The Quest for a United Germany

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CHAPTER I

GERMANY: ONE OR MANY

The Germanys

The rivalry for control in and over Germany has been a recurrent spectacle over the ages. Germany has been, for most of her history, a divided people or nation. It has even been suggested that, because of their geographical position in the middle of the European continent and because of their peculiar history, the Germans have been, or are still, prone to succumb to temptations or pressures of separatism.1

Although, in the opinion of the present writer, other causes have also contributed to the division of Germany—among them blunders of leadership and vagaries of history—we should understand today’s situation in historical perspective as another occurrence of a repetitive phenomenon in the life of the German people. The compulsion of external forces and international treaties is not an entirely new feature of German history. The problem of German unity and disunity has been for centuries much more portentous than similar problems of other nations.2 Centrifugal tendencies have been particularly strong in peripheral regions and have resulted in the permanent separation of parts of Greater Germany, like the

THE QUEST FOR A UNITED GERMANY

Netherlands, Switzerland, and Austria. In the past, “Germany” had different territorial meanings and passed through many metamorphoses: there has been a German Kingdom, the Holy Empire, and the German Bund; there were long periods when Germany was more a geographical than a political concept, and from 1806 to 1815 Germany was even formally nonexistent.

From the tenth to the early nineteenth century the Holy Roman Empire, the Reich, was the universal empire of west-central Europe; it was the putative successor to the Imperium Romanum as well as to the empire of Charlemagne, who himself had derived his title from Rome. The Holy Roman Empire was at no time a German national state; its characterization as Römisches Reich deutscher Nation (Roman Empire of the German Nation), as it was sometimes yearningly called, was a misnomer. Indeed, the Holy Roman Empire was a typical universal state in the Toynbeeian sense: in theory it was to include all Christendom (at least the Christendom of the West; the East had its own empire, the Byzantine, and later the Russian) and was to represent universal Christian unity.

During the centuries when other European nations were achieving their ethnic identity within the frame of a single political unit, the German ethnic body was undergoing the painful process of fragmentation into several territorial states ranging in size from minuscule to significantly large. The fragmentation of the Empire was brought about by many circumstances: the Emperor’s reliance on the support of feudal lords in his struggle for authority and the imperial crown; the religious split following the Reformation; the tendency of different imperial dynasties to strengthen their own princely territories.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Empire dissolved into its component units; as imperial authority weakened, the component territories of the Empire grew into centralized political entities. Finally, the Empire became not much more than a frame devoid of substance while the partite units had become sovereign states, though not nation-states. They were then popularly known as “the Germanys.” However, the concept of the quondam medieval world empire still lingered in German minds; despite its unreality German thinkers and statesmen frequently surrendered their vision to the fascinating ghost of the past.8

8 “While in the West the universal tradition vanished, while in the East it began to emerge into a politically ephemeral though metaphysically more last-
GERMANY: ONE OR MANY

Since the end of the Middle Ages, history of each century has produced problems engendered by the Zerrissenheit (dismembered status) of the German people, problems peculiar to Germany but, at the same time, impinging on other states and nations. The “German problem” of the sixteenth century, also a European problem, was the religious split which separated Germans from Germans more deeply and more evenly than it did any other big European nation. In the seventeenth century the religious cleavage produced the devastating Thirty Years War, both a European and an internal German struggle. The “German problem” of the eighteenth century was characterized by the rivalries between the two German superpowers, Austria and Prussia.

The end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries witnessed a French invasion of Germany which led to her amputation, the dissolution of the Reich, defeats of Austria and Prussia, and the creation of the Confederation of the Rhine—which was an aggregation of Napoleonic satellite states. After the downfall of the first French Empire, the Congress of Vienna maintained the reduction of German states from 365 to 39 and set up, in lieu of the defunct Holy Empire, an equally frail scaffolding of Germany, the Bund (German Confederation). Dismemberment of Germany thus continued; economic factors and the increasing quest for unity led, however, to the creation of the Zollverein which, to some extent, paved the way for a political union.4

The attempt to establish unity through popular parliamentary methods (today we would say: self-determination) by the Frankfort Diet in 1848 had failed. After the frustrating events of 1848–50, most of the German intellectual and political leaders, including liberals, became convinced that German unity could not be achieved by democratic methods. Priority was given to unification over demands for political democratization.5

From 1866 to 1871 Prussia, under the leadership of Bismarck, contrived to achieve the so-called kleindeutsch (little-German), in-

stead of the *grossdeutsch* (great-German) solution by creating the Second Reich with the exclusion of Austria.

The decades following the creation of the Hohenzollern Empire saw the grand-scale development of German military and economic power. By its mere existence and nature it had upset the traditional European balance of power. While Bismarck anxiously endeavored to present the Reich as a territorially satisfied state, under the ambitious William II new Germany embarked on an aggressive nationalistic course.

*The "Belated" German Nation*

The German national feeling, so powerfully aroused and stimulated by Napoleonic domination, had no territorial message to convey. At the turn of the eighteenth century, and even later, nation and state had become divergent if not antagonistic concepts for the Germans, unlike those held by such nations as the French or English. Because of her weakness, portions of Germany's ethnic body had broken off in the course of centuries, some of them forming separate nations. She lost the Dutch and the Flemings in the northwest, the Alsatians in the west, the Swiss in the south, and, finally, the Austrians. She compensated herself, however, by pushing far into the east, mixing with and absorbing Slav populations but without reaching anywhere natural and clear ethnic frontiers.

Generally speaking, the basic nonstatist concept of German nationalism, based on Herder's nonpolitical notion of a nation, meant that all persons of German tongue and culture were considered members of the German folk-nation, a concept later successfully exploited by the adherents of pan-Germanism and abused by Hitler.

The Bismarckian Reich, when created, possessed no nationalist-ideological basis; it was intended by its founders to be a greater Prussia, that is, the Prussian military and bureaucratic machine enlarged by permanent confederates. Thus, Prussian power hunger and nationalistic aspirations to German unity could be satisfied at a stroke and for the benefit of all.

With the establishment of a Prussia-led unified Germany, the center of German national life shifted to the east. For centuries

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*Bismarck himself was a power-minded political realist, "the least ideological of modern politicians." Golo Mann, "Bismarck in Our Times," *International Affairs* (London), January, 1962, p. 12.*

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the weight of Germanism had essentially been situated between the Rhine and the Elbe; the directing centers of high-level politics, Vienna and Berlin, seemed more or less outside the limits of Germany proper, as was Paris, which exercised no small influence in German affairs.

Germany proper, prior to 1871, had no single political or cultural center. After the foundation of the Second Reich, political, cultural, and economic activities became concentrated in Berlin, a city a hundred miles east of the Elbe River and overshadowing in splendor and importance the various regional capitals of the Empire.7

The intermingling of different parts and regional elements of the Reich between the East-Elbian subjects of the Prussian state and the more Western-minded Germans of the Rhineland and South Germany, though not complete, gradually brought the Germans into political and economic coalescence. This evolution, though mitigating cultural and social incongruities, inspired a number of fateful problems and reactions. The unfulfilled dream of complete German unity and the lack of ideological values to support the new state8 as well as "the sense of inadequacy of this power-state unification under Bismarck kept alive other nationalist ideological expressions, especially among intellectuals."9

The yearning for a spiritual content in the power-state, the search for a tradition which some thought to find in the mystical concept of the medieval Empire, the cultural condemnation of Western liberalism combined with radical nationalism, the plunge into irrational racialism or pathological individualism—all beamed low like a hidden fire during the lifetime of the Second Reich. This fire would flame up in the interwar period. While expressions

7 The Elbe River, as a historic and cultural divide, has played a role equal to if not more important than the Rhine: in the early Middle Ages the Elbe was the border of Germanism and of Christianity; the area beyond was subsequently colonized by Germans. By and large, the social and cultural, and also the economical, structure of East-Elbian territories (characterized by what was genuinely Prussian) differed from those west of the river. The Elbe was approximately the border of Napoleonic domination, and it was along this river that American and Soviet forces met at the end of World War II. See Friedrich Kracke, "Die Elbe—Europa's Schicksalsstrom," Politische Studien, May-June, 1963, pp. 324-29.

8 It has been pointed out, for instance, that the Bismarckian Reich lacked a leading constitutional theory: the theoretical justification of the Constitution was merely that "it worked." Fritz Stern, The Politics of Cultural Despair. A Study in the Rise of the Germanic Ideology (Berkeley, Calif., 1961), p. xxv.

9 William J. Bossenbrook, The German Mind (Detroit, 1961), pp. 4-5.
of revolutionary conservatism and extreme nationalism also oc­
curred in other countries, nowhere did these revolts of the mind acquire such political significance as in the Germany of the Kaiser and, even more so, during the Weimar interlude.10

Until the Bismarckian unification the Germans had been an “inchoate nation”; after 1871, however, Germany definitely became a nation-state, though a belated nation-state.11 The symbiosis of Germans within the confines of the Second Reich shaped them into a self-conscious national community. While, on the one hand, those who had so far lived outside Prussia experienced the regimentation into Prussian discipline and orderliness, Prussia, on the other hand, became more exposed to German idealism and romanticism, for better or worse.

The coherence and resilience of the new German nation-state, badly tested after the defeat suffered in World War I, withstood the trial. It is reasonable to believe that, even after the much greater catastrophe of 1945, the German state would not have fallen apart if zonal occupation had not forced upon it a political division. Here, as already mentioned, we have to consider the significance of Germany’s geographical location which has invariably had an impact on German destinies.

Germany is located in the very center of Europe; she is sur­rounded by small but also by two big nations: the French in the west and the Russians in the east (Poland lies between the Ger­mans and the Russians, and has four times been partitioned by them). A centrally situated country without conspicuous natural boundaries, such as Germany, is more likely to suffer amputation and dismemberment than nations of peripheral location. The Haps­burg Empire was, in its time, supranational and held the periphery of Germany only, extending far into the east and south. Prussia, also peripheral in her original location, was able to expand toward

10 See, in particular, Armin Mohler, Die konservative Revolution in Deutsch­

11 See the German view on Germany’s “belatedness” as a nation in Helmuth Plessner, Die verspätete Nation (Stuttgart, 1959), passim.
the east and into the heart of Germany because of her Spartan-like military and political organization. Before 1871, without these two powers or whenever they faltered, divided Germany was nothing more than an agglomeration of buffer states.

When lacking power, as in Napoleon’s time, the German area became a route of march and a battleground for foreign armies and easy prey for the victors. When powerful after her unification, despite her fright from a two-front war, Germany soon became a threat to all her neighbors. In two world wars she tried to establish a continental hegemony but failed. Hitlerite hubris not only dislocated the entire world and caused unspeakable human miseries, but also wrought havoc on the German nation itself. The gruesome chaos of Nazi Germanism fell into the hands of the Allies, called to dispose of the lifeless body of the defeated giant, Hitler’s Third Reich.

The problem of how to deal with the defeated Germany had become a concern of the Allies as soon as the dawn of victory appeared on their horizon. The wartime proposals for Germany’s future, including the question of occupation zones, are not only of interest to the historian. These considerations reflect political thinking and planning which has not lost its momentum and significance in the present. The partition of Germany, though not a direct result of these ideas and plans, grew nevertheless out of those wartime and postwar deliberations, plans, and arrangements. Unintentionally, they contributed to the creation of the present bipartite (or, with West Berlin, tripartite) Germany.

Planning Germany’s Dismemberment

The question of how to handle defeated Germany was a subject of considerable discussion and controversy in both official and unofficial circles in the United States and Britain. It was on the agenda of the wartime summit conferences of Teheran and Yalta; the Potsdam Conference was almost entirely devoted to this issue. Overwhelming public opinion in the western democracies demanded that Germany be penalized for having provoked the war and, thereby, having caused death and suffering for tens of mil-

THE QUEST FOR A UNITED GERMANY

lions. By identifying Nazism with the German people, many wished to make the German nation as a whole responsible for Nazi atrocities. Others, wishing simply to render postwar Germany incapable of any future aggression, proposed political, military, and economic measures stern enough to achieve the desired result. Among the various preventive means against renewed aggression, partition of Germany was presented as the most appropriate.

The story of planning for a dismembered Germany reflected a line of inconsistencies. President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill wished to promote a “voluntary” separation of German states; they were, however, opposed by their experts who warned them against the harmful precedents of post-World War I and the vain French efforts to support German separatism. The wartime conferences revealed the incongruity and even contradiction in what the Allied leaders envisioned for Germany; they found no solution to how these Germanys could be prevented from reuniting except by the constant use of force. Stalin, sensing the inconsistencies of these projects, stressed at Teheran the necessity of keeping the portions of a future Germany divided “by various economic measures, and in the long run by force if necessary.”

Similar ambivalence prevailed with regard to the territorial configuration of partitioned Germany. One cannot reasonably support dismemberment in the abstract: one must have in mind certain sound guiding ideas of how the new map of Germany is to be shaped. But the proponents of such plans failed to agree on any

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13 A plan submitted by Henry Morgenthau, Jr., Secretary of the Treasury, foresaw not only the dismemberment of Germany but the complete removal or destruction of her key industries and the "agrarization" or "pastoralization" of that country with a permanently unemployed multitude of at least ten million destitutes and a mere subsistence level for the rest of her population. Morgenthau also published a book explaining his plan: Germany Is Our Problem (New York, 1945).

common denominator except perhaps that Prussia must be broken up. It was held that this would benefit the Germans by restoring certain of their benign national characteristics effaced through the Bismarckian unification.

Churchill shared the view of many experts that by pulverizing Germany a vacuum would be created between "the white snows of Russia and the white cliffs of Dover." His imaginative mind envisioned, for a moment, the creation of a Danubian confederation bolstered by the Catholic states of southern Germany, separated from the Protestant North and Prussia. But when the Yalta Conference opened, he showed marked reluctance to commit his country to the principle of Germany’s dismemberment. The attitude of the British Premier and also of President Roosevelt can be explained by the evident change in the military situation. A fragmentation of the German area into miniature states would have played even more into Soviet hands than did the penetration of the Red Army into Central Europe. For them, delay was the diplomatic answer to Soviet entreaties to make a final decision on the question of dismemberment.

The dismemberment still lingered over international parleys of the Allies until it was finally exploded by Stalin himself on May 9, 1945, when in his victory proclamation he announced: "Germany has been smashed to pieces. The German troops are surrendering. The Soviet Union is celebrating victory, although it does not intend either to dismember or to destroy Germany." ¹⁵

The disharmony and lack of enthusiasm on Germany’s political partition died, chiefly because it could not be fitted into the post-World War II foreign policy concepts of any of the "Big Powers." For the Western powers, a fragmented Germany would hardly have been a bulwark and an ally against the threats of the East. For Moscow, at that moment, the coveted price was: Germany undivided. A congeries of smaller German states, under French or British protection, might have frustrated this most ambitious plan. None of the powers, at that time, envisaged that occupation zones might develop into spheres of influence or that the United States would be prepared to station forces in Germany many years after the end of the war.

The question of Germany's future border was closely linked with that of the postwar extension of Poland's frontiers. The three big powers were in agreement that Poland's eastern borders were to correspond to the "Curzon Line," which meant the surrendering of about one half of Poland's 1939 area to the Soviet Union. Poland was to be compensated for her losses in the east "by moving her westward," that is, by giving her a share of prewar German territory.\footnote{At the Yalta Conference the Soviet leaders proposed the extension of Poland to the Oder and Neisse rivers, thus enlarging her with most of East Prussia, with Silesia and eastern Pomerania; the Soviet Union sought the annexation of the northeastern portion of East Prussia with the city of Königsberg. Although the latter demand was not opposed by the Anglo-Saxon powers, they refused to approve the Oder-Neisse frontier.}

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A three-member European Advisory Commission worked out recommendations for all European questions and drew up plans for the military occupation of Germany. The eastern portion of Germany (about 40 per cent of the territory of the Reich) was assigned to occupation by Soviet forces. Northwest Germany was to become the British and Southwest Germany, the American zone of occupation. After initial objections by the United States, the above distribution of the zones was accepted. This approval also included accepting Greater Berlin as an area of joint occupation by the three powers (city sectors were later agreed upon) without, however, making provisions to secure access routes for the Western powers across the Soviet zone surrounding Berlin. Subsequently, a French zone was carved out of the American and British zones, and France was also to share in the joint occupation of Berlin.

The European Advisory Commission also reached agreement on the governmental structure of occupied Germany. Each commander-in-chief was to be the supreme authority in his respective zone, and joint control over all Germany was to be exercised by a Control Council of Germany composed by the three (after France's participation, four) commanders-in-chief. Berlin was to be governed by the so-called Kommandatura.\footnote{At the Teheran Conference, Churchill graphically demonstrated the moving of Polish borders westward with the help of three matches: like soldiers taking two steps "left close."}

\footnote{The Kommandatura (the Russified version of the German Kommandantur, a city military commandant's office) was the council of the four Berlin military governors, under the authority of the Control Council of Germany.}
The Potsdam Conference

At the time of the German surrender, the American and British front line, facing the Russians across Germany, did not coincide with the borders of occupation zones as agreed earlier. The withdrawal of American and British forces had to be traded in return for their entry into their respective sectors of Berlin. No written agreement was signed concerning the rail and road routes to be used by the Western powers to reach Berlin.\textsuperscript{18}

The concluding summit meeting of the wartime leaders was held in Potsdam in late July and early August, 1945. Here the political and economic principles which were to govern the treatment of Germany had to be decided. It was agreed that “for the time being no central German government shall be established,” but it was expressly provided that certain essential German administrative departments shall be set up, particularly in the fields of finance, transport, communications, foreign trade, and industry. In the economic field, the Potsdam Protocol most emphatically decreed that “during the period of occupation Germany shall be treated as a single economic unit.” This principle was, however, initially infringed by allowing both the Soviet Union and the United States and Britain to satisfy their reparation claims by removals from their zone of occupation. The Soviet Union was also to receive additional machinery from the Western zones in exchange for food and raw materials from its own zone.

The question of Poland’s western border almost brought the conference to a dead end. The Russians, after their conquest of the German Eastern Territories, had transferred all the area lying east of the Oder and Neisse rivers to Polish administration. Most of the German inhabitants (which formed the majority of the population), about six to seven million people, had fled or had been expelled. President Truman accused the Russians in Potsdam of having created a “Fifth, Polish Zone of occupation.”

No final agreement was reached, however, on the Polish boundary question. The compromise agreed upon provided that “the final delimitation of the western frontier of Poland should await

\textsuperscript{18} The reason for not insisting on written agreements stipulating selected access routes was the belief that a right to free access was established by the fact of occupation by Western forces of Berlin. See Philip E. Mosely, “The Occupation of Germany: New Light on How the Zones Were Drawn,” Foreign Affairs, July, 1950, pp. 603–4; Lucius D. Clay, Decision in Germany (Garden City, N.Y., 1950), pp. 25–27; Herbert Feis, Between War and Peace—The Potsdam Conference (Princeton, N.J., 1960), pp. 147–49.
the peace settlement.” Pending the final determination of this border, the German territories east of the Oder and Neisse rivers (which we shall call Eastern Territories) “shall be under the administration of the Polish State and for such purposes should not be considered as part of the Soviet Zone of occupation in Germany.” The Conference gave its approval that the remaining Germans of these areas should be transferred “in an orderly and humane manner.”

Most of the Potsdam arrangements for governing occupied Germany remained or soon became dead letters. Even at the time of their conclusion, they had scarcely concealed the deep disagreements between the signatories. Whatever the merits or demerits of the Potsdam Agreement, this instrument was, at least theoretically, to govern allied action in Germany. In some respects, its impact is felt even to this day. Its alleged violation—an accusation leveled mutually by East and West—triggered the developments which have since taken place in the western and eastern zones of occupation.

From Quadripartite to Bipartite Germany

In the months following the German surrender, wartime agreements of the Allies and the Potsdam Protocol became operative. In view of the ambiguities relating to the powers of the Control Council and the divergent policy objectives of the individual Allied powers, it was uncertain whether the locus of principal authority to rule Germany was to rest with the Control Council or whether it would be fragmented between the four zonal military governments. It was questionable whether the Control Council, through the willingness of its members, would be ready to assume the role of an effective central government for Germany, bound as it were by the unanimity rule.

The Council of Foreign Ministers, set up by the Potsdam Conference, was designated, inter alia, to prepare the peace settlement for Germany, a document which was to be accepted by “the Government of Germany” when such government was established. Plans began to crystallize for the eventual establishment of a central

GERMANY: ONE OR MANY

German government to operate under the supervision of the Allied Control Council.

Of the three Potsdam Conference powers, the Soviet government was the most eager to proceed with the creation of a German central authority. It is hardly possible to conjecture what the consequences would have been if central German executive departments and later a central German government could have been set up. Was it the existence of an Austrian government which secured unity for Austria despite the four-power occupation? The analogy, though possibly pertinent, is little convincing because the magnified size, geographical position, and power potential of Germany gave her a different place in the judgment of other states.

However, during the first year of the operation of the Control Council, all attempts to establish even German administrative departments were frustrated by the French veto. France had not been allowed to participate in the conferences of Yalta and Potsdam; therefore, the French government was not obligated by the decisions reached at those meetings. The French recognized only those measures relating to the administration of Germany which agreed with their policy. France opposed any German central administration before her territorial claims were met; i.e., the separation of the Rhineland and the Saar district from Germany and the internationalization of the Ruhr.20

Both the United States and Britain rejected French demands, while the Soviet Union so cast itself as the champion of German unification that it opposed attempts to federalize the German state structure. In order to break the stalemate, Secretary of State Byrnes proposed a twenty-five-year treaty for the disarmament and demilitarization of Germany in the spring of 1946. Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov rejected the proposal because, in his view, the proper sequence of actions was, first, to set up a German government, then to conclude with that government a treaty of peace which would provide for the demilitarization of Germany.

The entire German question appeared to be caught in a vicious circle: the French refused the establishment of a central German

administration and government until their territorial demands had been met; the Russians refused preparations for a German peace treaty until a German government had first been set up. The British vetoed going ahead with the creation of a central German administration by ignoring French opposition. While the Soviet Union gave lip-service to German unity, it prevented the management of Germany’s economy as that of a single unit, a principle solemnly laid down in the Potsdam Agreement.

While the struggle between German state unity and fragmentation, and between economic order and chaos was being fought in an unhappy merry-go-round at the conference tables of the Control Council and the Council of Foreign Ministers, the German people were submerged in a struggle for individual survival. The nightmare which had come over them because of the mistakes and crimes of their leaders obscured, for the time being, all but the concern of staying alive. National emotions were lost in the problem of satisfying one’s primary needs.

During the winter of 1945–46, the economic situation in Germany, especially that of the Western zones, had become catastrophic. A level of 1,500 calories a day per capita could not be maintained, especially because of the influx of millions of refugees from the Polish-administered territories, from Czechoslovakia, and from the Soviet zone. Imports of many millions of tons of food were needed—imports paid for by the American and British zonal administrations and, ultimately, by the taxpayers of those two countries. In the meantime, reparations deliveries were flowing from the Western zones to the Soviet Union. Food and raw material deliveries from the Soviet zone failed to arrive, though Russia continued to import food from her own zone. All this clearly conflicted with the idea of treating Germany as one economic unit. In May, 1946, the American military government stopped all reparations deliveries, a step which the Soviet government considered “illegal.”

According to the Potsdam Agreement, administration in Germany was to be directed “towards the decentralization of the political structure,” a measure which the Western powers interpreted to mean that their zones be divided into smaller states (Länder, in German), mostly in accordance with earlier historical state entities. The Russians were, however, the first to introduce a central

\[\text{Clay, Decision in Germany, pp. 120–22; Byrnes, Speaking Frankly, pp. 174–75.}\]
GERMANY: ONE OR MANY

zone administration. The Saar territory was first handled as a Land of the French zone; in December, 1946, despite the protests of the other occupation powers, a customs union between France and the Saar was announced and the latter area was withdrawn from the authority of the Control Council.

Thus far, the authority of the Control Council was hardly noticeable. The few laws and directives issued by it contained mostly noncontroversial generalities. In February, 1947, the Control Council abolished the State of Prussia when there was no longer any such state in either of the zones. As Byrnes expressed it: "So far as many vital questions are concerned, the Control Council is neither governing Germany nor allowing Germany to govern itself."22 Indeed, the Control Council proved entirely nominal, immobilized by the veto power its members held and without any executive power of its own.

The initiative to end the impass of German economy and statehood came from Secretary of State Byrnes. In his speech in Stuttgart on September 6, 1946, Byrnes outlined the road for a complete economic rehabilitation of Germany, to be followed by political rehabilitation. He said that, if "complete unification [of Germany's economy] cannot be secured, we shall do everything in our power to secure the maximum possible unification."23

For the time being, the maximum possible unification was the economic merger of the American and British zones, known as Bizonia, in December, 1946. Although the invitation for a fusion of zonal economies was issued to all four occupation powers, the creation of Bizonia provoked strong Soviet protests.

Another important turning point along the road of German partition was the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers held in March and April, 1947. An American proposal to set up a German government composed of the heads of the governments of the Länder was strongly opposed by Molotov who wanted a strongly centralized government. The Western delegations gained the impression that the Soviets desired a centralized German government so as to facilitate a Communist take-over of the country. Only in one respect was the Moscow Conference a "successful failure."24

22 U.S. Senate, Documents on Germany, 1944-1961, p. 58.
23 Oppen (ed.), Documents on Germany Under Occupation, 1945-1954, p. 155. Italics have been added.
24 Walter Bedell Smith, My Three Years in Moscow (Philadelphia, 1950), p. 211.
The last, for the time being, conference of foreign ministers in London ended with another fiasco. The Western powers now decided to turn the bizonal economic area, increased by the French zone, into a self-governing German political federation. The Soviet government did not fail to recognize that such a plan would frustrate its projects. Under such circumstances, Stalin was ready to resort to coercive measures, which he had not yet employed in Germany against the Western Allies.

The Battle for Berlin—A Battle for Germany

In the spring of 1948 the Cold War was in full operation. Its epicenter was now Germany. After the London Conference, any reasonable agreement with the Soviets concerning the establishment of a German central authority and the preparation of a treaty of peace with Germany appeared hopeless. The Western powers now decided “to do it alone.” A conference on Germany held in London during the first half of 1948, attended by the United States, Britain, France, Belgium, Holland, and Luxembourg, agreed to re-establish a German government. The minister-presidents of the Western zones were authorized to convene a constituent assembly in order to prepare a constitution for the approval of the participating German states. Hopes were expressed that, eventually, the re-establishment of German unity, “at present disrupted,” would become possible.25

In order to meet the challenge of the impending political integration of the Western zones, the Soviet government prepared drastic reprisals. On March 20, 1948, stating that because of independent Allied action “the Control Council virtually no longer exists as the supreme body of authority in Germany,” Marshal Sokolovsky, the Soviet Commander-in-Chief, left the meeting of the Council. Thus ended formally the quadripartite Allied government of Germany.26 The Berlin Kommandatura continued to func-

tion for another three months but was not in a position to direct the German City Council because of the unanimity rule.

Soviet propaganda announced that, owing to the end of quadripartite rule in Germany, the Western garrisons no longer had any right to be stationed in their Berlin sectors because all Berlin was in the Soviet zone. Soviet military authorities began to hamper transport and communications between Berlin and West Germany. On June 16, 1948, the Allied split in Germany was followed by a similar split in the microcosm of Berlin; after a stormy meeting, the Soviet member of the Kommandatura walked out on the pretext of American “rudeness.” In Berlin the struggle for Germany was joined head-on over the problem of national currency reform.

Since German economic recovery depended on the introduction of a stable monetary system, the three Western powers decided to exchange the former Reichsmark for the new Deutsche Mark. The right to mint or issue money had always been considered an essential attribute of sovereignty; under the mixed system of authority in Berlin, the issue of new money became the formal reason for the battle for Berlin. As soon as the Soviet command was informed of the impending currency reform, all train and road traffic to and from Berlin on the interzonal border was stopped. The Soviet authorities wished to introduce their own currency in the Soviet zone as well as in Berlin; however, the Western powers decided to circulate the Western Deutsche Mark in West Berlin, a move which had not been planned originally.\(^\text{27}\)

The Western powers chose to defy the Soviet blockade by initiating the “air lift,” thus keeping West Berlin supplied by air transportation with food, coal, and other articles needed for its sustenance. Fortunately, three air corridors were available for this purpose, under earlier decisions of the Control Council, and the Soviet command did not dare to interfere with the air traffic.

Not only the Allied four-power administration of Berlin but also the German city government was soon split because of the crisis. Elections, due in December, 1948, could not be held in the Soviet sector; a rump City Assembly deposed the lawful city government

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\(^{27}\) See the Law for Monetary Reform of June 20, 1948, Oppen (ed.), *Documents on Germany Under Occupation, 1945–1954*, pp. 292–94, which ordered only the conversion of currency for the three Western zones without mentioning Berlin. For all aspects of the monetary conflict and the Berlin crisis, see Manuel Gottlieb, *The German Peace Settlement and the Berlin Crisis* (New York, 1960), passim.
and set up a separate Berlin Magistrate for the Soviet sector only. Thus, the Berlin city administration, like all of Germany, was split from top to bottom.

The Berlin airlift was an outstanding success. A counter-blockade, prohibiting all traffic, did considerable harm to the Soviet zone. Early in 1949 Stalin seemed to have realized that the Berlin blockade had failed to achieve its expected success. After various face-saving devices, the Soviet government was ready to end the siege of Berlin; and on May 9, 1949, a joint four-power communiqué announced the reciprocal lifting of the blockade and the convocation of the last foreign ministers' conference in Paris.

Since the last East-West exchange of views, the Western powers had moved ahead in creating a West German state. Their victory over the Russians in the battle for Berlin had greatly enhanced their determination, and they felt secure of having the overwhelming majority of German public opinion behind them. Soviet appeals to German nationalism in defense of German unity appeared insincere. Furthermore, the only thing the Soviet representative could offer in Paris was the restoration of the status quo before the breakdown of quadripartite Allied control. On the other hand, the Western powers were only ready to admit the Soviet zone into the system they had already created in the West. After frustrating and lengthy discussion, no agreement could be reached on the issue of German reunification. Another attempt to restore unity of the government of Berlin also failed. The currency problem—the original cause of the Berlin conflict—was hardly mentioned.

The Paris Conference of 1949 marked the last opportunity for the Soviet Union to participate in the control of all-German affairs. Their strength in the earlier phase of Allied control rested with their veto power in the military supervision of German affairs. Because of the deficiencies of Communist totalitarianism, as well as the historic antipathy of the Germans toward Russia, their possibilities for reaching out, through the Communist party and its affiliations, could not be exploited. The Russians slowly came to realize that they had lost all chance to gain ascendency in western Germany or in West Berlin. What remained for them was to strengthen their hold over their own zone and to try to prevent or slow down developments in western Germany, especially the in-
clusion of the West German state in the alliance system of the West.

**German Governments in the West and East**

The flare-up of the Cold War and the ensuing division between the Soviet zone and the Western zones were not willed by the Germans, nor could they have prevented them. Only when the Western occupation powers decided to go beyond the establishment of German administrative agencies and bring about a unification of the western Länder into a federated state were political-conscious German elements—political parties, pressure groups, and other elites—called on to collaborate in the vital matter of re-fashioning Germany. They had serious misgivings about whether the establishment of a West German government would not jeopardize chances of reunification, whether it would not rather strengthen and perpetuate Germany’s partition. The Federal Republic of Germany could not have been created without the active makers were led by a healthy egoism. The East zone could not now participate of the Länder.

It appears that the majority of the West German decision-makers helped by them; why should their inability to rescue one third of their co-nationals prevent them from emerging from a state of political impotency and economic debility into a status of self-government with good prospects of obtaining complete independence. It would be, however, incorrect to interpret this attitude of German leadership as indicating a lack of devotion to the cause of German unity. Most of the political actors may seriously have believed that the success of a German state in the West would attract the East and, in fact, serve unification.

In other words, the advantages of creating—for the time being, as it was believed—a German government in the area of the Western zones were felt to outweigh the dangers. It was, nevertheless, considered important that no definitive or permanent form should be given to the political unit to be established and that its provisional and territorially incomplete status should by all means be emphasized. The German leaders, therefore, objected to naming the assembly proposed by the London Conference (which was to draft the constitution) a “Constituent Assembly” and the document to be drawn a “Constitution.” Instead, they suggested calling the meeting a “Parliamentary Council” and the constituent law of the new state the Grundgesetz (Basic Law). These semantic changes would conclusively point out that no definitive constitu-
tion was planned and would underline the temporary nature of the state organization to be created.

The delegates to the Parliamentary Council, which met in Bonn on September 1, 1948, had been elected by the legislatures of the Länder. Delegates from Berlin were denied the right to vote (under the instructions of the occupation powers) but were allowed to attend the assembly. Members of the principal parties were divided on the crucial issue: whether to give greater powers to the central government or to permit larger competences to the individual Länder. Another thorny issue of the deliberation was the status of Berlin. The Allied military governors vetoed the inclusion of Berlin as a regular member of the Federation. Accordingly, no voting membership in the Bundestag (the Federal Parliament) was accorded to the deputies from Berlin. The designation of the new capital city was another bone of contention: the Western powers opposed the move to make Berlin (West Berlin) the capital of the West German Federation, a move which was to be a demonstration for unity and a challenge to Soviet intransigence.29

Eventually, on May 8, 1949, the Parliamentary Council passed the Basic Law of the "Federal Republic of Germany." Bonn was chosen as its capital. The Basic Law was approved by the legislatures of all the Länder, except "states'-rights"-minded Bavaria. But even Bavaria accepted it subsequently.

Under the new regime the Federal Government was to exercise full legislative, executive, and judicial powers as provided by the Basic Law (and the Land governments, likewise), subject to the reservations contained in the Occupation Statute. In August, 1949, the first elections under the new constitution were held; a Federal president, elected; and the first Federal Chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, appointed.

Since the beginnings of integration in West Germany, the Soviet government had not evolved any constructive scheme to counter Western plans. All it could offer were actions aimed at delaying or obstructing progressive developments: violent measures (such as the Berlin blockade) alternated with propaganda exhibits, such as the "People's Congress" or the "People's Petition for German Unity." Only after the actual foundation of the government in the West did they step out of their lethargy and counter the Western

constitutional evolution by similar actions in their zone. In October, 1949, the German People’s Council reconstituted itself as the Provisional People’s Chamber of the “German Democratic Republic.” Earlier, the People’s Council had voted a constitution which was now adopted as the legal basis of the new East German state.\(^\text{30}\)

The establishment of a government in West Germany had provoked violent protests from the Soviet government. The sudden creation of an alleged “counterpart” government in the Soviet zone was equally denounced in the West. Secretary of State Dean Acheson declared:

The United States Government considers that the so-called German Democratic Republic established on October 7 in Berlin is without any legal validity or foundation in the popular will. This new government was created by Soviet and Communist fiat. It was created by a self-styled “People’s Council” which itself had no basis in free popular elections. This long-expected Soviet creation thus stands in sharp contrast to the German Federal Republic at Bonn which has a thoroughly constitutional and popular basis. \(\cdots\)\(^\text{31}\)

Chancellor Adenauer denied any legitimate status to the “administrative whole” of the Soviet zone because it did not rest on the freely expressed will of the people. He declared before the Federal Parliament:

Thus the Federal Republic is—pending the achievement of German unity—the sole legitimate political organization of the German people. This has certain consequences for internal and foreign policy on which I cannot dwell in detail today.

The Federal Republic of Germany also feels a responsibility for the fate of the 18 million Germans who live in the Soviet Zone. It assures them of loyalty and care. The Federal Republic of Germany is alone entitled to speak for the German people. It does not recognize declarations of the Soviet Zone as binding on the German people.\(^\text{32}\)

Similar claims to represent the entire German people were advanced by Otto Grotewohl, the East German Prime Minister:

The Government takes its origin from the first independent German people’s movement and is thus the first independent German Government. \(\cdots\)


\(^{31}\) \textit{Ibid.}, p. 424.

\(^{32}\) \textit{Ibid.}, p. 432.
The Government will do everything to serve the unity of Germany. . . . We are sure of our historic success in Western Germany, too, because we are in complete accordance with the natural and simple laws of our people's existence. . . .

Germany's political and economic unity will no more be given us as a present than will the abolition of the Occupation Statute and the separate West German state or the withdrawal of all occupation troops from Germany. . . .33

As a result of political and administrative developments, Potsdam Germany (the area originally subjected to the four-power control) had, by 1949, become dissected into five parts: (1) the Federal Republic of Germany; (2) the Saar territory, integrated economically and politically with France; (3) the German Democratic Republic; (4) West Berlin, under three-power control; and (5) East Berlin, under Soviet control.

While the separation of the Saar was resented in West Germany, the establishment of what was believed to be a Soviet puppet-government in East Germany was considered a national affront and disaster. On both sides of the Iron Curtain—and at that time the zonal border was far from being as impenetrable as later—protests were voiced. It was widely held that partition was intolerable and could not last long.

**European Integration, Rearmament, and Reunification**

At the time of Germany's surrender in 1945, the "German Problem" meant for the Allies the prevention of renewed aggression by the Germans and, to this end, the sharing of control in Germany and the shaping of her future as a peaceful nation. But five years later the German problem concerned the restoration of German unity, the establishment of an all-German government, and the conclusion of a peace treaty. Within the following five years, the problem of Germany for the Western Allies would consist in the search for integrating West Germany into a European and Atlantic system and rearming her in order to strengthen Western defenses against the Soviet Union.

While the East German regime, recognized only by the Communist confraternity of states, wished to behave and be treated as a sovereign political unit, the popularly supported German state of the West displayed certain hesitations before assuming the power and responsibilities of statehood. West Germany's desire to be only

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33 Ibid., pp. 430-31.
a temporary substitute for a future all-German state was severely tested when the dilemma of joining the Western alliance and of rearming—and thereby strengthening the division of their country—was faced by her leaders.

The relative harmony which eventually had prevailed over West Germany’s “first dilemma”—the question of whether and how to establish the “provisional” Federal Republic of Germany—came to a quick end as soon as the new state-structure began its operations. The project of German rearmament and the concomitant participation in a West European integration process and in the Atlantic alliance, when contrasted with the postulate of reunification, created a violent dispute between government and opposition.

With the disappearance of Germany as a power factor in the heart of Europe, the traditional balance of power shifted in favor of the Soviet Union. With France enormously weakened by the war, the unprecedented advance of Russian authority to the line from Lübeck to Trieste threatened to engulf all of Western Europe. By 1949 the West had the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and successfully set up a West German state in order to bolster the sagging defenses of Continental Europe. The West had slowly become aware of the fact that the power vacuum created by the destruction of German might would have to be replaced and that even an American commitment and presence was not entirely sufficient for a restoration of the balance of power in that part of the world.34

In June, 1950, the Korean War exploded, thus revealing the possibility of Soviet aggression in other portions of the world. The West’s inferior strength in available military manpower along the European Iron Curtain had become glaringly manifest to Western leaders, especially in the United States.35 German military power would have to be rebuilt for the sake of restoring the military and political balance of power in the center of Europe. NATO commitments to hold the Elbe-Rhine line appeared ludicrous without German participation.36

Nevertheless, weighty psychological and political reasons militated against such a project. The bogey of German military power was still calculated to frighten Germany’s hereditary foes—the

Russians, Poles, Czechs, and also the French. The attitudes of the Germans themselves were far from unanimous. They had been told, time and time again, that Germany would remain disarmed; now they were invited to rearm. They easily recognized their exposed position: early in the Korean War, when Communist forces threatened to push Americans into the sea, malicious voices from East Germany warned their Western co-nationals that they might have to share the fate of the Koreans who set their store in the Americans—that reunification might come from a contrary direction.\(^{37}\) The German public in the West expected, in case of a Soviet attack, to be defended by the occupation powers and not to be liberated by them—subsequently. Convincing news about the remilitarization of the German Democratic Republic added to the uneasiness felt in Bonn.

The Western powers traveled a long way within a few years. From a dogmatic condemnation of German militarism, they turned to the advocacy of German rearmament, even against the wishes of large sections of the German people.\(^{38}\) The disregard of power realities, so noticeable in the American approach to Soviet expansionism during World War II and shortly after, rebounded sharply on those policy-makers who had blithely ignored the strength and nature of the Soviet challenge while continuing to tilt against the windmills of German militarism.\(^{39}\)

In December, 1950, the NATO Council unanimously agreed to invite the Federal Republic of Germany to participate in common defense measures and asked the three occupation powers to begin conversations with the Federal government. A lengthy and many-sided international discussion on German rearmament thus began. The debate created a heated struggle between the political parties of West Germany—a struggle essentially centered around the impact of rearmament on the future of reunification.

The admission of the Federal Republic into the Western system of alliances and its remilitarization was only acceptable with certain reservations: the French, for instance, first sternly opposed the establishment of an independent German army. After the experiences of the past hundred years, it has become axiomatic to say that European peace hinges on Franco-German understanding or hostility.


\(^{38}\) This paradox is presented by Hans Habe, Our Love Affair with Germany (New York, 1953), pp. 23–24.

\(^{39}\) See Morgenthau (ed.), Germany and the Future of Europe, pp. 76–80.
Following World War II, a European system of competing national sovereignties seemed outdated and anomalous in relation to the new power structure in which the giant continental states were paramount. An integrated Western Europe, with supranational institutions, would—it was thought—solve both the problem of Franco-German rivalries and those of a resurrected German power which would thus be prevented from seeking alignment with Russia and remain an orderly member of the Western European family.

In defeated Germany the combination of frustrated national sentiment and supranationalist idealism persuaded an unusual proportion of the leadership groups that European strength and peace could be insured by close integration of the nations. The first step in this direction was the establishment of an international authority for heavy industries—the European Coal and Steel Community—initiated by French Foreign Minister Schuman and followed later by the European Economic Community.

After considerable hesitation, the French government reluctantly agreed to the creation of a European Defense Community (Pleven Plan) for the establishment of an integrated European army to which Germany would contribute with strictly limited units. The conclusion of the European Defense Treaty, in the eyes of its draftsmen, would finally bind Germany militarily to Europe. There would be no room for the dreaded German Schaukelpolitik (the playing off of the West against the East and vice versa) or for independent German attempts to unify the nation by force.

The German opponents of the official policy of European integration and rearmament reflected different shades of opinion. There were those who opposed these policies on principle and those who considered partnership with the West inopportune before Germany had achieved unification or ascertained that unification was unattainable. The first group included neo-Nazis, conservatives, pacifists, Communists, and fellow travelers. All these groups carried little

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40 Among prewar German leaders, former Minister Andreas Hermes, former Chancellors Heinrich Brüning and Josef Wirth advocated neutralism; former Ambassador in Moscow, Rudolf Nadolny, suggested a “Rapallo” approach to the Soviet Union; the Nauheim Circle under the leadership of Professor Ulrich Noack asked for withdrawal of all occupation forces; see Clay, Decision in Germany, pp. 389–90; Terence Prittie, Germany Divided—The Legacy of the Nazi Era (Boston, 1960), p. 315; Hubertus Prinz zu Löwenstein and Volkmar von Züllsdorff, Deutschlands Schicksal, 1945–1957 (Bonn, 1957), pp. 185–86; Survey of International Affairs, 1949–1950, pp. 74–75; Richard Hiscox, Democracy in Germany (London, 1957), p. 113; T. H. Tetens, Germany Plots with the Kremlin (New York, 1953), p. 171.
weight in parliamentary politics. The antimilitarist campaign was conducted with the help of the "Ohne mich" ("without me," "don't count on me") slogan—a war cry employed by all shades of opposition to remilitarization. Protestant theologians rallied to this view, among them Pastor Martin Niemöller who had spent many years in Hitler's concentration camps.\textsuperscript{41}

The most powerful opposition arose, however, within the Social Democratic Party (SPD), whose leader, Kurt Schumacher, had now become the foremost critic of the "Adenauer line," in its turn supported by the majority party, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), and its Bavarian affiliate, the Christian Social Union (CSU). But there was opposition even within the government: Gustav Heinemann, the Federal Minister of the Interior, tendered his resignation in October, 1950, because, in his opinion, rearmament would be against "God's will" and would prevent reunification.\textsuperscript{42}

Schumacher was not fundamentally opposed to Germany's remilitarization. But he wanted to use remilitarization or the threat of it for the promotion of German unity; and he believed that, by giving policy priority to reunification, it would prove feasible to obtain it despite Soviet opposition. The Social Democrats of Germany, partly to refute accusations against them of being "internationalists," partly to please their disgruntled electorate and to distinguish themselves from the Communists, championed the German national cause in a manner which set them apart from the more moderate and "European" Christian Democrats.

A powerful opposition against Adenauer's European policy was lined up by the SPD in the Bundestag. The signature of a defense agreement with the Western powers—a final commitment to the West—they maintained, would not only prejudice German unity but would also make it downright impossible. Schumacher and his followers, however, never made it clear what price they would be ready to pay for reunification; they possibly might have offered the neutrality of united Germany had such an opportunity arisen. Their attitude has thus to be differentiated from that of outright

\textsuperscript{41} Pastor Niemöller had earlier (December, 1949) declared that the majority of the Germans would prefer to have their country reunited, even under a Communist government, than to leave it divided. He also claimed that the division of Germany was the greatest blow to Protestantism since the Reformation, calling the Federal Republic the result of a Popish plot "conceived in the Vatican and born in Washington." \textit{Survey of International Affairs, 1949-1950}, p. 76.

"neutralists" or pacifists or adherents of the East-oriented Schaukelpolitik.

The essential difference between Adenauer's view and that so tenaciously held by Schumacher was a matter of diplomatic timing: the Socialists and other nationalist groups wished to give first priority to the unification question and reproached Adenauer for sacrificing German unity to a policy of pleasing the Western powers. On the other hand, Adenauer and his Party considered the security and freedom of the Federal Republic to be the necessary prerequisite of achieving unification. Konrad Adenauer stated his position tersely in the following form: "As things stood it simply was a fact that if we did not align ourselves with the West, with Europe, we would not thereby approach by a single step the reunification of Germany in freedom."43

The conflict which arose in 1950 centered around questions of priority or emphasis in regard to how and when the reunification issue should be taken up and whether it should have absolute priority over all other policy goals. Would the choice in favor of West Germany’s rearmament in alliance with the West and her integration into the Western alliance system affect chances and prospects of reunification? Or would an integration into the power system of the West be conducive to the unification “in peace and freedom” of the severed portions of the German people? The age-old German “East-West dilemma” had again emerged but in a new form, offering new alternatives though none of them was a clearcut solution; what proponents of opposing arguments could submit in respect to the prospects of reunification were just tentative, inchoate policy-plans or mere contingencies.44

The Free Democratic party did not follow the Socialists in their

43 Konrad Adenauer, Memoirs, 1945–1953 (Chicago, 1966), p. 431. The Chancellor’s position is thus summarized by a leading German commentator: “The majority of people in West Germany realize by now that they cannot have both unity and freedom. For the time being we must choose either the one or the other. Faced with this alternative it seems more opportune to be content with freedom now, and to work for unity later rather than to begin by striving for unity which can be gained only under Russian domination and to renounce freedom forever.” Marion Dönhoff, “Germany Puts Freedom Before Unity,” Foreign Affairs, April, 1960, p. 400.

THE QUEST FOR A UNITED GERMANY

all-out battle against the European Defense Treaty and rearmament. They included so many different shades of opinion that it was not easy for them to find a common platform. The Party continued to support the government in which it participated with several ministers.45

On May 26, 1952, the so-called Contractual Agreements were signed in Bonn, providing for the abolition of the Occupation Statute and granting full sovereignty (with certain reservations) to the Federal Republic. On May 27, the European Defense Treaty was signed in Paris. Nearly two years would pass before the Bundestag ratified these treaties; and in August, 1954, they would fail of ratification by the French Parliament. During all this time, East-West exchanges concerning reunification did not cease to attract attention and raise the hopes of the Germans.

East-West Exchanges on Germany’s Unity

Having created their “Germany,” the Russians continued to press for the restoration of German unity on their terms, passing the blame of Germany’s division to the other side of the Iron Curtain wherever possible. The idea of German unity was to be kept alive; the Soviets and their East German satellite were to be posed as the real champions of unification, so as to prevent West Germany’s rearmament and her joining the Western political and military alliances.46

The dictatorial methods of the “Pankow regime” (as the East German government was contemptuously called after the East Berlin District where it had its headquarters) and its dependence on Moscow made official contacts repulsive. Frequent high-level West and East German pronouncements, therefore, remained monologues. The Communist policy-makers of East Germany took special advantage of the leaders of “bourgeois” satellite parties in

45 Karl-Georg Pfleiderer, FDP deputy and former diplomat, submitted to the government in 1952 a memorandum, known as the Pfleiderer Plan, which, while not suggesting Germany’s neutralization, wished to guarantee her neutrality in the case of an East-West armed conflict. See Wilhelm G. Grewe, Deutsche Aussenpolitik der Nachkriegszeit (Stuttgart, 1960), pp. 174–80; Alistair Horne, Return to Power (New York, 1956), pp. 355–56. Pfleiderer’s name again became prominent when, as Ambassador in Belgrade, he opposed the severance of diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia under the so-called Hallstein Doctrine, shortly before his death in 1957.

46 For a good analysis of Soviet policy toward Germany in the years from 1946–55, see Werner Erfurt, Die sowjetrussische Deutschlandpolitik (Esslingen, 1956).
GERMANY: ONE OR MANY

contacting West German political organizations and leading citi-
zens. The avalanche of Communist propaganda slogans and attacks
was met by Western proposals for free elections in the whole of
Germany. Early in 1951 the Volkskammer (East German parlia-
ment) called on the Bundestag for the formation of a constituent
assembly “on a parity basis.” Adenauer, supported this time by
Schumacher, declared that, in view of the forthcoming four-power
talks, this latter conference should agree on “free, general, equal,
secret and direct elections for an all German Parliament.”

The Soviet government, in notes addressed to the three Western
powers, proposed on November 3, 1950, to convene again the coun-
cil of foreign ministers to examine the fulfillment of the Potsdam
Agreement on the demilitarization of Germany. A preliminary con-
fERENCE to establish the agenda for the proposed meeting of foreign
ministers was held in Paris in the Palais Rose from March 5, to June
21, 1951. After prolonged negotiations, no jointly accepted agenda
could be drawn up so as to contain all the items of discussion in a
sequence acceptable to both East and West. The conference at the
Palais Rose can be furnished as a proof that the Russians, at least at
this time, were insincere in their expressed desire to promote Ger-
man unity. As the meeting in Paris progressed, the German ques-
tion receded into the background and, finally, the foreign ministers’
conference was never held because the Soviets insisted on including
two non-German items in the agenda (NATO and the question of
American bases). Had the Russians really been sincere, they would
not have thwarted a conference which originally they had pro-
posed.

In the next three years, whenever an agreement or ratification of
an agreement between West Germany and the NATO countries
was pending, the Soviet government would show marked interest

Otto Nuschke, chairman of the Soviet zone Christian Democrats, came
several times to Bonn to discuss German unity with the leaders of the
CDU/CSU. He was coldly received and, later, not received at all.

New York Times, February 8, 1951. With regard to the proposed con-
stituent assembly, composed of equal numbers of representatives from Eastern
and Western Germany, Secretary of State Dean Acheson remarked: “Would
the East German representatives be appointed by the Communist Party regime
or would they perhaps have the added cover of a fake election of the type
held in Eastern Germany on October 15? And why should the 18 million
captive Germans of the East have equal representation with the 47 million
free Germans of the West?” Oppen (ed.), Documents on Germany Under

The final communique of the Palais Rose Conference is published in Docu-
in a discussion of German unity, holding out attractive concessions and even “free elections”; the interest and concessions would evaporate when the gambit was no longer timely. Offers originating in the German Democratic Republic showed a similar ebb and flow.

In the early spring of 1952, agreement on Germany’s accession to the Western alliance system seemed assured; this elicited a series of notes from the Soviet Union designed to delay or prevent the signature and later ratification of the Contractual Agreements and of the European Defense Treaty.

The first Soviet note was delivered on March 10, 1952, to the three Western powers. It dropped the demand for German disarmament, up to then the prime Soviet condition, but substituted for it with a plan to secure Germany’s nonaligned status, the withdrawal of all foreign troops, and the recognition of the Oder-Neisse Line as the eastern boundary of Germany. The Western governments replied later in March; they objected to the independent German army which Moscow had offered and rejected the idea of a permanently neutralized Germany.

On April 9, 1952, Moscow sent another note; it now recognized the necessity of all-German elections but again insisted that the Potsdam Agreement had finally resolved the eastern border question. The Western powers now asked the Soviet government to allow an inquiry into the conditions of East Germany, an inquiry to be followed by free elections. The Soviet rejoinder came on the eve of the signature of the Bonn and Paris treaties, containing this time propagandistic accusations. A Western note then emphasized that free elections had to precede any other action, including a peace treaty which could only be concluded with a central German government. The last Soviet note, in this exchange of notes, submitted a timetable which differed sharply from that of the West: first, preparation of a peace treaty; then, establishment of an all-German government (by a fusion of the East and West governments); and, last, the holding of elections. In September, 1952, the Western powers, on their part, insisted on their priority of action.

The Soviet March note and the subsequent diplomatic exchange have occasionally been cited as one of the “missed opportunities”

60 The Soviet note failed to explain how a united Germany was to be created; Documents on Germany, 1944–1961, pp. 116–17; Documents on International Affairs, 1952 (London, 1955), pp. 85–88.
61 Documents on Germany, 1944–1961, pp. 119–20; Documents on International Affairs, 1952, p. 89.
62 Documents on International Affairs, 1952, pp. 94, 96, 100, 175, 186, 195.
GERMANY: ONE OR MANY

for achieving German unity.\textsuperscript{53} A close scrutiny of the Soviet diplomatic correspondence, however, does not warrant the belief that Moscow would have been willing to abandon its East German fief even for the neutralization of a reunited Germany. The Soviet notes, while suggesting an uncommitted all-German government, were never ready to allow for free elections as a first step toward setting up a central German government; again and again they insisted on the fusion of the East and West German regimes on a parity basis. This meant the equation of a democratically elected parliament with one emanating from undemocratic single-list elections. The Soviet demand for acceptance of the Oder-Neisse frontier prior to the signature of a peace treaty in itself precluded any chance of accommodation.

Stalin's death on March 5, 1953, raised hopes in the West that Soviet intransigence on German unification would be modified; there was a desire to see if Stalin's successors had changed their attitudes. The Berlin revolt of June 17, 1953, suppressed by Soviet tanks, demonstrated, on the one hand, the fragility of the East German regime; on the other, it showed Russian determination to use armed force to maintain puppet governments.

In September, 1953, general elections took place in the Federal Republic; they resulted in a resounding victory for the Chancellor's party. The dilemma which the Western electorate faced at the 1953 general elections was, in a sense, unique: it had to express an opinion on a highly speculative subject. The SPD told them that joining the West meant "forgetting" the other Germany; the CDU/CSU replied that joining the West would be an important step toward the reunification of their country. In other words, "if you go West, you really go East." Evidently, the voters, having witnessed Hitlerite adventurism, had no taste for risks or uncertainties; furthermore, they instinctively distrusted Soviet readiness to negotiate and wished to place their stake on the West. The impact of United States influence on West Germany's politics was also clearly reflected in this vote. German national feeling had become defensive and self-centered instead of expansive and romantic.

The post-Stalin Foreign Ministers' Conference met in Berlin from January 25 to February 18, 1954. The East German government had made frantic efforts to participate. The Federal government sent only an adviser-representative (Professor Wilhelm G. Grewe) and did not wish to be officially represented in order to avoid equal rank with the representatives of East Germany.

The British Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden, submitted a plan for the unification of Germany according to the following timetable: free elections under the supervision of the four powers; the assembly thus elected would draft a constitution and form a national executive; a government would then be formed according to the new constitution and would participate in the negotiation of a treaty of peace. Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov opposed the Eden Plan and held to the view that united Germany should not be allowed to enter into any political or military alliance. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles proposed that the all-German government should have authority "to assume or reject the international rights and obligations of the Federal Republic and those of the Soviet Zone."

Molotov had still other projects: that a provisional all-German government be formed by the parliaments of East and West Germany; that a General European Treaty on Collective Security in Europe be signed by all European governments, including the "two Germanys"; and that the United States and (Communist) China should participate as observers. These projects, if accepted, would have meant the dissolution of NATO and the exclusion of the United States from European politics.54

The Berlin Conference was absolutely unproductive as far as the German problem was concerned. Neither the Russians nor the Western positions had changed essentially. The Soviet proposals were aimed not only at preventing the possibility of Germany's alignment with the West but also at arranging, in advance, the character of the future all-German government. Nevertheless, in many circles of West Germany, especially among the Social Democrats, Western attitudes at the Conference were considered too inflexible. According to this view, a renunciation of Germany's participation in the European Defense Community in exchange for Soviet approval of free elections should have been made.

GERMANY: ONE OR MANY

West Germany Joins the Atlantic Alliance

French refusal to ratify the European Defense Treaty and its twin, the Contractual Agreement, thoroughly upset Western diplomatic strategy and deeply stirred German public opinion. After having co-operated with the Western powers—even, as many thought, to the detriment of national unity—the restitution of sovereignty was still in abeyance. The opposition, this time supported by a much greater number of Germans, was inclined to believe that the entire Adenauer policy had ended in bankruptcy.55

The situation was saved by a skillful British initiative. A Nine-Power (United States, Britain, Canada, France, the Federal Republic, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, and Italy) Conference opened in London on September 28, 1954; it accomplished the "near-miracle" of successfully substituting for the defunct Defense Community a reshaped Western European Union to which the Federal Republic and Italy were now admitted. In pursuance of the agreements reached in London, the representatives of the interested powers met again in Paris and on October 23, 1954, signed a number of treaties, protocols, and declarations which raised the Federal Republic to the rank of a sovereign power, included it and Italy in a revised Western European Union, and admitted West Germany to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Bonn had, however, to accept certain restrictions on her right to rearm; she was required not to manufacture on her territory atomic, biological, or chemical weapons, long-range or guided missiles, large warships or bomber-aircraft.56

For West Germany, the most important result of the Paris Treaty was the ending of the occupation regime. It was, however, in harmony with the German national interest when Article 2 of the new Contractual Agreement provided that: "In view of the international situation, which has so far prevented the re-unification of Germany and the conclusion of a peace settlement, the Three Powers retain the rights and responsibilities, heretofore exercised or held by them, relating to Berlin and to Germany as a whole, including the re-unification of Germany and a peace settlement. . . ."

Concerning the status of the Federal Republic, it should be re-

55 Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, September 1, 1954.
56 For the text of the Final Act of the Nine-Power Conference held in London from September 28 to October 3, 1954, see Documents on Germany Under Occupation, 1945–1954, pp. 600–9; for the Paris Treaties, Protocols, and Declarations, see Documents on Germany, 1944–1961, pp. 155–75.
membered that the London Declaration of October 3, 1954, contained the following statement by the eight governments: “They consider the Government of the Federal Republic as the only German Government freely and legitimately constituted and therefore entitled to speak for Germany as the representative of the German people in international affairs.”

In return, the Federal Republic had declared “. . . never to have recourse to force to achieve the re-unification of Germany or the modification of the present boundaries of the Federal Republic of Germany, and to resolve by peaceful means any disputes which may arise between the Federal Republic and other States.”

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

The Western powers, accordingly, committed themselves to the fundamental aim of West German foreign policy; namely, the furtherance of German unity. They recognized the Federal Republic as the only mouthpiece entitled to speak and act for the whole German people and agreed to withhold final recognition of the eastern border of Germany until a peace settlement.

A special declaration was devoted to the status of Berlin by the governments of the United States, Britain, and France in the London Protocol: “The security and welfare of Berlin and the maintenance of the position of the Three Powers there are regarded by the Three Powers as essential elements of the peace of the free world in the present international situation. Accordingly they will maintain armed forces within the territory of Berlin as long as their responsibilities require it. They therefore reaffirm that they will treat any attack against Berlin from any quarter as an attack upon their forces and themselves.”

The Federal Republic, on its part, agreed to provide financial aid to Berlin which would remain in the Deutsche Mark West (West German mark) currency area. It would also “ensure the representation of Berlin and of the Berlin population outside Berlin, and facilitate the inclusion of Berlin in the international agreements concluded by the Federal government, provided that this is not precluded by the nature of the agreements concerned.”

Italics have been added.
The London-Paris agreements thus did not settle the question of whether West Berlin was or was not a part of the Federal Republic. Like many controversial points of principle recorded in international documents, this matter has been left open.58

The London-Paris agreements also included one between France and West Germany concerning the Saar. Under this agreement the Saar was to be given a “European statute within the framework of the Western European Union,” a status which, however, had to be approved by a referendum of the people of the Saar. The referendum was held in October, 1955, and, despite the recommendation by Adenauer that this provisional arrangement be accepted, the great majority of the voters rejected the European statute, thus expressing their desire, once again, to rejoin Germany. The French proved realistic enough not to oppose the people’s will any longer and, on October 27, 1956, concluded an agreement providing for the reunification of the Saar territory with the Federal Republic of Germany. Thus, German unity along the western borders of this country was re-established.59

The sudden understanding reached in London and Paris took the Soviets by surprise when they had already started to exploit the frustrating effect on the German mind of the European Defense Community’s collapse. On the day when the Paris Treaty was signed, a new Soviet note suggested a four-power conference to consider German unity. The note assured the Western powers that the Soviet government was ready to re-examine the proposal for the holding of free elections in Germany in accordance with the Eden Plan submitted at the Berlin Conference. Again, the timing of the note suggested that the Soviet accommodation was just a maneuver to delay or prevent the final conclusion of an agreement between the Western powers and the Federal Republic. The governments of these countries were now resolved not to participate in any conference with the Soviets until the London-Paris treaties had received final approval.

The agreements of October, 1954, were subsequently approved

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58 See Chapter V.
59 The question of the Saar in its post-World War II development received an exhaustive treatment in the three-volume work by Robert H. Schmidt, *Saarpolitik, 1945–1957* (Berlin, 1959, 1960, 1962); see also Jacques Freymond, *Die Saar, 1945–1955* (Munich, 1961). Some minor territorial changes, other than the Saar, were negotiated in the subsequent years and settled between the Federal Republic of Germany, on the one hand, and Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg, on the other.
THE QUEST FOR A UNITED GERMANY

by the parliaments of all the signatories. The ratification debates in
the Bundestag demonstrated that for practically all Germans these
treaties were not considered a realized goal but only a step toward
the achievement of that final goal: the reunification of their coun-
try. The Social Democrats once again opposed approval of the
agreements before all the possibilities of an understanding with the
Soviet Union had been thoroughly explored and exploited. The
official position of the Federal government was that reunification
could be achieved if the West showed unflinching determination
and unity. Adenauer also pointed to the weaknesses and instability
existing in the Soviet Union (the rivalry between Stalin’s succes-
sors); he dismissed Soviet notes and declarations as mere propa-
ganda for the purpose of thwarting Western integration moves.60

Thus, German public opinion was conditioned to believe that
alignment with the West and German contribution to the Western
military preparedness would force the hand of the Soviets and bring
about the long-expected Soviet concession of genuine free elections
and, as their result, the unity of Germany. Moscow, on the other
hand, seeing that its diplomacy had failed to prevent Western un-
derstanding, realized the necessity for changing its tactics. It would
now have to adjust to the consequences of the independence at-
tained by the Federal Republic and rely, even more strongly, on its
“two-Germanys” policy.

The Spirit of Geneva and Reunification

In the spring of 1955 Moscow, after years of delaying tactics,
suddenly declared its readiness to complete the Austrian State
Treaty on the condition that Austria assume the permanent status of
a neutral country.61 Before the volte-face with regard to Austria,
the Soviet official position that an agreement on Germany must pre-
cede the completion of the Austrian treaty had been strongly up-
held. This precedent is often held to demonstrate that the Soviets
are capable of sudden changes of view and concessions. The real
reasons for the Russian change of mind can only be assumed. The
new Kremlin policy might have been aimed at consolidation; con-
solidation in Germany meant the build-up of two Germanys; in

3121–3250; Vol. 23, pp. 3512–72, 3859–74.
61 The treaty recognizing Austria’s independence and providing for the
withdrawal of occupation forces was signed in Vienna on May 15, 1955.
Austria, it meant neutralization of that country and mutual withdrawal of forces. Moscow might have foreseen a slight possibility that Austria, frustrated by the Soviet delaying tactics, might throw in her lot—after the West German model—with the West and create an unpleasant situation for the Soviets with Vienna as a second Berlin. But it is less likely that the Kremlin wished to make neutralized Austria an example for Germany. The events of 1955 produce no evidence of any serious Soviet willingness to trade German unity for neutralization; neither was such an offer ever made by the Western powers or the Federal Republic.

Having brought their arrangements with West Germany to a successful conclusion, the Western powers offered two conferences to the Soviet government: one to be attended by the heads of government, followed by a second to work out the details of the decisions reached by the first. The Summit Conference of Geneva (July 18–23, 1955), having no fixed agenda, was preceded by polemics which were, on the Western side, designed to emphasize the priority of the German question and, on the part of the Soviets, intended to show that they considered disarmament the paramount topic.

Before the opening of the Summit Conference, on June 7 a note was handed to the West German Embassy in Paris by the Soviet Ambassador to France expressing a desire to normalize relations between the Soviet Union and the Federal Republic and inviting the Federal Chancellor to Moscow.62 This Soviet move was part of a diplomatic reorientation, largely misunderstood in Bonn. Instead of trying to please German national feeling, the Russians were attempting with this move to familiarize the world with the existence of two Germanys. The Soviet demarche was an implicit invitation to the West to do likewise and to take up diplomatic relations with the “other” German state—the Democratic Republic.63

The Summit Conference resolved to discuss the question of Germany’s division, European security, disarmament, and contacts between East and West. It was soon discovered that these questions were interdependent. It was the emphasis on or priority of these questions which divided the Soviet representatives from those of the West. President Eisenhower, Prime Minister Eden, and French

63 For an appraisal of the Soviet move, see Grewe, Deutsche Aussenpolitik, pp. 214–20.
Premier Edgar Faure wished to connect German reunification with European security and consider disarmament later, while Soviet Premier Bulganin insisted on making progress on disarmament first. Eventually, this Conference produced only some empty generalities; the much praised but evanescent “Spirit of Geneva” showed that spirit alone is not a practical product of international gatherings.

In the interval between the two conferences, the Federal Chancellor journeyed to Moscow. Earlier, he had indicated that he wished to discuss reunification and the question of German prisoners still in the Soviet Union. In his opening address Adenauer declared that the resumption of diplomatic relations between the two countries was unthinkable unless these two questions were solved. Bulganin denied the Chancellor’s right to speak on behalf of all Germans and insisted that there were only German war criminals in the Soviet Union. It was subsequently suggested that at this moment the Chancellor should have broken off negotiations and returned home. That he did not was probably a result of his concern over the German prisoners. He decided to stay and retreat from his original position.

The outcome of the Moscow talks was not a compromise, as has been alleged, but a victory for the Soviets. The two countries agreed to exchange ambassadors without fulfillment of any conditions by Moscow. An exchange of letters between Bulganin and Adenauer only expressed hope that the resumption of diplomatic relations would contribute to the solution of “the principal national problem of the German people—restitution of the unity of a German democratic state.”

Adenauer, before leaving Moscow, addressed another letter to the Soviet Premier in which he maintained “the Federal Government’s legal position with regard to its right to represent the German people in international affairs and with regard to the political conditions in those German territories which, at present, are outside its effective sphere of authority.”

In the Soviet reply the Federal Chancellor was told that “the question of Germany’s frontiers was settled by the Potsdam Agreement and that the Federal Republic of Germany is exercising its jurisdiction over the area which is subject to its sovereignty.”

— Löwenstein and Zühlsdorff, Deutschlands Schicksal, p. 291.
— Wiedervereinigung und Sicherheit Deutschlands, p. 45; Documents on International Affairs, 1955, p. 254.
Thus, although neither of the two opposing legal and political positions was violated, the Soviet government achieved its objective. As if to compound the failure of the Chancellor, shortly after his departure a delegation of the German Democratic Republic, led by Prime Minister Grotewohl, was received with much fanfare. In a new agreement, signed on September 20, full exercise of sovereign rights, including the conduct of international affairs, also "in its relation to the Federal Republic of Germany," was conceded to East Germany.66

The "acid test" of the Summit Conference, as President Eisenhower stated, was the second Geneva meeting where foreign ministers were expected to transform vague formulas into concrete agreements. All that the heads of government conference had achieved with regard to the German problem was a short directive addressed to the foreign ministers which, temporarily, had raised optimistic expectations, later to be sadly frustrated by the attitude of Foreign Minister Molotov. The directive contained the following passage: "The Heads of Government, conscious of their common responsibility for the solution of the German problem and the re-unification of Germany, are in agreement that the German question and the questions of Germany's re-unification by free elections should be solved in harmony with the national interest of the German people and also for the sake of European security. . . ."

A new version of the Eden Plan, submitted jointly by the three foreign ministers of the West, failed to interest Molotov. He introduced a somewhat new element by claiming that reunification should not jeopardize the "political and socio-economic achievements" of the German Democratic Republic, which meant that there could be no German unity unless the Communist system were maintained (and, by implication, extended to the West). Molotov also insisted on the establishment of an "all-German Council" composed of equal numbers of representatives of the East and West German parliaments, instead of the "free elections" mentioned in the directive.

The positions taken on Germany by the two sides were irreconcilable: no progress could be made on European security as long as German reunification was considered "the indispensable premise" of any such agreement. Molotov advocated the view that European security would assure the security of the German people; the Western view was that without solving the German problem no security

66 See Grewe, Deutsche Aussenpolitik, p. 221.
could be given to Europe. Thereafter, the only agreement which was reached was that of breaking up the Conference.67

It became clear as a result of the two Geneva Conferences (if it was not before) that the West had nothing to offer the Soviet Union in return for East Germany; treaties of guarantee, demilitarization, even neutralization of Germany (which was never offered), were commitments unequal in value to the tangible advantage of holding onto the eastern portion of Germany. The failure of the policy of the "positions of strength" was not immediately realized in Germany. But those who had already viewed the alliance with the West as harmful to German unity and had reluctantly followed the Chancellor's circuitous all-German policy—the Free Democrats—withdrawn in February, 1956, from the cabinet and went into opposition. Their leaders, especially Thomas Dehler, now supported some form of neutrality which would make large-scale rearmament superfluous.68

While the "policy of strength" had failed to advance the cause of reunification, the policy of rapprochement with the Soviet Union failed equally to bring about a sustained easing of tensions and, in its wake, a measure of disarmament. The German stalemate and the continuing Cold War induced the Soviets to exert pressure outside Europe: the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Nevertheless, for reasons inherent in the East German situation, Khrushchev would again have to turn back to the most sensitive point of the German dilemma: Berlin.

Stalemate over Germany

With the Soviet Union's endorsement of the "two Germanys" concept and the Federal Republic's and its Allies' commitment to the "one German state" doctrine, the possibilities of diplomatic maneuvering were considerably narrowed down, if not altogether eliminated, after 1955. In the years following the Geneva deadlock, the diplomatic exchange on the German problem became monotonous and repetitive. The Soviet Union wished to leave negotiations on reunification, which it claimed to be an internal German matter, to the "two German states." On the other hand, the Federal Republic vainly tried to initiate meaningful discussions with the Soviet Union—the "occupation power" of East Germany.


68 Löwenstein and Zühlsdorff, Deutschlands Schicksal, pp. 298–99.
The diplomatic relations established in 1955 enabled the West German and Soviet governments to exchange notes and memoranda. After the frustrating events of 1955, the Federal government undertook to keep the reunification issue alive by dispatching, in 1956 and 1957, several memoranda to Moscow explaining Bonn's point of view. Soviet replies reiterated their thesis and advocated direct contacts between the Federal government and the German Democratic Republic. Soviet Prime Minister Bulganin and Chancellor Adenauer exchanged letters. The plan of a "German Confederation" to bring the "two German states" under a common roof was rejected by the Federal government.\(^69\)

The East German regime, following Moscow's opinion, exerted efforts, blandishments, and pressures to participate in an exchange of views with the Federal Republic and have itself recognized as a co-equal partner with its western neighbor. Walter Ulbricht, First Secretary of the Socialist Unity party (SED), submitted to the Central Committee of the Party on December 31, 1956, the plan for establishing a confederation of the two Germanys. Under this plan, the "two German states" should send equal numbers of delegates into an all-German council. The council should act as the government of the confederation and prepare the eventual unification of both parts of Germany. The government of Bonn, on the other hand, rejected any plan which would recognize democratic and undemocratic representations as equal and continued to insist on "reunification in freedom," which meant free elections for an all-German government and constitution.\(^70\)

The ideal of German unity was already sharply contradicted by the hard facts of life: two state and governmental structures faced each other along a line which had acquired all the characteristics of an international frontier, not even one in the Western sense but a section of impenetrable Iron Curtain. "Germany" was again a geographical rather than a political notion. In the German Democratic Republic the word "Germany" was even banned from use on maps and books on geography, to be replaced by expressions denoting the existence of two German states.\(^71\) In the Federal Republic, however, official terminology continued to name the East German area

\(^{69}\) For texts, see Wiedervereinigung und Sicherheit Deutschlands, pp. 51–91.
\(^{70}\) See Wiedervereinigung und Sicherheit Deutschlands, pp. 64, 84.
\(^{71}\) Since December 16, 1957, the East-West zonal border was officially to be known in the German Democratic Republic as Western State Border (Staatsgrenze West). The East German Encyclopedia thus defines Germany: "a country in Central Europe, systematically split into two states with entirely different socio-political orders." (Meyers Neues Lexikon, Vol. I, p. 507).
as “Soviet Zone of Occupation” or “Central Germany,” and the authorities and government of that area as “zonal” authorities or the “zonal” government.

Despite the evident failure of the Adenauer government to achieve reunification as a result of both Western integration and rearmament of the Federal Republic, the elections held on September 15, 1957, increased the majority of the ruling CDU/CSU parties and made it possible for them to dispense with support from other parties. How far this vote of confidence reflected approval for the government’s policy concerning reunification, or whether it reflected satisfaction with other domestic items of Adenauer’s platform, is difficult to ascertain. Public opinion polls register an increased interest in the reunification issue after 1956.\textsuperscript{72} We may only conclude that the public had not and has not yet abandoned its belief in the official thesis on reunification. There was no indication that the majority of voters shared the view strongly advanced by the SPD that past opportunities had been missed which, if properly exploited, could have led to German unity.

The situation of Berlin presented a sharp contrast to the frozen positions and hardened borders dividing East and West Germany; the access routes to West Berlin constituted a gap in the Iron Curtain and West Berlin itself, an open society surrounded by Communism. West Berlin, an isolated outpost, combined advantages and disadvantages for both sides: it was a dagger directed against the surrounding Soviet-controlled area, a propaganda window and also a haven of refuge; on the other hand, being an enclave with tenuous lines of access, it easily lent itself to dangers of complete isolation and conquest.

In this state of congealed fronts and diplomatic trench warfare, Khrushchev launched his attack in November-December, 1958, against the exposed stronghold of West Berlin, demanding its transformation into a neutralized free city, thus demonstrating the strategic truth that points of strength may become points of extreme weakness. With his broadside against the Allied and free German position of West Berlin, the Soviet leader at least temporarily managed to separate the Berlin issue from its logical association with the question of German partition. After the end of 1958, the struggle for German reunification became secondary to the diplomatic battle to defend West Berlin, in which the Soviets had gained the

\textsuperscript{72} Karl W. Deutsch and Lewis J. Edinger, \textit{Germany Rejoins the Powers} (Stanford, Calif., 1959), p. 178.
initiative. Now Western efforts had to be concentrated on preserving the Berlin status quo instead of changing the divided status of Germany.\textsuperscript{73}

The Soviet government, while trying to ignore the connection between the reunification issue and the “abnormal” situation of Berlin, nevertheless demanded the conclusion of a peace treaty with the two Germanys and also with a German confederation, if it were set up before the peace treaty was concluded. It showed reluctance to discuss the unification of Germany at the suggested international meeting “because this question is outside the competence of the U.S.S.R., the United States, Britain, and France” and can be solved only “through rapprochement and agreement” between the two Germanys.\textsuperscript{74} But the Western powers maintained that the “Berlin problem involves the question of re-unification of Germany” and also that of a European security treaty and a peace treaty with Germany.\textsuperscript{75}

The Soviet counterstroke against Berlin in November and December, 1958, took Bonn by surprise. The Federal government, as in subsequent situations, preferred to leave the conduct of Berlin’s defense to the Allied powers, primarily to the United States. On January 10, 1959, the Soviet government suggested the convocation of a peace conference on Germany with the participation of both German governments and transmitted a draft text of the treaty of peace. Heinrich von Brentano, the Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs, with the consent of the three major political parties, rejected both the idea of a peace conference and the text of the draft treaty.\textsuperscript{76}

On March 26, 1959, the Federal government agreed, however, to send observers to the forthcoming Foreign Ministers’ Conference, even though the German Democratic Republic was also to send observers. It should be remembered that in 1954 Bonn refused to allow its observers to sit at the Foreign Ministers’ Conference table when observers from East Germany were also admitted. Even so, the Federal government was criticized by some of the more rigid adherents to the nonrecognition thesis for having consented to being seated at the “children’s table” together with the representatives of

\textsuperscript{73} Details of the second battle for Berlin will be discussed in Chapter V.
\textsuperscript{76} \textit{Wiedervereinigung und Sicherheit Deutschlands}, pp. 131-32.
the "Pankow regime." If the Geneva Conference gave up none of the fundamental theses of the West, it nevertheless showed considerable accommodation toward certain Soviet concepts.

The Foreign Ministers' Conference, held in Geneva from May 11 to June 20 and again from July 13 to August 5, 1959, though mainly concerned with Berlin, devoted considerable time to the reunification issue as well. The Western "package plan," also known as the Herter Plan after Secretary of State Christian Herter, combined a temporary solution of the Berlin question with a final settlement of the reunification problem. The immediate reason for the failure of the Conference was the lack of a common answer to the question: what should happen to Berlin if, within a stated time, no agreement could be reached on the reunification question? The Conference failed to restore the pre-eminence of the problem of German unity over the isolated issue of Berlin. In the latter stages of the Conference, only the future of West Berlin was discussed instead of that of all of Greater Berlin.

The rigid application and interpretation of the "one German state" doctrine seemed a hurdle on the road of flexible approaches to the Berlin question endorsed by the State Department subsequent to the Geneva Conference. These avenues of approach, often containing formulations or proposals which appeared heretical to the dogmatists in Bonn, became a source of nervousness and anxieties in the Federal Republic after 1961. Thus, following the erection of the Berlin Wall on August 13, 1961, Adenauer had to agree that the Berlin issue be treated independently of the question of German unity. In April, 1962, an American "package offer" to the Soviet Union, which combined a nonaggression (in other words, a status quo) commitment with the Berlin question, was withheld because of West German opposition. A slightly modified plan concerning the internationalization of the access routes to Berlin which would have given a certain limited recognition to the German Democratic Republic almost caused the downfall of Foreign Minister Schröder. This proposal, nevertheless, proved unacceptable to the Russians.

77 For the Herter Plan submitted to the Geneva Conference on May 14, see Documents on International Affairs, 1959, pp. 34–39.
78 The Western proposal was that in such case the Berlin status quo would be re-established, whereas the Soviets wished to have a free hand in dealing with Berlin; see ibid., pp. 40–53.
The federal elections held in September of 1961 presented a reversed trend. The CDU/CSU obtained only 242 seats in the Bundestag (against 270 in 1957), while the SPD now received 190 seats (instead of 169 in 1957) and the FDP, 67 seats (41 in 1957).

The elections had been held shortly after the disaster of the Berlin Wall that divided East and West Berlin and closed the door to the thousands of refugees who had streamed from all parts of East Germany into this haven of refuge. It is most likely that the frustrating effect of this event turned part of the electorate against Adenauer; it is also possible that some of the voters had become weary of the old Chancellor. The SPD (the elections had taken place after its reversal on the reunification issue) no longer campaigned against the reunification policy of the government and, therefore, the conclusion cannot be discarded that this issue played only a secondary role in the elections. The electorate might have felt that it was not called to vote on this question; had reunification been a practical issue, it is unlikely that the voters would have shown indifference toward it.

Under Adenauer's successor, the policy on reunification did not essentially deviate from the course set by the first chancellor of the Federal Republic. But it was to become more "pragmatic"; that is, the doctrine was not applied for its own sake but with the end of facilitating German unity. Thus, it could be expected that the doctrinal rules would be "stretched" as far as possible without doing injustices to the underlying political principles.

Thus, Chancellor Ludwig Erhard, in his inaugural address to the Bundestag of October 18, 1963, opposed any agreement between the Western Allies and the Soviet Union "at the expense of Germany's vital interests," which, first of all, included the demand for German unity. Erhard referred to the often-heard reproach against the nonrecognition policy of Bonn when he stated: "We are told that the division of our country is a 'reality' that has to be accepted. Of course, it is a reality, but it is an unbearable one. Injustice is also a reality, and yet we shall have to do all possible to remove it. Above all, if the division of our country is put forward as a reality, the will of the German people to restore its unity is a far stronger reality."80

Khrushchev's offensive against West Berlin proved hardly more successful than West German endeavors to promote reunification of Germany. While the erection of the Wall may have saved the East

German state, the Soviet Premier's leapfrogging into Cuba ended with a crushing defeat and, apparently, cut short his hopes of changing the existing status quo in Germany.

The German deadlock led to a political war of attrition and placed the achievement of German unity in the remote future. While the voters and the masses may have recognized tardily the existing deadlock on the reunification issue, the stand-pat position of the diplomatic front did not fail to impress the policy-makers of the Federal Republic. It persuaded them to adapt their methods and their thinking to long-term effects. The perspective created by the developments of the German question resulted in the contemporary policies and opinions which we shall undertake to examine in the following chapters.