

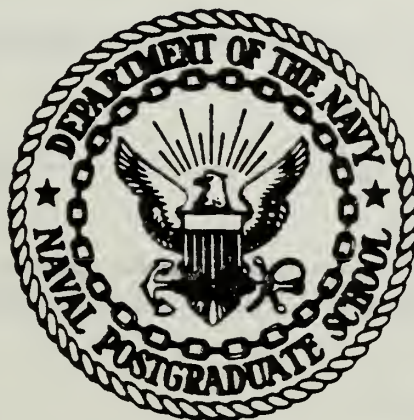
THE GERMAN REUNIFICATION ISSUE: A SOVIET  
PERSPECTIVE

Lynette Manning Tatsch



# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

## Monterey, California



# THESIS

THE GERMAN REUNIFICATION ISSUE:  
A SOVIET PERSPECTIVE

by

Lynette Manning Tatsch

September 1981

Thesis Advisor:

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The question of German reunification has endured over time, conflict, and the convulsions of global power. After thirty years, the Germans are still pondering over the rent in their nation's boundries and debating whether the present schism is immutable or will be reversed sometime in the future. However, the reunification issue is indeed significant beyond the scope of German cohesion--it imports directly on international security and lies at the nexus of superpower relations. The present agitation in Polant may be the impetus for the revival of the reunification chant. This research provides an



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The German Reunification Issue:  
A Soviet Perspective

by

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Captain, United States Air Force  
B.A., Purdue University, 1971

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

from the

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September 1981





## ABSTRACT

The question of German reunification has endured over time, conflict, and the convulsions of global power. After thirty years, the Germans are still pondering over the rent in their nation's boundaries and debating whether the present schism is immutable or will be reversed sometime in the future. However, the reunification issue is indeed significant beyond the scope of German cohesion-- it imports directly on international security and lies at the nexus of superpower relations. The present agitation in Poland may be the impetus for the revival of the reunification chant. This research provides an analysis of German reunification with an emphasis on the Soviet perspective. I will examine the issue by: reviewing the history of reunification negotiations from 1947-- present: exploring the advances gained by OSTPOLITIK/WESTPOLITIK; studying the sentiments of the East European countries on the reunification issue; discussing the inextricable linkage of the problem to the interdependence in economic relations between the Federal Republic of Germany, the German Democratic Republic, and the Soviet Union; and conclude by presaging the prospects for the ultimate realization of reunification.



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## I. INTRODUCTION

"I do not foresee under what auspices and conditions the Germans will get together again, but they will. One Germany is not something which anybody thinks of as being right around the corner. It's a real desire in the soul of the German nation, whether in the west or the east. It would be wrong for any nation to believe that the nation state is normal for any nation for any nation but not for the Germans."<sup>1</sup>

While the division of a single nation between rival blocs is no longer a novelty in international relations, it is no less dangerous to peace for being familiar. Of the three nations now so divided, Germany deserves special attention on a number of grounds: it was the first nation to be divided and has remained so the longest; it is the only nation in which one part has ties to and access to, a great city existing as an enclave 100 miles deep in the other part; and most important, it is the only great power to be so divided. And the prospects for bloodshed over Germany's division are potentially much greater, for conflict over Germany would involve the American and Soviet forces directly and would probably be fought with the most modern weapons available, nuclear weapons. It is therefore the most serious case of a divided nation and the most disastrous consequence of World War II if only because it might well become a contributing cause of World War III. It would be a gross error to regard the division as a stabilizing factor in world affairs, it is an unstable condition that might eventually unravel a world conflict.

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<sup>1</sup>Quote from Helmut Schmidt in an article entitled "Schmidt's Calculabilities," The Economist, October 6, 1979, p. 47.





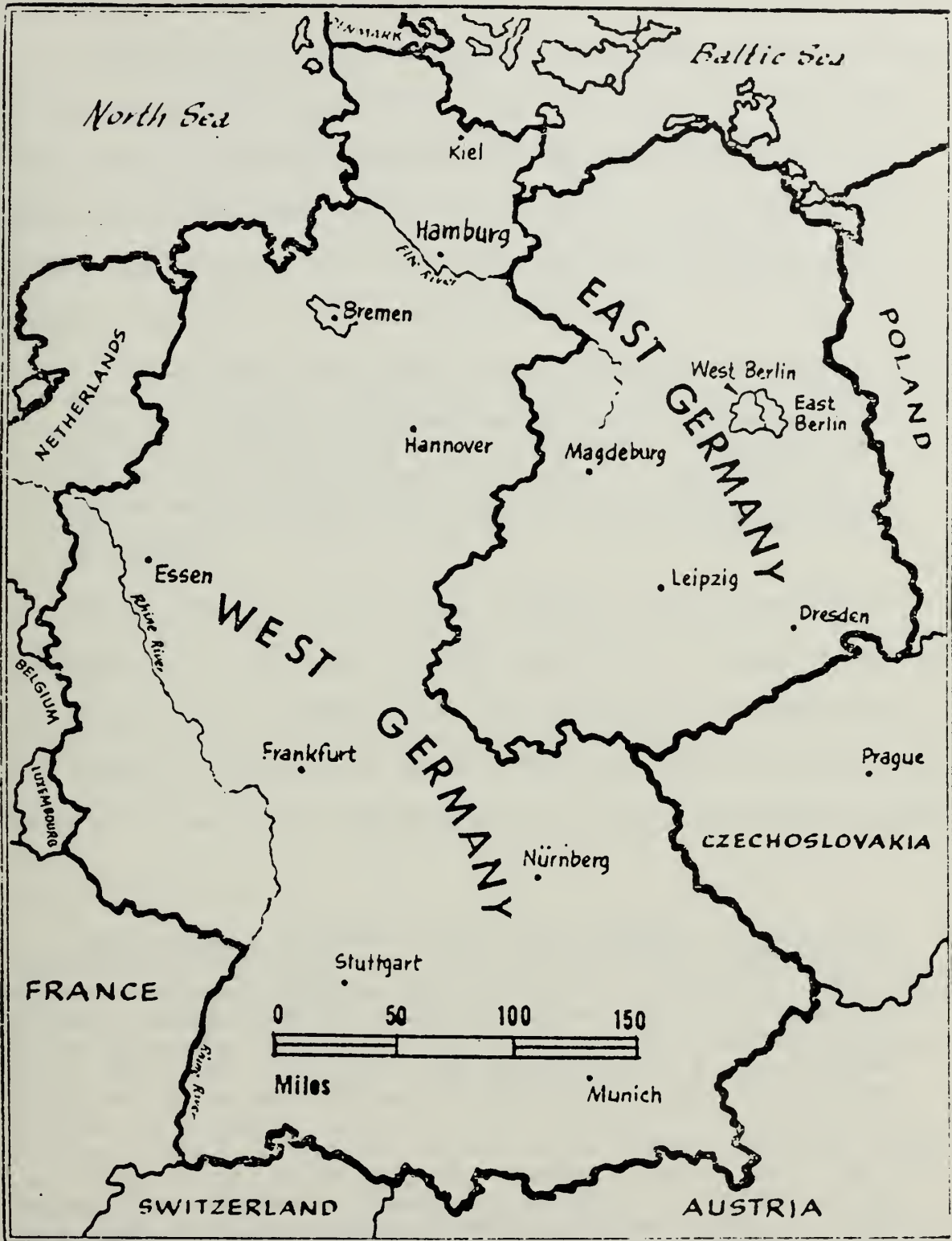


Figure 1. Map of East and West Germany



It should be clear that the Germans do not merely want reunification as one desirable thing among many. They really want it -- even though so far they have taken only preliminary, indirect, and partial steps toward that goal.<sup>2</sup> These sentiments are evident not only among West Germans, but as Melvin Croan points out, the quest for reunification hits East Germans with possible even greater fury.

"As visitors from abroad quickly discover, social manners and mores are much more traditionally German in East than in West Germany. Grassroots sentiment remains deeply attached to the notion of a single shared German nationality, irrespective of the country's post World War II division. If anything, the popular sense of identification with a common German nation is currently much stronger in the GDR than in the Federal Republic of Germany."<sup>3</sup>

Reunification, of course, does not depend solely on the Germans. The Russians, for their part, realize that the key to Germany's eventual reunification lies in Moscow rather than Washington. For this reason this thesis will focus on the Soviet perspective of German reunification. Moscow will have to face some momentous decisions on the fate of Eastern

---

<sup>2</sup>Walter Scheel, President of the Federal Republic addressed the United Nations on September 19, 1972 when the FRG was accepted as a member. His speech contained these thoughts on unification: "This time, 28 years have passed since the end of the war. This illustrates the fate of my people: Origins and victims of war, divided without its own doing, now living in two states and uncertain as to a common future. Do you realize why we hesitated to cross the threshold to the United Nations. It is painful to face up to the political reality of the division of one's own country. We were afraid such a step might convey the impression that we had given up, abandoned hope of unity...Our aim remains clear: The Federal Republic of Germany will continue to work for a state of peace in Europe in which the German nation will recover its unity in free self determination." There is certainly no equivocation in his desire concerning the matter at hand. Walter Scheel, "For German Unity and Peace in Europe," Central Europe Journal, Oct/Nov 73, No. 10/11.

<sup>3</sup>Melvin Croan, "The Germanies at 30 -- New Country, Old Nationality," Foreign Policy, No. 37, Winter 1979-80 p 142.



Europe in the future, not the least of which will be the growing chant for German reunification. Germany's division, now three and a half decades old, will not continue indefinitely without grave dangers of war. The West has never publically offered the Soviets much more than an invitation to turn over their part of Germany to NATO and leave. The Soviets, except under Stalin and momentarily under Malenkov, have never offered much more to the West than to surrender West Berlin. Now that the fires are reignited in Poland, the flame may spread to Eastern Europe, and the reunification of Germany may cease to be a chimera and become a reality.

This thesis will initially examine the history of negotiations on the reunification of Germany, particularly the negotiations involving the Soviet Union. This exploration will begin with the realities that emerged from the World War II conferences on Germany and travel to the present Brezhnev era.

In Chapter III the effects of OSTPOLITIK/WESTPOLITIK on the reunification issue will be discussed. The chapter will focus on the Soviet reaction to OSTPOLITIK and will explore the West German initiatives from 1969 to the present.

The fourth chapter will discuss the East European sentiments about a future reunification. The fate of Germany is inextricably linked to the future of the other East European countries. If Poland succeeds in its reform movement it is almost certain Czechoslovakia and East Germany will not be far behind in forging their own measure of independence. As recently as July 26, 1981, Der Spiegel reported that Polish unrest was spreading to East Germany. The West German news magazine further



reported that the East Germans have been encouraged by the way the Poles stood up to their communist government and, to signal their pugnacity, the East Germans have gone on strike for better working conditions in sections of some plants; distributed illegal leaflets calling for support of the Polish Solidarity Union; and clashed with police in several cities. It is therefore imperative to examine the status of the East European states and their sentiments vis-a-vis German reunification.

Chapter V will examine the economic interdependence of the Federal Republic of Germany, the German Democratic Republic and the Soviet Union. The issues discussed will include the implications of the new Hamburg natural gas pipeline, the extent of GDR/FRG/USSR trade and the way in which these closer economic ties may be parlayed into new security arrangements.

Finally, Chapter VI will explore the conditions under which the Germanies may eventually become unified. The subjects of an evolving Eastern Europe and the politico-military alliances of NATO and the Warsaw Pact will be discussed as they directly impact on the reunification issue.





## II. THE HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS

The diplomatic time and energy devoted to the reunification question by the Great Powers since World War II faithfully reflects its importance. Measured on this scale, no East-West issue can rival the German question for top position. Its closest rival in Europe was the Austrian state treaty, which took ten years to complete.<sup>4</sup> The German question has already taken much longer, and in the years since 1954, it alone has been a major (or the major) topic at no less than two full scale summit meetings, three foreign ministers meetings, one Kennedy-Khrushchev meeting, a Chancellor-Foreign Minister meeting and any number of Western Big Three conferences. The conferences and events reflect the common consensus in East and West that Germany is the master key to Europe.

On three occasions in the past three decades, the negotiations and conferences have been punctuated by crises which have assumed major proportions. Two crises, focusing on Berlin, kept the world's attention at fever pitch for a year or more at a time. Where the first Berlin crisis in 1948 demonstrated the final breakdown of the occupying powers to administer Germany as a unit, the second Berlin crisis, beginning in 1958-59, underlined the dangers implicit in keeping her divided.<sup>5</sup> And in 1980, the neighboring crisis in Poland augurs for a resurgence of the German unification chants and a potentially volatile situation.

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<sup>4</sup>In May, 1955 the Austrian Peace Treaty was settled, with the Soviet Union and the West signing a treaty that guaranteed Austria's neutrality.

<sup>5</sup>John Dornberg, The New Germans, (McMillan Publishing Co., 1976), p 96.



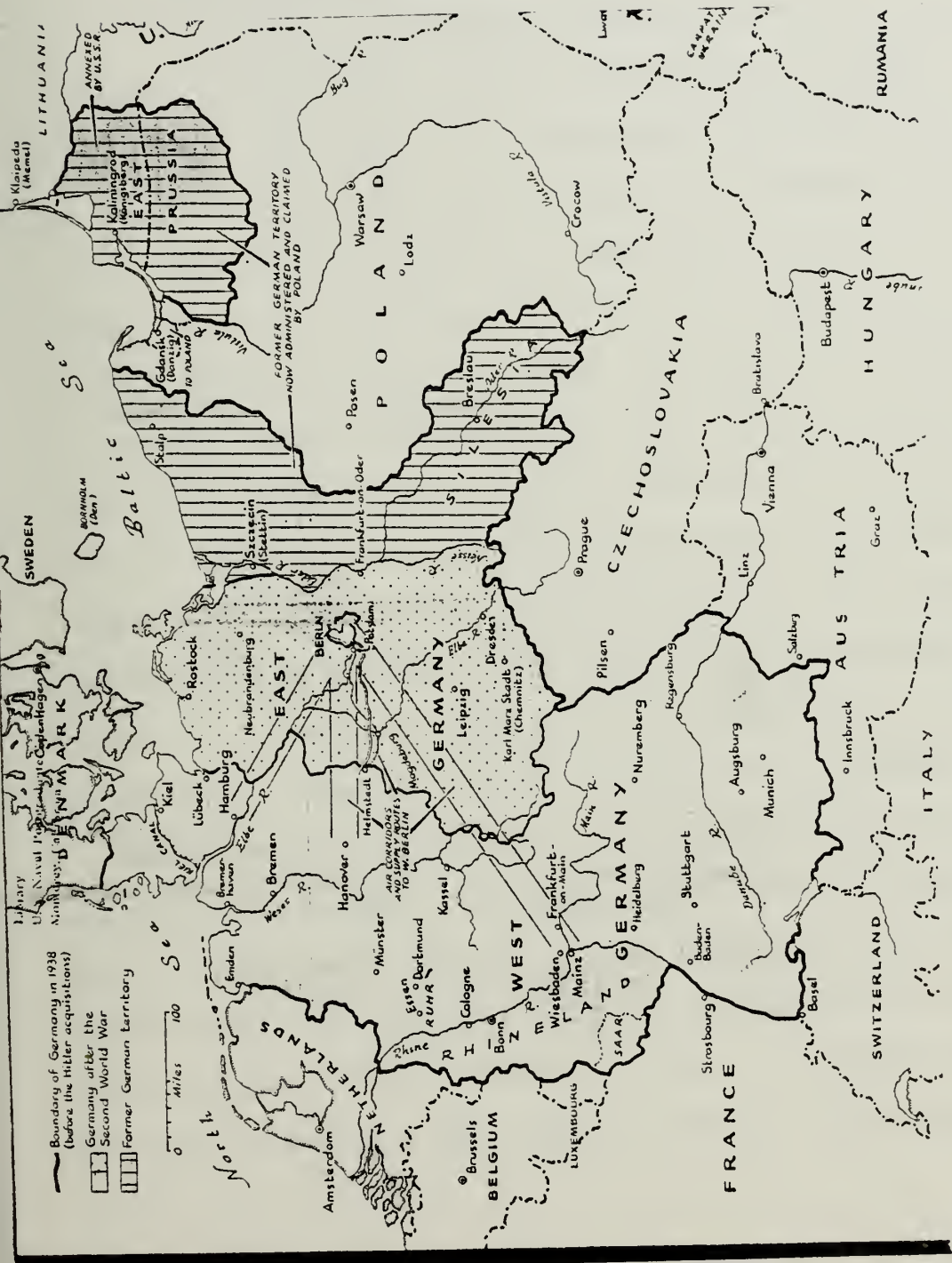


Figure 2. Postwar Division of Germany



## A. THE SOVIET DIPLOMACY OF WORLD WAR II

### 1. Teheran, Quebec, and Moscow

It took only a few wartime conferences, held over a period of two years, for the Allies to agree on the division of Germany. It has since taken a long succession of conferences, strung over three decades to record their inability or unwillingness to put Germany back together again. While Germany was still the common foe and the War was still raging, it was not too difficult to arrive at a concerted plan to deal with the immediate problem. All were against Nazism; all were in favor of disarming Germany and dismantling her war industry; all wanted strict controls for Germany's future.<sup>6</sup> But it proved easier to agree on the need for rendering Germany harmless than to agree on the means for keeping her that way. And it was easier to agree on the principle that Germany should be punished than to agree on what the punishment should consist of. Divergencies among the Allies appeared early: the Soviets in particular favored thoroughgoing harshness in all respects.

Toward the end of World War II, Stalin began to reveal his post war program for Germany. The Germans were to suffer: in blood, in sweat, in land, and in treasure. At the Teheran Conference (November-December 1943) Stalin proposed a toast to the execution of some fifty thousand German officers at the end of the war. Roosevelt attempted to treat the incident as a joke; Churchill did not.<sup>7</sup> Stalin traced a

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<sup>6</sup>Anton DePorte, Europe Between the Superpowers, New York, 1976, p. 74.

<sup>7</sup>Steven Garrett, Lecture at Naval Postgraduate School, November 1980.



KONISBURG

frontier for Germany which would give Konisburg to the Soviet Union, leaving the larger nation as he said "on the neck of Germany."<sup>8</sup> Stalin predicted that Germany would rebuild her power in 15-20 years -- therefore, Germany's industrial capacity should be reduced. The Soviet Union also needed the German machinery to replace destroyed equipment and "at least four million Germans" as laborers in the work of Soviet reconstruction. Germany should, said Stalin, be "broken up so that she could not reunite." Because the "Germans fight like fierce beasts" and it would be best to "break up and scatter the German tribes." Churchill said he was for partition in principle but in the form of a new Danubian Confederation that would include Southern Germany and isolate Prussia. Roosevelt advocated the partition of Germany into five states: Prussia, Hanover, and the northwestern area, Saxony with Leipzig, Hesse with Darmstadt and Kassel, and Bavaria with Baden and Wurtemberg.<sup>9</sup>

Before the next meeting of the Big Three, Churchill met with Roosevelt at Quebec and with Stalin in Moscow. At the Quebec Conference (September 13-17, 1944) Roosevelt produced a plan for German partition. This was essentially what came to be known as the Morgenthau Plan, which would have dismembered Germany altogether. Under this plan, East Prussia and Silesia would go to the Soviet Union and Poland, respectively; France would gain the Saar and the left bank of the Rhine (and even up to Moselle); Denmark would annex the area north of the Kiel Canal; the Ruhr and the area south of the Kiel canal would be under international

---

<sup>8</sup>"One Germany or Two" ORBIS, Summer 1969.

<sup>9</sup>Bernice Carroll, "The Partition of Germany--Cold War Compromise", World Affairs, 1969.





control; and the rest of Germany would be partitioned into a North German State and South German state. The Quebec version of the Morgenthau plan also called for the deindustrialization of the Ruhr, the Saar, and the rest of Germany. If this had passed Germany would be a fragmented, agrarian state. Not a very sagacious plan, to say the least.<sup>10</sup>

This hasty proposal was soon rescinded, Churchill had never really been convinced of its wisdom and FDR's Secretary of State, Cordell Hull was completely opposed.<sup>11</sup>

Churchill's Moscow visit (October 9-17, 1944) led to an agreement between the Prime Minister and Stalin for a general division of Eastern Europe into two spheres of influence, with Great Britain to control Greece and share control of Yugoslavia. Polish boundaries were discussed (the Curzon line in the East and the Ober in the West) and Stalin showed more interest in Churchill's plan for a Danubian Confederation. International control was envisaged for the Ruhr, the Saar and Kiel.<sup>12</sup>

## 2. Yalta

At the next meeting of the Big Three, at Yalta (February 4-12 1945), the discussions were resumed. Stalin referred to the Germans as "Savages" and his intent was still punitive. A few months earlier, he had told Stanislaw Mikolajczyk, the Polish leader, that he thought

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<sup>10</sup>Frederick H. Hartmann, Germany Between East and West, (Prentice-Hall, 1965) p. 51.

<sup>11</sup>The Soviet position on the Morgenthau Plan is vague, yet Moscow would have approved of heavy reparation.

<sup>12</sup>Hartmann, p. 70.



communism would fit Germany like "a saddle fitted a cow,"<sup>13</sup> -- in other words not at all. Stalin proposed the General Dismemberment of Germany; it was to be divided into Prussia, Southern Germany (Bavaria and Austria) and Ruhr Westphalia (under international control). This proposal was closer to Churchill's earlier position, but at this time the British Prime Minister argued against a binding and permanent commitment to any precise plan. Roosevelt, although still very much in favor of partition, attempted a compromise. According to the agreement which resulted, the Allies would "possess supreme authority with respect to Germany. In the exercise of such authority, they will take such steps, including the complete disarmament, demilitarization and the dismemberment of Germany as they deem requisite for future peace and security. The procedure for dismemberment and the precise design for the partition were to be devised by a commission."<sup>14</sup>

The desire to punish was still very much in evidence, but with some difference. Stalin foresaw nothing but pure gain in the dismemberment of Germany: a weakened Germany, shorn of its Bismarkian power, could not threaten the Soviet Union, and it might well be brought under Soviet domination. Roosevelt was thinking of ending the threat to world peace, which a united Germany had in his view twice represented.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Elmer Plische, Contemporary Government of Germany, (Boston Houghton Mifflin Co., 1961, p. 13.

<sup>14</sup>Terrence Prittie, Germany Divided, (Boston: Little, Brown and Co. Inc., 1960) p. 25.

<sup>15</sup>James Wolfe commented on the United States position in 1947 by describing Secretary of State Byrnes' response to Molotov's assertion that the United States really did not want reunification. "Byrnes himself rather tacitly agreed when he reported after the fourth Council of Foreign Ministers meeting that the Western powers were opposed to strong national government in Germany and favored instead a highly federalized system." Wolfe pp. 43-43.



Churchill wanted the division of Germany but he did not want to open the door to Soviet hegemony.<sup>16</sup>

The punishment theme on which the Big Three agreed, and the questioning of its extent and precise nature, on which they disagreed, appeared again in the related question of frontiers. Stalin proposed the Oder-Western Neisse as Poland's western border. Churchill, while supporting the movement of Polish frontiers to the west, cautioned against stuffing "the Polish goose so full of German food that it got indigestion."<sup>17</sup> Roosevelt agreed to the concept of the Oder boundary but added that there would appear to be little justification for extending it to the Western Neisse. The New Poland -- which was to be established on the basis of "free and unfettered elections" by "universal suffrage and secret ballot" and in which all democratic and anti-Nazi parties should have the right to take part and put forward candidates would be given new frontiers.<sup>18</sup>

It was agreed that France would be allocated a zone of occupation formed out of the British and American zones and that she would become a member of a Allied Control Council for Germany. Plans were also drawn up for war crimes trials of the major Nazis. Finally, the occupation

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<sup>16</sup>Frederick Hartmann, p. 62.

<sup>17</sup>Michael Balfour, Summary of Multipartite Agreements and Disagreements on Germany, 1948, p. 118, quoted in Frederick Hartman.

<sup>18</sup>History has taught the Russians a basic geopolitical lesson; that the vast plains of Eastern Europe afforded no defense other than distance. Therefore, it was essential that any real or potential enemy be moved as far to the west as possible.



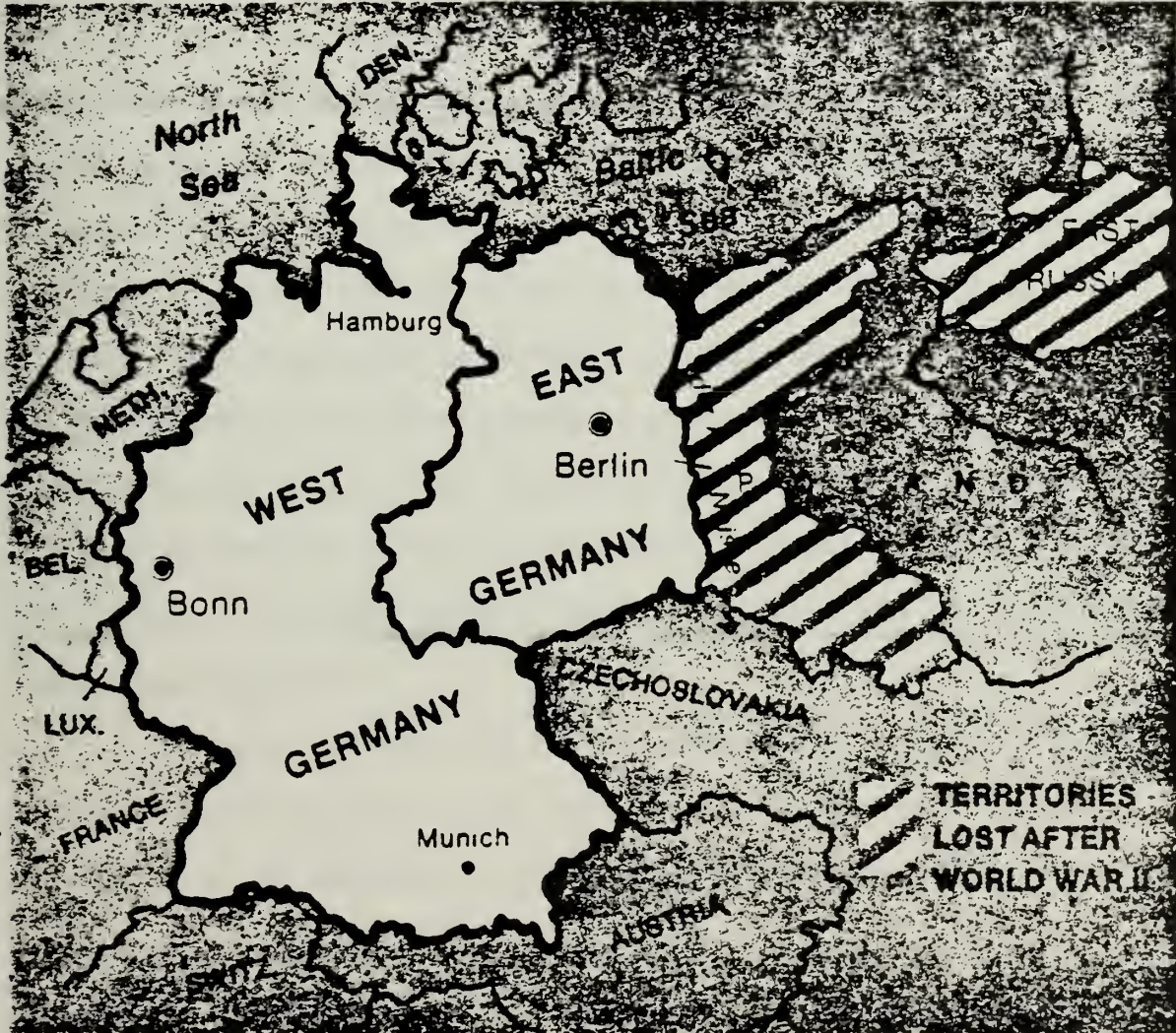
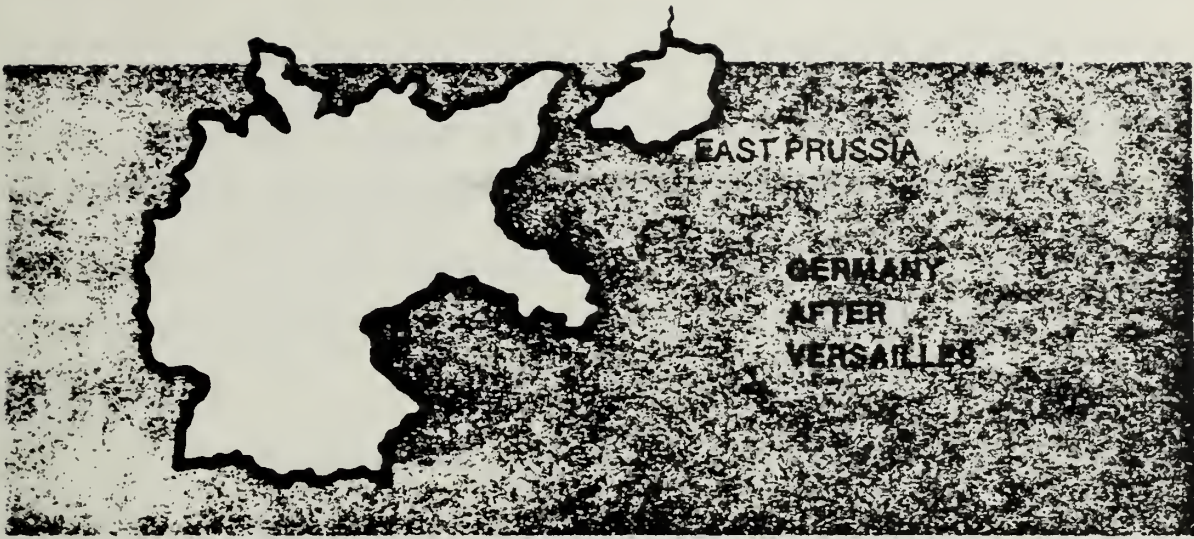


Figure 3. Territories lost to Germany, postwar





zones, as recommended by the European Advisory Commission, were formally approved by the Soviet Union. The United States Joint Chiefs of Staff, meeting at Yalta on February 7th agreed -- without raising the question of access routes to Berlin from the Western zones -- that "there are no reasons why the Draft Protocol ... should not be approved."<sup>19</sup>

The punishment theme occurred again in the matter of reparations. Again Stalin demanded substantial reparations, claiming that the Soviet Union had lost more than a third of its horses and almost a third of its cattle; in addition some 1,710 towns had been destroyed as well as 31,500 factories and some 40,000 miles of railroad right of way -- approximately 128 billion of direct losses.<sup>20</sup> The Soviets wanted annual payments in current production over a ten year period (implying a long occupation) to supplement confiscation of industry. Churchill objected to the "spectre of a starving Germany, which would present a serious problem for the Allies." If annual payment in kind were to be made, the German people must eat, for, he pointed out, if one "wished a horse to pull a wagon," one must "give it fodder." Stalin wanted 10 billion for Soviet reparations.<sup>21</sup>

The final protocol met Stalin's demands only to a certain point. It provided that Germany was to "pay in kind for the losses caused by her to the allied nations..." These reparations were to take three

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<sup>19</sup>Issac Deutscher, The Great Contest: Russia and the West, (New York Bellantine Books, 1961) p. 15.

<sup>20</sup>James H. Wolfe, The Eastern Zone and Soviet Policy in Germany 1945-1950, (London: Oxford University Press, 1951) Chapter 2.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.



forms: "removals" of German assets inside and outside German frontiers "within 2 years after surrender, chiefly for the purpose of destroying the war potential of Germany; annual deliveries of goods from current production for a period to be fixed; and the use of German labor."<sup>22</sup>

In the wake of the Yalta Conference, the European Advisory Commission did not come to serious grips with the issue of German dismemberment. On March 24th, Churchill indicated he wanted to postpone considering "dismembering Germany until my thoughts about Russians intentions have been cleared away."<sup>23</sup>

The war ended. The day after the Soviets signed the surrender terms (May 9, 1945) Stalin declared the "Soviet Union does not intend either to dismember or to destroy Germany." Later that month, when asked why he changed his mind Stalin replied that his own ideas "had been turned down at Yalta."<sup>24</sup>

Whatever their reasons, the Big Three began to treat dismemberment -- in Stalin's sense -- as a dead issue. Consequently, at the next important summit conference, at Potsdam in July-August 1945, the focus shifted away from formal final partition to the problems of Big Three coordination implicit in the defacto temporary partition along zonal lines.

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>Churchill foresaw the strategic posture the Soviet Union would assume after the German collapse, and he desired every possible device be employed to counterbalance the new power in the East.

<sup>24</sup>Churchill's equivocation on the issue of dismemberment must have sufficiently deterred Stålin; such equivocation may be the art of great statemanship.



### 3. Potsdam

The Potsdam Conference (July 17-Aug 2, 1945) continued the punishment theme with its corollaries of disagreement over its nature and extent. The purposes of the occupation of Germany by which the Allied Control Council was to be guided were spelled out. In organizing the German economy primary emphasis was to be given to the development of agriculture and peaceful domestic industries.

The disagreement of the Allies over reparations continued to be marked. Stalin was not satisfied that he was getting enough. On the eve of the conference, Stalin transferred that part of the Soviet zone east of the Oder-Western Neisse to Polish "administration." At Potsdam, he blandly asserted that "no single German remained in the territory to be given Poland," and asked the western allies to accept this fait accompli.<sup>25</sup> It was clear that the American view was that the territorial issue was not finally settled. The Soviet physical occupation was accepted for the time being, and the Soviets were quite content to leave it at that. So the territorial issue was uneasily "settled" in conjunction with the reparations issue which Stalin now began to "interpret."<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>James H. Wolfe. Chapter 2.

<sup>26</sup>The unity of Germany as a political and economic entity was implicitly recognized, and the Russians later claimed great credit for having firmly opposed, as early as March 1945, any Western proposals for the partition of Germany... But while such a partition was not brought about, Potsdam undoubtedly laid the foundation for a different kind of partition. All Russian attempts to secure a foothold in the Ruhr were firmly rejected; but what made the "zonal" division of Germany even more obvious was the agreement that was reached on



#### 4. Post Potsdam Second Thoughts

The ink on the Potsdam Agreement was hardly dry before all concerned were having second thoughts. The economic provisions of the accord could have produced the intended result only by superb cooperation among all the occupying powers. When the occupation started, the needs of the German people for the most elementary means of survival began immediately to get in the way of carrying out the agreement. The payment of reparations should not have even been attempted until the situation in Germany had been brought under control. Had reparations been delayed, there would have been much more reason for continued cooperation by the Soviets. As it was, they got much of what they wanted for little return; when the whole arrangement broke down, they were ahead. To maintain perspective, though, it must be remembered that even what the Soviets got seemed to them to be far short of what they considered their due.<sup>27</sup>

The Soviet Union had less difficulty than the West in clinging to the basic pattern of the Potsdam accord. Its implementation implied a weak and defenseless Germany for some time to come. With the American and British haste to "send the boys home" as soon as hostilities were terminated and the uncertainty of France's power in the early

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reparations... The foundations for the real division of Germany, officially still to be under Four Power control, were laid by the reparations agreements reached at Potsdam. (Werth, Alexander, Russia at War 1941-1945, New York, Avon Book 1964), pp 922-23.

<sup>27</sup>Richard Rossner, A Introduction to Soviet Foreign Policy (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1969), p 201.





postwar period, the Soviet Union was easily the strongest military power on the continent of Europe. Because the great military threat to Soviet interests in the twentieth century has come from Germany, the weakness of the Western nations and Germany's utter lack of power served the basic interests of the Stalin regime.<sup>28</sup>

To weaken Germany further the Soviets converted spontaneous and wholesale looting into a systematic process. While individual soldiers took watches, pots and pans and radios, the Soviet government took entire factories. Many of these factories, once dismantled, were left to rust, lost in the bureaucratic maze and a dead loss to everyone. Technicians and scientists were taken to the Soviet Union in droves, "here to work to rebuild the Russian homeland and apply German methods and secrets to the improvement of Soviet strength. The high numbers of prisoners of war taken by the Soviet Union were also put to work. Because the Soviets were receiving factories from the western zones as well, all Germany -- and particularly the Soviet zone -- was being milked dry for the benefit of the USSR. All East Germany became, in effect, a vast slave plantation for Soviet purpose."<sup>29</sup>

On September 6, 1946, Secretary of State Byrnes, speaking at Stuttgart, gave notice of a new approach. The U.S. was convinced that "the time has come when the zonal boundaries should be regarded as defining only the areas to be occupied for security purposes and not as self contained economic or political units. Therefore, the United

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.



States government has formally announced that it is its intention to unify the economy of its own zone with any or all of the other zones willing to participate in its unification. That the U.S. should be first in recognizing the need for a new approach was not surprising. The burden of furnishing aid to Britain and France, and now to Germany, was a heavy one. The U.S. naturally wished to ease that burden by making Germany self supporting. The willingness to take a more lenient view might also have arisen from the fact that no physical devastation had ever been visited on the United States.<sup>30</sup> Byrnes went on to urge the creation of a "democratic German government" which should be demilitarized under a twenty-five year enforcement plan. He reiterated that the revision of Germany's eastern frontiers in Poland's favor would be supported by the United States.<sup>31</sup>

In March and April 1947, the Foreign Ministers' Conference in Moscow deadlocked on the German question, just as they were to do again in November 1947. In the closing weeks of 1947, Secretary of State Marshall reported "we cannot look forward to a united Germany at this time. We must do the best we can in the area where our influence can be felt."<sup>32</sup>

On February 9, 1948, the Bizonal Charter was announced by the British and American governments; on March 20th, Soviet Marshall

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<sup>30</sup>Anton DePorte.

<sup>31</sup>Peter H. Merkl, The Origins of the West German Republic, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963)

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.



Sokolovsky walked out of the Allied Control Council in Berlin. This marked the end of even the facade of Four-Power administration of all Germany. In early April, the French zone united with the rest of West Germany and on July 18th a currency reform was announced, and later introduced in West Berlin. The Soviets countered immediately with an intensification of the blockade of Berlin; through which they had planned to discourage the West from establishing a separate West German state.<sup>33</sup>

## B. STALINIST POLICY AND GERMAN REUNIFICATION

### 1. Stalin's Perception

Stalin had established the East German system in the years immediately after the occupation as a pilot state for a communist Germany. By 1949, he was forced to acknowledge the failure of his original plan. The Western powers engaged in a process of dividing Germany because of the anxieties inspired by Stalin's attempt to divide Europe. Stalin's own response -- his attempt to prevent the division from taking place inside Germany -- only accelerated it. When the Berlin Blockade was lifted, NATO had already come into being and the constitution of the West German state was being drawn up. But Stalin's failure did not necessarily mean the abandonment of the plans for a unified country. As so often in Stalinist diplomacy, he was ready to

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<sup>33</sup>The blockade was a symbol of the collapse of Four Power control, and also heightened fears of an imminent military clash. Truman and Acheson were reluctant to push the Russians very far on the breaking of the blockade by force. Dean Acheson, Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department, (New York: Signet, 1969), pp. 346-348.



settle for less than the best, and in this case a reunified Germany, united on terms that would make it amenable to Soviet influence, and where he could still hope that a Communist or Communist--leaning country would emerge, was still infinitely preferable to a divided nation, in which the greater and more powerful state would be assured of Western protection and would develop a booming capitalist economy.<sup>34</sup>

Thus, while Adenauer was working hard to integrate the Federal Republic into the Western system, Stalin was still contemplating the possibilities of German reunification. Adenauer has frequently been accused, not least by the German Social Democrats, of making a cold and heartless choice, and of deciding that the interests of the West German state took precedence over the future of seventeen million people in East Germany. In many ways these accusations are justified, but at the same time one might wonder whether Adenauer felt that he had any real choice. A reunified Germany which was open to Soviet domination might, in his view, have endangered the security and well being of all Germans. His policy was diametrically opposed to that of Stalin, and Stalin's own plans no doubt impelled Adenauer to press for Western integration even more strongly than he would otherwise have done. In consequence, by the beginning of the 1950s the West German state, in concert with its European allies on the one hand and with the United States on the other, was actively promoting a western system in which it would play a fully integrated part. Adenauer's first offer to join

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<sup>34</sup> Adam Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence: Soviet Foreign Policy 1917-1967, (New York: Praeger, 1968) p. 536.





NATO was made in November 1950: a fact which must have encouraged the process of readjustment which was already going on in Soviet foreign policy.<sup>35</sup> It would not be long before Stalin offered the Western powers what they professed really to want: that is, German reunification.

## 2. Rigors of Stalinism on GDR

But the contradictions of Stalin's policy were not resolved by such a change of tactics, and were seemingly incapable of being resolved. At the same time as Soviet diplomacy was beginning to explore new possibilities for German reunification--a process which was fully in accord with the requirements of Stalinist foreign policy--the full rigours of Stalinism were being imposed on the East German state. This very fact was in itself enough to make the West Germans and the other powers hesitate about exposing the rest of Germany to the dangers of Soviet influence. The flexibility of Soviet foreign policy was heavily outweighed by the inflexibility of Stalinist domestic policy. This might account for the fact that when Stalin's offer was made, early in 1952, it was virtually ignored, and equally for the fact that when the East German revolt of 1953 occurred, and when the Soviet leaders were clearly hesitant, the western powers took no risk whatever of promoting German reunification.

## 3. Paradoxes

The history of these years seems to be a history of four paradoxical processes. First, it was the Soviet Union, rather than

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<sup>35</sup>Grant S. McClellan, The Two Germanies, (N. W. Wilson Co., 1959), p. 105.



the West, which showed an active interest in German reunification. Second, that the German state, whose Stalinism was at least a match for that of any other country in Eastern Europe, and whose loyalty to the Soviet Union was the most dogmatic and the most binding, was at the same time the country which was clearly considered the most expendable in Soviet eyes. Adam Ulam concluded, in fact, that it was entirely possible for Stalin to sacrifice a major conquest like East Germany without the slightest effect on his position at home or within the communist bloc. Third, this very Stalinism made it more difficult for the Western powers to believe in the new flexibility of Soviet foreign policy. And fourth, that while the process of Stalinist integration and the open contempt with which Stalin treated East German interests made it clear that the GDR was in the strictest sense a satellite of the Soviet Union, the Federal Republic was on the other hand acquiring greater independence almost every day through the process of integration with the West.<sup>36</sup>

In East Germany, like all other Socialist economies, the pace of reconstruction was appallingly slow. For many years after the war most of the towns in the country were still, literally, a mass of ruins. In some places the rubble of 1945 was barely cleared ten years later. Factories and machinery were of course renewed, but it was apparent to the great mass of workers that the fruit of their labor was going primarily to the Soviet Union. At the same time, the radio stations

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<sup>36</sup>Adam Ulam, p. 538.



of West Berlin were happily informing them how well the economic miracle was going in West Germany and what splendid allies the Americans were. This kind of reporting certainly helped swell the number of refugees and increased the pressures for coercion and repression.<sup>37</sup>

#### 4. Stalin's Note of 1952

It was in this context that Stalin proposed, in a Note which has since become famous, that the Four powers should, without delay, 'discuss the question of a peace treaty with Germany and examine the question of an all-German government expressing the will of the German people.' This Note, of March 1952, marked a fundamentally new departure in Soviet foreign policy. Instead of trying to achieve some form of German reunification through competition with the West, and in the context of a long drawn out political struggle, Stalin was now suggesting that the Four Powers should try to reach agreement. There are of course any number of ambiguities -- for example, the distinction between discussing the question of what purports to be a democratically elected government. Equally, it is possible, as many historians have asserted, that this Note was a motiveless exercise in Soviet duplicity which the Western powers were quite right to treat with the frivolity that in fact it received.<sup>38</sup> But such assertions,

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<sup>37</sup>McClellan, p. 110.

<sup>38</sup>Gordon Craig in From Bismark to Adenauer Aspects of German Statecraft, (New York: Harper & Row, 1965) asserts that the offer probably was not genuine but that the United States and West Germany were foolish to reject it out of hand. "For, as one reads the Soviet note of March 1952, the salient point is not the one over which the publicists were still arguing after his (Adenauer's) retirement --



though they carried conviction, were dogmatic and unconvincing. Soviet diplomacy was extremely active at this time, both before and after Stalin's death, in attempting to prevent what the Soviet government was clearly coming to regard as the most dangerous possible consequences of the division of Germany, namely West German rearmament. 'The time would come, wrote the Soviet Premier, when Germany would challenge her former allies even to the extent of waging war against them. This was the inevitable nature of capitalist competition.'<sup>39</sup> Marxism notwithstanding there were those who agreed with Stalin on the future possibility of a German threat; among these was a majority of the French National Assembly which rejected the European Defense Community Treaty.

The Soviet offer to negotiate a settlement of the German Question, as expressed in the Note of 1952, appears to have also been motivated by a desire to isolate West Germany by placing it in a position of military, if not political, neutrality. The tactic employed was to offer the German people what they desired most--reunification. In return the Soviet Union required only a pledge of non-alignment in the Cold War and an acceptance of the Oder-Neisse Line.<sup>40</sup>

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namely, whether it was a sincere offer or merely an elaborate maneuver--but rather the fact that the Western powers and their German partner did not apparently make any serious effort to find out, by exploration and negotiation, how sincere it might be." pp. 114-115.

<sup>39</sup>J. V. Stalin, "Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR," Bolshevick, September 10, 1952, as quoted in Chamberlin, William Henry, The German Phoenix, (Duell, Sloan and Pierce, 1963) p. 102.

<sup>40</sup>William Chamberlin, p. 210.





Seemingly, the offer was quite reasonable, but a Federal Republic divorced from the Atlantic Community would have been exceedingly vulnerable to subversion and eventual absorption into the Soviet Bloc. There is little possibility that a neutral West German state could long survive as a buffer between East and West. The Soviet Union had a great deal to gain and little to lose if the plan was accepted. This may explain why Stalin was willing to permit elections and even an investigation, albeit a non-United Nations one, to insure the fairness of the elections.

Nevertheless, there is a real question as to whether the Soviet proposal was a sincere one or a diplomatic maneuver. There is some reason to believe the offer was genuine because its acceptance would have meant the accomplishment of a strategic objective -- the isolation of West Germany. At the very worst, the Soviets could always claim a propaganda victory if their notes were not carefully considered by the West.

#### 5. Western Rebuff

But what of the cause of reunification? The chances of reunifying Germany were seemingly not limited. However, the opportunity was not taken. The Soviet appeal was frustrated, and a rearmed West Germany was integrated in the West. The East reacted by doing the same with the Democratic Republic, thereby perpetuating the danger that concerned Western planners in the first place.

One question plagues me -- did the Western powers really desire a reunified Germany free to join one bloc or the other? The answer appears to be in the negative. A Federal Republic can be more easily



controlled than a unified Germany. And there were certain risks involved. A reunified Germany would have been subject to Soviet influence to a far greater extent than to American influence if the bulk of American troops had gone home. Soviet forces could always return more quickly than American forces. And if anyone in 1952 had stopped to observe the consequences of Soviet influence in East Germany, she could hardly have been blamed for wishing to preserve West Germany from a similar fate. A calculation of relative risks was, in fact, involved. It was not a question of balancing the relative risks of a strong Soviet force stationed perpetually in East Germany against the risks of a continuing Soviet influence exercised from further afield. It was a question of identifying the division of Germany with that of Europe and of making the straight forward assumption, that so long as Europe remained divided, German power would be necessary to counter-balance Soviet power. Thus, as astonishing as it seems to me in retrospect, the fact remains that in 1952, Stalin offered the reunification of Germany, and the Western powers refused.

The difficulty was that, once the Federal government had been committed to the process of Western integration, any attempt to re-open the German Question would have postponed that process for the whole of Western Europe. Stalin's and Malenkov's proposals were obviously a threat to the chances of the EDC; but they were also a threat, indirectly at least, to the wider movements toward integration, to which by now all the governments of the Western European Union countries were committed, and to which President Eisenhower had given



his blessing at the moment of his first inauguration in 1952.<sup>41</sup> In the best of circumstances, it would have been an awkward choice; nonetheless there is no disregarding the fact that the Western governments made the choice, and they decided to live with the division of Germany which had so alarmed them in the years between 1945 and 1947. In doing so, they tactitly abandoned the goal of German reunification.

## C. POST STALIN

### 1. Revolt of 1953 and Its Effect on Reunification

Stalin made his proposal almost exactly a year before he died. In the last year of his life, conditions continued to deteriorate drastically inside the GDR, and three months after his death, the East German revolt of 1953 broke out.<sup>42</sup> The tragedy of that event lay not only in the suppression of the revolt itself, in the use of tanks against workers whose original demonstrations were inspired by yet another increase in costs after three years of continual overwork and inadequate nourishment, nor in the long period of suppression and punishment which followed the rising and the general strike.<sup>43</sup> It lay also in the fact that East Germany was about to experiment with

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<sup>41</sup> During this period a primary driving force behind the remilitarization of West Germany was the U.S. Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles. He and Chancellor Adenauer became close personal friends, which helps account for the close cooperation between the U.S. and the FRG on the problems of common defense during the Eisenhower years.

<sup>42</sup> Terrence Prittie, Germany Divided, Chap 7.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.



a cautious measure of liberalization at the same time that the Soviet Union was again showing its willingness to discuss the whole German question with the Western powers. Both experiments were destroyed by the revolt. The Central Committee of the SED itself had publicly declared that the tempo of the 'transition to socialism' had been false and damaging, and that it had hindered the chances of reunifying Germany.<sup>44</sup> The Soviet government, which had only a few days before hinted at a possible reconsideration not only of the German question, but also of the treatment it had previously accorded to Germany, was concerned above all that it would not bow to force. The costs of goods were raised, a still harsher economic plan was introduced,<sup>45</sup> Ulbricht's power was made more absolute, and the chances for serious discussion of German reunification passed.

The attitude of the United States and the other Western powers was equally revealing. On June 25, 1953, President Eisenhower sent a message to Chancellor Adenauer in which he expressed deep interest and concern over the events in East Berlin. Despite such sentiments, the West remained passive throughout the crisis. Had it threatened to intervene to halt the Red Army's suppression of the revolt, the West might have forced concessions from the Soviets. Instead, the Western powers seemed almost relieved when the disturbances were crushed, and the normal conditions of strained partition returned to Germany.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>David J. Dallin, Soviet Foreign Policy After Stalin, (Philadelphia, J. B. Lippencott, 1960) pp. 171-179.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid.





## 2. Reunification and the Changing Context of Leaders

After the death of Stalin, one of the leading aspirants to political leadership, Lavrenti Beria, may have been willing to revise Soviet policy in the direction of sacrificing the East German government to the West. Even if this was Beria's desire, the policy shift did not occur since Beria was eliminated as a contender for power by his rivals. In fact, the suspicion that he was willing to sacrifice East Germany may have contributed to his demise.<sup>47</sup>

Negotiations within the changing context of leaders continued at a foreign ministers' conference early in 1954. It is of interest now because it was the occasion on which the powers came closest to agreement -- and even so the gulf between them was unbridgeable. Eden demanded free elections throughout Germany as the preliminary to a peace treaty, and Molotov agreed -- provided that the powers determined before hand what sort of government they would allow to emerge.<sup>48</sup> This was perhaps less fatuous than it sounds: it indicated the fundamental Soviet pre-occupation with security, and with the freedom of action of any German government. However, no agreement was possible; and on the question of the European Security Pact -- which Churchill

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<sup>47</sup>Beria's actual role in Foreign Policy remains unknown. Khrushchev was later on to allege that he carried a major share of responsibility for the Soviet-Yugoslav break, but like many of Khrushchev's tales this must be taken with a grain of salt. The same holds true for the stories that following the East German disturbances in June 1953, Beria advocated the abandonment of East Germany and far reaching concessions to the West. Ulam, p. 543.

<sup>48</sup>Frederick H. Hartmann, Chapter 8.



had proposed as one way of circumventing the related difficulties of the German problem and the problem of European security -- it was clear that no progress could be made without a formal renunciation of the Western attempts to incorporate West Germany into its defense system.<sup>49</sup>

But at the same time, the Soviet Union was clearly determined to go on trying. In March 1954, -- that is, before the final defeat of the EDC in the French Assembly -- the Soviet Union offered to join NATO.<sup>50</sup> Such a momentous offer was clearly intended to convert NATO into a collective security organization, somewhat along the lines of the 'new Locarno' which Churchill had called for.<sup>51</sup> But if the Soviet government took Churchill seriously, there is no indication that any government in the West was prepared to take the Russian offer with equal seriousness. The whole episode is still somewhat obscure, but the Soviet suggestion is frequently presented today as a panic reaction to the imminent prospect that Germany would join NATO. At that stage, though, there was still no such prospect. It is more likely that, in the spirit of Churchill's own suggestions, it saw an opportunity here to combine a solution to the question of European security with a framework for resolving the German problem.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid.



The West assumed a passive attitude toward these efforts and persisted in its policy of integrating the Federal Republic into the Atlantic Community. The London Conference of Western Foreign Ministers, from September 28 to October 3, 1954 devised a formula for the arming of West Germany as a part of the West European Union, which was then integrated into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.<sup>53</sup> The Soviet bloc countered with the Warsaw Pact the following May.<sup>54</sup> Instead of creating a general security system for Europe, the alliances of the East and West divided the continent into two armed camps. There was, however, one gesture made in the direction of a mutual security arrangement: West Germany committed itself never to employ force to achieve reunification.

On October 6, 1954, Foreign Minister Molotov attempted to stay the course of Western policy with a speech he gave in East Berlin. He stated that reunification would only occur if Germany were neutralized and even hinted at acceptance of free elections in return for neutrality. Should the Federal Republic enter the Western alliance system, the Soviet spokesman continued, there would be no reunification.<sup>55</sup>

Molotov's speech was followed by a Soviet note of October 23, which called for another four power conference to discuss reunification. On November 13 the Soviet Union again demanded a European Security

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<sup>53</sup> Charles Plank, The Changing Status of German Reunification, 1953-1966, (John Hopkins Press, 1963), Chapters 6, 7.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.



treaty as a means of preventing the rebirth of German militarism. The United States replied on December 13, that the possibility of reunification was now remote, and that France, too, might be threatened by a remilitarized Germany.<sup>56</sup>

In the Fall of 1954, James Bryant Conant, the United States ambassador to Bonn, wrote that the Western Powers desired German reunification, but that the Soviet Union simply would not accept their concept of it.<sup>57</sup>

Winston Churchill had told the House of Commons on March 28, 1950, that a lasting settlement of the German question must be negotiated while there was still time.<sup>58</sup> By the winter of 1954, that time had passed. While the Soviet Union might have permitted reunification on the basis of free elections provided Germany were to divest itself of any military alliance with the West, it would never agree to the creation of a Germany free to join the West. The rejection of neutrality by the West made reunification virtually impossible. So it developed that, by their very nature, the opposing European alliance system required a firm partition of Germany.

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid.

<sup>58</sup>Hans J. Morganthau, "Germany: The Political Problem," Germany and the Future of Europe, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951,) pp. 87-88.





## D. KHRUSHCHEV ERA

### 1. Change in Sentiment

Between 1952 and 1955, there appeared to be some prospect of German reunification. After 1955, there was none. There were two reasons for the sudden change: first the nature of the agreements reached between the Western powers, and then between East and West, second, the internal crisis of the opposing blocs after 1955.

It is essential to appreciate the magnitude of the change in Soviet foreign policy at this time. In 1952, Stalin had sent his famous note to the Western powers, in which he appeared to propose some form of German reunification. Its ambiguities and uncertainties have already been indicated, but, in a sense, the question of whether Stalin 'meant it' is irrelevant. What is to the point is that during the period which began with this note, Soviet policy was willing to use the prospect of German reunification as the basis for its relations with the West. The aim of reunification was acknowledged by both sides: they differed about the modalities of reunification, about the political and military context in which it would take place, and about the character of the German state to emerge. But at least they shared the fundamental assumption: that the object of their exchanges was the reunification of Germany.

After 1955, they differed completely in their assumptions and they have done so ever since. The Western powers still professed to regard the reunification of the country as their ultimate aim -- and they might have meant it too. But the Soviet Union, under Khrushchev,



insisted with undeviating consistency that the basis for a European settlement must be the final and universally recognized division of the country. The division of Germany became a fundamental objective of Soviet policy at the same time as peaceful co-existence.

## 2. The Geneva Summit Conference, 1955

The Geneva summit meeting illustrates the sharp differences between the tactics of the communists and the aims of the Western Allies. The Soviets wished to give priority to the creation of an inclusive European Security pact and disarmament, and then to consider the solution of the German question. The West wished to tackle the concrete and practical issues involved in bringing the two parts of Germany together. In Geneva, the Soviets agreed that Germany should be reunited through free elections. They made it clear however that they thought the arrangement could only be worked out with official representation of the GDR and the FRG. The conference decided to study the questions of a security pact for Europe, the limitation of armaments, and the establishment of a zone in which armed forces would be disposed by mutual agreement. The decision to explore these matters led to the meeting of foreign ministers in Geneva in the autumn. The common agreement about the reunification of Germany was ignored by the Soviets.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>59</sup>Ronald Bitmer, "Soviet Policy on German Reunification," World Affairs, 13 December 1969, pp. 244-256.



### 3. New Dealings Between Bonn and Moscow (1955-1958)

In May 1955 West Germany entered NATO, and the Warsaw Pact created a formal Communist military bloc. In that month also the Austrian peace treaty question was settled, with the Soviet Union and the West signing a treaty that guaranteed Austrian neutrality. The Soviets had suddenly unfrozen this issue in March by inviting the Austrian Chancellor to Moscow and offered to sign a draft treaty more favorable to Austria than the draft treaty the West had agreed to compromise on. The Soviets were obviously mounting a two-step political offensive. To Germany, they were, in effect, saying: you too could gain favorable terms if you would accept neutrality. When this maneuver failed and Germany entered NATO, the Soviets -- through the Warsaw Pact were saying: Two can play at building positions of strength. This event marked the beginning of German rearmament and the definite end of one phase of the negotiations.<sup>60</sup>

Speaking in East Berlin on July 27, 1955, Khrushchev stated that an "armed West Germany made reunification impossible. The only feasible way to achieve reunification was for the German states to accomplish this themselves. However, this does not mean a mechanical unification of both parts of Germany. The social system of East and West Germany were too far apart. The workers of the Democratic Party could hardly be expected to relinquish their political and social achievements in exchange for unity."<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup>Ibid.

<sup>61</sup>Quoted in Bitner.



#### 4. Adenauer Visits Moscow

In September Chancellor Adenauer consented to an invitation to visit Moscow. Adenauer emphasized the German wish for peace, German unity, and the return of German prisoners of war. The atmosphere at the talks became increasingly less than cordial. Bulganin said the prisoner-of-war issue could be discussed only with both German governments represented. Adenauer took note of the Soviet contention that the Germans themselves must take the initiative on reunification, and added that the idea had considerable merit. Then he calmly went on to say that the trouble was that the Soviet Zone regime did not enjoy the confidence of its people. By September 12th the conference had reached an impasse and Adenauer's plane was ready for departure.<sup>62</sup>

#### 5. Geneva Conference of Foreign Ministers

The meeting of four foreign ministers was held in Geneva October 27 -- November 16, 1955. In the interest of European security, the western powers proposed consideration of the Eden Plan, which had provisions designed to reassure the Russians with any presumed danger of German aggression. Foreign Minister Molotov's stated objections to the plan are summed up as, a) that the sanctions of the treaty were mere consultations, b) that a reunited Germany would be bound to join NATO.<sup>63</sup> Molotov's objections with regard to the German menace sprang from a certain historical determinism. His statements

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<sup>62</sup>Craig, p. 220.

<sup>63</sup>Bitner, p. 156.





at this time reflected an expectation of inevitable progress of a resurgent and aggressive Germany, devoid of any awareness of the many basic changes brought by the nuclear age. He expressed firm belief that the dynamics of German development were a threat to the existence of communism. From these premises, he arrived, by a logical extension of his Marxian ideas, at the inescapable conclusion that Germany must be communist or divided.<sup>64</sup>

#### 6. In the Wake of Failure

The failure of the meeting meant the closing of the door to reunification for many years. All subsequent maneuvers were of little significance, except as they demonstrated the Western powers' determination not to abandon the principle of freedom for the German people or to weaken in defense of Berlin or the support of German democracy.

In the Soviet Union two main events -- the Khrushchev speech at the Twentieth Congress and the forcible repression of the Polish and Hungarian uprisings -- did nothing to alter policy toward Germany. There was no notable confrontation until 1958. In East Germany steps were taken to establish a ministry of defense and to build up a people's army.<sup>65</sup>

These years were also a time of great improvement in Berlin's economic condition, of rearmament in West Germany, and of further

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<sup>64</sup>Ibid.

<sup>65</sup>Ulam, pp. 302-304.



steps toward European economic cooperation. Khrushchev declared the new policy of de-Stanlinization in February 1956.<sup>66</sup> The concern of most Germans for reunification was probably subordinated during this period to their unceasing involvement in Western policy and commerce. Ulbricht was worried because of the lag in his economic programs, yet actively pursuing rearmament with a variety of military formations.<sup>67</sup> At the same time, contingents of Russian soldiers, estimated at 21 divisions, remained on East German soil.<sup>68</sup>

### 7. Khrushchev's Battle for Berlin

As Khrushchev became more firmly established in the party and the government, he enjoyed almost unlimited power. He pressed hard on the perimeter of his empire and probed for weakness among the democracies. He had urged the calling of another summit meeting at which he hoped his preeminence would be more conspicuous than it had been in 1955. Throughout this year there was a running debate between Khrushchev and Dulles and a notable degree of brinkmanship in the Far East, Middle East, and elsewhere. As regards Germany, it was the year of the Khrushchev ultimatum to the three Western powers over Berlin.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>66</sup>Ibid.

<sup>67</sup>Willy Brandt, The Ordeal of Coexistence, (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University, 1963) p. 160.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid.

<sup>69</sup>Edward Crankshaw, Khrushchev: A Career, (New York: The Viking Press 1966, p. 280.)



## 8. Intense Diplomatic Activity

That Khrushchev's desire for a summit meeting was related to the German question was manifest in the series of communications that started with Premier Bulganin's letter of December 10, 1957 to President Eisenhower on the Rapacki Plan for neutralizing Central Europe and Eisenhower's reply of Jan 12, 1958.<sup>70</sup> It continued throughout the year. There was a period of active diplomatic communications between Bonn, Washington, Moscow, and elsewhere. These activities were variously interpreted as pointing up the danger of growing German strength, indicating a wish on the part of the Soviets to placate a more active GDR, an increased awareness of the significance of nuclear weapons, or an intention of capitalizing on the success of Sputnik and other achievements in the field of missiles and space. Their divergence from the statement on reunification made at the conclusion of the Geneva Summit was evident in the proposal for an agreement between the two German states.<sup>71</sup> President Eisenhower said that, if suitable preparations were made, he would be willing to have a meeting of heads of government.

Consultations preparatory to such a summit were initiated but bogged down for months when difficulties arose over the agenda. These difficulties were mainly connected with the German issue and a continuing debate over "reunification," a "peace treaty," "confederation,"

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<sup>70</sup>Plank, Chapter 9.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid.



the "security" issues, and the apparent Soviet propaganda efforts. The summit meeting itself was not scheduled until May 1960, and then it was to be broken up by Khrushchev's angry gesture in leaving Paris.<sup>72</sup>

In September a Soviet note urged early conclusion of a peace treaty and dealings between the two German states but ignored the question of free elections. It was therefore rejected by the three Western powers. This note differed in no essential respect from the earlier notes, but it emphasized Khrushchev's growing determination to make gains along the lines he had been pursuing since the Geneva Conference. All the moves in this attempt to force the Allies to compromise their position rested on the tacit assumption that Berlin could be used as a pressure point. Tension was mounting.<sup>73</sup>

#### 9. Khrushchev's Ultimatum

In early November 1958, Khrushchev delivered a speech at the Sports Palace in Moscow which foreshadowed the demands he was to make on November 27. He said that only the German people, working together as two separate states, could settle the question of reunification. This statement, following as it did the failure to gain acceptance for the Rapacki Plan in 1957 and the discussion of an all-German council in the weeks immediately preceding, occasioned much talk of the German question in all major capitals. Secretary Dulles was asked in a press conference what Washington would do if the Soviet personnel

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<sup>72</sup>One Germany or Two: Soviet Policy and Plans, 96-109.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid.





at the checkpoints were replaced by East Germans. He said that while Washington would not accept a situation that gave recognition to the East German regime, it might consider such an arrangement if the persons at the checkpoints were acting as the agents of the Soviets. In spite of its probable legal validity, this statement caused considerable agitation in Bonn.<sup>74</sup>

These discussions and forewarnings did not prevent the harshly worded ultimatum of November 27 from coming as a severe shock to the Western powers. They had no thought however of accepting the ultimatum: they recognized that if the Kremlin had finally decided to make Berlin an issue, they would have to stand their ground, whatever the risk. An immediate press statement made this clear. After the first few hours of panic, the Berliners showed their understanding of the Allied position by the speed with which they returned to the savings banks the funds they had hurriedly withdrawn; and the economy moved on in high gear. Within a few days Khrushchev showed his understanding of the Western position by stating at an Albanian Embassy reception that he had not intended an ultimatum. The ultimatum itself was not mentioned again, although the six months' span it had set forth continued to worry some diplomats.<sup>75</sup>

These events brought another change in Soviet tactics. Khrushchev began to show interest in an invitation to visit Washington.

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<sup>74</sup>Jean Edward Smith, The Defense of Berlin, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1963) pp. 185-190.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid.





Figure 4. Map of Berlin .



He delayed action on a unilateral peace treaty with the GDR.<sup>76</sup>

There was no substantial change in the Berlin situation after 1958 until the Wall. In spite of occasional harassment, access to Berlin was not seriously disturbed, and, with a feeling of reasonable security in the city, the economy continued to improve. The Allies, having shown their firmness, could accept the status quo for years to come.

#### 10. The Geneva Conference, 1959

The Geneva meeting beginning in May 1959 brought no agreement and no change in the German situation. Although the Russians had been offered a greater opportunity than they realized, no substantial ground was lost to them.

On June 16 the West proposed a limitation of the garrison to 11,000 men, reduction of the garrison if "developments were to permit," conditional East German control over access to Berlin, and a curb on intelligence and propaganda in the city.<sup>77</sup> The various proposals offered were however rejected by Gromyko. The final Soviet proposals were a repeat of the earlier recommendations. Had Gromyko accepted the Western proposals, West Berlin's hope of survival would have been destroyed.

The battle for Berlin, which was in fact the battle for Germany, tapered off as Khrushchev looked to Washington and his coming visit. His talks with Eisenhower outside Washington, which have been frequently regarded as leading to a relaxation of tensions called the

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<sup>76</sup>Edward Crankshaw, pp. 295-300.

<sup>77</sup>Smith, p. 186.



"spirit of Camp David" did not in fact bring any changes in Russian policy toward Germany. The last years of the Republican Administration were relatively undisturbed as Khrushchev, interested in Cuba, Africa, and the Middle East, strove to expand his foreign relations and twice appeared in the United Nations (1959, 1960).<sup>78</sup> The ultimatum served on the Western powers and the threat of a unilateral peace treaty melted away. There was an appearance of harmony and acceptance of the status quo until after the American elections in November 1960.

#### 11. The Wall

The changing of the guard when John F. Kennedy took over the leadership in Washington naturally led to curiosity and excitement on both sides. Kennedy was eager to meet with Khrushchev and to take his measure. The Soviet chairman for his part wished to test the firmness of the new young man. The meeting was scheduled for Vienna in early June. The American President had expressed his optimism as he started his journey, but the talks in Vienna left him depressed and apprehensive. Before the 1961 meeting in Vienna ended, Khrushchev presented Kennedy a note similar in some respects to that of November 1958. Earlier, on his return from Paris through East Berlin in 1960, Khrushchev had again spoken of a separate peace treaty for the GDR.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>78</sup>Crankshaw, pp. 301-330.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid.





Worried about Laos, shocked by the misadventure in Cuba, and distressed by his failure to make any constructive moves with Khrushchev, Kennedy did not present to the world the strong image that was later to be his. Weeks elapsed between his receipt of the note and the rejection of the Soviet demands on July 17. The American reply reemphasized the priority of German reunification and self-determination. In a news conference on July 19, and in a speech on July 25, Kennedy stressed the importance of the Western military presence in Berlin.<sup>80</sup> It was at this time that he referred to the protection of West Berlin, ignoring the fact that four-power rights applied to all four sectors of Greater Berlin. Meanwhile, for a variety of reasons, fear mounted and the outflow of refugees from the Zone increased to proportions not witnessed since 1953. The flight from the GDR was discussed by several American senators, in a manner which left doubt as to the clarity and firmness of the position in Washington.<sup>81</sup>

Built in the week beginning August 13, 1961, the Wall was an expression of Soviet readiness to support Ulbricht.<sup>82</sup> It has also an indication of Soviet calculation of the possibility of defying the American government with impunity. Some have concluded that American inaction at the Wall led to the missile crisis over Cuba a year later.

The Wall creates a situation for East Germany which does not exist in any other Warsaw Pact nation. It constitutes a visible expression of communist policy from which it will be difficult to retreat.

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<sup>80</sup>Fereni A. Vali., The Quest for a United Germany, pp. 194-195.

<sup>81</sup>Eleanor Lansing Dulles, Berlin, (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press 1970) Chapter 6.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid.



The manner in which it will be eliminated will tax the ingenuity of the men in the Kremlin.

At the same time the Wall represents a major Soviet concession to Ulbricht. It could not have been established in any period where the Allied position was recognized as firm and might have been beyond Ulbricht's reach after Kennedy's stand in the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 had caused the communists to make a new assessment of his will. Not until the confrontation in 1962 was Khrushchev persuaded that the West was still determined to maintain its strong position in Germany.

## 12. Further Developments

The year 1964 saw some rather important developments. On June 12th the Soviets signed a treaty with the German Democratic Republic, which was, in effect, a substitute for the separate peace so long threatened by Khrushchev. Because the Soviets did not attempt by it to terminate Western rights, it put the end to the Second Berlin Crisis.<sup>83</sup> In that year, too, American relations with West Germany were in disrepair as the West German government hesitated over signing the 1963 Test Ban Treaty (which had become possible through the detente following the Cuban Missile Crisis). The West Germans were concerned over avoiding any implication of de facto recognition of the GDR if both Germanies ratified. What actually worried them far more was the fear that the new American--Soviet accord might be consolidated at the expense of German reunification. However, the treaty was ratified on 1 December.<sup>84</sup> Both sides continued to wrestle with their mounting problems. The

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<sup>83</sup>Ibid.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid.



sudden overthrow of Khrushchev again delayed the likelihood of immediate serious moves.

## E. BREZHNEV ERA

### 1. Brezhnev Doctrine

From 1964 to 1971 there was no indication that Soviet policy shifted from the basic demands: (1) the recognition of the reality of two German states, (2) the recognition of the separate character of West Berlin as a political entity, (3) the recognition that reunification is a matter to be resolved between the two German states. For example, the "communique of the Bucharest Conference" of the Warsaw Pact in 1966 emphasized the importance of the recognition of the existing borders in Europe and the reality of two German states.<sup>85</sup>

The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 underscored in a most dramatic manner the importance the Soviet Union attaches to the prevention of the destruction of Marxist-Leninist governments throughout Eastern Europe. The Soviet Union moved to protect its ideological core interests in Czechoslovakia from disintegration into a plural political system. The development of the so called Brezhnev Doctrine, which the Soviet Union used to justify intervention in a socialist nation "to prevent counterrevolution," indicates the importance the Soviet Union attaches to the preservation of ideologically correct regimes in Eastern Europe.

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<sup>85</sup>Thomas Wolfe, Soviet Power and Europe 1945-1970, (Baltimore John Hopkins Press, 1970.)



The Dubcek interlude was particularly ominous for Ulbricht -- not only was reform socialism anathema to him and his political longevity, but Czechoslovakia's eagerness to deal with "established" forces within the FRG was a challenge to the legitimacy of the GDR. If Eastern Europe were willing to interact with Bonn before the FRG's prior recognition of the GDR, this would further challenge the GDR's legitimacy. The USSR and the GDR were partners in containing the spread of the Prague spring; the invasion of Czechoslovakia represented a defeat of West German bridge building OSTPOLITIK and a reinforcement of Ulbricht's influence in Moscow.<sup>86</sup>

## 2. Foreboding Signals

After the invasion, signs began to appear that signaled dis-sension between the USSR and the GDR over policy toward the FRG. The Soviet decision to respond favorably to West German initiatives for normalizing relations in 1969 precipitated a two year crisis in USSR-GDR relations. While it had been a consistent Soviet goal since 1955 to secure Western ratification of the post war division of Germany, the USSR was willing to compromise on the issue of de facto versus de jure recognition by the FRG of the GDR. This was linked to other major Soviet problems: the desire to revitalize a dialogue with the U.S., including the move to begin arms control talks, and the growing fear of China.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ulam, pp. 750-770.





With the coming of Brandt to power in 1969, the FRG ceased to pursue a revisionist policy toward Eastern Europe: instead of seeking to change the postwar status quo, Brandt agreed to accept it on Soviet terms. The West German willingness to accept a de facto East German state, the agreement to sign a non-proliferation treaty and to ratify the postwar European boundaries (Oder-Neisse Line) argued for better ties between West Germany and the USSR.<sup>88</sup>

### 3. Soviet Leadership and the GDR

After the signing of the Soviet-West German Treaty in August, 1972, it became clear that Ulbricht was non-plussed about the Soviet compromise on the recognition question. Ulbricht was adamant about the need to end all West German links with West Berlin; his recalcitrance about supporting the Brezhnev position on rapprochement undoubtedly contributed to his early retirement. When the situation became critical, the USSR could still exercise the power to control events in the GDR. Since that time, East Germany, under Erich Honecker, has been more circumspect about contumely behavior in the face of Soviet Westpolitik and there has not been any open conflict since the Ulbricht altercation.<sup>89</sup>

The GDR is, according to Foreign Minister Gromyko, "an important outpost of socialism on Eastern Europe's western border," East Germany is extremely important to Soviet security in Europe, but it is not vital to the Soviet Union's continued existence. Conversely, the GDR

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<sup>88</sup>Ibid. p 754.

<sup>89</sup>Jones, "East Germany Under Honecker," World Today, Summer 76.



could not survive as a state without the aid of Soviet control. This is because the GDR, unlike Poland or Czechoslovakia, lacks legitimacy as a nation, as well as a communist state. Its relationship with the Soviet Union is central to its viability, its economic stability, and the maintenance of its position in the Warsaw Pact. The continued division of Germany is the vital issue for the GDR.<sup>90</sup>

However, the USSR has lost influence among citizens in the GDR in the last decade. Since 1972, the GDR's international recognition and its 1975 entry into the United Nations has elevated East Germany from a pariah state to a nation with international legitimacy.<sup>91</sup> Prior to 1972, it had diplomatic relations with 30 states; now 126 states recognize it.<sup>92</sup> The establishment of East Germany's international legitimacy has, to some degree, liberated it from total Soviet control, however, there are limits. It is one of the USSR's loyal proxies in the UN and the world.

#### 4. Honecker Takes Over

Since Erich Honecker replaced Ulbricht and cooperated with Soviet politics, he has sought to increase the degree of integration between the GDR and the USSR as a way of combating debilitating effects of intra-German normalization. The 1975 treaty promises closer cooperation between East European countries and the USSR, based on Marxist--

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<sup>90</sup>Angela Stent, Soviet Policy Toward the German Democratic Republic, Unpublished report 1980, Chapter 2.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid.



Leninism and the "Brezhnev Doctrine." However, this treaty conspicuously omits commitment to German reunification, although two previous treaties mentioned it.<sup>93</sup> Also the 1974 GDR constitution obviates any mention of German unity and speaks instead of the "inviability of borders." The treaty also claims that "West Berlin is not a constituent part of the FRG." It stresses the basic view now held by the GDR and the USSR; that is, both sides share a fundamental commitment to the division of Germany and to the separation of West Berlin from the FRG.<sup>94</sup>

##### 5. Brute Force

The most visible and ultimately the most important forced reminder of Soviet power over the GDR are the 20 Soviet divisions stationed on the East German soil. This ensures control not only over the GDR's army, but also over its population, and is a constant reminder of the potential costs to the GDR of any challenge to Soviet policy. Moreover, the GDR government presumably welcomes the presence of Soviet troops as a deterrent to East German domestic unrest, so evident in a neighboring state.<sup>95</sup>

The six divisions of GDR National Peoples' Army is supposed to compliment the Soviet divisions in the GDR. However, one might wonder about the fundamental morale of the NVA. If a war were to break out in Europe, would East German soldiers be willing to take up arms against their West German brethren? This is a case far more delicate than in

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<sup>93</sup>Jones, p 74.

<sup>94</sup>Ibid.

<sup>95</sup>John Dornberg, The New Germans, (McMilliam Publishing Co., 1976), Chapter 9.



any of the other Soviet satellite military forces. It is doubtful that East Germans soldiers would support the rapacious instincts of the Soviets and the orders of their Soviet-chosen German leaders.

The growing gap between living standards in the USSR and GDR is a source of increasing concern to Moscow. As a result of detente, East Germans have more contacts with West Germans. Since 85% of the GDR population watches West German television, they are constantly impressed by the high standard of living the West Germans enjoy. This places extra pressure on the East German government to stress consumption, and consumer spending is twice as high in the GDR than in the USSR. This voracious consumption is visible to Soviet troops. The Soviet Union may have to choose between discontent within Eastern Europe over the GDR's privileged position and the need to keep the GDR happy by allowing its population to experience an affluent way of life unmatched in any other socialist country.<sup>96</sup>

The most pressing problem facing the GDR leadership since 1949 has been the inability to develop a separate socialist German national identity. The fact is, there is another thriving German state with a different socio-political system acting as a strong magnet to the East German population and is an additional source of instability for Honecker's government. Many Western analysts question whether the GDR has been able to inculcate in its population a national identity separate from that of West Germany. An AED poll of people between 16 and 25 revealed that 75% of young people consider themselves German, not East German.

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<sup>96</sup>Angela Stent.





Moreover, although the GDR constitution has dropped all references to reunification, a West German public opinion poll seems to refute this claim.<sup>97</sup> Reunification is not dead in the minds of the German populace, it has just been incarcerated in an eastern bloc.

In January 1978, the West German magazine Der Spiegel published a letter of a putative dissenting group within the SED. Among other things the group called for reunification "...we are for an aggressive national policy that seeks the reunification of Germany with social democrats, socialists, and democratic communists holding a majority over conservative forces."<sup>98</sup> The sensibilities expressed in the letter represent a current of opinion which suggests that the reunification issue remains unresolved. Of course, the USSR denounced the letter as fabrication by the revanchist West Germans.

As long as the GDR remains the military and economic bulwark of Soviet power in Eastern Europe, its domestic tensions are of secondary importance to the USSR. On the other hand, if the lack of domestic legitimacy begins to threaten the GDR's communist party, then Moscow may have to reconsider its attitude. Moscow fears that the inner-German rapprochement may in the long run develop an independent momentum which the USSR can no longer control.

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.



### III. THE EFFECTS OF OSTPOLITIK/WESTPOLITIK ON THE REUNIFICATION ISSUE

In 1968 Willy Brandt expressed the West German policy of negotiation and mutual assistance (which was later to become known as OSTPOLITIK, or policy toward the East) as follows:

The Federal Republic of Germany has a vital interest in achieving a peaceful balance in Europe. The Germans would inevitably be drawn into any armed conflict between East and West. They would be the first to experience the devastation. Their national existence would be at stake: the accumulation of troops, military equipment and atomic means of destruction in the small area of Germany is unique in the world. So for this reason, too, our primary aim must be the safeguarding of peace in Europe. All other problems, including that of German partition, are subordinate to this aim.

The keystones of our policy are: reduction of tensions, improvement of relations and preparatory contributions to a European peace settlement. Our geographical position gives us a special responsibility. For centuries, Germany has acted as a bridge between eastern and western Europe. We want to try and rebuild bridges which have been destroyed. This is why we want to work together with our eastern neighbors, who share this ambition, in all fields of economic, cultural and--if possible-- political life.<sup>1</sup>

OSTPOLITIK requires of West Germany a daring policy of initiative and movement toward the East, marked by realism, patience and determination. Its policy may be bearing fruit today-- in the restraint the Soviets have thus far shown in Poland.

When West Germany joined NATO in 1955, the allies undertook a formal commitment to pursue German reunification in negotiations with the Communist bloc. The formula then envisaged involved a bold

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<sup>1</sup>Willy Brandt, Willy Brandt--People and Politics The Years 1960-1975, (Boston: Little Brown and Company) 1976, p. 184.



negotiation between East and West. But Chancellor Adenauer's Eastern policy was essentially negative.<sup>2</sup> By the 1970's, the conditions affecting Germany's position had greatly changed. The commitment to reunification remains, but Germany has adopted a formula in which reunification is seen as occurring as the result of a long-run process of bridge-building between East and West -- the policy of OSTPOLITIK.

This chapter will attempt to define OSTPOLITIK, its bases, its advances, its nuances, and its inextricable linkage to the problem of German reunification.

#### A. OSTPOLITIK DEFINED--LONG AND SHORT TERM GOALS

OSTPOLITIK, by whomever in Bonn it is defined, has two main components. First, it seeks an improvement of the Federal Republic's relations with the USSR in a manner which persuades the Soviets that the division of Germany is neither durable or in the Soviet interest. That is, of course, a Promethean undertaking since the minimum goal of Soviet policy in Europe is to preserve the status quo; and Moscow views any attempt to alter it by outside forces as a violent attack on its vital interests.

The second component of OSTPOLITIK is to improve relations with the states of Eastern Europe, including East Germany. Exploiting the powerful interest of Eastern Europe in economic ties with Europe's most prosperous state, the Federal Republic attempts to demonstrate to them that the division of Europe and Germany is not worth the sacrifice it necessitates.

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<sup>2</sup>Gerald Freund, Germany Between Two Worlds, (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company) 1961, pp. 267-268.



## B. INCEPTION OF OSTPOLITIK

It was only in September 1955 that the Federal Republic opened diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and this was as far as Chancellor Adenauer was willing to go, believing that the Soviet Union could only be forced to make concessions over the reunification of Germany through Western strength and a policy of rigidity. Settlement, in his view, had to precede real detente. He was opposed to summit conferences at which the West always seemed to be making all the concessions and in which the Federal Republic could not participate to defend her interests. Adenauer's posture tended merely to assure that the German Problem would be removed from the agenda of detente.<sup>3</sup>

The post-Adenauer governments: Erhard, the Grand Coalition, Brandt, and Schmidt, have sought to assure, by their activism toward the East that, at the very least, the German Problem would remain a salient aspect of the many efforts of East and West to order their relations. To do this they had to make the rather painful admission that a German settlement could only come as a result of gradual and far-reaching accommodation between East and West in which the Federal Republic actively participated.<sup>4</sup>

Though the first signs of a change in West Germany's OSTPOLITIK occurred as early as 1965, the participation of the SPD in the Grand Coalition from the end of 1966 was the main factor in bringing about

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid pp. 203-208.

<sup>4</sup>Helmut Schmidt, The Balance of Power, (London: William Kimber), 1970.





the change. In all the West German political parties, second thoughts were being given to OSTPOLITIK. The main cause was the apparent failure of Adenauer's policy--a policy of rigidity had not borne the expected fruit and Bonn's two most important allies, the United States and France, no longer seemed to support the German policy beyond giving it lip service.<sup>5</sup> Since by the mid-1960's the Federal Republic had already emerged as an economic giant while still playing the part of a political pygmy; it is not surprising to see the change occur at this time.

The German initiative began with an announcement on February 24, 1965 that Kosygin had been invited to visit the Federal Republic. The next move was Erhard's Peace Note of March 25th, 1966, which, besides general proposals concerning nuclear weapons, also indirectly raised the possibility of agreements on the prohibition of the use of force in disputes between West Germany and the various East European governments.<sup>6</sup> On December 13th Kiesinger, as Chancellor heading the new Grand Coalition, called for improved relations with Eastern Europe but specific reference was made to Poland and Czechoslovakia rather than to the Soviet Union. In October, 1967, Brandt, as Foreign Minister, called for "sincere friendship" between West Germany and the Soviet Union and offered to conclude a treaty on the mutual renunciation of force.<sup>7</sup> In April 1968, in response to a Soviet demand that similar

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<sup>5</sup>Gerald Freund, p. 280.

<sup>6</sup>Karl E. Birnbaum, East and West Germany: A Modus Vivendi, (Lexington: Lexington Books), 1974, p. 8.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid, p. 10.



agreements be concluded with the GDR, West Germany offered to exchange declarations on the renunciation of the use of force with all Warsaw Pact states. In June 1968, Brandt met the Soviet Ambassador to East Germany for a long discussion on German-Soviet relations and in October, only one and a half months after the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia, he spoke with Gromyko in New York.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, these first steps remained within strict limits, since the major partners in both Erhardt's government and the Grand Coalition, the CDU/CSU, were not prepared to recognize the Oder-Neisse boundary and the GDR, nor sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty which seemed to be the price demanded by the Soviet Union for a real relaxation in Soviet-German relations.<sup>9</sup>

### C. THE SOVIET REACTION

The Soviet reaction to West Germany's new OSTPOLITIK was at first quite discouraging. Erhard's invitation to Kosygin at the beginning of 1965 to visit Bonn was turned down and the Peace Note of March 1966 was quickly brushed aside as meaningless. The Bucharest Declaration of July 1966 still singled the Federal Republic out as the main obstacle to a European settlement, and at the end of 1966 and the beginning of 1967 the Soviet Union made a great fuss about the danger of neo-Nazism in West Germany while claiming the right to intervene in the event of the "resumption of aggressive policies by the former enemy state."

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid, pp. 11-12.

<sup>9</sup>Josef Korbel, "West Germany's OSTPOLITIK: Intra German Relations" ORBIS, pp. 1050-1058.



The main purpose of the Soviet policy toward West Germany seemed to be to derive the maximal concessions from the Federal Republic in exchange for any significant improvement of relations and, as has already been pointed out, the Federal Republic was not prepared at this juncture to grant them.<sup>10</sup> Yet there were other reasons for the initial cool reception. As the wild accusations against the Federal Republic on its "role" in the liberalization of Czechoslovakia during 1968 showed, West Germany was still a useful scapegoat and an excuse for Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe. No doubt it was also difficult for the Soviet Union to change its attitude which for many years had seen West Germany as the main threat in Europe to Soviet interests, particularly as long as the Christian Democrats were still the main party in power in Bonn. East German pressure must also have acted as a barrier to any Soviet interest which might have existed for improving relations with West Germany, while the prospect of West Germany gaining access to nuclear weapons through some form of NATO arrangement caused worry in the Kremlin.

In return for her more flexible OSTPOLITIK, the Federal Republic received a good deal of frustration and discouragement and was made aware of the fact that she would have to make major policy concessions in order to reach the same sort of "normal" relations with the Eastern bloc as Britain and France already enjoyed. Her main achievement was an impressive increase in trade with the Soviet Union after a period of relative stagnation during the years 1960-65.<sup>11</sup> Due to her strong

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid, pp. 1058-1060.



balance of payments position, however, this trade increase was of much lesser importance to her than a similar increase would have been in the case of Britain. Even with her increased share of Western economic contacts with the East, West Germany was still a very far way from being able to use her economic power for political ends.

#### D. WEST GERMAN INITIATIVES 1969-72

A long term aim of the Federal Republic's OSTPOLITIK has always been to foster conditions which would enable an eventual reunification of Germany. Adenauer believed that this could only be achieved from a position of strength and a policy of no compromises which would force the Soviet Union to give up her grip on East Germany. The Social Democrats felt that this policy had simply led to a growing rift between the two Germanies and their 'citizens'. This stagnant policy had to be stopped. What Willy Brandt wished to achieve was the reduction of tension between West Germany on the one hand and the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc on the other in order that the latter might place pressure on the GDR to be more flexible in its policy toward the Federal Republic. The longer run aim was to see the gradual dissolution of the two military alliances facing each other in Europe,<sup>12</sup> followed by the disintegration of the two blocs and a realignment of forces in Central Europe which would enable the eventual reunification of Germany within a broader framework of improved intra-European relations.

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<sup>12</sup>Walter H. Hahn, "West Germany's OSTPOLITIK: The Grand Design of Egon Bahr," ORBIS XVI, (Winter, 1973) p. 870.





The timing of the more intensive German effort has two basic explanations. The first is that by the end of 1969, the SPD became, for the first time in almost 40 years, the major partner in a coalition whose other members, the FDP, also favored the new approach to OSTPOLITIK.<sup>13</sup> Secondly, after the invasion of Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union showed herself increasingly receptive to West Germany's overtures for a variety of reasons.<sup>14</sup>

The most important manifestation of West Germany's new OSTPOLITIK was her willingness to recognize the status quo in Central and Eastern Europe as demanded by the Soviet Union and the other East European states, and her accession to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The Federal Republic realized that the mere expression of a desire to improve relations was not sufficient. The eventual benefits to be gained were considered more important than the immediate concessions the Federal Republic made the Soviet Union. These concessions were made in rapid succession, mostly after the SPD--FDP Coalition was elected into office.<sup>15</sup>

The first step concerning the de facto recognition of the GDR occurred in April 1969 when Brandt announced West German willingness in principle to take part in the Soviet proposed European Security Conference without conditioning her participation on the absence of

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<sup>13</sup>Josef Korbel, pp. 1050-1057.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid, pp. 1057-1060.

<sup>15</sup>The 1969 election marked a milestone in the history of the Federal Republic, it was the first time the SPD attained enough Bundestag seats to form a coalition government with the FDP.



the GDR -- this was the first time that the Federal Republic had dropped its traditional refusal to attend an international gathering at which the East Germans would also be present. The next step, in March 1970, was Brandt's first official meeting with the East German premier, Willi Stoph, which took place in Erfurt. Despite the absence of any concrete result, this meeting implied a further withdrawal from the West German refusal to recognize the GDR. Following the Four-Power Agreement of September 3rd, 1971, on the status of Berlin, discussions opened between the representatives of both Germanies to work out the actual elections of November 1972 (which increased the majority of the SPD/FDP Coalition. The treaty on the basic relative normalization in the relations between the Federal Republic and the GDR was signed on December 21st, opening the road to a relative normalization in the relations between the two German states.<sup>16</sup>

As soon as Brandt became chancellor he signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty as the Soviet Union had long pressed Bonn to do, an act for which they expressed their appreciation. By 1970 negotiations between West Germany and the Soviet Union had advanced sufficiently for Walter Scheel, the West German Foreign Minister, to pay a visit to Moscow, followed in August by the Chancellor's trip to Moscow for the official signing of the Treaty on the Renunciation of the use of Force. By this treaty, West Germany undertook "to respect the territorial integrity of all states in Europe within their existing frontiers."<sup>17</sup> The specific issue

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<sup>16</sup>Keefe, Eugene K., Area Handbook for the Federal Republic of Germany, (Washington D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office) 1975 p. 240.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid, p. 241.



of the Oder-Neisse boundary between Germany and Poland was settled in the December 7th West-German-Polish treaty. Soon after the Berlin agreement was signed Brandt visited Brezhnev in the Crimea to discuss various European problems. It was only on May 17, 1972 that the treaties with the Soviet Union and Poland were finally ratified by the Bundestag. Once the ratifications had taken place, the suspense which had surrounded the new OSTPOLITIK was over, and except for a settlement with Czechoslovakia, which was delayed by West Germany's refusal to declare the Munich Agreement of 1938 null and void, the initiating phase of Brandt's policy had come to an end.<sup>18</sup>

#### E. SOVIET REACTION TO THE LATER STAGES OF OSTPOLITIK

Before looking at the Soviet reaction to West Germany's diplomatic offensive it is important to note that during this period the former's interest in detente was constantly rising and that consequently the climate for cooperation between the West Europeans and the Soviet Union had become increasingly favorable. The most obvious reason for the Soviet interest in detente were: a) her own economic problems and the growing technological gap between herself and the West in the non-military field; b) her difficulties with China at a time when the latter had managed to climb out of the near isolation imposed upon her in the past by the United States. The manifestations of the Soviet interest in detente were her rapidly expanding trade and cooperation agreements

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<sup>18</sup>Timothy W. Stanley and Darnett M. Whitt, Detente Diplomacy: United States and European Security in the 1970s, (Cambridge: University Press), 1970 pp. 39-40.





Figure 5. Map of Postwar Boundaries





with the West, the convening of a Conference on European Security which she herself initiated, the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks with the United States, and most important from the point of view of this study, a fundamental shift in the Soviet attitude toward West Germany which meant the acceptance of West Germany rather than regarding it as a menace to European security and Soviet interests.<sup>19</sup>

After the initially discouraging reception to West Germany's new OSTPOLITIK during the year 1966-69, the Soviets began to show ever-increasing interest in the 1970's. Many explanations have been offered for the Soviet policy shifts at that particular time. First of all, there was the desire, soon after the invasion of Czechoslovakia, to play down the whole episode and wipe out the initial detrimental effect which it had had on the prospects of detente. Since West Germany had been the main scapegoat for the invasion it was primarily that state which the Soviet Union felt should be pacified. The desire to expand economic and technological contacts with the Federal Republic, seen within the context of Russia's broader economic interests, was another reason. There is no doubt that the Soviet Union also tried to help the SPD win the 1969 election so that it might form a government without the CDU/CSU, for she was well aware of the fact that only a government led by the SPD would be willing to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty, recognize the Oder-Neisse line and agree to establish official relations with the GDR.

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<sup>19</sup>Angela Stent, Soviet Policy Towards the German Democratic Republic, unpublished report. p. 20.



In February 1969, the Soviet Union offered Bonn positive concessions on the Non-Proliferation Treaty in the form of strong assurances that she had no intention of intervening in West Germany as she had previously claimed the right to do.<sup>20</sup> A week later a statement concerning the West German Presidential elections in West Berlin was made by the Russians but the subject was greatly played down despite East German efforts to the contrary. On March 12th, a summit conference of the Warsaw Pact which met in Budapest dropped the usual vindictive denunciation of West German militarism and called for a European Security Conference to deal with the German Problem.<sup>21</sup> At the 50th Anniversary of the Comintern the Soviet Union condemned the Stalinist denunciation of the German Social Democratic Party. In July 1969, Gromyko expressed Moscow's interest in improving the situation of West Berlin which was taken to mean an agreement to formalize the city's status in a way not wholly detrimental to West German interests. In December the Moscow Summit Conference of Warsaw Pact leaders sanctioned bilateral negotiations with Bonn which the Warsaw Foreign Ministers Conference of February 1967 had condemned. In 1970, came the negotiations between the Soviet Union and West Germany leading to the Treaty of Renunciation of the Use of Force, followed by a brief meeting between Gromyko and Scheel near Frankfurt in October 1970 and the Berlin Agreement in June 1972, soon after the West German--Soviet Treaty had been ratified by the Bundestag.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Karl Birnbaum, p. 15.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid, pp 6-15.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid, pp 41-42, 16-18.



Whether West Germany actually got anything in return for her concessions to the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc is a question which has been debated extensively. It is difficult to evaluate the long run returns since insufficient time has gone by. The most visible achievement has been West Germany's extraordinary expansion of trade, making her the most important Western trading partner of the Eastern bloc (this will be covered more extensively in another chapter). There have, however, been many less obvious achievements. In the first place the Federal Republic is no longer the target of vicious propaganda attacks accusing her of aggressive plans and revanchism. An accord on Berlin was signed, and although it was not agreed that West Berlin formed an integral part of the Federal Republic, at least West German rights in the city and those of the citizens of West Berlin were defined and officially recognized by the Soviet Union as well as the GDR. The next achievement was that the Soviet Union more or less forced a grudging East Germany to begin settling its relations with the Federal Republic, despite the fact that the latter was unwilling to concede that the two German states were foreign to each other.

For his part, Ulbricht, in his unrelenting opposition to Soviet WESTPOLITIK and to any German rapprochement, was isolated from the other East European leaders. He was convinced that only under conditions of permanent confrontation could he maximize his leverage over Moscow and erode the Western position in Berlin. His ultimate goal was to liquidate the four-power status of Berlin, and the Soviet willingness to begin Quadripartite negotiations on Berlin threatened his core policy goal. Although the USSR may well have shared this



ultimate aim vis a vis Berlin, in the short term, Ulbricht was obstructing Moscow's rapprochement with Bonn. Although it is possible Ulbricht was removed from power for domestic political reasons, particularly because of the failure of economic reforms, the fact that both the Berlin and the intra-German negotiations only made progress after his resignation in May 1971 indicates that the USSR played a role in his retirement. Since 1971, East Germany has been more circumspect in its reaction to Soviet WESTPOLITIK and there has not been any open conflict similar to that between 1969 and 1971. This has thus also been a gain for West Germany.<sup>23</sup>

Besides the Treaty on the Renunciation of the Use of Force with the Soviet Union, the actual value of which (as opposed to its symbolic value) is arguable, an agreement was signed on July 22nd for the opening of the West German Consulate in Leningrad and a Soviet one in Hamburg in November 1971; and it was finally agreed that Luftansa would fly to Moscow via West Berlin. West Germany now has full diplomatic relations with all the Warsaw Pact members, and having joined the United Nations together with East Germany, her position in the international system has been normalized to the greatest extent possible and will enable her to play a much more active and independent role in world affairs.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Stanley Radcliffe, 25 Years On - The Two Germanies, (London: Harrap and Company) 1972, pp. 239-240.

<sup>24</sup>Stanley & Whitt, pp. 48-50.





## F. INITIATIVES FROM 1973-1975

The initiating phase of West Germany's OSTPOLITIK actually came to an end in 1972 though relations with Czechoslovakia were normalized in December 1973. Brezhnev paid a much heralded official visit to West Germany in May 1973 at Brandt's invitation, and East Germany opened her official mission in Bonn in May 1974. In 1973 more important economic agreements were made while trade increased at a fast pace, with the Soviet Union showing a particular interest in expanding it even further by getting the reluctant West Germans to sign a very long term economic agreement. German reluctance to sign such an agreement resulted from unwillingness to become too closely tied economically to the Soviet Union and from the actual limits of what the Soviet Union could offer the Federal Republic in return for her purchases.<sup>25</sup> On October 1st, 1973 the first supplies of Soviet natural gas began to flow to West Germany by a pipeline running through Czechoslovakia, but by the beginning of 1974 the Soviet Union had fallen down on agreed oil deliveries. After the latter had also raised her price of crude oil West Germany's main oil company, Veba, cancelled its Russian contract. Both this setback and the refusal of the Bundestag to approve cheap export credits for the Soviet Union in March 1974 were the first indications that, although German-Soviet relations would not be allowed to deteriorate to their previous state, the road would henceforth not be planted with roses. In the meantime public opinion in the Federal

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<sup>25</sup>Korbel, pp. 1066-1070.



Republic became increasingly disenchanted with OSTPOLITIK, feeling that too many domestic problems had been making concessions without any visible returns. By the beginning of 1974 it could also be pointed out that the GDR was stalling on any real relaxation in its relations with the Federal Republic while the Soviet Union seemed in no mood to press its ally and despite the Berlin Agreement was herself raising difficulties concerning Bonn's prerogatives in West Berlin. Brandt's resignation over the Guillaume spy affair in May 1974, the withdrawal of Egon Bahr, the master architect of OSTPOLITIK, from the front bench of the SPD, and the accession to the Chancellorship of Helmut Schmidt who had never been as enthusiastic as Brandt about OSTPOLITIK, seemed to put a pallor on OSTPOLITIK for the time being.

#### G. THE TRANSITION FROM BRANDT STYLE OSTPOLITIK TO SCHMIDT STYLE OSTPOLITIK

Brandt's OSTPOLITIK was powered in part by the sincere motive to strike with Germany's former victims in the East the same "reconciliation" that Adenauer had effected with the West. It was powered partly also by the plausible tactical motive that, given the unfolding detente negotiations with Moscow by the Nixon Administration, the FRG might as well stage some gambits of its own lest it be completely outflanked by a comprehensive accord between the two superpowers.<sup>27</sup>

But there was also a larger conception behind OSTPOLITIK -- one that was purveyed by the man most responsible for the policy's

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<sup>27</sup> Helmut Schmidt, pp. 155-156.



implementation: Egon Bahr, Brandt's long time close associate and his chief negotiator in the East. Bahr envisaged a broad German strategy vis-a-vis the East that would lead over various accommodations including: the East-West force withdrawals; the dissolution of NATO and the Warsaw Pact; and the creation of an essentially neutralized Central Europe under the guise of a Collective Security System.<sup>28</sup> From Bahr's strongly nationalistic vantage point, the purpose of this vast re-vamping process--which the FRG would subtly engineer with the grudging tolerance of the superpowers--would be to set the stage for a reunion of the two Germanies, in fact, if not in formality.

Bahr relinquished the controls of OSTPOLITIK when Helmut Schmidt took over as Chancellor in 1974. Today, as Secretary-General of the SPD he continues to play a powerful role on the Bonn stage, even if not in the day to day deliberations of the Schmidt government. And he has given ample indication that although he may have modified the time frame of his expectations, by no means has he given up his basic vision of a future Europe.

Helmut Schmidt represents the conservative wing of the SPD. He is essentially a pragmatist with a basic pro-West orientation. But Schmidt is not immune to some of the traditional ideological under-currents in the SPD: for example, a certain abnegation vis-a-vis power politics, especially nuclear politics and strong and consistent emphasis on arms control as the preferred road to the gradual dismantling of the power blocs in Europe.

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<sup>28</sup>Walter Hahn, pp. 870-871.



Nor is Schmidt immune to an occasional wistfulness that mirrors at least vague outlines of the Bahr concept. Thus, in a much discussed private dinner speech in March, 1979 where, in the presence of the U. S. Ambassador to Bonn, Schmidt mused about the long range future of Europe.<sup>29</sup> The picture he painted was one similar to the last century--meaning, he said, a "cross-fertilization" of all European cultures, feelings once again of belonging to each other. He averred that obviously Germany would be the great benefactor because it could be reunited again in one house.<sup>30</sup>

Another vociferous voice in the call for OSTPOLITIK is the SPD's chief ideologue, Herbert Wehner. Throughout the period of OSTPOLITIK, Wehner has been the foremost advocate of a reconciliation between East and West--of Western Europe and the Communist Bloc, and most especially of West and East Germany.<sup>31</sup>

Although Brandt cut Wehner out when Brandt negotiated the present SPD-Free Democrat Coalition, Wehner has retained tremendous influence in the SPD, particularly among the young, as party whip in the Bundestag. He has stormy relations with Schmidt, but the Chancellor makes no major decisions without consulting him. Above all, Germany's OSTPOLITIK was to a large degree dependent on Wehner.

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<sup>29</sup>Interview of Chancellor Schmidt printed in the Christian Science Monitor March 16, 1980.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>Interview of Herbert Wehner, Business Week, September 29, 1980, p. 62.





Wehner, although 74, will continue to push for an accommodation with the Communists in any Schmidt-led government. The question is whether the Russians can meet him halfway.

For his part, Schmidt is flirting with neutralist solutions to European problems. Schmidt has called for a freeze on deployment of the next generation of "theater nuclear weapons" by both Americans and the Soviets. The agreement was that the U.S. should continue to prepare for the deployment of the Pershing II missiles and GLCMs while trying to negotiate a European Mutual Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR) at talks in Vienna. Schmidt says that the purpose is to get negotiations going again between the U.S. and Moscow after Washington's refusal to ratify the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT II) following the Afghanistan invasion. And it is clear he sees himself going to Moscow as a middleman.<sup>33</sup>

Yet, for all the logic and precision of Schmidt's pronouncements, it is clear that his freeze proposal has political implications that go beyond its actual language.

His new position is meant to curry favor with his own party's left wing, which as early as 1959 evolved a "Deutschland Plan" aimed at neutralizing West Germany.<sup>34</sup> It has evidently placated party leaders such as Herbert Wehner, who has at times, criticized Schmidt, arguing

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<sup>33</sup>"Steering Europe to Independence," Business Week, May 12, 1980.

<sup>34</sup>Walter Lagueur, "Euro-Neutrality," Commentary, June 1980, pp. 23-26.



that the Soviet military build-up in Central Europe is "essentially defensive."

Schmidt's new line offers the Soviets an opening to divide the U.S. further from its NATO allies. In a propaganda stunt, Moscow unilaterally withdrew 20,000 superannuated forces from the Central European front. The Russians are expected to resurrect their proposal for an "all Europe Energy Conference" hinting that the Soviets would help ensure access by Western Europe--and particularly energy short West Germany-- to a stable supply.<sup>35</sup> The proposed natural gas pipeline is a big step in this direction. The implication, of course, is that the U.S. no longer is capable of guaranteeing Mideast oil to European customers. And, as Schmidt has acknowledged on more than one occasion, Moscow always has one important card--the 17 million Germans living under a Communist regime in East Germany.

Large segments of the European body politic see war, not subservience to the Soviet Union, as the main threat; that is one important reason for the German pressure on Schmidt for negotiations at any price.

The recent Polish unrest has put some new kinks in OSTPOLITIK and intro-German relations. Initially, the Soviets and East Germans appeared to be maneuvering to soften West German reaction to any eventual Soviet-bloc military intervention in Poland. At the same time they were trying to undermine in advance the Reagan administration's drive to beef up NATO defenses in Europe. In this context could be seen: East German Communist leader Erich Honecker's revival of the idea of

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<sup>35</sup>Christian Science Monitor, March 16, 1980.



German reunification--something that has not been aired publicly at the official level in East Germany since the 1960s; and Soviet encouragement of propaganda campaigns in West Germany against the introduction of nuclear armed cruise missiles into the NATO arsenal on German soil; against nuclear installations generally in West Germany; and against the probability that the U.S. might push for NATO forces armed with neutron bombs.<sup>36</sup> These themes were intended to pluck that cord in West German hearts that remains responsive to any hope to eventual unification of the divided German homeland.

However, when the East German leadership uses the unification idea, it may also be hoping to give the East German people something to talk and think about other than the example being set by the workers next door across the Oder in Poland.

More recently, and in response to the prolonged Polish crisis, East and West Germany appear to be mutually shielding their special relationship from the cold East-West winds of the past 16 months. The two German states are not taking any steps forward, but neither are they retreating from the pragmatic cooperation they established at the height of the 1970s OSTPOLITIK.

This is clear after the exchange of public messages on the subject in Chancellor Schmidt's parliamentary message on April 9th of this year and Socialist Unity (SED-Communist) Party chief Erich Honecker's keynote speech at the East Berlin party congress April 11th.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>"East-West Germany Pursue Detente in Eye of Polish Storm," Christian Science Monitor, April 29, 1981.

<sup>37</sup>"Quest for Harmony," New York Times, January, 1981.



Arguments remain between Bonn and East Berlin--on citizenship, the concept of a unified German nation, the flow of visits between West and East Germans, and other issues. But both sides are simply stating their differences, then proceeding with business as usual.<sup>38</sup>

Thus, Mr. Schmidt criticized East Germany's quadrupling last fall of the border-crossing fee for West German visitors to East Berlin. Since the imposition of the new fee, 25 Deutschemarks (about \$12.50), the number of private West German visitors to the East has fallen by almost half. Schmidt also condemned the automatic weapons firing at any East Germans who attempt to escape to the West.<sup>39</sup>

But the Chancellor went on to point out that even in the present tense world situation, West Berlin's lifelines to West Germany have not been tampered with. And he specified that West Germany, which so highly values the East-West German contacts of the past decade, would not retaliate for East German shrinkage of these contacts.

On the East German side, in the same vein, the party newspaper Neues Deutschland sharply rejected Schmidt's reproaches. But this relieved Honecker himself from attacking Schmidt at the much more important forum of the party congress.<sup>40</sup>

In his speech, Honecker dismissed "the arrogant claim of the FRG to speak for all Germans." But he did not dwell on the subject, even though he had portrayed it half a year ago as a major stumbling block in East-West German relations.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid.





Mr. Honecker further gave the unusual assurance -- "to avoid any misunderstanding" -- that East Germany is not manipulating its policy to try to "loosen the Federal Republic's (West Germany's) relations to its alliance partners, especially the U.S."<sup>42</sup>

The East German party and government leader gave West Germany an even more concrete reassurance in his prepared text, but omitted this section when he spoke. He said East Germany supports a "quiet and normal" life for West Berlin on the basis of the 1971, Four-Power Agreement that normalized West Berlin's status. He added that in line with "common sense" East Germany remains "ready to deal with the West Berlin Senate about issues of common interest." Observers took the deletion of the West Berlin section from the delivered address as a way of conveying the message to West Germany without sounding too chummy at the ideologically important party congress.

The current East-West German stabilization follows the period last fall when Honecker suddenly worsened relations, in response to the Polish crisis. Besides raising border-crossing fees, Honecker launched a sharp attack last fall on West Germany's policy of granting citizenship automatically to any ethnic German who wanted it, including East Germans.

At the time West Germany, in effect, turned the other cheek--and was therefore accused by some critics of being soft on detente and yielding to Soviet and East German pressures. The East German pique blew over, however, and the East German reception of West Germany's quasi-diplomatic representative has been conspicuously warm this spring.

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid.



In retrospect, West German analysts believe that Honecker misjudged the situation last fall and expected overall East-West relations to deteriorate even more than they have over Poland. When he discovered that East Germany was alone in its embattled mood, he reverted to a more businesslike tone.<sup>43</sup>

Given the continuing Polish uncertainty, the two German states are hardly in a position to expand their contacts. At present there could be no new deals on the unusual pattern of West German money for East German economic projects, in return for East-West human contacts. Nor could the twice-postponed Schmidt-Honecker summit be rescheduled, despite East Germany's eagerness to have this stamp of respectability.<sup>44</sup> Nor are there any hints that East Germany might revoke the expensive border-crossing charge.

Yet the two German states have agreed not to let their differences or the Polish suspense degrade the bilateral relations that have become normal over the past decade of OSTPOLITIK. Trade expanded 19 percent last year after stagnating the year before--and as Schmidt has stressed, West Berlin's lifelines remain intact.<sup>45</sup>

And one of the many reasons for Russia's (relative) restraint in Poland thus far, may be the Kremlin's certain knowledge that, if Russian soldiers invade, the Hamburg natural gas pipeline deal would

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<sup>43</sup>"East-West Germany Pursue Detente," CSM, April 29, 1981.

<sup>44</sup>"Soviet-East Germans Try to Soften up West Germany," CSM, Feb 18, 1981, p. 4.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.



be off. For one of the paradoxes for the Russian leadership is that Soviet independence in energy supplies can be achieved only with the help of the West, Germany in particular.<sup>46</sup>

#### H. CONCLUSION

For the last two decades West Germany has been a stable force on the continent, and even now, Helmut Schmidt's government is the only one which continues to be reasonably effective and popular. Germany continues to prosper economically, albeit she has fallen off slightly in recent years.

Yet with all this, there have been disquieting signs out of Germany. Some of the elder statesmen of the Social Democratic party, notably Willy Brandt, Herbert Wehner and Egon Bahr, while reaffirming their loyalty to the Western alliance, have veered toward some form of neutralism. The Young Socialists, the Jusos, who constitute perhaps up to a third of party activists have gone even further. They "supported" the Soviet invasion of Afganistan with greater enthusiasm than did some West European Communist parties--which, however cautiously, dissociated themselves from the Soviet action. Even Willy Brandt remarked that the invasion of Afganistan proved that we needed more detente, not less.<sup>47</sup>

It has been fascinating to watch the change in the outlook of Wehner, Brandt, and their colleagues, precisely because, unlike some

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<sup>46</sup>"Russia Can Get By With a Little Help From Its Enemies," The Economist, May 9, 1981

<sup>47</sup>Class Lecture Notes, NATO-West Germany, Professor David Yost, Naval Postgraduate School, May, 1981.



Western liberals, they have few illusions about Communism and the Soviet Union. (Wehner was a leading Communist up to the early 1940s, while Brandt was in the forefront of the battle against the Communists as the mayor of West Berlin.) Could the rapprochement they now advocate be connected with the hope of achieving an all-German confederation? Perhaps, to some extent. But far more important seems to be the impact on these men of the change in the balance of power in Europe. The Soviet Union, as they see it, has become the leading force in Europe, and West Germany has to accept the fact. Under no circumstances must it be forced into a conflict with its powerful neighbor. If Germany remains reasonably strong and prosperous, they believe, it will have little to fear from Moscow.

It could be said in defense of such ideas that the overall perspective from Hamburg--a distance of 30 miles from the Soviet forward units--let alone from Berlin, is not the same as from Washington. As Brandt and Wehner see it, Germans will always have to be more accommodating toward the Soviet Union in view of their geographical proximity, their traditional trade relations, and of course, their relationship with East Germany.

The existence of the inter-German border, now reinforced by East German watchtowers, walls and mine fields, has never fully eclipsed the long term goal of a single Germany. Chancellor Schmidt said recently:

"We Germans cannot, nor do we want to, disown the historical identity of our people and our nation."

During the cold war, with the Berlin Wall going up and armor bristling, there was never much chance of the two Germanies becoming





one. The chances improved when the U.S. embarked on detente, a course that led West Germany to form its OSTPOLITIK.

For West Germany, detente brought the repatriation of thousands of ethnic Germans from the Eastern bloc, closer ties between members of families separated by the East and West German border and the removal of Berlin from the world's front pages as the cold war's tinderbox. The slow and painful gains cannot be forgotten by the Germans-- OSTPOLITIK and the quest for reunification will go on.



#### IV. GERMAN REUNIFICATION FROM THE VANTAGE POINT OF HER EAST EUROPEAN NEIGHBORS

"The Division of Germany must be seen in its proper context of a divided Europe. We must bring home to our Western partners the fact that the continued separate existence of seventeen million of our countrymen under Communist rule is a fate they share with the other Eastern European countries."<sup>1</sup>

"It would be a grave mistake for anyone to regard Europe as the petrified excrescence of two spheres of power: it is a living community of peoples and states. And the transformation that some wish for and others would like to stop is already making itself manifest."<sup>2</sup>

There are a number of cogent reasons for taking a closer look at the impact of the German problem on the East European Alliance: it is an issue which involves the whole of the alliance on a collective level; in addition, it is an issue of profound and vital national strategic importance to several states - specifically East Germany itself, Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union - and as such offers insights into the pattern of relations within this strategically important northern tier of states. Furthermore, it is an issue where the people of East Germany could be expected to oppose the Soviet Union and perhaps the rest of the alliance. It is dangerous to underestimate Germany's desire to become a united nation once again. The greater the obstacles placed in the way of German reunification the greater will be the risk of dangerous complications. It is doubtful

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<sup>1</sup>Josef Strauss Franz, The Grand Design, (Praeger, 1966) p. 10.

<sup>2</sup>Willy Brandt, A Peace Policy for Europe, (Canada: Holt, Rhinehart & Winston, 1969) p. 90.



whether Soviet leaders can continue to prevent another revolutionary explosion in this region if they insist on holding East Germany in subjection -- it is getting too big for them, as its economic progression would indicate. Furthermore, economic difficulties caused by East Germany's relations with Moscow, could trigger off a powerful wave of German nationalism. As long as Germany is divided there is an increasing danger of a revolution in East Germany, or of West Germany leaving the Atlantic Alliance in the hope of achieving reunification through direct negotiations with the Communists.

The situation in the Soviet dominated nations in Eastern Europe will improve or deteriorate according to the conditions in which German reunification is achieved. And conversely, the position of Germany will be stronger or weaker according to whether the countries of Eastern Europe become free or remain under total Soviet domination. The current unrest in Poland could be a harbinger of things to come in East Central Europe.

#### A. GERMANY IN THE BALANCE OF FORCES

"A reunited Germany has a critical magnitude. She is too big to play no part in the balance of forces, and too small herself to hold these forces in balance around her. For this reason it is, indeed, difficult to imagine that the whole of Germany, given a continuation of the present political structure of Europe, could just go and associate herself with one side or the other. It is for precisely this reason that the growing together of the two separated parts of Germany can be seen only as part and parcel of the process of overcoming East-West conflict in Europe."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Quote from Kurt Kiesinger, Chancellor of the FRG from 1966-1969; cited in Helmut Schmidt, *The Balance of Power*, (London: William Kimber and Co., 1969), p. 117.



If a solution to the German problem is to come within the range of the possible, then it must be one that does not jeopardize the balance of forces. There is no country in Europe, including the Soviet Union, that would ever allow Germany the weight necessary for this purpose. It is, in fact, precisely their anxiety lest Germany acquire greater weight that has induced not only the Soviet Union but all of Germany's neighbors to go a long way toward acquiescing in the status quo in Europe.

In this chapter, I will examine the important Eastern European countries as examples and sketch their interests, motivations, and attitudes, past and present, to the German question and the prospect for a resolution of the German problem.

## B. COMMUNISM IN EASTERN EUROPE

To understand the resurgence of the German problem, it is necessary to examine the evolving state of communism in Eastern Europe.

All the Communist states of Eastern Europe underwent during the fifties a common phase of liberalization which set in after the death of Stalin. This assumed different proportions in different countries and became associated in varying degrees with the endeavor to secure more autonomy, and with greater stress on national interest in foreign affairs. The concept 'liberalization' is rather a misnomer that does justice neither to its substance nor its motives. At the outside it is applicable to what went on in Czechoslovakia during the first seven months of 1968. One can see why hard line Communists in Eastern Europe and the Soviets regard this process as intolerable and why it led to the catastrophe of intervention.





Nevertheless, for more than a decade there was a uniform tendency toward a radical falling off in political and juridicial terror, and a similar tendency toward greater elasticity in the structures of economic command in the centralized economics of the East. The causes of this development were threefold. The Stalinist terror called for bloody sacrifices not only in the Soviet Union but in all countries. Opposite tendencies became apparent in the Soviet Union as long ago as the brief Malenkov period, and, swelling to a climax under Khrushchev and, at the 20th Congress of the CPSU, spread to other countries.<sup>4</sup>

The second cause lies in what was found to be the unsatisfactory economic results produced by the excessively rigid command economics, motivated as they were by political and ideological considerations and administered as they were by political fiat. The proud words about catching up and overtaking the West had been taken to absurd lengths and were completely unrealistic. The need arose to find economic methods of greater effectiveness, and the search inevitably led to greater freedom of decision on the part of bodies away from the center, and to greater delegation of responsibility.<sup>5</sup>

The third cause was also economic in character. The extensive exploitation of the Eastern European economies for the purpose of maximizing Soviet economic performance inevitably provoked the other governments to divergent economic strategies; they turned toward

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<sup>4</sup>Harry Schwartz, Eastern Europe in the Soviet Shadow, (New York: John Day Company, 1973) pp. 70-75.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid, pp. 75-80.



other external trading partners and this influenced their foreign policy. To the same extent, moreover, as the feeling of world political detente gathered momentum in the mid-Sixties, and as the Sino-Soviet dispute revealed even to Communists the hollowness of the phrase 'monolithic bloc' -- so the foreign policies of the Eastern European countries proceeded down the road toward relaxation. At the same time nearly all the governments and Communist Parties attempted, in the careful accentuation of their foreign policy, to support themselves on the internal consensus of the masses they ruled.<sup>6</sup> And where individual accents were scarcely possible owing to the presence of Soviet troops (e.g., in Hungary after 1956) the regime attempted, through cautious domestic relaxation, to find a stronger base for themselves in the consent of their subjects. Only the government of the GDR found itself in the difficult position of not being able to follow either path. It was therefore compelled to bring about, on a quite extraordinary scale, a steady and visible rise in the standard of living and, to this end, in economic productive capacity.<sup>7</sup> For all of this it is possible to make certain limited deductions about the foreign political interests of the various nations. They suggest that different attitudes exist to the problems of Central Europe and of Germany.

### C. PUGNACIOUS POLAND AND THE GERMAN QUESTION

The history of Poland during the last two centuries is practically synonymous with the history of the partition of the country; i.e., with

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>John Dornberg, The Other Germany, (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1968) pp. 161-165.



the constant struggle between the Germans and the Russians. The Soviet campaign into Poland now lies sixty years backward in time, and the simultaneous invasion of Hitler and Stalin, forty years. Poland's political dependence on France and Britain helped her neither in 1939 nor later. The Soviet advance up to the Elbe, and the westward displacement of the Polish-Soviet and Polish-German borders brought about by Soviet power, combined with the fact that Poland is bracketed by two mass Soviet armies, produced a situation where every Polish government since 1945 has been compelled to submit to the will of the Soviet master.<sup>8</sup> However, the Polish peoples' widespread lack of enthusiasm for communism and inability to apotheosize the Communist leaders on cue has led to the general malaise and recalcitrance of the Polish people.

Certain elements of sympathy were present for the Federal Republic, particularly at the time of the Polish October in 1956: but the introduction of the Hallstein Doctrine<sup>9</sup> and its application against the states of Eastern Europe led to their being very rapidly suppressed.

Poland's natural history gave them little enough reason for valuing the good neighborliness of either the Germans or the Russians; and their attitude remained basically unchanged up until the 1970's.

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<sup>8</sup>Richard C. Gripp, The Political System of Communism, (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), pp. 29-30.

<sup>9</sup>The Hallstein Doctrine was the brainchild of Chancellor Adenauer's State Secretary, Walter Hallstein. The Doctrine was the touchstone of the Federal Republic's foreign policy for a decade following its enunciation in 1955. It codified the FRG's isolation; it stated the intent of the FRG to eschew diplomatic relations with any country recognizing the



Ulbricht's Communism, tinged as it was with Prussian bureaucracy, was included in the Polish lack of love for the Germans. Nevertheless, at times, the Gomulka regime saw itself compelled by the direction of its real interests to cooperate with East Berlin in foreign affairs.

Polish governments supported the division of Germany just as they cling to their alliance with Moscow. Poland was a status quo power, because any change and any conflict could jeopardize the territorial arrangements at that time. The FRG did not recognize the division of Germany or the Oder-Neisse line.<sup>10</sup> The unloved GDR therefore appeared in the guise of a desirable buffer state and bastion. For the Communist ruling elite the maintenance of the internal power structure of the GDR would be endangered, and because sympathy with any changes in the GDR could undermine the stability of the Polish Communist regime. At that time, the prospects of a German reunion to form a German unitary Communist state aroused the profoundest misgivings.<sup>11</sup>

But the German Question raised for all Poles, whether Communists or not, the issue of Polish security. The Poles were satisfied with their country territorially; ethnic and political frontiers very largely coincided -- certainly more than at any time in their recent history.

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GDR. An exception was made for the Soviet Union, officially because it was one of the victor occupying powers with whom an all-German peace treaty must eventually be negotiated.

<sup>10</sup>Chancellor Brandt ultimately signed a treaty with Poland in 1970, confirming the Oder-Neisse river line as the boundary between the Democratic Republic and Poland.

<sup>11</sup>N. Edwina Moreton, East Germany and the Warsaw Alliance: The Politics of Detente, (Boulder: Praeger, 1978) pp. 18-22.







Figure 6. Map of Federal Republic; Democratic Republic



However, much has changed in the last decade. The guarantee of their Western regions -- the Oder Neisse boundary -- was a crucial feature of Poland's external relations with the Federal Republic of West Germany. Relations with West Germany warmed up considerably during this time -- OSTPOLITIK was in full bloom and the Poles were trading extensively with West Germany.<sup>12</sup>

Coincident with those changes came a change in sentiment for German reunification. If a reunification for Germany were to be in the cards, what Poland would like best of all would be a neutralized Germany -- a Germany that, in the Polish view, would have to be cemented into a European Security System.

In turn, German reunification could be linked with new security arrangements reducing tensions in Europe and Poland, in particular. The recent turmoil in Poland may ultimately be the genesis of the unraveling of the Communist regimes in Czechoslovakia, East Germany, and other East European states. The Soviets, weighing the costs of periodic crisis and repression might inch their way toward relations with Eastern Europe that don't insist on control of internal affairs of those countries, but rather, provide mutual security. Closer economic ties with the FRG and the West in general, and participation in the world economy, beneficial for the USSR, Poland, the GDR and the rest of Eastern Europe, could be linked to these new security arrangements including the reunification of Germany.

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid.



#### D. THE ENEMY BROTHER

"...There are fears that the Federal Republic might one day -- under radical political leadership -- turn unilaterally to the East out of disillusion with the continuing failure to achieve reunification of the German nation. It is, indeed, realized that such a turn of events would not lead to reunification in freedom, but only to the loss of Europe's equilibrium."<sup>13</sup>

The ninth largest industrial state of the world and the USSR's largest, and for high technology, its most important foreign trade partner, East Germany, is Moscow's guarantee of maintaining its greatest gain from World War II: the partition of Germany and the Soviet domination of the Eastern part.<sup>14</sup>

East Germany enthusiastically pushed for and participated in the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. The Czechoslovak developments endangered Ulbricht's and Moscow's role in East Germany,<sup>15</sup> for the Soviet Union the most important and for the West the least understood state in Communist Eastern Europe. The Polish unrest again threatens East Germany and the USSR, but East Germany and Russia cannot digest or swallow such a nation as Poland.

Yet East Germany is potentially the most unstable of the Communist East European states, for one overwhelming reason. It is not a nation, but a smaller, weaker part of Germany, and since nationalism and

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<sup>13</sup>Helmet Schmidt, The Balance of Power, p. 120.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid, p. 156.

<sup>15</sup>Stanley Radcliffe, 25 Years On - The Two Germanies 1970, (London: Harrap & Co., 1972), p. 79.



economics favor West Germany, its (GDR) population will at best resignedly tolerate East Germany's Soviet sponsored rulers. Ulbricht and Honecker are hardly loveable, charismatic men.

Ulbricht moved ruthlessly but flexibly, with Soviet support, toward consultative authoritarianism in economics while retaining coercive authoritarianism in the cultural and political spheres.<sup>16</sup> Ulbricht's, and later Honecker's importance to the Soviets has increased as the East German economy has become more important to them, as East-West detente and West German OSTPOLITIK have opened up the German question, and as Moscow has had to deal with the contumely behavior of other East European states. In short, although the East German leaders are unpopular, they are probably the greatest of any of the Soviet Union's allies.

The 1961 Berlin Wall and the New Economic System, which the Wall made possible, were great turning points in East German affairs. Before the wall, Ulbricht's state was being so rapidly drained of skilled labor that its economy was nearing collapse. Thereafter, resignation set in, thus lowering popular pressures against Ulbricht and the Russians. Ulbricht thereafter felt freer to adopt a drastic bureaucratic economic reform, the New Economic System: extensive decentralization of the economy, replacement of political cadres by technically trained managers, significant satisfaction of consumer needs, and, of the greatest political significance, considerable institutionalization of economic

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<sup>16</sup>Jiri Valenta, Soviet Intervention in Czechoslovakia, 1968, (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1979) pp. 114-115.





and technological interest group representation. Thus functional conflicts are no longer suppressed but channeled and profited from by the system -- all the while the commanding height of power -- the SED Presidium -- remains in the hands of the primarily political, still semi-conspiratorical, "marginal" elite of Ulbricht and his colleagues and successors.<sup>17</sup> However, East German reforms remain essentially bureaucratic. They do not, as in Yugoslavia, involve the introduction of a market economy or enterprise autonomy in foreign trade.

Thus, a new technological "counter-elite" has come into power in East Germany at most levels below the Presidium. This seems unlikely to challenge the control of Ulbricht's 71 year old successor, Erich Honecker. Only decisive change in Soviet policy toward Germany, East and West, or Poland, would make such a challenge likely: and the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia made this seem farther away than ever.

But Honecker's rationalized rule still remains potentially unstable, especially with the German question beginning to unfreeze. The West German OSTPOLITIK and the Czechoslovak liberalization initially unthawed the question.<sup>18</sup> For Ulbricht and the Russians, therefore, the invasion of Czechoslovakia was inter alia intended to reinsure East Germany's stability and block West Germany's influence. However, the effect was not permanent, but rather a temporary stop gap measure.

Although East - West detente and the Berlin Wall produced a more stable East German state, they also partially unfroze the German

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<sup>17</sup>Moreton, p. 175.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid, p. 175.



Question. Moscow resumed an active, offensive European policy; East Germany acted on West German public opinion, frustrated by the Wall's blocking on internal German travel and its blow to the dream of reunification; and West Germany's resultant new OSTPOLITIK did the same in Eastern Europe, including East Germany.<sup>19</sup> Bonn did well in South-eastern Europe, would have done well in Czechoslovakia had not the Soviets invaded, and was beginning to bring about the isolation of East Germany.

Thus Honecker's rationalized rule still remains potentially unstable, in spite of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, Afganistan, and its scare tactics in Poland. The liberalization of Poland threatens again to raise the chants for reunification. Whatever the Soviets do in the Poland case, they cannot refreeze the German question, they can only postpone it or exacerbate the demands for it.

#### E. CZECHOSLOVAKIA (BOTH BEFORE AND AFTER AUGUST, 1968) AND THE GERMAN QUESTION

The Czechoslovak cultural and political traditions make them a Western people. They have always had neighbors more powerful and arrogant than themselves and have therefore learnt how to stay the course to adjust themselves to any situation that arises.<sup>20</sup> The

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<sup>19</sup>Willy Brandt travelled to Erfurt in East Germany on March 19th 1970, and the East German Prime Minister, Willi Stoph, paid a return visit to Kassel in West Germany on 21 May 1970. The enthusiastic demonstrations in Erfurt (crowds of East Germans shouted Brandt's name for several minutes) were a personal triumph for Willy Brandt.

<sup>20</sup>Charles Gati, The International Politics of Eastern Europe, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1976) p. 165.



breakneck pace at which the demand for individual freedom mounted during the spring of 1968 (while Soviet warnings were underestimated or ignored); the strength of Czech passive resistance during August and September of that year that earned the sympathy of the world; the headstrong delight in taking risks which was apparent in these events -- all these things surprised everybody.<sup>21</sup>

After 1948, the Czechs -- enraged and disillusioned by the Western power's abandonment of the country of Masaryk and Benes, and filled with hatred of the Germans -- had inwardly gone a long way toward coming to terms with the Soviet seizure of power and Soviet domination, particularly as the latter seemed to guarantee the external security that had merely been promised by the West but not carried out. That this nevertheless gave way in 1967/68 to an internal structural change (as it was at first) which was to lead to disastrous foreign political consequences for Czechoslovakia, had several reasons. First of all, there was the morally highly dubious and economically incompetent Novotny regime. Not until 1963 did Novotny, yielding to growing internal pressure, resistantly begin the process of de-Stalinization and rehabilitation of those tortured and imprisoned during the terror trials of the early Fifties. The development, furthermore, of what was basically a highly developed industrial economy, had been hopelessly slowed down by the imposition of an ineffective system of economic direction. Novotny's people did not dare put into operation the proposals for economic reform that had been laid before them, because they feared

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<sup>21</sup>Harry Swartz, Eastern Europe in the Soviet Shadow, pp. 70-75.



(with every justification) that these might have unfavorable repercussions for their personal power position. All this led, from 1965 onwards, to rapidly developing opposition on the part of the relatively extensive Czech intelligentsia and educated class -- and this included the Communists who were in the van of the reform movement.<sup>22</sup> This situation has shades of similarity to the present East German situation.

External impetus came at last from the Slovaks who had too often and for too long been treated as second class citizens by Prague -- especially under Novotny. Dubcek rose in 1963 to the top of the Slovak Communist Party which had been run on Stalinist lines up till then. His arguments with Novotny led to connections with the Prague reformers. The Novotny regime reacted uncertainly and crumbled in the face of a swing of opinion with the Central Committee on the Communist Party which, for the first time (and, as regards Europe as a whole, the only time) felt that it had the support of a great majority of the country's population (i.e., of the Czechs, the Slovaks and the minorities).<sup>23</sup>

So rapid and extensive a process of democratisation would presumably not have taken place in Czechoslovakia if its peoples had actually entertained any actual fears of danger from without. But the Czechs had for a long time ceased to believe Novotny when he attempted to arouse in them fears of the Federal Republic based on manifestly improbable exaggerations; the Slovaks, in any case, had never been

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<sup>22</sup>Adam Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1974) pp. 738-739.

<sup>23</sup>Jiri Valenta, Soviet Intervention in Czechoslovakia, pp. 11-12.





particularly anti-German. In 1965 and 1966, the Federal Republic was the country on which most economic hopes were set, and toward which much thought was directed. The GDR on the other hand, was unpopular, even with Novotny -- a consequence of Ulbricht's striking gift for arrogance and perfidy. Even in 1966, a number of leading figures in the Novotny regime came out for a normalization of relations and for a resumption of diplomatic contacts with Bonn. After 1966, and the inauguration of the 'New Ostpolitik' hopes were directed even more openly toward future economic exchanges with the Federal Republic and towards economic credits from the latter.

The Soviet leadership was well aware that the domestic events in Czechoslovakia were not influenced by Bonn. But they had to take into account, with the rise of Czech hopes of economic aid from Western Germany, a possible reduction in their own influence. This might have been acceptable to Moscow if the process of liberalization and democratization in Czechoslovakia had not gone to such lengths that not only was the monopoly rule of the Communist Party of the Czech Soviet Socialist Republic threatened, but there was a danger that the bacillus of freedom of opinion might spread to the GDR and Poland (perhaps even to the Ukraine) and undermine the Communist regimes there.<sup>24</sup> The invasion, which had long been planned and was brilliantly prepared militarily, met with spiritual resistance within Czechoslovakia of a degree of solidarity completely unsuspected by the Soviets: and it

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<sup>24</sup>Jiri Valenta, pp. 105-114.



was six months before people known to the public were prepared to collaborate with the occupation forces.<sup>25</sup>

It was a foregone conclusion that Moscow would blame Bonn for the debacle, particularly as Blessing, the President of the Federal Central Bank at that time, and Scheel, the leader of the FDP opposition, had paid visits to Prague early in 1968 (despite urgent representations to the contrary from people better informed)<sup>26</sup> and had therefore provided the Soviets with a peg on which to hang their anti-German imputations. In fact, the invitations which gave rise to these visits were just another symptom of the inability of the Prague Communists to make a correct assessment of the extent to which Moscow might feel its vital interests to be at risk, and therefore the danger of Soviet intervention. After March 1968, the FRG rated higher than Prague the chances of a Soviet intervention, and in this Prague was evidently misled by the long and indecisive discussion in Moscow which preceded the final decision to invade.<sup>27</sup>

It is difficult to predict how Czechoslovakia's policy toward Germany, and the German Question in particular, will be in the future. Initially it will be a function of its dependence on the Soviet Union. Its later developments will depend on the denouncement of the 'Polish Crisis' and

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid, p. 150.

<sup>26</sup>Helmet Schmidt, p. 125.

<sup>27</sup>Jiri Valenta, pp. 93-94.



whether the Soviet Union will relax its holds on Eastern Europe or tighten the clamps. Prague will remain vitally interested in economic links with the Federal Republic: it was, after all, Novotny and not Dubcek who first exchanged economic representations with Bonn.<sup>28</sup> The still continuing and artificially stimulated discussion about the Munich Agreement of 1938, that in the end gave Hitler a free hand for the rape of Czechoslovakia, will not place any serious obstacle in the way of establishing closer exchanges with Bonn.

Similarly, no obstacle will arise over an alleged German territorial claim. The declarations of the Federal Republic to this end doubtless carry conviction in Prague -- despite the suspicions sown by Ulbricht and Honecker's people to the contrary. In the foreseeable future, Prague will have no security requirement vis a vis the Federal Republic. Should some regime in Prague think it necessary to inculcate fear of the Germans at some time in the future in order to gain internal support for itself, it will have great difficulty in reviving fears of German 'revanchism'.

However, the fact that both objective and subjective bases exist for normal and friendly relations with Czechoslovakia does not mean that Czechoslovakia will take up a positive attitude toward a reunification of Germany. Admittedly, any government in Prague that makes a true estimate of the power factors affecting its country would regard joint condemnations of the Federal Republic by the Warsaw Pact as lip service; but for Germany to be reunited would represent somewhat of a

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid.



threat, unless it were done in a broader European context. The same reasons apply here as in the case of the Soviet Union; but in that of Prague, the additional geographical factors cannot be overlooked. At best, Prague might fall back on the formula that Germany is a problem for the Germans. However, the Czechs will be interested in greater East European freedoms, mutual arms limitations, and economic decentralization. They would be amenable to the withdrawal of foreign troops from central and Western Europe. If reunification of Germany would lead to the sloughing off of Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe, the Czechs might view it as a very inviting proposal.

#### F. YUGOSLAVIA -- THE SENTIMENTS OF THE COMMUNIST MAVERICK

If Bulgaria, among the non-German national states of Eastern Europe, is the one most disposed to lean on Moscow, then Yugoslavia is the communist national state furthest removed from this attitude. Yugoslavia did not require the direct help of Soviet armies in freeing itself from Nazi occupation; and from the military geographical viewpoint it was out of reach of direct Soviet intervention. Both facts helped Tito's break with Stalin, now twenty years old. The largely pre-industrial structure of the country, which is most marked in the Southern and Eastern republics, favored the spread of Tito's ideologically and practically ideosyncratic form of Communism.<sup>29</sup>

In both its internal and external characteristics, Belgrade's policy is the result of a highly successful balance achieved by this

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<sup>29</sup>Gripp, pp. 25-26, 32.





outstanding ruler of the Yugoslav communists. The varied and contrasting characteristics of the peoples of Yugoslavia (Serbs, the more Western oriented Croats and Slovenes, Macedonians, Bosnians, Montenegrans and Albanians) made a federal, and therefore a more democratic, structure inevitable; and this is the hallmark of Yugoslav Communism. And the rivalries between the nationalities have an effect deep inside the league of communists.<sup>30</sup>

The policy of remaining outside all alliances has pretty well taken root in the country's consciousness, despite traditional Serbian leanings toward Russia. The economic blockade enforced against Yugoslavia twenty years ago by the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact states, made as big a contribution to this as Tito's authority -- and not least of all his dignified bearing toward Khrushchev. The foreign political aloofness toward Moscow changed after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia (when the Yugoslavs expressed open sympathy for Dubcek) into pronounced fear lest the same ill befall Yugoslavia.<sup>31</sup> They came out clearly and sharply against the Brezhnev Doctrine. More recently the Yugoslavs have shown revulsion against the Soviets intrusions in Afganistan and Ethiopia. They had made pronouncements and exhortations against similar movements in the Polish crisis.

Tito's immediate succession gave rise to a period of difficulty, but not to the degree that was adumbrated by most scholars of foreign

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid. pp. 33-34.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, pp. 65-66.



affairs. The changeover led to no internal and foreign political changes. Because a state of fairly continuous economic and domestic political development was achieved, neither the reluctance to enter blocs or the attitude toward East Berlin altered.<sup>32</sup> Belgrade has not allowed itself to be harnessed to Honecker's wagon; its political relations with the GDR, as well as with the Federal Republic, are correct. Economic relations with the Federal Republic, on the other hand, are of great importance.<sup>33</sup> The extraordinary large numbers of Yugoslav workers who go to the Federal Republic (balanced by an equally copious flow of German tourists to Yugoslavia) have been an additional cause of quite sympathetic feelings toward the Federal Republic on the part of the younger generation of Yugoslavs. This will probably be further ameliorated when the Winter Olympics hit Sarajevo in 1984. The resumption of diplomatic relations by the Grand Coalition<sup>34</sup> in Bonn, and Willy Brandt's visit to Belgrade, followed by Schmidt's visit at Tito's death, confirmed in the minds of both, the factual assessments each had made of the other during the interim. In the future, we should be able to expect -- assuming continued internal stability in Belgrade -- that Communist Yugoslavia will be more inclined to favor the Federal Republic than the Communist GDR.

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<sup>32</sup>Schwartz, pp. 66-67.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid, pp. 100-101.

<sup>34</sup>The 'Grand Coalition' was the government of Chancellor Kurt Kiesinger and Vice Chancellor Willy Brandt; it was so named because it was composed of the two major parties, the CDU and SPD.



But this does not mean to say that Belgrade would adopt a positive attitude toward German reunification. Nevertheless, Belgrade would probably have no misgivings provided the European balance -- and with it the neutrality of Yugoslavia -- would not be imperiled. Belgrade does not believe in the dissolution of the two alliance system, and does not desire this. It would rather put its trust in a process of gradual evolution which could lead to both systems being overarched by a treaty. "Borta" the Belgrade official party organ, wrote shortly after the invasion of Czechoslovakia:

"Socialism is the inescapable future of all nations and countries but they will only achieve it by their own path and by their own means. For this reason no one -- no country, nation, working class or group -- can monopolize or appropriate it. It follows that humanity can accept no one in the role of supreme judge -- a pontifex maximus of socialism who hands down infallible judgments about who is a socialist and who is not, about what the true foundations of Marxism-Leninism rest upon, what is the spirit of internationalism and the class struggle, and what is 'revisionism' or even 'counter revolution' in a socialist country."<sup>35</sup>

This statement certainly portends a heavy meaning for the current situation in the eastern bloc. The Yugoslav foreign ministry specifically warned Moscow on December 5th not to invade Poland. If the Soviet Union wishes to attract Belgrade back into its orbit, or even Finlandize it, what she would need is the opposite of the Brezhnev Doctrine. As long as she goes on trying to find ideological trappings for her claim to hegemony, however, there will be no warm-hearted response from Belgrade -- assuming, that is, that Yugoslavia continues its economic and domestic evolution.

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<sup>35</sup>Swartz, p. 101.



## G. NEPOTIST RUMANIA

Communism was imposed on Rumania at the end of the second World War; but the Rumanians are not a Slav people. Under Ceausescu's leadership, Bucharest, despite its close geographical proximity to the Soviet Union, is trying to uphold the independence of its foreign policy in every available forum -- whether in the Warsaw Pact or CMEA, or the United Nations in New York. Rumania did not join in the condemnations of either MAO or Dubcek, and Ceausescu sympathized openly with the Prague Spring.<sup>36</sup> Rumania does not want the Soviet Union to resort to military intervention to resolve its Polish dilemma or any other East European problem.

Domestically, however, Bucharest has displayed some nervousness about the possible impact of the Polish example of Rumanian workers. Notably, schizophrenic Rumania took part in the Warsaw Pact summit in Moscow at the beginning of December -- a participation it denied the Soviet Union at a simple gathering prior to the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.

However, Ceausescu has preserved a high degree of autonomy in his country's external relations and constantly lays stress on its national interests. It is probable that Ceausescu is supported by a wide measure of agreement among his people.

Rumania's national strategy carried with it, however, a considerable risk of conflict with the Soviet Union. The open condemnation of the

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<sup>36</sup>Ulam, pp. 705-706.





Czech invasion led, in the summer of 1968, to a tense situation in the course of which the leadership of the Rumanian Communist Party publicly ordered preparations for the military defense of the country.<sup>37</sup> Even though the will to fight and the combat readiness of the Rumanian armed forces in such a conflict would be difficult to predict with exactitude, it is nevertheless of unprecedented significance that during the autumn of 1968 it became possible for the first time to reckon with the possibility of war between two European Communist Parties and the USSR. An event of this sort would certainly shatter the unity among Parties and lead to a fluid situation in Europe -- possibly the restructuring of the entire Eastern bloc and ultimately the reunification of Germany. This is possibly the calculation behind Ceausescu's foreign policy which, while completely correct, peaceful and morally above reproach, is nevertheless a very risky one.

Against this background, the Federal Republic resumed diplomatic relations with Rumania in 1967 -- in contravention of the Hallstein Doctrine.<sup>38</sup> As in the case of Yugoslavia,<sup>38</sup> Bonn took care to inform Moscow of the intended step: no objection was made -- and any objection would have been difficult to substantiate. Nevertheless, Moscow did not view relations between Bucharest and Bonn with any particular joy,<sup>39</sup> any more than she did the considerable trade between the two countries.

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<sup>37</sup>Valenta, pp. 129, 158.

<sup>38</sup>Area Handbook for the Federal Republic of Germany, (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1974) p. 243.

<sup>39</sup>Swartz, pp. 56-58.



East Berlin watched both with great distaste, especially when the irascible Ulbricht was at the helm. However, Rumania's internal policy--unlike that of Yugoslavia or Czechoslovakia--hardly lays her open to charges of ideological heresy, or arguments involving Communist ideology. For the Rumanians, who signed both the Bucharest Declaration of the Warsaw Pact states in 1968, are doing no more than what is demanded by these resolutions of their allies: they are putting into practice the principles laid down therein regarding sovereignty, equal rights, national independence and non-intervention (this latter, incidentally, a principle that was missing from the Budapest Declaration signed after Prague!).<sup>40</sup>

In these joint resolutions, Rumania agreed with the call for reunification of the alleged right of the FRG to represent the German people, and for recognition of the Oder-Neisse line and the GDR. Since both these requirements have been fulfilled (the Oder-Neisse line was recognized in 1971 by the FRG; the German Basic Treaty passed in 1973 by the Bundestag, recognizes two separate states) they are no longer issues. There is no doubt that Rumania is interested in arms limitations, in the withdrawal of foreign troops (MBFR), and in the dismantling of the bipolar system of blocs and alliances. Rumania also had a hand in the proposals for a European Security Conference and a European security system. Rumania clearly would like to see an autonomous Europe, purged of a Russian overseer; if this were to

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<sup>40</sup>Moreton, p. 226.



involve the reunification of a neutral Germany I would posit that it would not be viewed as a threat to the Rumanian people.

#### H. PROGRESSIVE HUNGARY - EDGING TOWARD AUTONOMY

Since its debacle in 1956, Hungary has achieved considerable civic freedom compared with the other Communist countries -- the result essentially of official policy in Kadar's regime. Stressing how much has already been achieved, Hungarian officials quietly assure visitors they intend to go further, including giving more effective authority to the official trade unions and more independence to factory managers.

The degree of freedom is far from meeting Western standards, however. There is still complete press censorship. Hungarian editors take care to stay within party guidelines. But the citizens are well informed and habitually listen to Western radio stations.

Art, music and nonpolitical cultural expression are unrestrained, but restraints are firm on theatres, films and books which touch political sensitivities.

Ordinary citizens in the country can travel to the West once every two years, more often if relatives or others offer the foreign currency required. Hungary is a Roman Catholic country and the practice of religion is unrestricted. But these civic easements are contained within a system of Communist Party domination of all institutions except the Church.<sup>41</sup> The Hungarian economy works pretty well and agriculture is flourishing, exporting substantial surpluses.

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<sup>41</sup>Gripp, pp. 92-93.



The Hungarian Communist Party has much at stake in a peaceful resolution of Poland's labor and economic crisis. Hungary's leaders have a common interest with Poland and the FRG in continuing reforms of the Communist system and they are worried about the effects a resort to force in Poland could have in Hungary.

Hungary is experiencing a quiet liberalization, but it is evident that the country is voracious for the truer freedoms and independence from the specter of the Russian genre of Communism that haunts them. A greater European solution -- open liberalization; perhaps, Finlandization of Eastern Europe, would clearly satiate Hungary. Within this context, the reunification of a neutral Germany would not be anathema to a country yearning for its own expression.

#### I. ACQUIESCENT BULGARIA

Bulgaria will not command much space here for the reason that it adheres most extensively to the official line of the Soviet Union in their policy toward Germany and as regards security in general. It is almost an alter-ego of Moscow and whatever the Kremlin deems correct, Bulgaria will follow. If Moscow ultimately promotes the idea of a neutralized, unified German state, Bulgaria will not be expected to express reservations.

#### J. EPILOGUE: THE WARSAW ALLIANCE AND THE GERMAN QUESTION

"For us Germans the rigid clinging to the status quo is particularly difficult because it does not open up any prospect of overcoming the division of Germany. For Europe as a whole the present state of division cannot be final either. It is difficult to harmonize the rigid Soviet position with the





properly understood interests of Europe, which has a right to its own, peacefully secured existence, as Europeans are becoming increasingly aware."<sup>42</sup>

The Soviet Union's initial use of the Warsaw Pact as a diplomatic mouthpiece in East-West exchanges on the German question reflects both the fundamental significance of the issue but also the artificial role it had come to play in maintaining a pattern of relations which came to be felt as increasingly anachronistic by a number of the East European states, except of course East German (and to a certain extent, Poland) in the period prior to 1969. The extent, therefore, that the more artificial "cohesive" aspects of the German question have been modified in the wake of the agreements of 1970 and 1973,<sup>43</sup> (especially the use of the West German threat as a weapon of bloc cohesion) this should contribute to and reinforce the process of change underway from a Soviet-dominated alliance system toward a more mature political system.

If the German problem for Eastern Europe has not altogether been resolved, it has nevertheless been more clearly defined. Assuming that the balance of mutual security is not subjected to radical changes, there would seem to be at least the possibility of translating the changed political context -- the regulation of the German Problem and its counterpart, the Helsinki accord on security and cooperation in Europe -- into practical benefits in terms of greater autonomy in the

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<sup>42</sup>Willy Brandt, A Peace Policy for Europe, (Canada: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969), p. 95.

<sup>43</sup>Referring to the treaty with Poland where the FRG recognized Polish frontiers; and the Basic German Treaty, where the FRG acknowledged the existence of the GDR.



conduct of domestic and foreign policy on the part of the individual Warsaw Pact states.

Soviet policy in Europe has tended to be portrayed as having two dimensions, the desire for consolidation in the East and the pursuit of the practical benefits of coexistence in the West. In the past, the Soviet leaders, in being confronted with a choice, have invariably opted for the former, with sometimes disastrous consequences for their allies.

Leaving aside any more wide-ranging reflections on the future of the present alliance forms in international politics, the changing role and nature of the Polish and German problem might be expected to put relations within the alliance on a more rational basis and thereby heighten both the basic preceptions of common interests between the individual states, and their growing awareness of differing national priorities. These two trends, toward greater relative autonomy and toward the development of a more stable political alliance, are not, and should not necessarily be expected to be mutually exclusive.

They may well prove to be mutually dependent. The denouncement of the German Question may well provide the solution to East European nationalism and a more viable security system for both East and West.



V. THE ECONOMIC INTERDEPENDENCE OF WEST GERMANY, EAST GERMANY  
AND THE SOVIET UNION

In this chapter I intend to examine the economic interdependence of the Soviet Union, the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the Democratic Republic of Germany (GDR). In dealing with Russia there are three reasons why Germany, East and West, tend to behave differently from the United States and even Europe. One is a down to earth reason of practical interest; the other lies in the realm of psycho-politics; and the last relates to the dream for German reunification.

The practical reason that West Germany (FRG) does more trade with the Soviet Union is economic. The psychological reason -- West Germany does a special human trade in trying to save fellow Germans from isolation behind the iron curtain. Rattled by recession and the falling deutschmark, the West German government, when asked by the United States to reconsider its links with Russia will swallow twice when this means asking trade unions to lose more jobs and capitalists to forego more profits as well as seeing East Germany withdraw such few concessions to humanity as it has made in the past few years. Two major problems converge on West Germany -- the closest major European country to the Soviet Army and the one with the most to lose in trade and human contacts with the Communist world. Hence West Germany's notably cautious performance, the Olympic boycott apart, in the year of Afganistan and Poland.



## A. PROSPECTS FOR FURTHER TRADE -- FRG/GDR/USSR

The prospects of further expanding trade between the FRG, GDR, the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe continue to look favorable, thanks to the fact that their resources and products complement each other in many ways. As a result of progressive industrialization and the resumption of agricultural development, the USSR and all of the countries of Eastern Europe are more dependent today than before the last war on foreign deliveries of valuable investment goods and industrial equipment.<sup>1</sup> The export structure of Germany in particular is ideally suited to delivering increasing quantities of such goods. In German exports, for instance, the chief stress continues to be on investment goods and capital goods.<sup>2</sup> Therefore the Federal Republic of Germany has become the most important Western trade partner of Eastern bloc countries. For the same reason, the German Democratic Republic is, next to the Soviet Union, the most important Eastern trade partner of Eastern-bloc countries. Moreover, intra-German trade has, from 1962 to present, been responsible for 25%--34% of all FRG trade with the Warsaw Pact states<sup>3</sup> (see Table I). East Germany, naturally has a higher level of

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<sup>1</sup>Harry Swartz, Eastern Europe in the Soviet Shadow, (New York, The John Day Co.) 1974, pp. 71-83.

<sup>2</sup>Stanley Radcliffe, 25 Years On The Two Germanies, (London: Harrap & Co.) 1973, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup>N. Edwina Morton, East Germany and the Warsaw Alliance: The Politics of Detente, (Boulder: Westview Press) 1978, p. 244.





TABLE I  
 INTRA-GERMAN TRADE AS A PROPORTION OF WEST GERMANY'S  
 TRADE WITH THE WARSAW PACT STATES (INCLUDING ALBANIA)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total trade turnover</u> (in millions DM)	<u>Intra-German trade</u>	<u>Intra-German trade as a proportion (%)</u>
1962	5,781.9	1,767.1	30.6
1963	5,650.9	1,881.9	33.3
1964	6,586.2	2,178.4	33.1
1965	7,434.2	2,466.5	33.2
1966	8,529.8	2,970.7	34.8
1967	8,987.0	2,746.9	30.6
1968	9,711.9	2,871.6	29.6
1969	11,885.0	3,928.1	33.1
1970	12,922.9	4,143.7	32.1
1971	14,546.9	4,817.2	33.1
1972	17,359.0	5,308.3	30.6
1973	21,728.3	5,658.0	26.0
1974	29,342.5	6,924.0	23.6
1975	31,335.6	7,264.0	23.2
1976	34,035.6	8,146.0	23.9

Source: Moreton, p. 244



trade with her Warsaw Pact partners than with West Germany, however the 10%--15% trade ratio is substantive<sup>4</sup> (see Table II).

Since the foreign trade relations of the USSR and all of Eastern bloc countries still underlie strict planning, bilateral trade agreements prescribing rigidly fixed quotas are practically the only ones suitable for centralized economic plans in the various Eastern states. All digressions of foreign trade turnover from planned imports and foreign exchange exports have a very disturbing effect on internal economic development in the countries concerned.<sup>5</sup> The communist states can, however, only negotiate binding quotas for goods to be taken or delivered with members of their own group or developing countries with planned economics. This is the main technical and economic reason why, despite the limited opportunities of mutual complementation, foreign trade relations between the communist states are so disproportionate, and why their trade with the developing countries is being driven so forcefully. Like all developing countries the economics in Eastern Europe are appealing more intensively for substantial and long term credits and technical aid from the FRG and the West. The further their economic development progresses (East Germany is a good example) the more rational their economic policy becomes.<sup>6</sup>

Although today East-West trade is relatively small in volume and quite complicated, it would be a mistake to underrate its future

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid, p. 245.

<sup>5</sup>New Trends in Kremlin Policy, (Washington D.C. Center for Strategic and International Studies), 1971 pp. 16-19.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.



TABLE II

INTRA-GERMAN TRADE AS A PROPORTION OF EAST GERMANY'S  
TRADE WITH THE WARSAW PACT STATES (INCLUDING ALBANIA)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total trade</u> <u>turnover</u> <u>(in millions Valuta-Mark)</u>	<u>Intra-German</u> <u>trade</u>	<u>Intra-German trade</u> <u>as a proportion (%)</u>
1962	16,742.5	1,708.3	10.2
1963	17,592	1,849	10.51
1964	19,060.5	2,190.8	11.49
1965	19,446.5	2,341.7	12.04
1966	21,101.9	2,757	13.07
1967	22,104.7	2,537.5	11.48
1968	24,163.9	2,637.2	10.91
1969	27,314.6	3,489.1	12.77
1970	30,639.5	4,050	13.22
1971	36,647.8	4,294.6	13.15
1972	36,230.1	4,827.7	13.33
1973	39,829.6	4,935.2	12.4
1974	44,344	5,997.3	13.5
1975	55,059.2	6,474.6	11.8
1976	61,120.1	7,360	12.0

Source: Moreton, p. 245



prospects. Once the Eastern economies, which are in a state of impetuous development, have attained a certain degree of maturity, and provided they are one day allowed autonomy and liberalization, they can also become valuable trade partners of the Western world and draw benefit from a Greater European Economic Community.

## B. FRG---USSR INTERDEPENDENCE

### 1. Background

The Federal Republic of Germany is the principal western trading partner of the Soviet Union. In the nineteen-seventies, the Federal Republic's trade with the Soviet Union increased at double the rate of its trade with the rest of the world. In the first three months of 1980, sales to the Soviet Union increased by twenty-four percent over the same period a year ago.<sup>7</sup>

There are German political hostages to the Soviet Union: Berlin, communications between divided families in the two Germanies, the repatriation of ethnic Germans from other countries of the East.<sup>8</sup> The FRG has been willing to pay a large price for the increase in human contacts between the two Germanies. The Soviet Union has gained advantages from this. The FRG's desire to maintain the position that East and West Germany constitute one nation has led the FRG to develop a special relationship with the GDR. By terms of the 1957 Treaty of

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<sup>7</sup>Roger Morgan, West Germany's Foreign Policy Agenda, (London: Sage Publications), 1978, pp. 20-25.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.





Rome, which established the European Economic Community, the GDR became a defacto member of the common market.<sup>9</sup>

## 2. The Pipeline

The Soviet-Western European gas pipeline is a luminous example of the trade cooperation and interdependence of the Soviet Union and the Federal Republic of Germany. Even with the implied Soviet threat to Poland heating up, and with Moscow and Washington engaged in hurling invectives at one another, West German businessmen are still pressing ahead with negotiations on what would be the biggest East-West deal ever: the \$10--15 billion Soviet-gas-for-German pipeline exchange that both sides hope to wrap up soon. The two sides reached preliminary agreement at the end of January on 10 year credits at the low interest rate of 7.75 percent. Some West German bankers are suggesting that because of complex pricing and other conditions this formal rate would amount to a real interest of 9.75 percent.<sup>10</sup>

What is clear is that for West Germany both the potential economic gains and the political risks are enormous. The gains would include a significant move away from dependence on uncertain Mideast oil and a major contract for the recession-hit German steel industry. From 1985 on into the 21st century, West Germany would get an additional 12 billion cubic meters of Soviet gas annually.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Financial Times, "Western Europe's Uncertain Gas Supplies," September 23, 1979.



The political risks in the deal could include a Soviet invasion of Poland and a retaliatory Western embargo on technology sales to the Soviet Union.

The FRG is the key country in the equation and currently derives 15 percent of its oil and natural gas (17 percent gas alone) from the Soviet Union. Under the agreement now being negotiated, by 1990 the share of Soviet supplies in West Germany's total gas consumption would jump to 30 percent or 5 to 6 percent of primary energy.<sup>12</sup>

Despite repeated Soviet failures to deliver contracted gas during cold spells--this winters' deliveries to West Germany will drop a third below promised amounts -- West German businessmen view Soviet gas as much more reliable than Mideast oil. And the Bonn government views the projected ceiling of gas dependence on the Soviet Union as tolerable strategically.<sup>13</sup> The West German steel compressor, and refrigeration companies are also eager to get the expected 10 billion deutschemarks (5 billion dollars) worth of orders from this 3,600 mile pipeline, the longest in the world. Germans are also eager for those 2,500 extra workplaces that the Soviet order would bring.<sup>14</sup> However, conservative American strategists (as well as some conservative politicians in West Germany) fear the impact of any Soviet bullying tactics on Western European policies when the Kremlin could turn off the spigot on so much Western European energy.

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<sup>12</sup>The Economist, "Hamburg Pipeline," May 9, 1981, p. 97.

<sup>13</sup>The New York Times, "Europe's Big Gamble in Soviet Gas," April 19, 1980.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.



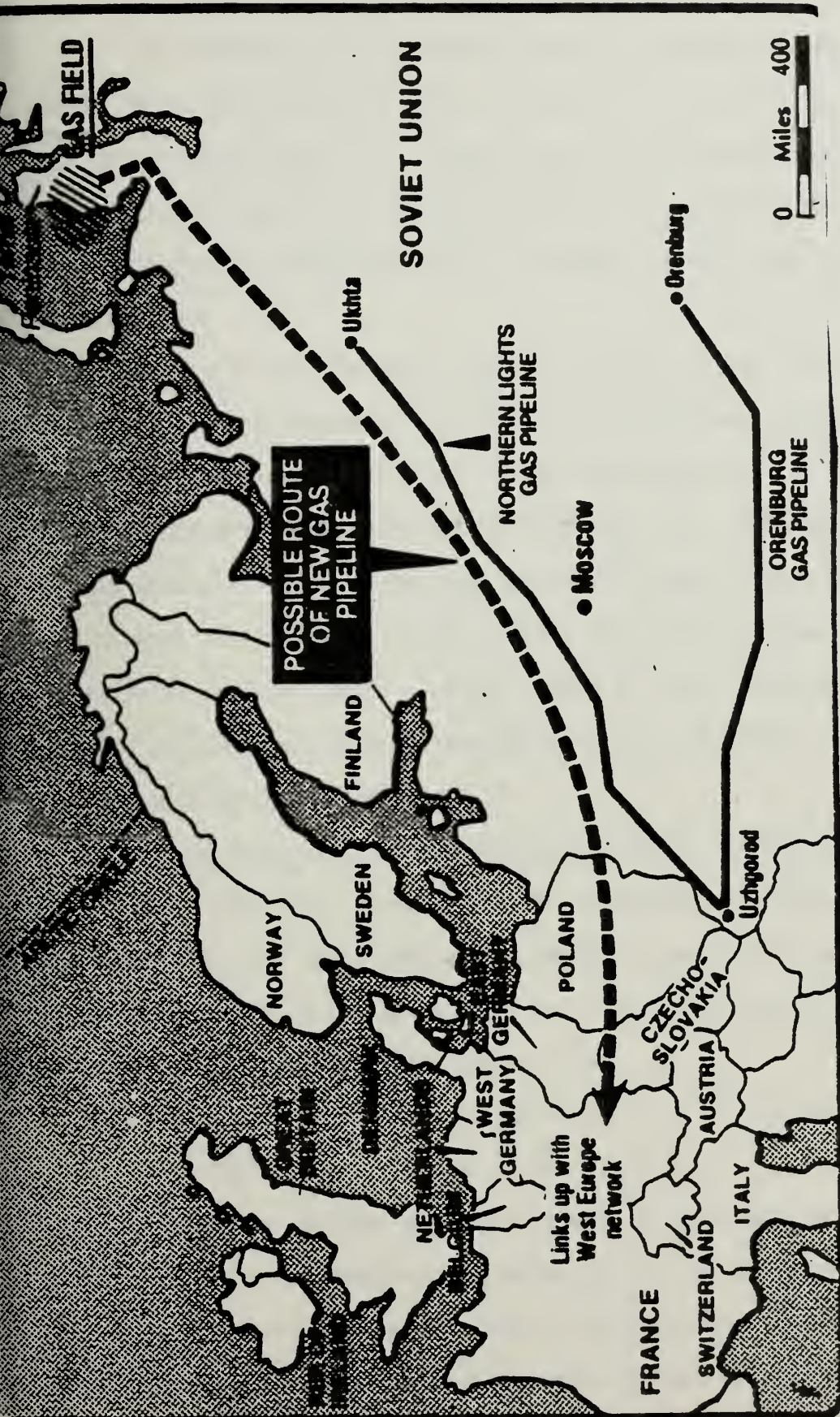


Figure 7. Route of Proposed Natural Gas Pipeline



The dilemma that has divided the U.S. strategic community -- whether it is more "stabilizing" in the world to help or stay aloof from future development of the Soviet Union's vast energy resources -- hardly exists among West German businessmen. The assumption is that the more energy sources there are in an energy short world, the better for everyone.

From this West German perspective, Western help in exploiting Soviet natural gas reserves -- estimated as the largest in the world -- is seen as a desirable move. And the Soviet trade with the West -- gas is expected to replace oil as the top Soviet hard currency earner in this decade -- still seems more likely to promote Soviet modernization than ostracism. Deals such as these may eventually ameliorate the situation in Eastern Europe -- from a scene of Soviet dominance to a scene of growing East European independence wherein German reunification may ultimately be realized.

### 3. FRG Perspective on Trade With Soviet Union -- Post Afganistan

This case amply demonstrates the importance the West Germans place on trade with the Soviet Union, despite exhortations and protestations from the United States, who at the time, had imposed an embargo of materials and grains to the Soviet Union.

The following case originated from a FBIS article dated 8 May 1980. Horst Schieffman, chairman of the production council of a steel plant in Muelheim, Germany was interviewed. He announced his enterprise's readiness to continue deliveries of pipe to the Soviet Union in spite of the pressure of the Carter administration, which had persistantly appealed to its West European partners for an economic





boycott of the USSR. Horst Schieffman explained his position on trade with the Soviet Union as follows:

"Because of the lack of new contracts, beginning in October last year the plant in Muelhiem was forced to put more than half of its production workers on a short work day. Just at that moment a large order came in from the Soviet Union, which made it possible this March to bring the enterprise up to full capacity, which means that everyone kept his job. Altogether, the orders from the USSR mean jobs for approximately 8,000 workers and employees."

"This is why we are categorically opposed to any sort of economic sanctions against the Soviet Union, which indeed could be turned against us ourselves..... Moreover, we should not forget the lesson of 1963, when the Adenauer government following instructions from Washington, ordered an embargo on deliveries of large diameter pipe to the Soviet Union. The only losers were the West German firms, factories, and workers. The result of this is well known: the Soviet Union cut back its trade with the FRG, intensified its cooperation with other countries, including capitalists countries and arranged for large-diameter pipe to be manufactured at its own production facility."

This illustrative case demonstrates the little enthusiasm that the West Germans have in abolishing or limiting trade with the Soviet Union. It appears to be a symbolic relationship that neither side is anxious to squelch, rather they are enthusiastic in their pursuit of intercountry trade.

#### C. GDR/USSR ECONOMIC RELATIONS

The GDR is the strongest member of COMECON except for the Soviets, and East Germany's power has played an important role in expanding its political clout, both within the Bloc and with the West. The system introduced by Ulbricht in the early sixties recognized economic realities at the expense of Marxist propaganda and exploited the historical German traits of efficiency and industriousness. This is



THE CHIEF  
INDUSTRIES  
AND NATURAL  
RESOURCES  
OF THE  
FEDERAL  
REPUBLIC



Figure 8. Map of FRG's Natural Resources



not to say the concept of central planning was abandoned, but rather modified within the framework of Communist authoritarianism.<sup>15</sup>

The GDR's economy is inextricably enmeshed economically, scientifically, and technically with that of the Soviet Union; for which it produces machinery, machine tools, precision instruments and electronics, chemicals and petrochemical products, ships and consumer goods. The Soviet Union provides the GDR with raw materials, primarily crude oil, cotton, iron ore, timber, iron, steel, and other metals.<sup>16</sup> To a degree, the integration of the GDR into COMECON threatens the special relationship with the Soviet Union through pressures for standardization and removal of special trading rights. The Soviet interests in COMECON integration probably transcends the parochial concerns of the GDR, the partner that stands to lose more in any surrender of economic autonomy. In fact the situation was made more complex with the energy crisis and worldwide recession which impaired the GDR's economic advantages in trade with the USSR.<sup>17</sup>

So, in spite of the fact that East Germany is a more developed country than is the Soviet Union, Soviet--GDR economic relations (as well as political and military relations) are characterized by a fundamental asymmetry: the GDR is economically more dependent on the USSR than vice versa. Foreign trade is much more important for the

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<sup>15</sup>N. Edinna Moreton, pp. 18-20.

<sup>16</sup>Stanley Radcliffe, pp. 144-146.

<sup>17</sup>In the past few years, there have been some signs that the GDR and the USSR have become more competitive in their trade with the FRG. In addition, the GDR has on one occasion, vetoed a Soviet-FRG agreement.



THE CHIEF INDUSTRIES AND  
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DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

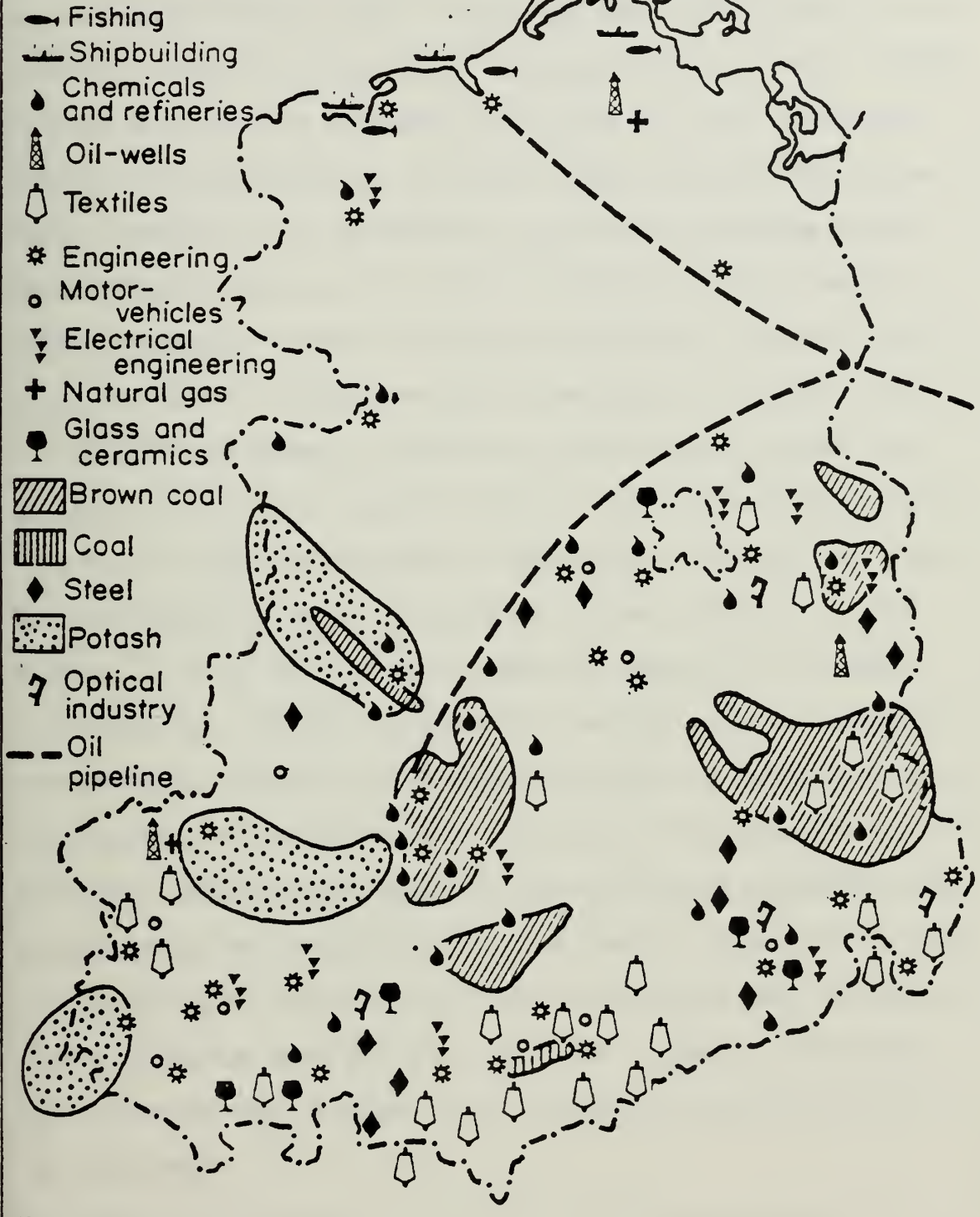


Figure 9. Map of GDR's Natural Resources





GDR economy than for the Soviet economy. Moreover, in the last decade, as East-West trade has grown, the USSR has been able to diversify its sources of machinery and advanced technology imports, whereas the GDR remains almost totally dependent on the USSR for vital raw material imports. Soviet-GDR trade, like Soviet trade with the FRG and other western countries, is complementary, involving the exchange of East German industrial goods, for Soviet raw materials. As raw materials prices, particularly those for energy, have risen in the last eight years, the terms of trade have gone increasingly in the USSR's favor.<sup>18</sup>

The USSR countenances a potential conflict between economic and political goals in its economic relations with the GDR which may well loom to the proportions evident in Poland today. While it is in the Soviets' economic interest to raise the prices for exports to East Germany, it is in its political interest to intensify its economic integration with the GDR, to maintain a constant source of dominance and influence. While on purely economic grounds it may be advisable for the Soviet Union to lessen the intensity of its trade with the GDR, political considerations suggest the advisability of maintaining close economic relations with East Germany. Moreover, the greater the economic dependence of the GDR on the Soviet Union, the higher the price of reorientating the GDR's political loyalties. However, this premise has not proven true in Poland and it probably will not hold true in the GDR either.

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<sup>18</sup>Stanley Radcliffe, pp. 144-146.



As in political and military relations, the USSR's economic relations with the GDR exist on a number of overlapping levels, each of which reinforce the other. Bilateral Soviet--GDR economic relations, embodied in a series of trade and cooperation agreements, are the cornerstone of the relationship. They are reinforced by the role of the GDR and the USSR in CMEA; however, GDR -- Soviet economic relations are closer than those between either the USSR or the GDR with other CMEA states. In addition, the Soviet and East German economic systems are similar, and East Germany's economic plans are coordinated with those of the Soviet Union every year.

The development of the Soviet economy in the late 1960's and its increasing ability to export manufactured goods has somewhat altered the structure of GDR -- Soviet trade, although the USSR remains primarily a supplier of raw materials for the GDR. Both countries' relative economic importance to each other has declined since 1950 -- trade with the GDR formed 16% of Soviet trade in 1951 and 11% in 1977.<sup>19</sup> Trade with the USSR formed 43% of the GDR trade in 1951 and 35% in 1977.<sup>20</sup>

Since 1970, bilateral trade has risen at a decreased rate, but bilateral economic relations have stressed closer integration. The day after the signing of the FRG -- Soviet treaty in 1970, the USSR concluded a \$25 billion five-year trade and technical cooperation agreement with the GDR, foreseeing a 56% increase in goods exchanged between

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Philip Windsor, Change in Eastern Europe, (London: Chatham House Papers), 1980, pp. 38-40.



the two sides, perhaps to sweeten the pill of Soviet WESTPOLITIK.<sup>21</sup>

The 1975 Soviet--GDR Friendship Treaty stipulated that economic contacts between the two nations would be intensified, and bilateral trade was supposed to increase 40% between 1970 and 1980. However, in 1975, the USSR increased the prices charged for its raw materials, creating problems in GDR--Soviet--East European relations. It appears that, at various junctures since then, East Germany has been able to resist further price rise or at least limit their increase. The GDR's negative balance with the USSR has grown and in 1978 the GDR agreed to supply the Soviet Union with technical expertise (and perhaps mercenary forces) in turn for extra supplies of Soviet oil and gas, while Moscow granted East Germany extra credits. However, when the GDR announced its 1980 economic plan, it was clear that its economic problems were increasing. The 1980 plan lowers the rate of increase for industrial production, calls for increases in energy imports from the Soviet Union and for increased exports.<sup>22</sup>

Although the GDR remains the most highly developed socialist society with the 8th highest per capita GNP in the world, and has the most efficient economic system of any East European country, its economic situation has deteriorated in the last few years. Its hard currency debt was \$10.5 billion by the end of 1979, 7% of all GDR exports to Russia went toward paying for its oil. In 1980, the figure

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<sup>21</sup> Stanley Radcliffe, p. 160.

<sup>22</sup> International Letter, "Economic Activity in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union," (Chicago: Federal Reserve Bank) April 24, 1981, p. 3.



was 25% with a predicted 35% by 1983. Today, East German goods are only one tenth as important for the Soviet market as are Soviet supplies for the GDR market. Between 1960 and 1980 Soviet--GDR trade rose by an annual average of 8.8%.<sup>24</sup> While the share of Soviet goods in the GDR total foreign trade had risen in the 1970s, the GDR's share in total Soviet foreign trade has fallen. The main East German exports to the Soviet Union are machinery (70%), machine tools, and equipment for the chemical industry. The GDR supplies 44% of the USSR's imports of agricultural machinery, 36% of its rail vehicles, and 23% of its ships. The USSR supplies the GDR with 89% of its oil, 100% of its natural gas, 66% of its coal, 80% of its sheet metal, 85% of its cotton, and 99% of its cut timber. The prices for many of these raw materials have risen by 50% since 1974, and this is especially serious for the GDR since 84% of its energy imports come from the USSR.<sup>25</sup>

The Soviet Union has, in recent years, been faced with a series of contradictory policy choices in its economic relations with the GDR, which continue to elicit ambivalent responses. Inasmuch as the GDR is the chief supplier of advanced technology to the Soviet Union and given the fact that East Berlin seeks to substitute consumer communism for a sense of legitimate national identity, it is in the Soviet Union's economic and political interest that the GDR continue to stress its industrial development and higher standard of living for its population. However, the growing gap in living standards

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<sup>24</sup>Moreton, pp. 216-218.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.





between the Soviet Union and East Germany is a source of increasing concern to Moscow raising questions and hopes for reunification. As a result of detente, East Germans have more contacts with West Germans. Since 85% of the GDR population watches West German television every night, they are constantly in a position to compare their standard of living with that of their West German counterparts. This places extra pressure on the East German government to stress consumption, and consumer spending is twice as high in the GDR as in the USSR. East Germans have far more automobiles, refrigerators and washing machines than do Soviets. This per capita conspicuously higher standard of living is obvious not only to Soviet and East European tourists, but also to the 400,000 Soviet troops in the GDR, who may well question why they are worse off than the population of the country they are occupying. They have their own special stores, but they cannot use the intershops. The Soviet Union may have to choose between discontent within Eastern Europe over the GDR's privileged position and the imperative of maintaining domestic political stability within the GDR by offering its population an affluent way of life unmatched in any other socialist country, or loosening the bonds on all East European countries and allow for a reunified Germany with a free market trading policy with the USSR.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Angela Stent, Unpublished Report, p. 26.



#### D. FRG--GDR INTERDEPENDENCE

The GDR has kept pace with the FRG in percentage growth in recent years, but trails substantially in overall economic output on a scale of roughly ten to one. The effect on the GDR population of the affluent neighbor to the West cannot be precisely measured, but with private consumption of the average East German only 60% of his West German counterpart, the effect is certainly of some concern to the GDR's leadership.<sup>27</sup>

Growing worker apathy and falling work morale has been noticed in factories, a problem which Soviet troops and tanks cannot eliminate. The East German workers are only two-thirds as productive as their West German counterparts. Although this is partly an outcome of their economic system which lacks productive incentives, it is also a result of falling morale. Moreover, the existence of "Intershop socialism" serves further to undermine legitimacy. In an attempt to accumulate as much hard currency as possible, the East German government allows its citizens to accept West Deutschemarks from relatives in the FRG and spend them in a variety of hard currency stores which sell goods unavailable in East Ostmarks stores. Although the system has somewhat tightened up, the fact remains that in a socialist society one is not rewarded for work done, but rather one's standard of living depends on arbitrary factors such as whom one knows in West Germany. This is

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<sup>27</sup>Radcliffe, pp. 131-135.



socialism according to the law of each according to the ability of his Western relative.<sup>28</sup>

The economic impact of the FRG on the GDR's economic health is definitely in dispute. By the terms of the 1957 Treaty of Rome, which established the European Economic Community, the GDR became a de facto member of the Common Market. Since the FRG treats intra-German trade as domestic trade, the GDR's products can enter the European Market on the same terms as that of the FRG. The special benefits the GDR derives as an informal member of the EEC is variously estimated as 18 percent of the GDR's trade portfolio, one third of the GDR's trade with the FRG, and one percent of the GDR's GNP. There are conflicting reports about how many East German goods enter the East German market via West Germany, but whatever the volume of goods, the GDR's privileged access to the EEC gives both East Germany and the USSR special economic advantages. Moreover, the GDR also benefits from the 850 million DM interest-free "swing" credits between the two Germanies.<sup>29</sup> No one can dispute the fact that sizeable advantages accrue to the GDR in its trade with the FRG. Without these benefits, the GDR would almost certainly not have come as far as it has.

In 1978, inner-German trade constituted 8.8% of total GDR trade (the GDR regards trade with the FRG as foreign trade). It forms 1.6% of FRG trade. The GDR imports both raw materials, investment goods and consumer goods from West Germany. It also derives other financial

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid, pp. 137-139.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.



benefits from the FRG, particularly the private money transfers between citizens of the FRG and GDR, transit fees for visitors to the GDR,<sup>30</sup> and West German payment for the autobahns constructed between Berlin and Mannheim and Berlin and Hamberg, totalling 2.2 billion DM between 1976 and 1984. The East Germans gain far more financially, both indirectly and directly, from the FRG than trade statistics alone would indicate. In general, these gains are also advantages to the USSR, which indirectly has access to West German technology and manufactures through the GDR.<sup>31</sup>

Even with all this assistance, there remain problems on the horizon for Honecker and the East German government. The relaxation of controls and economic downturn occurred together. The increase in raw materials and fuel prices and a growing dollar debt against Western accounts have impaired living standards, and the proximity to the glittering West German economy raises fears of domestic turmoil. Another constant source of vexation to the Honecker regime is Berlin.<sup>32</sup>

The 1971 Four Power Agreement is a prime example of Soviet disdain for East German sensitivities when larger interests are at stake. The Soviets insist on Four-Power control not only to maintain a lever on

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<sup>30</sup>The cost of transiting to East Berlin was recently elevated to 4 times the previous charge, apparently an effort by the East German government to defuse the infection of Polish liberalism and West German allurements.

<sup>31</sup>Christian Science Monitor, "East-West Detente," April 25, 1981.

<sup>32</sup>Moreton, pp. 219-224.





the West but to foreclose the possibility of overly warm GDR-FRG relations. The GDR has overcome the challenge of unification with the signing of the final act in Helsinki, but not the challenge of the FRG occupying half of East Germany's capital city. Several incidents in the last few years indicate that Berlin will continue to be a source of tensions. Traffic disruptions, violent objections to the establishment of FRG environmental and antitrust offices in West Berlin, and periodic threats to the corridors have served as signals for shifts in Soviet foreign policy in other areas. The GDR acts at Moscow's bidding in Berlin, in the long run to the benefit of the West, since the Soviet Union's strategic interests dictate a more moderate tone. In any case the problem in Berlin has not been solved, only regulated.<sup>33</sup>

Relations with Bonn present East Germany its greatest challenge. Between 1971 and 1976, approximately 15 million West Germans visited the East, and the GDR has recently taken various administrative steps to stem the flow and reduce personal contacts. However, economically the interchange increases steadily, particularly in light of the GDR's special EEC status which supports ten percent of East Germany's trade. The threat Berlin presents to the GDR's security is in the form of an infectious political virus. The GDR is apparently embarked on a new strategy of peaceful engagements with the West, in part due to a new regime and new self confidence, but also because of Soviet encouragement. Recently, though, the Polish crisis has put advancements in

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<sup>33</sup>CSM, "East-West Detente."



this relationship on the back burner. However, the GDR is still without a solid national basis and is susceptible to cultural and ideological encroachment from the FRG. Ultimately, the Soviet Union remains the arbiter of the GDR's fate.<sup>34</sup>

#### E. CONCLUSION

All these factors serve to undermine Honecker's claim that a socialist German nationality exists. It is unclear, however, to what extent the Soviet Union is concerned about the lack of national legitimacy in the GDR. On the one hand, as long as the GDR remains the economic and military bulwark of Soviet power in Eastern Europe, domestic tensions are only of secondary importance to the USSR, providing they remain under control. On the other hand, if the lack of domestic legitimacy begins to threaten the GDR's stability as an outpost of Soviet power, then Moscow may have to reconsider its attitude toward the problem. In the long run, it must be in Moscow's interest that the GDR develop a sense of national identity different from that of the Federal Republic.

Both the USSR and the GDR share the same goals toward the FRG: they want to maximize the economic benefits of the intra-German rapprochement and minimize its political risks. The GDR's response to Soviet pressure to improve relations with the FRG was to intensify Ulbricht's policy of Abgrenzung (demarcation) against the FRG. This policy seeks to differentiate the political, economic, and social

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid.



system of the GDR from that of the FRG and to insulate the East German population from the potentially destabilizing effects of detente with West Germany. For instance, whereas before detente (OSTPOLITIK) about 2.5 million West Germans used to visit the GDR every year, the current figure is 8 million (to a country with a population of 17 million!), with two million (largely senior citizens) East Germans going the other way.

The GDR has, however, even benefited economically from this aspect of inner-German relations. East Berlin has increasingly dealt with its dissident problem by literally selling its trouble makers to the FRG for hard currency (a normal worker costs about 70,000 DM; an academic, 160,000 DM). Although this human barter has curious results-- for instance the voluntary imprisonment of hundreds of GDR citizens hoping to be sold to the West -- it has served as a means of ridding the GDR of supposedly undesirable citizens (see Table III).<sup>35</sup>

While both the USSR and the GDR recognize the political disadvantages of the inner-German relationship, the USSR is more aware of its potential benefits, because it is a superpower with global political concerns. One reason for Moscow's pressure on East Germany was its desire to maintain good relations with West Germany, by offering the FRG concessions in its relations with the GDR. The USSR is conscious, in its polity toward inner-German relations, of the beneficial effects of these relations on its ties with the Federal Republic. This is also of concern to the GDR, but from the opposite point of view. East

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<sup>35</sup>Moreton, pp. 239-240.



TABLE III

NUMBER OF PERSONS LEAVING EAST GERMANY FOR  
WEST GERMANY

(a)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>
1949	129,245 (incomplete)
1950	197,788
1951	165,648
1952	182,393
1953	331,390
1954	184,198
1955	252,870
1956	279,189
1957	261,622
1958	204,092
1959	143,917
1960	199,188
1961 (until 13 August)	<u>155,402</u>
Total	2,686,942

Source: Moreton, p. 242





TABLE III (continued)

(b)	<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>
	1961 (after 13 August)	55,624
	1962	16,741
	1963	12,967
	1964	11,864
	1965	11,886
	1966	8,456
	1967	6,385
	1968	4,902
	1969	5,273
	1970	5,047
	1971	5,843
	1972	5,537
	1973	6,522
	1974	5,324
	1975	6,011
	1976	5,110
	1977 (unofficial)	4,037
	Total	173,529

Source: Figures for 1949-1973, DDR-Handbuch, (Cologne: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1975) p. 313. Figures for 1974-1976 are those of the Federal Ministry of the Interior, and those for 1977 originate from the West Berlin Arbeitergemeinschaft 13 August. Moreton, p. 243.



Berlin fears that closer Soviet ties with the FRG will diminish its leverage over the USSR. However, while the USSR can use the possibility of closer ties with the FRG to pressure the GDR, East Berlin can equally dangle the prospect of closer, autonomous ties with the FRG as a means of pressuring the USSR, and has done so since the Soviet invasion of Afganistan. Ultimately, the GDR may exploit the USSR's residual fears of German reunification to limit the pace of FRG-Soviet relations.

Regardless of this leverage, however, the USSR continues to play an important role in all intra-German negotiations. For instance, during the 1974 talks on building an autobahn between West Berlin and the FRG, the USSR insisted that East Germany consult it on all details of the arrangements. There have been occasions, however, when the GDR has negotiated with the FRG on sensitive issues without consulting the USSR. One way in which the USSR is legally able to control many of the negotiations between the two Germanies is through the Four-Power status of Berlin, which the GDR would prefer not to have.

If the Soviet Union and East Germany are wary of the political effects of inner-German relations, they both derive significant economic benefits from inner-German trade. The FRG has been willing to pay a large price for the increase in human contacts between the two Germanies, indicating the desire is still there for eventual unification. The Soviet Union has gained advantages from this. The FRG's desire to maintain the position that East and West Germany constitute one nation has led the FRG to develop a special relationship with the GDR. The GDR and the USSR seem to share the same view of the



desirability of inner-German trade, despite differences over the political aspects of inner-German relations.

Policy makers in Bonn are no doubt right in their expectation that the increased contacts between the two German societies will lead to a more stable relationship than in the past. Bonn is still paying substantial sums of money for the purpose of strengthening relations with the GDR: the balance of trade between the two Germanies is heavily favorable to the West, and the GDR's deficit is financed by credits paid for by the West German tax payer (East Germany--the prodigal brother). These options are regarded as helping to keep the option of reunification tacitly alive, and sustaining the idea of unity of the German nation.



## VI. CONCLUSION: THE UNRAVELING OF EASTERN EUROPE AND THE REALIZATION OF REUNIFICATION

The purpose of this scenario is to depict how events might unfold in the Europe of the late 1980s and the conditions under which German reunification might be realized. The remainder of the thesis will support the scenario by: discussing the incipient transition in Eastern Europe; the pathway to reunification; and the effect upon the politico-military alliance systems.

### A. SCENARIO

The current unrest in Poland (August, 1986) and the German Democratic Republic appears to be the genesis of the disintegration of Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe. The challenges in Poland and East Germany can hardly fail to influence events that take place in the rest of Eastern Europe; their positions are central geographically and politically to the Soviet Union.

For Poland, the current unrest is the manifestation of a continuum of inimical feelings between Moscow and Warsaw. Ever since the bloody quelling of the riots in Warsaw, Gdansk, and Posen in December, 1982, Polish residents have been seething with revolutionary fervor; sentiments have been at a fever pitch since late July. The Polish fever eventually caught on in East Germany in mid 1985, in spite of the NPA's<sup>1</sup> attempts to suppress East German workers. There have been multiple

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<sup>1</sup>NPA - National Peoples Army, in charge of indigenous security.





arrests of strike leaders in Rostock, Leipzig and Dresden. Factories in these cities are currently under workers' controls and chants for German reunification are becoming stronger in Berlin and other cities. Eric Honecker's replacement, an obscure member of the East German Politburo, has failed to consolidate support and the situation is slipping further out of Communist hands. Furthermore, the situation portends irreversible danger to the current officials, as control of the television stations and the newspapers in the major cities have slipped into the dissidents hands.

The reduction of Soviet troop levels in East Germany was undoubtedly a contributing factor to the impetus of independence that flows in the country. The presence of 20 Soviet divisions on German soil had been a constant reminder of the potential costs to the GDR of any significant challenge to Soviet policy. But following the Polish debacle in 1982 and the vociferous clamor for Mutual Balanced Force Reductions by the Europeans, the Red Army troop levels were significantly reduced.

The election in 1984 of Franz Joseph Strauss as Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, was another watershed for Germany. Herr Strauss has revived sentiments for German reunification, substantially increased inter-German trade, and spirited the East Germans with a resurgence of German "nationalism" and "Geist." The FRG currently ranks as the third most productive, industrialized country in the world. East Germany has not been far behind with the seventh position in the world ranking; the present volatile situation threatens to undermine this fast paced economy. The Soviet Union depends on East Germany for a large contribution to the Russian economy, especially as



a supplier of advanced technology. It has been in the Soviet Union's political and economic interest that the GDR continue to stress its industrial development and higher standard of living for the population. However, this growing gap in living standards between the Soviet Union and the rest of Eastern Europe and East Germany has sparked new tensions in the USSR and the other countries of Eastern Europe, who find themselves discontent in their execrable living conditions. As this rise in the economic power of the Germans accelerates, the German Democratic Republic is aligning more with the West, especially for trade, credits and capital investments. This economic situation has been another destabilizing force in East Germany.

As for the Soviet Union, (under the new leadership troika of Tikhonov, Andropov, and Gromyko) it is currently grappling with the problems caused by the misjudgments of the Brezhnevian gerontocracy. The Brezhnev obsession with considerations of ideology and power dictated the political priorities and produced the highest peacetime military budget of a great power for the longest period in history. This contributed to the neglect of other problems and thus to the aggravation of some internal as well as external difficulties. The USSR's technology would become obsolete without Western transfers. Its agriculture cannot feed its population; the grain transfer approved by President Haig has kept the Soviets from slow starvation. Even Soviet oil production has become insufficient and has forced the satellites to turn to the Middle East for oil. It has troubles with its East European satellites and some of its minorities have become restless. China and South Asia (Afganistan and Vietnam) will continue to command



increased Soviet attention and resources. Its ideological appeal has worn thin to third world nations. And it has helped cement politically its diverse antagonists: the U.S.A., China, Japan, and Western Europe. Its only remaining historical asset is its growing power; its ability to intimidate and to coerce, to instill and to exploit fear.

Thus, by 1986 the ascending line of Soviet external potency has crossed the descending line of Soviet internal political weakness. The dilemma has presented itself to the new Soviet leaders more sharply than ever before: either to achieve external successes or turn to internal reform. Weighting the costs of periodic crises and imbroglios in Eastern Europe, the Soviets will ease their way to the liberation of Eastern Europe by providing security without demand for dominance in state's internal affairs. Closer economic ties with the West both for the USSR and Eastern Europe will be seen as beneficial and necessary. Security and economics, in turn, will parlay into a greater flexibility and tolerance on the part of the Soviet Union toward Eastern Europe -- laying the way for a restructuring of European security systems. At the same time the United States will experience mounting political pressure for a further military disengagement from Europe and will, after a SALT III negotiation, bring all its troops home. By the end of the 1980's, all of this will ultimately culminate in the realization of German reunification, the Finlandization of Eastern Europe and the independence of Western Europe.

This fabricated situation was designed to presage the restructuring of Europe. The remainder of this chapter will present the current



reality of the situation and suggest how the scenario may become fact.

## B. THE PRESENT REALITY

The world is going through a fundamental change. The two-bloc world is in disrepair; it is not likely to be revived. Polycentrism is the order of the day as long as submerged national interests reassert themselves and the national interests of newly independent states come to the fore.<sup>2</sup> This alters the implications of the German problem, putting it in a changed perspective for many of those involved. There is less of the old emphasis on Germany as a prize to be won in the struggle between the blocs; there is more -- although still halting -- emphasis on Germany as the linchpin to the restructuring of Europe. At the same time, Germany appears to have shaken off a long concern with immediate material needs and unwavering alignment with one bloc -- there is a growing propensity not to allow others to decide her destiny. Chancellor Schmidt has had many contacts and made economic deals with the Soviet Union. To say that he is destined to be the next DeGaulle of Europe is perhaps a bit strong, but he is definitely striving for more independence. In addition, the change in Germany reflects similar changes elsewhere in Eastern Europe-- a demand for more autonomy and nationalism.

The point is that a new era for an old problem has begun. The Germans are no longer content that some day Germany will be reunified

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<sup>2</sup>Harry Swartz, Eastern Europe in the Soviet Shadow, (New York: The Hohn Day Company, 1973, pp. 72-73.





simply because the division is, as Brandt put it, contrary to human and Divine law. Of course the fact that the wish for unity is increasingly supplemented by the conviction that effective implementation of the wish (or chimera, as some would have it) must somehow be achieved does not mean that success will result. But it is reasonable to assume that a prolonged lack of future progress (especially in view of the convulsions of Eastern Europe) will be increasingly dangerous to all those involved. The status quo (a la Metternich) can not be imposed when the tempo in the life of nations increases; when the tempo increases, something will come of it.

What, then, will come of this problem, and under what circumstances are the major alternatives likely to be realized? Those questions will be answered in the succeeding pages.

### C. EASTERN EUROPE IN TRANSITION -- FINLANDIZATION?

#### 1. Politics of Eastern Europe

The 1980-81 liberalism in Poland not only compromised Communism, it also caused ominous cracks in the Soviet bloc. Though Russia has managed to retain the strongest position in the Communist camp, the Kremlin's domination over other members has been questioned and left seriously impaired.

The Hungarian revolution showed the way to a new social order: political democracy; safeguarding civic freedom; free association of workers, peasants, and other professions; and a mixed economic system with both collective and private ownership. The epoch-making importance of the Hungarian Revolution lay in that it was not only a revolt



against communist tyranny, but also that it established at the same time the positive aims of a new social order.<sup>3</sup>

Today, Hungary has retained pieces of that liberalism that was crushed by the Russians in 1956, but the Hungarian regime has been cagier and quieter about its advances. The Hungarians have recently accelerated their plans for a five-day work week. Hungarians now working the triple shift system (a 44 hour week) will go over to the shortened week in July. The rest of the country's 4.5 million labor force will have it next year.<sup>4</sup>

Hungary has been the only East European country to refrain from criticizing Poland's industrial unrest and the emergence of its independent union movement.

Unions in Hungary are autonomous and have extensive powers over management decisions on basic wage questions, annual leave, and allocation of housing. Some have a voice in hiring and firing. They must be consulted about manager-director appointments and, though they may not veto a ministry nomination, if they have objections, these are taken seriously into account.<sup>5</sup>

This year the Hungarians are tackling the feather bedding of failing enterprises and wage differences. Each is a highly sensitive

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<sup>3</sup>Robert G. Wesson, The Russian Dilemma, (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1974, p. 108.

<sup>4</sup>Christian Science Monitor, February 17, 1981, p. 10.

<sup>5</sup>Wesson, Russian Dilemma, pp. 83, 194.



subject in the Communist countries with their ideological, but often seriously uneconomic commitment to full employment.

The minimum wage is being raised by 8 percent; maximums may go up as much as 25 percent. This means a break with the once-rigid egalitarianism and is intended to reward the qualified expert and the skilled worker.<sup>6</sup> Sounds like a long way from Soviet-style communism? It is.

The profound developments in Czechoslovakia in 1968 presented a confused challenge to the Soviet leadership. The resignation of Moscow's protegee, Novotny, the reformist forces of Dubcek's leadership and the revival of freedom of the press, had created, from the Soviet point of view, a dangerous political situation in one of the most important countries of Eastern Europe. The situation had every potential for infecting other East European countries with the passion of reform -- any may have done so had not the Soviets come crashing down.<sup>7</sup>

Now that Peking has become the second centre of the Communist world, insisting on equality with Moscow, the Soviets are rife with dilemmas. Poland, leaning on China and the West, and entertaining friendship with Yugoslavia, tries to follow her own road. Despite all the efforts to force her back to the folds of "Mother Russia," she can no longer be considered a dependable ally. Yugoslavia is constantly involved with Russia and her Communist pawns. Yugoslavia shows no

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<sup>6</sup>Christian Science Monitor, Feb 17, 1981, p. 10.

<sup>7</sup>Jiri Valenta, Soviet Intervention in Czechoslovakia 1968, (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1974), p. 12.



signs of leaping at any time to the support of the Kremlin. Rumania, as well, insists on a 'wayward' course in foreign policy, albeit the domestic constraints imposed by Ceaucescu are quite repressive.

Moscow is justifiably worried, realizing that its exclusive supremacy over the Communist camp has been seriously challenged. Its authority has begun its plunge in Eastern Europe. The subjugated countries can no longer be trusted. Communist rulers may swear allegiance to Moscow with great servility, but, they speak only for themselves. And by trying to enforce this loyalty to Moscow by persecution, they themselves are merely admitting the poverty of their leadership. Czech Communists live in permanent deference to the Soviets. Honecker could be swept away if the twenty Soviet Divisions were to leave East Germany. Belgrade alone, at present, rejects Soviet supremacy openly, but elsewhere Communist regimes remain in power only because of the fear of Soviet military intervention.

## 2. Military Forces of Eastern Europe

The tasks imposed on the Red Army have grown monstrously. The satellite armies are of dubious value to Moscow. In the 1956 Polish uprising, the effort to win the Polish Army over to Russia by putting in charge Polish-born Red Army Marshal Rokossoviski, failed dismally.

The Polish Army then, and today, seems willing to fight against Soviet units. Hungarian soldiers joined the revolution against Moscow at the very beginning. The Communist general, Maleter, organized the defense in Budapest against attacking Soviet divisions. Even officers considered loyal communists gave themselves to the service of the revolutionaries. In the Czech crisis, Dubcek did not mobilize





the Czechoslovakian armed forces and civilians and was adverse to bloodshed with the Russians. The dismissal of Czech General Prchlik, designed to diffuse the crisis, unfortunately strengthened the cause of the interventionists in Moscow.<sup>8</sup>

In an emergency, the eighty satellite divisions might form a kernel of revolt rather than an auxiliary force of the Red Army. Partisans would harass the Soviet military machine over the whole wide area between the Baltic and the Mediterranean (excluding Bulgaria).<sup>9</sup> This would cause the Soviet divisions to be pinned down in all the regions now oppressed by the Russian dictatorship. Unless they believe in deluding themselves, the rulers in the Kremlin cannot fail to realize the proven unreliability of the satellite armies, as well as the danger of revolt and sabotage if there was a war. The so-called 'strengthening' of the Warsaw alliance, stressed in many declarations issued by the Communist government since the Hungarian uprising, has no other practical meaning other than to supply the Russian government with a specious legal pretext for maintaining garrisons and bases for aircraft, naval units and guided missiles in the captive countries. The Red Army is the only force in East Central Europe on which Moscow can depend. It is significant that the number of Soviet instructors and controllers to the satellites increased respectively after the

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid, p. 160.

<sup>9</sup>Bulgaria historically hewed to Moscow's wishes.



East German unrest of 1953, the Hungarian uprising of 1956, the Prague Spring of 1968 and the present Polish revolt.

Unlike the armies of other East European states, the GDR NVA (National Peoples' Army) is a product of the Warsaw Treaty Organization and it serves under the control of the Supreme Command of the Warsaw Treaty Organization. NVA troops are among the best equipped and best trained in East Europe, the second most effective after the Red Army.<sup>10</sup> In order to maintain discipline and subordination, there are constant high-level military contacts between the NVA and Red Army,<sup>11</sup> and all leading GDR military personnel are trained in the Soviet Union. So far, the NVA has served Soviet interests, not only on GDR soil but also in East European and African operations.<sup>12</sup> However, the fundamental morale of the NVA has to be held in question. If a war were to break out between the Soviet Union and Western Europe, would East German soldiers be willing to fight in a fratricidal conflict with their West German brothers? While the efficiency and effectiveness of the NVA is no doubt a military boon to the Soviet Union, Moscow must be careful to choose their conflicts wisely.

The substantial changes taking place in Eastern Europe have extended beyond the military spectrum -- the more complex and deeper

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<sup>10</sup>Angela Stent, "Soviet Policy Toward the German Democratic Republic," Unpublished Report, 1980 p. 24.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>In Angola and Ethiopia. Recently, they have been pointed out as a putative source for arms to Salvadorian guerrillas.



problems of economics pose a far greater challenge to continued Soviet dominance.

### 3. The Economic Path to Finlandization

The economic morass created by social revolution and forced industrialization and collectivization is a fundamental element in the declining fealty of the East European countries to the Soviet Union. The promised plan of prosperity and stability has only resulted in the magnification of old tensions and inchoate resentments. Although the post-war economies of Eastern Europe evolved into a new productive capacity, the failure of the regimes to satisfy the demands of industrial workers and the new intelligensia (supposed supporters and beneficiaries of the new socialist order), has added new discontents to the persistent grievances of peasants opposed to collectivization, religious people shocked by the persecution and denial of the churches, diehard nationalists espousing personal and national freedoms hostile to the communist milieu. Open dissent and violence a la Poland are but the most spectacular manifestations of the unanticipated effects of economic and social change.

The limits of extensive growth in simple basic industries became apparent in most states in the 1960's, and the system had neither the resiliency nor the effective political control to adapt to the new requirements. The issue of economic reform posed a test for the economists, the planners, and the high political officials of each country as they tried to decide how much decentralization, use of incentives and freezing of prices would be compatible with



the system.<sup>13</sup> However, party satraps feared that experimentation with changes would erode their power bases. When Czechoslovakia and Hungary in 1968 embarked on economic reform as an alternative to stagnation, the results were disastrous for Czechoslovakia. Hungary delicately transformed the economy so as not to disturb the political balance or provide "fraternal assistance."

The experience of the 1970's has sharpened the dilemmas and highlighted the narrow choice of options open to the East European regimes. How the regimes propose to confront the dilemmas of the 1980's--high energy prices, technological backwardness, consumer demands, inefficient industries, balance of payments deficits, mounting international debt, and the rigidities of the economic structure--remains to be seen. In any case it is obvious that the Soviet Union can not provide the panacea for this sea of troubles.

#### 4. Prospects for the Future

It has been over three decades since the Soviets made the decision to indirectly control Eastern Europe. In that time they have failed to develop a stable, dependable and viable system. The bloc-wide institutions of the Warsaw Pact and the CMEA<sup>14</sup> have not created a true community. The prospects for the Soviet Union itself are foreboding--declining economic growth; slow technological progress;

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<sup>13</sup>Richard C. Gripp, *The Political System of Communism*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), pp. 91-101.

<sup>14</sup>CMEA--Council for Mutual Economic Assistance--The Socialist equivalent to the Marshall Plan organized in 1949.





serious problems of manpower; a heavy military drain on resources, social problems of divorce, alcoholism, and abortion; and a shortage of available energy. In the absence of a drastic reform of the system or a rapprochement and great expansion of trade with the West, the Soviet Union may be forced to focus on itself, squeezing the most out of its own resources and denying further adventurism. How would this situation affect the East European countries? The USSR certainly could not make up for its paucities by squeezing her neighbors. They will have similar problems, many of them in more acute form for they are more dependent on international trade and credits, more energy deficient, and hampered by the communist rigidity that pervades the political system and strangles economic reform. The Soviets cannot continue to draw on their own declining resources to help satellite regimes that are floundering. Credits, preferential prices, emergency aid, and Soviet oil and gas cannot continue as contributions.

What is the solution to this seemingly inevitable succession of crises that lie ahead? Albeit the Soviets have the military primacy to control unrest and possible explosions in Eastern Europe, there are alternative solutions that could provide security and ameliorated economic interdependence without Soviet insistence on control of internal affairs. The Finlandization of Eastern Europe and neutralization of the Germanies might provide the solution to the explosive dilemmas of the Soviet Union.



#### D. THE ROAD TO THE REUNIFICATION OF GERMANY

It is evident that Soviet foreign policy has entered a period of increased difficulties and complications: the Polish unrest poses a formidable problem and threatens to infect the other East European countries; relations with the United States have been steadily deteriorating; the Marxist Leninist ideology is beginning to look feeble even to the third world; and relations with China don't auger for improvement. Can the West, then, take advantage of the Soviet Union's increasing problems to force or induce a Soviet retreat from East Germany?

The concept of building strength until the Soviets were ultimately forced to make concessions has a fatal psychological flaw. It is true that nations sometimes sacrifice some prestige to avoid war. The Soviets did exactly that in the Cuban Missile Crisis. But it should not be forgotten that they were not being asked to turn Cuba over to the U. S. The United States demand was much more moderate than that. If the United States had insisted on completely humiliating the Soviets, it is doubtful they would have chosen to avoid war. It is quite possible to envisage solutions in which the Soviets might find it practical or desirable to withdraw from East Germany. But it is not at all likely that they would simply turn East Germany over to NATO for nothing in return. The security of the Soviet Union in the West depends on adequate arrangements regarding Germany. The weaker the position of the Soviets, when what is at stake is vital, the more they must hope to bluff through and hold out. Soviet control over Poland and East Central Europe could be loosened under certain conditions, but these



areas cannot be simply abandoned by the Soviets as a second step in a Western political offensive. The Soviets would be forced to try to hold on while their determination to do so would be in doubt -- surely a very dangerous situation for any nation.

So far, the problem has been discussed in terms of a simple and unilateral withdrawal from weakness. Another possibility exists: the Soviets might withdraw if the West would withdraw too.

Such a process might occur very gradually, and perhaps almost tacitly, or by a formal agreement executed in relatively compact stages. But in either event it would be a program of matched concessions in East--West troop dispositions and East--West alliance obligations. And at the end of the process both German states would be joined in a single all-German government which would be under formal obligation to refrain from military alliances with East or West. The whole arrangement would have to be further strengthened by a European Security Pact which would guarantee Germany against attack and Germany's neighbors against German aggression.

Such a plan has at least once been given tentative approval by a Soviet administration. In February 1955, when this plan -- which also provided for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Poland -- was presented at the Warsaw interparliamentary conference on the German question, 150 delegates, "including representatives from the Soviet Union," voted unanimously to offer negotiations on free, controlled elections in Germany.<sup>15</sup> The plan went beyond the Soviet offers at

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<sup>15</sup>Gerald Freund, Germany Between Two Worlds, (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1961) p. 162.



the Berlin Conference -- specifically in accepting the Eden formula for elections,<sup>16</sup> the proposition that there would be a single German state constituted in this fashion, and the proposal that the Soviets should withdraw from Poland. It left vague the important question of what degree of armament restrictions this "neutralized" Germany would be asked to accept.<sup>17</sup>

It is possible to argue that the Soviet government was merely engaging in a propaganda gesture at Warsaw. But its official note and other pronouncements had successively failed to arouse Western response, and it is more likely that they used this approach to suggest their serious intentions. Malenkov's sudden demise lends weight to this interpretation.<sup>18</sup>

There is a distinct and important difference between carrying out such a plan in conjunction with the reunification of Germany, and carrying it out while keeping Germany divided (as was proposed at one point at the German Conference by Molotov). The plan's usefulness as a basis for negotiation would be completely negated if it envisaged two weak, neutral German states. For one thing, the West Germans

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<sup>16</sup>The Eden Plan, submitted on Jan 29, 1954 aimed at "the conclusion of a freely negotiated treaty with a United Germany to be arrived at by stages: 1) free elections throughout Germany, 2) the convocation of the resulting National Assembly, 3) the drafting of a constitution, 4) the formation of an all-German government responsible for the negotiation of the peace treaty, 5) the signing and ratification of the treaty.

<sup>17</sup>Freund, Germany Between Two Worlds, p. 162.

<sup>18</sup>Malenkov's forced resignation took place on Feb 8, 1955 two days after the Warsaw interparliamentary conference on Germany ended.





could not agree to such a plan. On the other hand, a plan to create a militarily neutral Germany carries with it greater Soviet concessions than might be apparent. First, a united Germany, whether or not armament restrictions were imposed, would continue to be a relatively strong power, anti-Communist and pro-Western in orientation. A militarily neutral Germany would not be a feeble Germany or a Germany neutral in its preferences for one way of life over another. Second, in secret and really free elections, the Communists in East Germany would be utterly wiped out. (This is exactly what Khrushchev said about the proposal in 1963 -- that it would "liquidate socialism" in East Germany.)<sup>19</sup>

Why would the Soviets have any interest in agreement to a plan which, although it took West Germany out of NATO, also took East Germany out of the Soviet bloc and essentially eliminated the socialist framework of East German life?

There are a number of reasons. First, the Soviets currently are threatened with military involvement in Poland that could extend to other East European countries. If a new revolt took place in East Germany, the danger of escalation would be very great. The last revolt in East Germany, in June 1953, occurred while West Germany was still disarmed and neither truly independent nor responsible for German affairs. Now active West German forces total a half million, and the trained reserves have reached substantial figures. It would no longer be a simple matter for the West German government to take refuge in

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<sup>19</sup>Wesson, The Russian Dilemma, p. 37.



inactivity while East Germans were being slaughtered by Soviet tanks. As long as the Soviets remain in Germany they are gambling that they will not be forced, as in Hungary, to choose between bloody suppression and evacuation.

Secondly, the difficulties the Soviets are finding themselves in are increasing. Mr. Brezhnev has built the Soviet Union into a genuine superpower, with unprecedented military might. But, despite that, the tanks and warplanes have not snuffed out what the Soviet media scorns as "rebel gangs" in Afganistan. Nor does the Army seem to promise a palatable antidote to worker unrest in Poland. Nor is the military particularly helpful in underpinning an intricately planned economy that often just doesn't work. Furthermore, Secretary Brezhnev's version of detente has forged unprecedented trade links with the West, particularly with West Germany. But relations with Europe are strained. Relations with Washington are worse. Nor are the Soviets on the best of terms with Communist Parties in Europe. The Italians, Spanish, and French did not send their number one men to Moscow. And Sino-Soviet relations are faring no better than in recent years.

The Soviet advantage used to lie in the fact that some of the satellite states suffered at the hands of the Nazis and feared German expansionism. But since the West Germans threw off the shackles of the Hallstein Doctrine (which barred the establishment of diplomatic relations with any state, other than the Soviet Union, that recognized East Germany) and supplemented their economic missions in the area with full political relations, the fears of German revanchism no longer seem as credible.



There is, in short, already a well advanced trend toward drastically changed relations in Eastern Europe. The satellites do not want to be satellites, with the possible exception of Bulgaria. Under these circumstances, and in view of German sentiments and Polish initiative as well as the Soviets' economic burden in the East, there is far more reason for the Soviets to make some suitable arrangement for the whole of Eastern Europe.

Thus positive and negative considerations combine to make the Soviets potentially more willing to consider some degree of liquidation of their East European position.

No one can foresee the outcome of the growing difficulties and sharpening tensions inside the Communist world. But the whole Communist empire is being shaken by conflicting social and national forces -- and by powerful spiritual currents. Now that the spirit of freedom has been released, anything can happen. But whatever the course of events that lead to a European settlement the forces in the Soviet Empire will not be able to achieve the liberation of the people of East Central Europe without realizing the solution to the German Question and employing effective political aid from the Western Powers to effect such solutions.

#### E. A NEW POLITICAL SETTLEMENT: NATO AND WARSAW PACT

The radical change in the strategic orientation of the United States, Britain and France, who are concentrating more and more on tactical nuclear weapons, may lead to paradoxical consequences. While the danger of a general nuclear war diminishes to a minimum, the



defensive capabilities of Western Europe would be weakened, the more so if the number of American and British forces in Europe were to be drastically reduced. Our military value compared with Russia's strength is not perhaps great, but the politico-economic value is tremendous. Our presence on the Continent is a dependable, and perhaps the only, guarantee that the Western Powers would automatically repulse a Soviet attack with their nuclear weapons. It is understandable that the Russians should strive by every means to destroy NATO, which would mean the withdrawal of American bases not only on the Continent, but also in Britain. Similarly, one can understand why the Russians refuse to link the question of disarmament with that of the political settlement of controversial European issues; they simply want to retain their position in East Germany and in East Central Europe.

As long as Germany remains divided and independence is denied to subjugated Communist nations, Western Europe will continue to be susceptible to the dangerous political pressures of Russia, pressures that could only be increased after any reduction in the number of American and British troops stationed on the Continent. Attempts to arrange for general disarmament will fail until the two main European problems, German reunification and liberation of the satellite countries, have been tackled satisfactorily. To experienced negotiators, there can be no disarmament without security and no security without a political settlement to satisfy all interested partners.

The Western governments will not accept any Soviet proposals intended to extend Soviet influence throughout Germany. Erich Honecker's revival





of the idea of German unification<sup>20</sup> was made with the caveat that unification should be under Communism. The East German leadership may have raised the reunification issue, an issue that strikes a responsive cord in the hearts of East German people, in order to soften West German reaction to any eventual Soviet-bloc intervention in Poland. It may also have been done to give the East German people something to talk and think about, other than the example being set in Poland. In any case, recent events point out the subject of reunification is quite alive in Germany, even if the proposal was untenable from the Western viewpoint.<sup>21</sup>

It is possible to visualize a political settlement that would make a new system of European security practicable. The Western governments, including Herr Schmidt's Federal Republic, will not accept any Soviet proposals intended to extend Soviet influence throughout Germany. On the other hand, Moscow will reject any proposals for reunification unless they include guarantees against a unified Germany becoming a member of the Atlantic Alliance. A settlement can only be envisaged if Germany becomes united through free elections and gives a pledge to refuse the blandishments of military blocs. In all other things, Germany could be a truly sovereign power with a limited army defense force of her own. This could also be subject to restrictions similar to those imposed on other states by a general disarmament agreement.

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<sup>20</sup>The idea of German reunification has not been aired publicly at the official level since the 1960s. Honecker broke the silence on the issue this month (Feb 81).

<sup>21</sup>CSM 18 Feb 81.



The men in the Kremlin will not withdraw from East Central Europe unless they are assured that this region will not be used as a staging area for an assault on Russia. A settlement could be based on an undertaking by each government, created in these territories by free elections, to remain neutral. Such a pledge could be internationally guaranteed. On the whole, in their foreign policy, Germany could follow the example of Austria; while Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, and Romania followed the example of Finland.

Such a settlement would be completed by the simultaneous withdrawal of Western soldiers from West Germany and Soviet troops from East Germany and East Central Europe. The reduction of American and British forces in other West European countries could come with the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Eastern Europe or depend on the progress of general disarmament, depending on what negotiators work out.

An interview with George Kennan revealed the following. When the interviewer asked Mr. Kennan why Soviet troops don't get out of Eastern Europe, he responded that the situation directly involved the German Problem, so long as American and other Western forces remain in West Germany. Mr. Kennan posited that we should consider the idea of withdrawing all American forces from the Continent of Europe.<sup>22</sup> He went on to suggest that Germany's frontiers would be guaranteed by the English and American atomic deterrent.

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<sup>22</sup>Interview of George Kennan in The Two Germanies, edited by Grant S. McClellan, pp. 137-138.



Agreement on these proposals could be embodied in a new European security system or at least become a basis for such a system, guaranteed by everybody concerned, including the United States, the Soviet Union and the United Nations. This security system could be linked at the same time, with a disarmament agreement.<sup>23</sup>

Concern about the possibility of the American withdrawal, not only from West Germany but from the whole of Europe, may be a stumbling block in negotiations. But, would the United States lose interest in the defense of Europe if a physical presence on the Continent weren't maintained? Surely this would be one more reason for becoming even more active in the defense of Europe.

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<sup>23</sup>Different suggestions and plans, analogous to these proposals, have been submitted by distinguished statesmen from time to time. In 1957, Hugh Gaitskill of the House of Commons proposed the following: "The path to be followed seems to me an expression of the Eden plan put forward in 1955. It was at that time proposed that there should be a withdrawal of forces from the frontiers between East and West Germany, leaving within Germany itself a zone in which there were no foreign troops. Would it not be possible to extend the area of such a zone until it covered, say, the whole of Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary -- and, if possible, Rumania and Bulgaria"?

Franz Joseph Strauss, leader of the CSU/CDU opposition party in the FRG espoused an even bolder plan in his book, The Great Design: "The unification of Germany cannot be achieved either by force or by the acceptance of Soviet conditions. The attempt to use forcible methods would mean unification in a cemetery and acceptance of Soviet conditions would in the long run mean unification in a common prison. ...The indispensable political bargaining counter in this grand design must be to leave no hope whatsoever in Moscow that Germany is prepared to surrender the right of self determination. We are ready to submerge our national aspirations in membership of an all European Federation. What we are not ready to do is to abandon our national rights and human liberties by accepting the present division in the country and perpetuating the status quo. It is up to us Europeans to establish a European framework, to create a European architecture in which a united Germany could be absorbed....Such a Europe should retain close alliance with the United States. It should possess the means of self defense up to and including the possession on the nuclear deterrent...."



Another possible objection against the plan is that it lacks any guarantee that the Soviet armies would not return to the countries they had left, especially after the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Europe. This fear is not unfounded. It would be necessary to insist on the United States and the other Western powers giving an explicit warning that they would answer such Soviet aggression with a nuclear counter attack. It would be necessary, too, to guarantee, in this kind of agreement, modified free elections in the countries of East Central Europe. As long as the present Communist regime remains in power, there will always be the danger that a Moscow sycophant will ask for "fraternal assistance."

It is true that after a plan of this kind had been accepted, the Russians would retain their military superiority on the Continent. But even if we do not take into account that a united Germany and the "liberated" countries of East Central Europe would have their own armies, ready to defend their national independence, it would be far better for Russia to start an offense from her own frontiers through a buffer belt, rather than from the Elbe River.

It would be delusory to contend that the objections and misgivings mentioned are unfounded. But it is worthwhile to consider the superior advantages of the suggested plan. They seem to outweigh, to a great extent, any of the risks that must be taken in putting the proposals into practice.

The main advantage of the plan rests in the fact that, while the menacing superiority of Soviet power in Europe would be greatly reduced, the security of Russia itself would be in no way endangered. This also





would provide truly favorable conditions for peaceful co-existence or friendly trade competition between the East and West. The tension that now exists in Western Europe would be vitiated if the Soviets would withdraw behind their own frontiers. Germany would be reunited. The nations of East Central Europe would be free.

The balance of power may swing to the benefit of the West in spite of Russia's still remaining the strongest power on the continent. Western civilization may once more influence the whole of Central Europe. At the same time, the influence of the Russian civilization could also be felt where it was genuinely appreciated. In some ways the Russian security might be enhanced. The Russians would have no further need to fear the aggressive intentions of the Germans. Yet this fear would exist even if the Germans disavowed NATO and military alliances. Only a plan that involved Germany in the general scheme of European peace could bring comfort to the Russians.

True enough, the Russians would lose their supremacy over their satellites, but even so they would gain. They would no longer need to watch for contumacious tendencies. They would no longer need to supply diminished energy resources to ungrateful European clients. Instead of being enslaved, these countries might become their partners and neighbors. Instead of being burdensome rebels, they would be cash customers. Russian economic co-operation with these nations would bring them more benefit than is possible now when they are obliged to maintain an enforced dominion over these countries. The people of Eastern Europe have a profound hatred of Soviet tyranny, (with the possible exception of Bulgaria, which is more Byzantine and was protected from the Turks by



Russia). Once free, they may desire nothing more sincerely than peace and friendly cooperation with everybody, Russia included.

#### E. SOVIET REACTION TO THE PLAN

The advantages of such a settlement of European problems are sufficient to explain why the Western Powers should take the initiative in making the necessary preliminary moves toward negotiations.

Of course, it is not likely that the Soviet Government would accept this plan in the present situation. The Russians have not yet relinquished the hope of realizing their expansive aims as Afganistan, Vietnam and Central America have vividly pointed out. But I am convinced that the Western Powers, in presenting these proposals to the Russians, would strengthen their moral and political position without losing anything. Their initiative could drive the Soviets into a precarious defensive. If Moscow were to refuse such a proposal, it might incite the whole German nation against Russia and hopefully drive it into the embrace of the West. Germany, eagerly hoping to attain the neutral status enjoyed by Austria, would grow dangerously restive; the other East Central European countries looking to enjoy the same status as Finland would also grow recalcitrant.

Moscow would lose much of the sympathy of the 3rd World nations, who would realize even more clearly than during the Hungarian Revolution, Czech uprising and Polish revision, that this negative attitude of the Russians to the plan was further proof of the Kremlin's imperialistic aims and intentions. Moscow's attitude would obviously be criticized in Europe, North and South America, China, and in the African countries.



This could only lead to new and serious frictions among the Soviet leaders.

Bold initiative from the Western democracies would forestall similar initiative from Moscow. The resources of the Russians are overstrained and since the Polish uprising they have encountered serious difficulties in the satellite countries. Brezhnev has involuntarily exposed Russian vulnerability by discussing the satellite countries more often and more carefully than before, stressing repeatedly and with noticeable irritation that these countries will remain in 'the Socialist camp'.

The Soviets may try, in certain circumstances, to escape from their predicament by granting further autonomy to the East European countries, even at the price of a considerable diminishing of the influence of the Communist parties. They might, at the same time, revise their attitude to the German question. If they were to decide, because of the growing opposition of the satellites, to content themselves with having a decisive influence over them, instead of the present exploiting domination, they could gradually bring about a state in which these nations might become resigned to enjoying considerable autonomy in the administration of their own internal affairs. The Russians could even gain the sympathy of the Germans if they were to facilitate their reunification. Through similar adjustments, Communist leaders could stabilize their influence in East Central Europe and probably extend it to the Rhine. This would mean they would become even more dangerous rivals to the West than before. At present the Western Powers are protected against this danger mainly by the intractability of Moscow itself. Quite understandably the Russians do not want to forfeit this direct



domination over East Central Europe, fearing that any relaxation of their tyranny might put the whole regime in jeopardy. Inner pressures may force the Soviet leaders to realize that Stalin's empire cannot be preserved intact for ever.

Necessity may press Moscow's new leaders to try to transform their empire into a commonwealth under Russian leadership. If this happened, the Russian 'sphere of influence' would probably spread even over the rest of Western Europe and we would see the Finlandization of Western Europe.

If the West does not want or cannot use 'a policy of strength' against the Soviet Government, it can only prevent the danger of Moscow's influence growing by boldly achieving a political settlement that would lead to the withdrawal of the Red Army from the centre of Europe to beyond the Russian frontiers. This could only be done through a compromise agreement with Moscow, that in its turn would bring counter-balanced benefits to everybody, including the nations of East Central Europe.

#### G. DIPLOMACY OF THE WESTERN POWERS

Soviet rulers, dizzy with the cult of power and the merciless application of force, would abandon their positions in East Central Europe only under pressure of necessity. The Western Powers can bring about Soviet compliance by firm policy, elastic, imaginative diplomacy and thoughtful propaganda. I believe the present administration of Reagan-Haig is capable of this genre of diplomacy.





Firm policy should be based above all on a resolute determination to preserve and strengthen the Atlantic Alliance. Whatever weakens this, strengthens Russia. Any effective negotiations with Moscow presupposes unbreakable solidarity of the Western Powers, based on the military power of NATO. Until a settlement about the main controversial issues in Europe and Asia is reached, the existence of a strong Western bloc remains vital for the whole free world, as well as for all those behind the Iron Curtain who yearn for freedom. That is why it would be very dangerous to consider any withdrawal of American and British troops from Europe before a settlement of the main causes of tension between the free world and the Communist world.

The firm policy of the West -- as far as Europe is concerned -- should manifest itself in an emphatic declaration that the Atlantic Powers consider both German reunification and the restoration of the freedom and independence of the nations of East Central Europe fundamental conditions of any political settlement or agreement with the USSR. In spite of numerous declarations the Western Powers have had difficulty in proclaiming, in any statement worthy of being called a pledge, that the peaceful liberation of the nations of East Central Europe was a basic principle of their foreign policy.

Because the so-called liberation policy was restricted mainly to the field of propaganda the Russians felt justified in ignoring it. If Secretary Haig were to officially proclaim the peaceful liberation of the Central European nations a definite aim of the Western powers, the Soviet Government would be forced to give serious consideration to what was being said, especially as any such declaration could



encourage all the satellite nations living in a state of latent revolt against Soviet domination.

The effect of such a declaration could be even stronger if the Western Powers proclaimed at the same time that they would consider the neutral status of the liberated nations of East Central Europe as a suitable and desirable part of a new system of Continental security. They would clearly prove in this way that they have no intention of exploiting the liberation of these nations to embarrass Russia. They should emphasize that they wish to liberate the satellites merely in accordance with internationally recognized principles governing the right of every nation to freedom and independence.

Their readiness to guarantee the neutrality of Central European nations would also prove their belief that the wide strip between the Baltic and the Mediterranean, in the past so often an excuse for discord and conflicting ambitions among the Great Powers, should become a region of peaceful and friendly co-operation.

Such a declaration of the Western Powers could profoundly embarrass the Russians, especially if it were stressed at the same time that the proposed political settlement would open the way to real and substantial disarmament. On this basis it would be possible to mobilize world opinion against Russian inflexibility and greatly stimulate the hopes of the satellite countries, third world nations and of many Russians, too, that the days of Communist dictatorship were numbered.

The plan I have outlined should be accompanied by wide propaganda. People on both sides of the Iron Curtain should be told of the purely peaceful aims of the plan. Public opinion in Russia cannot exist in



the same sense or even to the same extent as in the free countries. Yet it exists, especially among the Soviet intelligensia and bureaucracy. These people have limited opportunities at least of listening from time to time to foreign broadcasts. So the Western Powers should repeat on every appropriate occasion that they have no hostile intentions toward Russia or her people. It should be emphasized that they sincerely wish to co-operate with them. It should also be frequently stressed that the Western Powers have no intention of interfering with any attempts made by the Russians to reach a political agreement with the now enslaved nations. This answers Soviet propaganda repeatedly asserting the 'the Western imperialists' aim at the destruction of Russian administration and the disintegration of the United States of Soviet Russia.

The Western Powers should constantly reaffirm that they have no intention of supporting any attempt to restore any of the regimes that existed in Eastern Europe before they came under the influence of the Red Army's Commissars or of enforcing their own political and social systems on the peoples in Communist-dominated territories. The Western Powers should merely reiterate that they are ready to recognize and to respect any regimes that emerge from free elections. Let us not forget the impact of the Communist propaganda that continues to repeat to the workers in Russia and the enslaved countries that the fall of Communism would bring not only a return of capitalism but also unemployment. Russian broadcasts constantly warn the peasants in Central Europe of the danger of restoring the large private estates. It is taken for granted that this is the ultimate aim of the Western Powers.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Wesson, Russian Dilemma, pp. 172-173.



The Polish, Hungarian, and Czech uprisings clearly revealed the aspirations of all dominated nations. This helped the Western democracies in preparing a new policy (and the propaganda to go with it, especially during the Polish crisis). Their last doubts, if they existed at all, were dispersed. It was all too obvious that all the nations of East Central Europe passionately desire liberation, not only from Soviet domination but from local Communist tyranny as well. Hungarian revolutionaries expressed the wishes of all these nations when they asked for neutral status and free and peaceful co-operation with all other nations, including Russia. Polish and Hungarian rebels proved that they wished neither to return to capitalism nor to retain Communism. They desired instead a new liberal and Socialist democratic order. Voices from the other captive countries make a similar plea whenever they have an opportunity for making themselves heard. The West would greatly help the people behind the Iron Curtain if, through its policy, diplomacy and propaganda, it would support these desires.

#### H. CONCLUSION

Communism has lost its old appeal. No longer does it fill people with overwhelming, impetuous zeal. Its influence is waning. But behind the Iron Curtain there is a renaissance of liberal Socialism, characterized by a renewed respect for spiritual and religious values. Marxist materialism is being superseded by a new spiritualism or humanism, conceived socially. The Eurocommunists have sometimes, at their best, exemplified this form of zeal.





Since the Polish risings, the situation has changed radically: today there is a real possibility of the Western democracies passing from the defensive to the offensive. As long as the West is able to preserve a strong Atlantic Alliance, it can prevent further Russian military expansion. It cannot use military means against all-powerful Red armies. In this way Western policy remains defensive. Yet the political and ideological potential of the Western democracies is far stronger than that of the Communists. The West could tighten the crisis of Communism through a political offensive exploiting all the forces in revolt behind the Iron Curtain, against the despotism of the Kremlin and Communist dictatorship.

A political offensive means above all timely political and diplomatic action. Astute Western diplomacy could deprive the Russians of the initiative that they have held for so long. The Reagan team may have the capacity for this enlightened diplomacy. Whenever it is possible to anticipate events, it is best to try to influence them in favor of the cause of freedom. Vigorous propaganda, truthfully interpreting the crisis of the Communist world, could sharpen inner tension and help the forces of liberalization. The fundamental demands, postulated by the Czech reformers and Polish workers, provided safe directives for propaganda to pierce the Iron Curtain. Every suitable expedient should be used. It should be made possible for great numbers of people from Russia and other Communist countries to travel to the free world. Visits of Western individuals and groups to Communist countries should



be organized.<sup>25</sup> Democracies cannot control their tourists as effectively as Communist Governments control their own people who are allowed to visit the West, but it would be possible to instruct at least some of them to consider themselves as envoys behind the Iron Curtain - envoys of the free world.

It seems expedient to develop as much as possible the cultural relations between West and East in order to strengthen those in the East who long for freedom of spirit. In some circumstances even economic or financial aid granted by the Americans and other Western countries could strengthen the liberation movements. Credits to Poland were a step in this direction.

When the danger of a general war diminishes, the task of diplomacy and propaganda must increase. In the eyes of the Russians 'peaceful co-existence' does not mean the end of the struggle between capitalism and Communism, but a permanent, ruthless war waged by political and economic weapons. Communists engage in this all the more stubbornly and mercilessly when faced by a domestic crisis. The Western democracies would need now, even more than in the past, a central staff for an intensive political and ideological war against the Communist world.

The political, diplomatic, propaganda and cultural weapons used systematically in a combined operation by the West could strengthen and encourage the forces of liberalization that need sustaining in the struggle for freedom behind the Iron Curtain.

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<sup>25</sup>Vladimir Sakharov, High Treason, advocated the exchange of visits between the West and the East to expose the debilities of the Soviet Union and the strength of the free countries.



Combined internal and external pressure could eventually persuade the Russians seriously to negotiate with the West about a new political settlement in Europe. This would inevitably lead to their leaving the dominating positions that they have occupied in the centre of Europe since the end of the war. The hopes of German reunification would cease to be a chimera, they would become a reality.



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