Bonn 25322, "Stationing of Forces in the FRG and Berlin," 14 Aug 90; Bonn 26037, "Stationing of Forces in the FRG and Berlin," 20 Aug 90.

Berlin.⁶⁵

Now that officials at the political level were engaged, the Americans found that the positive feelings toward the United States did indeed matter. The obstacles began to melt away. The FRG agreed to extend the existing stationing agreements for an indefinite transitional period. Bonn agreed to all of Baker's requests. The U.S. sent a negotiating team, headed by Ambassador Nelson Ledsky, to work out the details. As new problems arose at the working-level (with applying the NATO SOFA to individual NATO soldiers in the former GDR), Baker intervened personally to straighten the problems out with Genscher. Kastrup was already uncomfortable with the approach his foreign ministry lawyers had been taking, and Genscher delivered on his promises to settle the issues along the lines agreed upon with Baker.⁶⁶ The U.S. then successfully negotiated three agreements with the FRG during the following two weeks: a renewal of the 1954 Presence Convention providing a legal basis for stationing of all allied troops in the FRG; a new stationing agreement for British, French, and American troops in Berlin after Four Power rights ended, and an agreement covering the de facto extension of the NATO SOFA to the former GDR.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ See Dobbins (Acting) through Kimmitt to Baker, "Request for Signature: Letter to Genscher on Allied Troop Stationing in FRG and Berlin," 15 Aug 90. Baker signed out the letter the same day. The NSC staff also suggested that Scowcroft send a message to Teutschik alerting him to the significance of these issues. I was unable to determine whether this message was actually sent. See Hutchings through Basora for Scowcroft, "Message to Teutschik," 23 Aug 90.

⁶⁶ See Bonn 26813, "Possible Movement in FRG Stationing Position," 24 Aug 90; draft EUR cable (actual message reference number unavailable), "Stationing Talks: Applicability of NATO-Related Agreements to Eastern Germany," 29 Aug 90; Dobbins to Zoellick, "August 23 One-Plus-Three Political Directors' Meeting," 27 Aug 90; Foulon to Zoellick, "Day One of Stationing Talks - Problems Emerge," 29 Aug 90; Bonn 27371, "FRG Stationing Talks: Still Far Apart After First Day of Talks," 29 Aug 90. Baker phoned Genscher on August 30. For Genscher's written reply responding to this call and resolving the key issue, see Letter from Genscher to Baker, 31 Aug 90 (the official copy was delivered by the FRG embassy on September 3). Genscher promised an "analogous extension" of the NATO SOFA to the former GDR in a cosmetic form that would allay Soviet concerns during the transition period but "ensure that when members of the forces of the Allies and their dependents travel to the present GDR, they essentially enjoy the same rights as in the Federal Republic of Germany." See also Bonn 24379, "Future Allied Presence in Berlin," 6 Aug 90.

⁶⁷ See Bonn 28458, "Bonn Stationing Talks," 7 Sep 90 (from Ledsky); Zoellick to Baker, "German Stationing/SOFA & Bilateral Issues - Suggested Points to Mention to FM Genscher in Advance of Moscow," 9 Sep 90; Bonn 28652, "FRG Stationing Talks: September 10 Meetings of NATO SOFA and Supplementary Agreements Working Groups," 10 Sep 90; State 305304, "Status of the Bonn Stationing Negotiations," 11 Sep

Other bilateral issues were settled more easily and less formally. The Americans needed assurances that a united Germany would address old American property claims outstanding against the former GDR and would also deal forthrightly with Jewish claims. A private agreement between Lufthansa and Pan American Airways helped ease solution of the civil aviation issues. Appropriate letters and assurances were attached to the Final Settlement when it was later presented for ratification to the U.S. Senate.⁶⁸

All these complicated bilateral negotiations occurring during August and September hinged, though, on completion of another treaty. The Two Plus Four process was still the ultimate vehicle for settling the external aspects of German unification. The other negotiations were driven wholly or in part by the need to be complete at the time the Final Settlement for Germany being negotiated by the Two Plus Four participants was ready for the approval of foreign ministers in Moscow on September 12.

A Final Settlement

Working from an American outline, with various sections divided among the four Western states, the West Germans, Americans, British and French worked out a draft final settlement document during the month of August. The Soviets began exchanging views about a new settlement text first with the West Germans, in Moscow on August 16-17, in addition to the talks on the four bilateral treaties then being concluded. Kastrup then had more in-depth follow-up talks in Bonn with

90; Bonn 28789, "FRG Stationing Talks: September 11 Update," 12 Sep 90 (from Ledsky); Bonn 28790, "FRG Stationing Talks: September 11 Plenary," 12 Sep 90; Bonn 28946, "FRG Stationing Talks: Request for Authorization to Agree to Presence Convention Extension," 12 Sep 90; Bonn 28949, "FRG Stationing Talks: September 12 Working Group Meeting on SOFA Extension Note," 12 Sep 90; Bonn 29871, "Revisions to Proposed FRG Note on the Termination of the Relations Convention and the Settlement Convention," 19 Sep 90.

⁶⁸ See Zoellick to Baker, "German Stationing/SOFA & Bilateral Issues," 9 Sep 90; Baker letter to Genscher, 5 Sep 90 (apparently sent on on September 7); State 304186, "Briefing Paper on U.S.-FRG Issues for Two-Plus-Four Ministerial in Moscow," 8 Sep 90; Genscher letter to Baker, 25 Sep 90.

Kvitsinsky on August 27-28.⁶⁹ The main negotiation of the settlement document took place in four days of intense negotiations among Two Plus Four political directors in East Berlin at the beginning of September. Three main issues soon dominated the preparation of the final document.⁷⁰

1. How and when to give up Four Power rights?

The question was this: Would Four Power rights remain in effect until the final settlement was not only signed but also ratified by all the national legislatures? Suppose there was a ratification problem, perhaps in the Soviet Union? All countries but the Soviets agreed to answer this question by issuing a declaration suspending

⁶⁹ On these talks see letter from Kastrup to Seitz, 29 Aug 90. A controversy later flared in Germany over whether Kastrup had erred in the negotiation of the final settlement by allowing the Soviets to immunize their occupation measures, including massive confiscations of property, from any later legal challenge. Kiessler & Elbe defend Kastrup against the charge. Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, pp. 182-88. Their defense is supported by the negotiating record. The August 17 Soviet draft settlement did include such a formal immunity but this blanket protection, in a treaty, was rejected by both Kastrup and by the United States government. The September 1 Soviet draft returned to this provision; it was again opposed by both Bonn and Washington. The matter was thereupon settled by a letter sent from Genscher to Four Power ministers repeating a June 15 joint Bundestag-Volkskammer declaration that the 1945-1949 expropriations were irreversible. This was a statement of fact. The question of compensation for the expropriations was reserved to the German parliament. There is no specific language establishing formal legal immunities.

⁷⁰ These September talks were nominally chaired by the East Germans, but De Maiziere, as the new foreign minister, asked his delegation head to yield the chairmanship to Kastrup. Elbe considered it quite fortunate that Meckel's "troop" did not run this crucial meeting. Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, p. 203. The American delegation was led by Zoellick, joined by Seitz, Zelikow, Young, Koblitz, and EUR desk officer Andrew Goodman. The West German delegation was led by Kastrup and included Elbe, Peter Hartmann from the Chancellery staff, Christian Pauls, Klaus Scharioth, and Martin Ney. The Soviet delegation was led by Bondarenko and included Gennadi Shikhin, Valery Golovin, Valery Rogoshin, Vladimir Grinin, and Kiril Toropov. The British delegation was led by Weston, joined by Hillary Synott, Jonathan Powell, and Michael Wood. The French delegation was led by Dufourcq, joined by Denis Gauer, Thierry Dana, and Marie-Reine d'Hauassy. The East German team (mostly new, with Meckel's departure) was led by Helmut Domke joined by Ernst Krabatsch, Herbert Suess, Fritz Holzwarth, Thilo Steinbach, Max Wegricht, and Guenter Hilmann. Unless otherwise cited, the discussion of issues which follows is based on the author's contemporary notes; various annotated drafts and notes in Zoellick's office files; Moscow 31295, "Soviets Raise Three Points of Contention Regarding Two-Plus-Four Final Settlement," 6 Sep 90 (Kvitsinsky called in Matlock on September 6); and the State Department records of the September negotiations in East Berlin. Seitz to Baker, "September 3 One-plus-Three Political Directors' Meeting in Berlin: Detailed Account," 31 Jan 91; Seitz to Baker, "September 4-7 Two-plus-Four Political Directors' Meeting in Berlin: Detailed Account of September 4 Session," 31 Jan 91; Seitz to Baker, "September 4-7 Two-plus-Four Political Directors' Meeting in Berlin: Detailed Account of September 5 Session," 15 Mar 91; Seitz to Baker, "September 4-7 Two-plus-Four Political Directors' Meeting in Berlin: Detailed Account of September 6 Session," 15 Mar 91; Seitz to Baker, "September 4-7 Two-plus-Four Political Directors' Meeting in Berlin: Detailed Account of September 7 Session," 15 Mar 91.

Four Power rights at the time of signature, with the rights to be eliminated when the treaty was ratified by the participating countries and formally entered into force. The Soviets said they would withhold their consent from the suspension declaration until they were satisfied with the outcome of the negotiation of the four bilateral treaties with the FRG.

2. How and when could NATO "structures" enter the former GDR?

All the Two Plus Four countries had now agreed that all of Germany would be a full member of NATO but that, at least while Soviet troops remained in Germany, "NATO structures" would not extend to the former GDR. What exactly did this mean? The West Germans, apparently after discussing the issue with the Soviets during the Genscher-Shevardnadze August 16-17 meetings in Moscow, first proposed a blanket prohibition on any movement of American, British, or French forces into the former GDR. The other allies considered this language too confining, given possible contingencies for NATO defense in a crisis or, maneuvers and exercises, or troop transits. The West interpreted the Caucasus press statement as a limit only on the stationing of foreign forces, not all temporary movements. NATO aircraft, for example, would certainly be flying over eastern German airspace and helping to defend it.⁷¹

The allied countries agreed that they would not move their nuclear weapons eastward into the former GDR. This was only a symbolic concession since only German forces would be permanently deployed in eastern Germany and the Germans had already foresworn any possession of nuclear weapons. The Soviets, in the East Berlin settlement talks, pressed to exclude all dual-use weapon systems, effectively excluding anything which could fire or launch a nuclear weapon. This position was plainly unacceptable to the West since it would keep aircraft or artillery from being deployed into the former GDR. The Americans came up with language, based on the way dual-use systems were handled in the CFE treaty, but the Soviets balked at

⁷¹ Dobbins to Zoellick, "August 23 One-Plus-Three Political Directors' Meeting," 27 Aug 90 (attaching August 20 letter from Kastrup providing a further debrief on the Genscher-Shevardnadze meetings in Moscow).

accepting this compromise. Bondarenko claimed that letting dual-capable systems into the former GDR would violate the understanding reached in the Caucasus. Kastrup said he had been at those meetings (Bondarenko had not) and that the dual-capable issue had not even come up. Kastrup checked with the Chancellery and they confirmed that there had been no discussion of dual-capable delivery systems. Bondarenko felt sure the matter had been settled in the Caucasus. The political directors were stalemated.

3. Handling future limits on German armed forces.

Gorbachev and Shevardnadze had agreed that future German armed forces would be limited at 370,000, but acknowledged that these limits would become effective only when other European countries also accepted equally binding limits on their armed forces. In the meantime the Germans would promise unilaterally to reduce their forces to the 370,000 level. The question was about where and how the Germans would make this promise. The Soviets still wanted the commitment sealed somehow in the current CFE treaty. Shevardnadze raised this point with Baker when the two ministers met in Siberia at the beginning of August. Baker again wanted to keep this German undertaking from impeding the completion of the CFE treaty. The Germans would make their pledge separate from the treaty itself, but connected to it -- just as the Americans and Soviets had also exchanged a reciprocal pledge in February about limits on the forces they could station on foreign soil in Europe.

Shevardnadze just wanted the matter raised in the CFE setting in some way. Baker was satisfied with any solution that did not put the matter in the treaty. NATO allies then worked out a common approach that Genscher presented to Shevardnadze in Moscow. Genscher and the East German foreign minister would go to Vienna and, at a CFE negotiating session, make unilateral statements about their future plans. This took place on August 30. The East German governing coalition had broken up. Prime Minister De Maiziere had personally taken over the foreign ministry. So Genscher, accompanied by De Maiziere, stated in Vienna that the FRG would reduce the personnel strength of its armed forces to 370,000 within three or four years. Genscher stated that Bonn "assumes" that in future conventional arms control

negotiations other countries in Europe would make similar commitments to limit the personnel strengths of their armed forces. That pledge was repeated in the final settlement as a quotation of what the Germans had promised, with the statement only that the other signatories "take note" of Genscher's statement.⁷²

In the Berlin negotiations Bondarenko introduced a new idea by proposing to link the completion of Soviet troop withdrawals from Germany to German fulfillment of their promise to reduce their armed forces down to 370,000 as part of parallel limits on other European armed forces. In other words, Soviet soldiers would stay until the Germans made their reductions regardless of when or whether a future arms control treaty was concluded. The French, British, and American delegates all "totally" opposed this provision. But, after lengthy argument, they drafted language that was deliberately ambiguous. The Soviets and Germans agreed in the settlement that the withdrawal of all Soviet troops "will be completed by the end of 1994" but said this was "in connection with" the FRG's pledge to reduce its forces down to 370,000.

So the Soviets had established some vague linkage which, in a small way, did single out the Germans for a uniquely binding constraint on their armed forces -- at least until the end of 1994. Kastrup welcomed this Soviet compromise language. The West could claim that the Soviet withdrawal pledge was specific and unequivocal, that it was doubly guaranteed by the Soviet-German bilateral agreement on troop withdrawal, and that "in connection with" did not qualify the Soviet promise. But this was a weak argument. The Americans found themselves, by the end of the discussion, in the awkward position of being more worried about this "singularization" than Kastrup was, so they let it go. But they advised Baker of their concern.

Bondarenko also tried to have the settlement create provisions for permanently

⁷² See Treaty on the Final Settlement with Respect to Germany, signed in Moscow, 12 Sept 90, Article 3; Memcon for Meeting between Baker and Shevardnadze, Fisherman's Lodge, Irkutsk, 1 Aug 90 (the two ministers were joined only by Ross and Tarasenko); Eagleburger to President Bush (for his evening reading), 10 Aug 90 (on August 9 NATO agreement in CFE coordinating group); letter from Kastrup to Seitz, 20 Aug 90; Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, p. 203.

verifying Germany's renunciation of nuclear and biological weapons and verify the size of German armed forces. None of the Western countries would support this. Bondarenko, after three days of talks, then complained bitterly how everyone seemed to oppose Soviet draft language on every issue. There seemed to be a "law," he said, that no one would support Soviet proposals.⁷³

Zoellick and Seitz left Berlin and traveled on to Helsinki, where they met the party that had arrived for President Bush's meeting with Gorbachev, their third face-to-face encounter since Bush had taken office. Shevardnadze wanted to talk about CFE issues and Germany. He felt reassured in the (mistaken) belief that Genscher had promised to keep nuclear capable aircraft out of the former GDR after unification. This was incorrect, since practically all modern military attack aircraft are capable of carrying nuclear weapons. Baker said he would not try to limit German sovereignty, but he would say that America would only sign on to the agreement announced in the Caucasus -- which referred only to nuclear weapons. Baker also stressed that NATO had only agreed not to station foreign forces in the former GDR. This did not prohibit other kinds of movements. Shevardnadze said he was concerned about exercises, not other kinds of temporary transits of foreign forces.

Shevardnadze felt sure that Genscher had been ready to compromise on this point. He told Baker that surely Genscher would not have suggested something without discussing it with the Americans. "I called Genscher two days ago," Shevardnadze said, "and he said he was getting in touch with the Americans."

⁷³ At the end of the Berlin negotiations, Elbe and his East German counterpart switched places at the delegation table. The American team noticed and Zoellick joked about this visible coming together of the two Germanies. One of the old East German diplomats behind Elbe grumbled about his East German colleague that, "I've always known where he really came from." Elbe retells the story in Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, p. 204. The new East German delegation head, Domke, left no doubt where his sympathies were. At the end of the session he gave all the delegates a numbered lithograph, prepared for the occasion. It was an austere painting of a waiting room, recognizable to East Germans as the place they would have to wait interminably under the old regime in order to request permission to travel to the West. Domke thought it was an appropriate memento for a negotiation that would insure no East German would ever be in this situation again.

"Well," Baker said, "he called and he asked me to help him solve it here in Helsinki."

"That is what he said to me," Shevardnadze exclaimed. "He said to raise it with Baker. I told him that we are dealing with the sovereign rights of Germany, so why should I raise it with Baker?"

Baker repeated his understanding from the West Germans: there had been no discussion or understanding on dual-use systems, only nuclear weapons. Baker explained that the Soviet position would keep practically all artillery out of the former GDR. Shevardnadze appeared not to understand that most artillery is dual-capable, since it can fire nuclear-armed shells. (Such shells had been widely deployed in the Soviet military as well as the American one.)

Baker also pressed Shevardnadze to agree to suspend Four Power rights at the time the settlement was signed. Shevardnadze still wanted to wait to see how other bilateral treaties with the Germans turned out. Baker then revived the lingering American concern over the theoretical linkage between German troop reductions and the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Germany. He warned this would be a real problem unless the other issues could be settled. The ministers then turned to a discussion of the Gulf crisis.⁷⁴

The Two Plus Four political directors met again on the eve of the arrival of their ministers to try to wrap up remaining differences the day before the final settlement on Germany was to be signed. Genscher and Baker had talked through the key issues in advance, arriving at common positions. The issue of dual-capable weapon systems was solved by qualifying the Soviet-proposed language with the American formula offered in Berlin, and this was hammered out in advance by Kastrup and Elbe with Kvitsinsky and Bondarenko. Genscher and Baker had agreed on this approach and, after lengthy debate, the Soviets accepted it. Other issues

⁷⁴ Memcon of Meeting between Baker and Shevardnadze, Helsinki, 9 Sep 90 (Ross, Tarasenko, and the interpreters were the only others present). Only the American government was still expressing concerns about the theoretical linkage of German troop reductions and Soviet troop withdrawals in the final settlement.

remained unresolved as the ministers arrived.⁷⁵

On the day the final settlement was to be signed, September 12, the Soviets were satisfied with the state of their bilateral negotiations with the Germans and were ready to join in a declaration suspending Four Power rights. Gorbachev and Kohl had settled the money issue two days earlier. Baker also decided to go along with the final settlement's treatment of Soviet withdrawals and promised German force reductions.

But, up to the last moment, there was still no agreement on the extent of NATO activities to be allowed in the territory of the former GDR. Though Elbe later singled out the British for their rigid tone on this issue, commenting derisively about Weston wearing his Royal Marine tie, the Americans were equally adamant -- if not as outspoken. Zoellick privately advised Baker on his arrival that the Soviet draft, with its blanket exclusion of allied forces from eastern Germany, "represents a Soviet effort to disassociate Germany's NATO allies from part of its territory and people. ... It is incompatible with the supposed Soviet willingness to permit Germany to choose its Alliance It is also yet another permanent infringement on German sovereignty."⁷⁶

It had been agreed since July that the German armed forces, even if integrated into NATO's military command, could be stationed or deployed anywhere in

⁷⁵ See Kiessler & Elbe, *Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken*, pp. 208-09 (on the September 10 meeting with Kvitsinsky); Seitz to Baker, "September 11 Two-plus-Four Political Directors Meeting in Moscow: Detailed Account," 15 Mar 91; Zoellick briefing paper for Baker, "German Final Settlement: Moscow Meeting Notes and Attachments," 9 Sep 90 (with Zoellick's annotations). A later version of this package, dated September 12, reflects the outcome of the last political directors' meeting. Delegations at the September 11 meeting were similar to the Berlin session, except that Kvitsinsky headed the Soviet team instead of Bondarenko and, on the U.S. delegation, Rice, who had been in Helsinki and was accompanying Baker, replaced Zelikow.

⁷⁶ Kiessler & Elbe, *Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken*, p. 209; Zoellick to Baker, "German Final Settlement: Moscow Meeting Notes and Attachments," 12 Sep 90. Zoellick saw no way to compromise this opposition, except perhaps to accept a prohibition only while Soviet troops remained in Germany. The Americans noted that the language extending the prohibition on movement of foreign troops beyond the accepted ban on "stationing" had not appeared in the Soviet draft settlements of August 17 or September 1. It only showed up in Berlin, in a draft provision that "contingents of troops ... [from Britain, America, and France] will not cross a line corresponding to" the current borders of the GDR. Then the Soviets proposed adding that foreign troops will not be stationed in the former GDR "and they will not carry out any military activities there." The proposal was first debated on September 6.

Germany after Soviet forces left the former GDR in 1994. It was also agreed that foreign forces would not be stationed in the former GDR or carry out "any military activities there" until after Soviet troops were withdrawn at the end of 1994. Thereafter the West was willing to concede that foreign troops would not be "stationed" in the former GDR.

On September 11 political directors agreed to Kvitsinsky's proposal that foreign forces would be "neither stationed nor deployed" in eastern Germany, if it was understood that the term "deployed" only ruled out large-scale NATO maneuvers and did not affect smaller-scale transits or training. Kastrup, responding to a Kvitsinsky suggestion, further suggested that the FRG was prepared to make a statement that, in interpreting this provision, it would take everyone's interests into account. Weston said the UK would interpret such a statement to mean that smaller maneuvers could be permitted, with the decision in each case resting with the sovereign German state. The French and Americans offered similar interpretations. Weston still preferred an American proposal spelling out that "deployed" referred only to large-scale maneuvers. Zoellick thought the issue should be given to the ministers to solve. Kastrup wanted to keep working on the problem. The positions of the two sides were very close. It was Kvitsinsky, chairing the meeting, who suggested to the exhausted officials that it was fruitless to continue debating the topic and proposed that they adjourn for the night.⁷⁷

Since the West Germans saw the British as impeding a settlement on this issue, by talking of the need for NATO "maneuvers" with non-German forces in eastern Germany, Genscher personally leaned hard on Hurd to relax his opposition in a meeting at the German ambassador's residence on the eve of the ministerial. Genscher said the British were threatening a collapse of the ministerial and a failure to conclude a final settlement. According to Elbe, Hurd gave way and instructed his

⁷⁷ See Seitz to Baker, "September 11 Two-plus-Four Political Directors Meeting in Moscow: Detailed Account," 15 Mar 91, attached memcon pp. 10-16 (describing the evening discussion of the issue). This account corrects the inaccurate version of the supposed 'British problem' reported by Pond, Beyond the Wall, pp. 324-25 n. 32, based on her interviews in the German foreign ministry.

aide to call Weston off. During the political directors' session Weston mentioned that he had spoken to Hurd.

Later that evening Genscher discovered that wicked "Weston" had not backed off. He continued to argue that NATO needed to preserve its ability to fulfill its defense commitments to eastern Germany through a more flexible provision on the movement of foreign forces, arguing to his Western colleagues that the current reformist turn in the Kremlin might not last forever. Shevardnadze, in his memoirs, recalled being informed late that night, presumably by Kvitsinsky, that a country "was demanding the addition of a clause extending the zone of possible NATO maneuvers to the territory of the former GDR." He passed a message saying that, if his colleagues adopted such an article, "the meeting the next day would be off. In other words, there would be no treaty, and it would be their responsibility."⁷⁸

Genscher, returning to his hotel to discover the issue had not been settled, was furious. He could not understand what Hurd was doing. He and his staff thought then, and Elbe states in his memoirs, that Hurd had probably received further instructions directly from Thatcher in London. Elbe remembers a Bonn diplomat speculating that, "We perceived the displeasure in this that the [British] no longer had their 'role.'"

Genscher angrily declared that he would go to the signing ceremony tomorrow and, "We will see who does not come." The world press, he thought, would see who was responsible. Elbe, in his memoir, even goes so far as to quote, without comment, Kvitsinsky's suspicion that some among Germany's allies wanted to sabotage the whole process of German-Russian reconciliation and arms control — an obvious dig at the British and probably Thatcher. The use of Kvitsinsky to levy this charge is ironic, since it was Kvitsinsky who had cut off the discussion of the problem during the meeting of political directors and it was Kvitsinsky who presumably then advised Shevardnadze to threaten to cancel a signing of the treaty.

Oddly, Elbe's story said nothing about the American role to this point. Yet no

⁷⁸ Shevardnadze, The Future Belongs to Freedom, pp. 146-47.

country had more influence on a NATO issue than the United States, and no government had more influence with the British government. The omission is telling. It shows that the Americans agreed with the British, which was the case, and that the West Germans knew it. Rather than explain to their minister how the political directors' discussion had finally sputtered out in a combination of British and American stubbornness and the Soviet chair's impatience, Kastrup -- who had tried to keep the discussion going -- apparently found it easier to blame the British. Or so he was understood. It is possible, however, that the West Germans knew Zoellick was immovable but were waiting for Baker to arrive.

We do know that in the middle of the night Genscher, frustrated and angry about the 'British problem,' tried to get Baker out of bed, though Baker's aides preferred not to wake the weary secretary of state. But after Genscher threatened to "wake him myself," Baker was roused for a meeting in his suite with the anxious West German foreign minister. Baker, according to Elbe, promised to help insure that nothing kept a Two Plus Four agreement from being signed as planned. What Elbe does not mention is that Baker, not wavering from the American position, worked out with Genscher the possibility of leaving the "deployed" word in the text, perhaps with an oral explanation that this would not include "large-scale" maneuvers. No one could write a satisfactory legal definition that excluded such "large-scale" movements without prohibiting transits, training activities, or other contingencies important to NATO's defense of all of Germany. Genscher came back to his hotel at 2:30 in the morning and briefed the just-arrived East German prime minister and foreign minister, De Maiziere, on the situation.⁷⁹

"Toward morning," Shevardnadze recalled, "I was informed that the proposal [to extend NATO maneuvers] had been withdrawn." Since there had been no such

⁷⁹ Kiessler & Elbe, *Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken*, pp. 210-12; a last minute reference to the Baker-Genscher understanding was typed early in the morning of September 12 onto Zoellick's briefing paper on the subject for Baker. See "German Final Settlement: Moscow Meeting Notes and Attachments," 12 Sep 90 (last item in briefing points at Tab 3). Though Elbe refers to Baker being jet-lagged, Baker had been in Moscow for nearly two days, and had come from the summit talks with Gorbachev in Helsinki on September 9.

proposal to begin with, it is hard to tell how Kvitsinsky's reports to him had changed during the night, or whether Kvitsinsky felt he had already dared enough in using Shevardnadze's clout to intimidate the Western delegates. In any case, when the Western ministers gathered for breakfast at the French ambassador's residence Genscher had pulled the French foreign minister to the side, pleading with him, "Roland, I have never asked you for a favor. But now you must help me. Make the situation clear to Hurd."

Kastrup had already drafted a West German statement along the lines he had suggested during the meeting of political directors the previous night, that they would define the term "deployed" taking everyone's interests into account. He deserves some credit for holding on to this idea, and remembering that no one had really opposed it. Since neither the Soviets, the British, nor the Americans had actually spoken out against Kastrup's suggestion at the time, neither Hurd nor Baker had any particular difficulty with drafting the suggested language that foreign forces would not be "stationed or deployed" in the former GDR, while combining it with the German statement that they would resolve any disputes over the interpretation of the term.⁸⁰

Since the German government would have territorial sovereignty over any allied activity, no new constraints were being added. The standard meaning of "deployed," in this context, was "to place or arrange (armed forces) in battle disposition or formation or in locations appropriate for their future employment."⁸¹ The very first time Weston had spoken to the issue of allowed military activities, in Berlin on September 6, he had explained that NATO was obliged to defend eastern Germany and, unless an activity was expressly excluded, a question about other activities was strictly a matter to be decided by the allies involved, starting with the agreement of the host country. Bondarenko then answered by accusing Weston of wanting maneuvers in eastern Germany. Weston immediately replied that he had said

⁸⁰ See Shevardnadze, The Future Belongs to Freedom, p. 147; Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, p. 212.

⁸¹ Merriam-Webster, Webster's Third New International Dictionary, vol. I (1986).

only that this would be a question for Germany and its allies to decide. Zoellick had then joined in explaining the key significance of giving Germany these sovereign choices. The new proposal in Moscow mirrored the stance Zoellick and Weston had taken literally from the moment the issue had first arisen.⁸²

The Two Plus Four ministers then gathered, with only a few aides present, and quickly agreed to the Western proposal. As mentioned earlier, neither Kvitsinsky (nor anyone else) had directly opposed this idea when it briefly emerged the previous night. The meaning of the term "deployed" was to be described in an Agreed Minute saying that any questions about the term "will be decided by the government of the united Germany in a reasonable and responsible way taking into account the security interests of each contracting party...." Then in the late morning the formal meeting began with a round of emotional speeches, followed by the ceremonial signing of the document. On October, at a CSCE ministerial meeting in New York, the governments signed the declaration suspending Four Power rights at the moment of German unification, and this declaration took effect when Germany was unified on October 3, 1990.⁸³

In the afternoon of September 12 Gorbachev met with Genscher. Referring to his rough handling of the West German foreign minister in December 1989, Gorbachev recalled their "hard conversations." Now Gorbachev wanted to turn the page and talk of a new Europe. Several ministers referred to a "long road" that had arrived at a destination. In the Berlin declaration of June 5, 1945, and the Potsdam declaration of August 2, 1945, the victorious powers had assumed supreme authority over Germany and defined their responsibility for the future fate of a defeated and ruined nation. Now, on September 12, 1990, in Moscow, the World War II victors gave up that responsibility and blessed the recreation of a united German state.

⁸² Author's notes of the meeting; Seitz to Baker, "September 4-7 Two-plus-Four Political Directors' Meeting in Berlin: Detailed Account of September 6 Session," 15 Mar 91, pp. 12-13 of attached memcon.

⁸³ See Declaration Suspending the Operation of Quadripartite Rights and Responsibilities, October 1, 1990, reprinted in International Legal Materials, vol. 30, p. 555 (1991).

Shevardnadze said there were no winners and no losers. He said the "German Question" would never again threaten European peace. Bush's vision of a "Europe whole and free" had taken form. The division of Europe had ended with an end to the division of Germany. By any definition, the Cold War was now over. In that sense at least, the treaty signed in Moscow was truly a final settlement.⁸⁴

Follow-Through

On October 3 the Federal Republic of Germany absorbed the German Democratic Republic under Article 23 of the FRG's Basic Law. All Germans became preoccupied with the enormous task of integrating the new Laender, and a different society, into the Federal Republic. Soaring on the public acclaim which greeted his diplomatic achievements and the unification of the country, Kohl was reelected with a comfortable margin of victory in the federal elections held on December 2.⁸⁵

Germany signed its bilateral treaties with the Soviet Union in Bonn on November 9.⁸⁶ It signed, as promised, a bilateral treaty reaffirming the border with Poland on November 14 and a general Polish-German treaty of friendship was also signed in June 1991.⁸⁷ All the signatories of the Final Settlement ratified the treaty, though Gorbachev and Shevardnadze had to exert themselves to win the consent of the Supreme Soviet, where Falin tried to rally the die-hard conservative opposition. The Final Settlement entered into force in March 1991.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ The account of the concluding session in Moscow is drawn from Kiessler & Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken, pp. 205-13; Seitz to Baker, "September 12 Two-plus-Four Ministerial in Moscow: Detailed Account," 31 Jan 91; author interviews with Zoellick and Rice; Zoellick to Baker, "German Final Settlement: Moscow Meeting Notes and Attachments," 12 Sep 90.

⁸⁵ The "hangover" is admirably summarized in Pond, Beyond the Wall, pp. 225-48.

⁸⁶ See Hans Viktor Böttcher, ed., Materialen zu Deutschlandfragen: Politiker und Wissenschaftler nehmen Stellung 1989-91 (Bonn: Kulturstiftung der deutschen Vertriebenen, 1991), pp. 251-256.

⁸⁷ See *ibid.*, pp. 286-306.

⁸⁸ The text of the Final Settlement on Germany is reprinted in numerous collections; one is *ibid.*, pp. 158-162. For Soviet commentary on the Soviet-German treaties see Aleksandr Bovin, "Germany: Victory or

The military setting for postwar European politics had been shadowed since 1945 by the deployment of massive Soviet conventional forces in the heart of Europe. By the end of 1990 this fundamental feature of Europe's political geography was being erased. The Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces on Europe (CFE) remained firmly linked to a CSCE summit. This linkage, combined with extraordinary exertions by Baker in August and September, culminating in a series of meetings in New York at the beginning of October, finally produced a CFE treaty that was signed in Paris, on November 19, at the CSCE summit. One afternoon in Moscow, Baker explained why he was working so hard, despite the changes in Europe, to finish the CFE treaty.

I know that we're going to have further negotiations. ... The fact is that these negotiations will be overtaken by real events anyway. And it's going to happen to you more than it will happen to us. But it will happen to us, too. Maybe we could say that arms control is a waste of time since it's going to happen anyway. But we do get political

Defeat," Izvestiya, November 12, 1990, p. 1 in FBIS-SOV 90-220, November 14, 1990, pp. 26-27; Ye. Grigoriev & V. Drobkov, "The Germans and the United States: Why the USSR President Went to Germany," Pravda, November 14, 1990, pp. 1, 5 in FBIS-SOV 90-221, November 15, 1990, pp. 29-30; "Parafirovaniye Dogovora [Treaty Approved]," Vestnik, no. 19 (77), October 15, 1990, p. 19; "SSR-FRG: Vizit M.S. Gorbacheva v FRG," Vestnik, no. 23 (81), December 15, 1990, pp. 2-20. On the Polish-German treaties see Wladyslaw Czaplinski, "The New Polish-German Treaties and the Changing Political Structure in Europe," American Journal of International Law, vol. 86, no. 1 (January 1992), pp. 163-72. For the Soviet debate over ratification, including expert evaluations by Kvitsinsky and a high-ranking military officer explaining why the settlement was the best available protection for Soviet interests, see, e.g., TASS, "Shevardnadze Addresses Panel on German Treaty," September 20, 1990 in FBIS-SOV 90-184, September 21, 1990, pp. 20-23; interview with Kvitsinsky, "An Agreement is an Agreement," New Times, no. 12 (1991), pp. 18-20; A.A. Danilevich, "Voyenno-Strategicheskiye Aspekty Ob'edineniya Germaniya [Military-Strategic Aspects of German Unification]," Voyennaya Mysl', No. 10 (October 1990). Once the final settlement was signed, many conservatives in the government swallowed their private dismay and publicly supported Gorbachev's decision. See, e.g., Marshal Sergei Akhromeyev, "Unity Was Bound to Come," Die Welt (German Unity supplement), October 3, 1990, p. 8 in FBIS-SOV 90-192, October 3, 1990, pp. 5-6; Vadim Zagladin, "The Soviet View of German Reunification," in press release, October 16, 1990 in FBIS-SOV 90-216, November 7, 1990, pp. 16-19. On Falin's irreconcilable opposition and his efforts to attack the Final Settlement in the Supreme Soviet (including an argument with Kvitsinsky), see Politische Erinnerungen, pp. 497-500.

The U.S. government was undecided until September about whether or how to submit the German final settlement to Senate ratification. After Bush and Baker were satisfied that the Senate would take up the treaty expeditiously, so that the U.S. would not delay its entry into force, they chose to handle the document as a treaty rather than an executive agreement. Legal arguments had been adduced to support either outcome, but the administration preferred if possible to satisfy the Senate's wishes to get the agreement. For a summary of the arguments see Seitz, Mullins and Kreczko (Acting) to Baker, "Congress and the German Settlement," undated (probably 3 Sep 90). The U.S. Senate did ratify the treaty with exceptional speed and little controversy.

advantages from arriving at agreements. And I think we need them. Otherwise, anything can be undone.

The withdrawal of Soviet forces from central and eastern Europe was already well underway, but the CFE treaty provided that all Soviet forces in Europe, including European Russia, would be reduced to about half their former size and remain under these limits for the foreseeable future. In the spring of 1991, as promised, all European states issued political undertakings about the maximum size of their armed forces, so that the Germans were not singled out by having made such a commitment.⁸⁹

The Germans reduced their armed forces as promised and budget constraints even drove them below the 370,000 ceiling so that, by the middle of 1994, their armed forces numbered 357,000 personnel. The German government was contemplating further cuts to a target of 345,000. As in 1990 the issue was how to reconcile this smaller army with the continuation of conscription. The Soviets also proceeded with the withdrawal of their forces from eastern Germany, completing the removal of all of their troops on schedule in 1994. More than half a million Russian soldiers, dependents, and civilians departed with 2.7 million tons of material and more than twelve thousand armored fighting vehicles. The majority of American forces have also left Germany since 1990. But more than 100,000 American soldiers and airmen will stay in Germany for the foreseeable future.

In the final act of concluding Germany's occupation, American, British, and French forces left Berlin on September 8, 1994 to proclamations of thanks and friendship. Russian troops had departed a week earlier, unhappy that they were not permitted to join in the gala Western ceremony. As of September 1994 the Bundeswehr, fully integrated in NATO's military command, can deploy and operate

⁸⁹ For the Baker quotation see Memcon of Meeting between Baker and Shevardnadze, Moscow, 13 Sep 90, p. 5. For a textual analysis of the CFE treaty and its aftermath, see Jonathan Dean, "The CFE Negotiations, Present and Future," *Survival*, 32 (July-August 1990): 313-24; Ivo Daalder, *The CFE Treaty: An Overview and an Assessment* (Washington: Johns Hopkins Foreign Policy Institute, 1991); Jonathan Dean & Randall Watson Forsberg, "CFE and Beyond: The Future of Conventional Arms Control," *International Security* 17 (Summer 1992): 76-121.

freely in any part of Germany.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization survived the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and flourished as an institution, even though the Atlantic community has had difficulty in defining a political vision for the post-Cold War world. By 1994 NATO's status as Europe's premier organization for integrating political and military decisionmaking and power was unchallenged. The Alliance's infrastructure played a notable role in supporting the U.S.-led coalition's military effort against Iraq in 1990-91 and NATO has been called upon again to support Western political and military efforts during the Croatian and Bosnian crises.

A dull and unobjectionable NATO-Warsaw Pact declaration was ultimately prepared in time for the CSCE summit, and just as quickly forgotten. But the former adversaries in the Warsaw Pact seized upon the separate and more lasting July 1990 Western invitation to send their envoys to NATO. By the end of 1991 NATO completed its reformulation of military strategy and force posture and had set up a more formal entity to include the Eastern states, the North Atlantic Cooperation Council. In early 1994 NATO responded to Eastern European clamor to join the Alliance by creating the "Partnership for Peace," a halfway house for developing closer integration of these governments with NATO's political and military organization. The CSCE had been strengthened too as an institution, precisely along the lines proposed at NATO's London summit, but remained too large and unwieldy to do more than sponsor useful diplomatic initiatives to complement the work of other institutions.

The tremendous boost that France and Germany gave to the European integration process, impelled by the breakneck pace of German unification, had very significant consequences. During the spring and summer of 1990 the key decisions were made to negotiate what became the Maastricht Treaty, signed in December 1991, creating the present European Union. The hectic and unreflective quality of these decisions in 1990 were, in large part, a product of French dismay and frustration with developments in Germany and a German desire to sign any piece of paper that established their irrefutable credentials as good "Europeans." The ill-

conceived aspects of the rush to European political and monetary union sparked a public and financial backlash in 1992 and at the end of 1994 fundamental questions about the goal of political union, the inclusiveness of the planned monetary union, and the relationship of these plans to the simultaneous enlargement of the European Union have still not been answered.

The greatest change of all, of course, was the 1991 disintegration of the Soviet Union itself. The fundamental causes for this great event transcend even the events of 1989 and 1990. The more immediate catalysts for radical change in 1990 and 1991 included the struggle to hold non-Russian nationalities in the Union, the attempted coup in August 1991, and the historic role of Boris Yeltsin. International developments also played a part in this dramatic phase of history.

Of first importance was the crisis over Lithuania. This issue had reached a peak of tension in the spring of 1990, then reached another in January 1991. In both cases Gorbachev stepped right to the brink of ordering large-scale military action. In both cases international pressure played an important role in persuading him to step back.

Gorbachev's retreats over Lithuania and Germany were the two decisions that, more than any others, were considered unthinkable by most observers in and out of the Soviet Union before they happened. These policies, more than any others, emboldened other nationalities to press their claims. After all, if Gorbachev would make these decisions, anything was possible. The "sudden intensification of nationalistic sentiment was palpable during the last months of 1990."⁹⁰

During the last quarter of 1990 Gorbachev made a radical course correction in his domestic policies, moving toward authoritarian rule in order to save the Soviet Union and salvage the future of socialism. Shevardnadze resigned in December. Gorbachev had to rely on support from the army, the Interior Ministry police, the KGB, and the Communist Party. But Gorbachev had difficulty winning back conservative Party support. He had begun discarding the structures of collective

⁹⁰ Kaiser, Why Gorbachev Happened, p. 368.

leadership, ignoring the Politburo. The first issue that he treated in this way was policy toward Germany. As the structures of collective leadership withered, the barons of the Soviet state spun further out of centralized control. In the specific case of the military the alienation from Gorbachev was dramatically accelerated by policy on Germany and the CFE treaty. This area of policy, more than any others taken earlier, had a direct, massive impact on the lives of hundreds of thousands of officers, the posture of their forces, and the beliefs that had guided their professional lives.

Gorbachev, Shevardnadze, and their close aides recognized the impact of their decisions on Germany in domestic politics -- not in the sense of mass public opinion, but in their analysis of key factions close to the levers of power. Chernyayev later commented that, if there had been a coup in August 1990 rather than August 1991, the top issue would have been Germany. Kohl and especially Genscher were always worried about whether they were pushing Gorbachev too far, whether Gorbachev would survive.

Bush, Baker, and Scowcroft, while sincere in their desire to help Gorbachev, were less willing to compromise other priorities they valued in order to do it. Hence American positions were consistently more conservative than Genscher on the policy issues and the Americans were consistently more skeptical than Kohl about the value of quickly offering massive, government-guaranteed loans to Moscow. For the many reasons indicated in this study, the American views tended to be those ultimately adopted by the Western side, and were eventually accepted by the Soviet Union. A question that remains is whether this American success in its German and European policies was a Pyrrhic victory because it so seriously weakened Gorbachev's authority at home, thereby imperiling the East-West rapprochement of 1988 and 1989.

My conclusion is that the United States was correct in pursuing its more ambitious operational objectives on Germany because, first, it was more important for America and Western Europe to win the postwar struggle to end Soviet and communist control over Central and Eastern Europe than attempt, possibly in vain, to safeguard reform in the USSR. While it mattered hugely whether Moscow chose to be a friend or foe of the Western countries, the United States could not be sure that

Gorbachev would not be overthrown at any time for other reasons, including his domestic reforms. The USSR might again turn into an adversary whatever the West might do for Gorbachev. But, for a time, the U.S. did have a good chance of securing the future and pro-Western alignment of a united Germany while maintaining the strength and cohesion of the North Atlantic Alliance. That task took precedence.

Second, the Americans did not think they had arrived yet at the most extreme dilemma between success on Germany and failure for reform in the USSR. Even when Shevardnadze pleaded to Baker, in Berlin, to understand Gorbachev's perilous domestic situation, Shevardnadze did not ask the Americans to reverse their entire policy. Instead he used this argument to urge Washington to address Soviet security concerns by, for example, changing the posture of the NATO Alliance. Since the Americans responded to this Soviet plea, they thought they had found a 'third path' that would mute the worst domestic repercussions from a Gorbachev 'surrender' on Germany.

Both of these arguments can be challenged. One can argue that Western demands regarding Germany fed Communist old-guard resentments that could have produced a renewed cold war if Gorbachev was driven from office. Remember the comment of Alexander Bessmertnykh, then ambassador to the U.S. and the man who replaced Shevardnadze as foreign minister: The way Germany was unified was "one of the most hated developments in the history of Soviet foreign policy, and it will remain so for decades."⁹¹ By guarding so vigilantly against a new cold war the Americans might have been creating one. The second argument can be challenged by arguing that Gorbachev, and the Americans, both miscalculated. They both wanted to believe the illusion that there were, as both Baker and Shevardnadze put it, "no winners and losers." But they were deceiving themselves.

The arguments on both sides must be taken seriously. Subsequent events appear to validate the Bush administration's judgments and choices. Yeltsin emerged on top; he sought even closer cooperation with the United States for the new Russian

⁹¹ Quoted, from 1991 interview, in Beschloss & Talbott, At the Highest Levels, p. 240.

state. But events could have followed a different course in 1991. The Kohl government and the Bush administration might have been right, but they were also lucky.

Chapter Twelve

THE COURSE OF A GREAT EVENT

Who Gets the Credit?

The rapid unification of Germany in freedom was a great event. To many it was also a great accomplishment. So even before unification was complete officials, scholars, and journalists were arguing about who should get credit for this achievement. Kohl's governing coalition had a special incentive, since the Chancellor had placed unification at the core of his 1990 campaign for reelection. The Bush administration, alarmed by press reports treating the matter as a Soviet-German deal and Bush as a bystander, worked to put its own version of the record. The American officials were also worried about the politics of awarding credit, though the presidential election was more than two years away and American public interest was modest. As the Bush administration officials feared, candidate Bill Clinton derided Bush's part in ending the cold war, saying Bush was crowing about his role like a rooster taking credit for the sunrise.¹

Journalists and scholars quickly took sides. Some, like Clinton, were dismissive about the American role. Michael Mandelbaum said Bush lacked "the capacity to define U.S. interests abroad and the policies necessary to pursue them."² Frank Costigliola said American leaders had actually been cool toward the prospect of German unification in November-December 1989 and that Kohl had "struck out on his own and presented Washington with *faits accomplis*.³"

However, almost all serious scholars of German unification have -- like most West German officials -- placed a substantial emphasis on the American role.

¹ Bill Clinton, address to the Los Angeles World Affairs Council, August 1992.

² Michael Mandelbaum, "The Bush Foreign Policy," Foreign Affairs, 70 (Winter 1990): 6.

³ Frank Costigliola, "An 'Arm Around the Shoulder': The United States, NATO and German Reunification, 1989-90," Contemporary European History, 3 (March 1994): 87. Costigliola unfortunately blends an inaccurate factual portrayal of the course of events (even considering the then-available published material) with his value judgment that the Bush administration was far too preoccupied with preserving NATO. Costigliola does not consider NATO valuable enough as an institution to have been worth the risk of sparking "a revanchist Russian nationalism." *Ibid.*, p. 110.

Elizabeth Pond concluded that, "Apart from the very few players in the game, even the Bush administration itself never realized just how good its own policy actually was." Richard Kiessler and Frank Elbe, Stephen Szabo, Karl Kaiser, Heinrich Bortfeldt, and Alexander Moens all arrived at a similarly positive appraisal.⁴

Some scholars took Gorbachev's side. Raymond Garthoff believes Gorbachev wanted a common European home and can take credit for Germany's unification. Indeed, to Garthoff, "the continued tough bargaining by Reagan and Bush in an obsolete zero-sum negotiating mode" only made matters "more difficult for Gorbachev."⁵

Then there are commentators, like Konrad Jarausch, who scoff at all these efforts to give politicians credit for a grass-roots movement of the people. "The unlikely heroes of the upheaval are the people of the GDR." The view of such writers is that, once the will of the people held sway, politicians could do little more than chase this "runaway train."⁶

This study may not settle the debate over credit, but it should make the argument less interesting. Gorbachev's historical role was crucial in setting the general forces in motion. But he did not want unification. From the November 1989 scheming with Krenz to the May 1990 Politburo meeting where he pounded his fist on the table to emphasize that Germany would "never" be united in NATO, Gorbachev made it clear that the common European home he had in mind was not the one that

⁴ Elizabeth Pond, Beyond the Wall: Germany's Road to Unification (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1993), p. x; Richard Kiessler & Frank Elbe, Ein runder Tisch mit scharfen Ecken: Der diplomatische Weg zur deutschen Einheit (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1993), *passim*; Stephen Szabo, The Diplomacy of German Unification (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), p. 115; Karl Kaiser, Deutschlands Vereinigung: Die internationalen Aspekte (Bergisch Gladbach: Bastei Lübbe, 1991), pp. 21-22; Heinrich Bortfeldt, Washington, Bonn, Berlin: Die USA und die deutsche Einheit (Bonn: Bouvier, 1993), *passim*; Alexander Moens, "American Diplomacy and German Unification," Survival, 33 (November/December 1991): 531 ("American policy, in particular, was well-conceived and well-executed, and the American role in the unification process was fundamentally important.")

⁵ Raymond Garthoff, The Great Transition: American-Soviet Relations and the End of the Cold War (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1994), pp. 774-778.

⁶ Konrad Jarausch, The Rush to German Unity (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 5. The "runaway train" phrase is from Richard Helms in the Washington Post, February 25, 1990, p. A24.

was taking shape before his eyes. There is no reason, in Gorbachev's case, to be tempted by the usual historian's trap of referring "changes and achievements to this party or that personage, reading the issue as a purpose that has been attained, when very often it is a purpose that has been marred."⁷

Hardly anyone would contest that Kohl's policies are a vital part of the story of German unification. The study also establishes the significance of the American role beyond any doubt. There were no Soviet-German *faits accomplis*. When Kohl traveled to Moscow in July 1990 Gorbachev had already decided to move. Kohl was just as surprised as Bush that Gorbachev moved when he did, as decisively as he did. And Kohl adopted positions on substantive issues that had, without exception, been carefully coordinated in advance with the American government and had, in several cases, been designed in Washington. After unification was all over, after he had retired from office, Hans-Dietrich Genscher told Pond bluntly that: "Gorbachev cared about only two countries, Germany and America. ... If America had so much as hesitated [in backing Germany], we could have stood on our heads" and not gotten anywhere.⁸

Once it is recognized that the Soviet Union, the two German states, and America were all essential to the interactions that determined the outcome, the more interesting questions are those that examine just how the interactions affected the course of this great event.

Here one stumbles directly into another debate over credit, credit for "victory" in the Cold War. Defenders of the Reagan administration, in particular, take credit for confronting communism and placing it under the strain of competing with an American military buildup and American efforts to subvert Communist rule. Critics of the Reagan administration see Gorbachev as the key figure and think the Reagan policies just made Gorbachev's job of reducing tensions even harder. My view is that

⁷ Herbert Butterfield, The Whig Interpretation of History (New York: Scribner, 1st American ed., 1951), pp. 39-40.

⁸ Pond, Beyond the Wall, pp. 185-186.

the Reagan efforts encouraged a broadbased quest for reform leadership within the CPSU by spotlighting inadequacies in the very sectors most highly prized by the state. The 1985 choice of Gorbachev as General Secretary was a result. But there were several forms of reform being considered, and some (like those supported by Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov) would have exacerbated the U.S.-Soviet rivalry. Gorbachev was not forced to choose the particular direction of glasnost and perestroika he followed. Soviet economic conditions were bad but not desperate. Further, Gorbachev did not make the decisive choices about the international and defense posture of the Soviet Union until late 1987 and 1988. The Reagan administration policies guided by Shultz encouraged those choices but did not force Gorbachev's hand. They were Gorbachev's choices dominated by Gorbachev's vision of the USSR's future.⁹

But, internationally, this chain of events led mainly to a period of detente and budding rapprochement in U.S.-Soviet relations. The chain of events leading to the upheavals in Central and Eastern Europe, the unification of Germany, and then the collapse of the USSR itself, originated in Gorbachev's decision to abandon international class struggle as the guiding metaphor for Soviet foreign policy. But the pivotal decisions were only beginning to be made in 1988. They were: (1) whether to abandon the "Brezhnev doctrine" and let East European communist leaders fend more for themselves, with Moscow hoping that these countries would find their own little Gorbachevs who could make their states more viable and less dependent on Soviet help; and (2) how to respond once pressure for self-determination outside and inside the USSR began affecting vital Soviet interests, as those interests had traditionally been defined.

The crunch came first in decisions about allowing non-communist rule in Poland in 1989 then, most importantly, in the 1989 and 1990 decisions about Germany and Lithuania. Associated with these were much sharper choices about defense priorities connected to signature of the CFE treaty and the disintegrating

⁹ This argument is developed at greater length in Philip Zelikow and Condoleezza Rice, A Study in Statecraft: Germany United and Europe Transformed, 1989-1990 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), chapter 1.

position of Soviet forces stationed in Central Europe.

So the debate over Reagan administration policies, while interesting and important, does not connect well to a close analysis of what happened between 1989 and 1991. There is no necessary causal relationship between Gorbachev's decisions about U.S.-Soviet relations in 1987 and 1988 and his later decisions in 1989 and 1990 on Poland, Germany, CFE, and Lithuania. Judgments about the INF Treaty and withdrawal from Afghanistan were qualitatively different, by orders of magnitude, from the later judgments about the fate of Central Europe and the Soviet Union itself. It is absolutely telling to note that, by the end of 1988, Gorbachev, Shultz, and Margaret Thatcher all thought the cold war was over. In their terms, it was.

One can find a recurrent theme in Gorbachev's desire for cooperation over confrontation in his relations with the West. Gorbachev put domestic renewal ahead of international competition. But until 1989 the turn toward cooperation had been relatively easy. Gorbachev had encountered little serious domestic opposition to the INF Treaty or the withdrawal from Afghanistan. When Gorbachev faced sharp domestic political attacks on his "new thinking" in foreign policy during the winter of 1989-1990, he was facing such costs "for the first time."¹⁰ So his earlier choices, in harmony with his vision for how the cold war would end, with few political costs, hardly dictated what he would do when these premises were no longer valid.

Concentrating on 1989-1990, and on Germany in particular, the next hard question is to assess the role of popular unrest. Were politicians just following the irresistible outpouring of uncorked discontent? The best answer credits statecraft with the power to channel these popular desires rather than producing them.

The East Germans thought they could channel popular dissent into a reinvigorated GDR. A major reason why East German protests were not bloodily put down in October 1989 is because the majority of the East German politburo did not think they were facing a choice between bloody repression and surrender to West Germany. The majority of the East German politburo, including security czar Erich

¹⁰ Garthoff, The Great Transition, p. 412.

Mielke, convinced themselves that they had an easier way out. Honecker was the problem. If they installed a little Gorbachev in East Germany they thought they could manage the cries for change. This was Gorbachev's view too.

This belief was not foolish. The American embassy, at least, thought this sequence of events was entirely possible. The leaders of the fall 1989 protests themselves sought to retain an independent, socialist East Germany. Weeks after the Berlin Wall opened, the available polling evidence indicated that majorities in the GDR did not want unification with the FRG, or did not think this option was really available to them. Charles Maier has described this in conversation as a "tethered consciousness. East Germans, oppressed by one of the largest secret police organizations ever created seemed docile before the summer of 1989. Raised in a cage, even a vigorous animal soon stops rushing at the bars. Eventually, even if the cage door swings open, the creature, so inured to its confinement, might be slow to realize how dramatically the situation had changed.

Kohl, backed by Bush, then played a crucial part in destabilizing the Krenz and Modrow governments in the fall of 1989 and the winter of 1989-1990, insisting on revolutionary change as the condition for economic aid. Kohl then put out a unification alternative to Modrow's frustratingly slow domestic reforms. When Bush helped shield Kohl from the inevitable reaction to this plan and then Kohl, with American encouragement, began offering a rapid, straightforward path to unification, public unrest gained a new, well-defined outlet. It dawned on the East Germans that the great powers would not stop unification and they could actually choose this tempting way out of their dilemmas.

Then, though, the West still faced the challenge of reckoning with the international consequences of the East German choices that became evident in the election of March 1990. From February 1990 onward the American government led the way in fashioning that response, as the West German government concentrated on the task of internal unification and in offering just enough economic help (in January 1990 and in May 1990) to temper Soviet anger. But the key moves in June-July 1990 were political, not economic. Kohl brought no new economic aid to Moscow in July

1990; just the plan starting with the IMF study that was agreed upon at the G-7 summit in Houston. But, propelled by the outcome of the London NATO summit, the West was offering the long-term prospect of new political and economic cooperation. Soviet diplomacy had been kept off balance, behind events, and outmaneuvered. Gorbachev was euphoric about the outcome of the 28th Party Congress even as he was discarding the constraining (but sustaining) machinery of collective leadership. Gorbachev and Shevardnadze, both of whom had long harbored some ambivalence in their feelings about Germany and NATO, made their decision. They did not seek the approval of the Politburo.

Chapter One discussed the relationship between "general causes" and "historical accidents" in the course of great events. One can think of East German popular opinion as a crucial general cause, a volatile force, that had to be assessed, persuaded, or channeled by governments. The outcome can be understood best by examining the interaction between the policies of the FRG, the USSR, and the United States.

One can use the metaphor of chaos theory offered in Chapter One and identify certain "breakpoints" as "bifurcations" between the old behavior of the system and its new behavior. There is the example of the Hungarian refugee crisis of August 1989, discussed in Chapter One. Other such "breakpoints" were the Leipzig demonstration of October 1989; Kohl's abandonment of the tenets of West German Ostpolitik during the fall of 1989; Kohl's decisions in the winter of 1990 to bypass Article 146-style confederation and move for an Article 23 takeover of the GDR (as well as the most radical option for economic union on West German terms); and the Soviet loss of diplomatic influence over German actions by May 1990 effected by the March 1990 GDR election and the contrast between the unfocused Eastern and energetic Western diplomatic efforts pursued between December 1989 and May 1990. These breakpoints then set the scene for the Soviet diplomatic failures in Bonn in May 1990 and in Berlin in June, Gorbachev's concession at the May 1990 Washington summit, and Kohl's successful July 1990 trip building on the message delivered by the London NATO summit.

Theories of International Change

It is tempting to explain the outcome of German unification with a neo-realist hypothesis. This hypothesis would assert that the pro-Western outcome reflected an underlying asymmetry in the structural power capabilities of the two sides. The Soviets were bound to be overwhelmed because they were so weak.¹¹

This hypothesis, however, runs into two major problems. First the Soviets were not so weak at the time. Their military power was formidable. Even if Gorbachev had ruled out the cruder uses of the 380,000 Soviet troops stationed in East Germany, his military position was the backdrop for his diplomacy. As the study shows, West German and American officials were quite worried about possible Soviet political counter-moves, especially during the winter of 1989-1990. The West German and East German electorates would have reacted strongly to any signal that a major international crisis might be looming or that government policies were about to plunge Europe back into a renewed cold war. Sensitized by upcoming elections, political figures and journalists were extremely attuned to signals from Gorbachev, a man widely admired in both German states, and even to signals from far lesser Soviet officials.

True, the Soviet economy was faltering. But the relative strength and weakness of West and East was in good part a product of what leaders valued, and how they assessed strength. Bush and Kohl may have felt strong, but practically all media commentators -- operating from a similar base of facts -- expected the West would have to move more slowly and make more concessions in order to manage the unification of Germany. Part of the sense of strength was based on an assessment of the quality of Soviet diplomacy, an artifact of personality, circumstances, Soviet bureaucratic politics, and organizational culture.

For his part, Gorbachev felt he needed Western support. But this was again based on his perception of the structural conditions. In 1947, as Stalin moved toward

¹¹ John Lewis Gaddis seems to be making this inference in his essay on "Tectonics, History, and the End of the Cold War" in The United States and the End of the Cold War: Implications, Reconsiderations, Provocations (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 156-157.

a more confrontational posture against the West, he could note that America had the atomic bomb and the Soviet Union did not. The American GDP rivaled that of the rest of the world put together. Objectively, his position vis à vis America in 1947 could be considered weak. But he did not perceive it that way.

The second major criticism of the neo-realist hypothesis is that it does not adequately explain key parts of the record. Gorbachev, for example, achieved his greatest bargaining success, squeezing more than ten billion D-Marks in grant money out of the West Germans in September 1990. This was nearly two months after Gorbachev had conceded publicly on the major issues. If Gorbachev lacked the political and economic clout to force a confrontation over the big security issues in the spring and summer of 1990 (or even earlier), why would he feel able to risk a confrontation over money in September, when the FRG-GDR treaty on political union was already signed, unification was imminent, divisions among the allies and within the West German government had faded, and Gorbachev's own bargaining position had deteriorated? The answer lies less in general calculations of power than in the circumstances of the moment: Gorbachev's belated recognition of what he needed politically and economically; a West German government that was caught off balance and preoccupied by the oncoming calendar of events; and a West German Chancellor anxious to avoid a public confrontation with the popular Soviet leader while also unwilling to seek help from the American president who was in turn distracted by the crisis in the Persian Gulf.

If a simple neo-realist calculation of structural power does not adequately predict the course of a great event like German unification, can other theories do better? The current state of the art in predicting peaceful territorial change among international relations theorists was summarized as follows by Arie Kacowicz:

I identify three background conditions that facilitate the process of peaceful territorial change: an asymmetrical distribution of power between the parties, preferably to the advantage of the status quo power; a similar type of political regime among the members of the dyad; and a convergence of norms and rules of international law and morality sustained by the parties in relation to a disputed territory.

Kacowicz then explains that:

These conditions are not very significant separately; it is their dynamic confluence that explains the possible outcome. Furthermore, not all the conditions have the same importance or relevance. ... Conversely, the presence of all three conditions does not necessarily lead to a successful outcome, in the form of a treaty that formalizes a new territorial status quo. It is important therefore to understand as well the process variables that make peaceful territorial change likely to occur -- the interests and preferences of parties regarding a given territory, their degree of cooperation and reciprocity, and their strategies of bargaining and negotiation.¹²

Kacowicz did not study the German unification case. But the outcome is consistent with his theoretical hypothesis, as quoted above. Unfortunately, an entirely different outcome would also have been consistent with his conclusions. There was arguably an asymmetrical distribution of power between the parties, though not as great an asymmetry as is sometimes assumed. But the asymmetry favored the challenger, not the status quo power. The members of the "dyad" (U.S., FRG, and some allies vs. USSR/GDR) had different political regimes. The Western half would probably be coded as "democratic;" the Eastern half as "transitional." So that correlation would also suggest a good chance of failure. As for the third criteria,¹³ convergence of norms, the answer is murky. Using Kacowicz's coding framework one can find partial disagreement on the concept of state sovereignty as applied to a united Germany, disagreement on the norms of coexistence (they had different views on preserving the status quo or preserving the existing balance of power); but they agreed on some other legal and ethical norms. This murkiness about norms is especially important since Kacowicz, following E.H. Carr, contends that normative issues are especially important variables in complementing the structural distribution of power.¹³ Analyzing the process variables only adds to the confusion.

¹² Arie Kacowicz, "The Problem of Peaceful Territorial Change," International Studies Quarterly, 38 (June 1994): 219, 219-220; see also *idem*, Peaceful Territorial Change (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1994).

¹³ Kacowicz, "The Problem of Peaceful Territorial Change," pp. 234, 237.

Kacowicz presents his model as explanatory, but not powerful enough for prediction. The process variables, for example, can probably only be factored in after the negotiation has already taken place.

But let us suppose that a theorist came up with a far more powerful model, so parsimonious and predictive that, in November 1989, it would have produced a plain prediction that Germany would be united, that peaceful territorial change would succeed. This study shows that even such a powerful model, while it might command intense scholarly interest, would not be terribly useful to policymakers or to concerned citizens.

Even this model would not forecast just how long it would take to accomplish unification: one year, five years, ten? A month after the Wall opened Kohl was still thinking about a timeframe of at least 3-5 years, and this was for the goal of confederation only. But the timing matters enormously. If unification had occurred after five or ten years it might have been the creation of a confederation, not a united state. It might have been a state with a new constitution created by an all-German constitutional assembly, establishing a new form of government for the Germans. This Germany might not be part of NATO; the FRG might have been governed by Chancellor Lafontaine. The final phase of negotiation over the terms of unification could be occurring among Lafontaine, President Clinton, and whoever was in power in Moscow.

That is just an illustration of the importance of one variable in useful prediction: timing. As one strives to imagine models that offer more and more precision in prediction the model begins to balance many very specific assessments. In other words, to meet tests of utility imposed by officials or citizens, analysts are likely to be forced away from general theories and obliged to concentrate on the specific presumptions and assessments in the case at hand. That does not mean a case-centered model cannot be constructed. Chapter One suggests the possibility of "fault tree analysis" for a particular country under stress. But such models are rare. Rarer still is the analysis that can incorporate both the range of contingent variables and the possibility of nonlinear behavior.

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The use of classified source materials obliged the author to submit his manuscript for prepublication review by the U.S. government during 1994 to insure that no classified national security information was inadvertently revealed. At no time in this process did any government official endeavor to alter (or even discuss) the narrative, the analysis, or the conclusions.

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The author interviewed former German, Soviet, American, and British officials in connection with this project. The sources are named in footnotes along with the time and place of the interview.

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