WEST GERMAN REARMAMENT:

FROM ENEMY TO ALLY IN TEN SHORT YEARS

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Thesis traces the US decision that West Germany should be rearmed after World War II; the French struggle to accept that idea; the west German government's attempts to trade ~~soviet~~ soldiers for sovereignty; and the path taken to convince the west German populace to accept new military forces. Covers the time frame from the end of WW II through 1955-1960. -:

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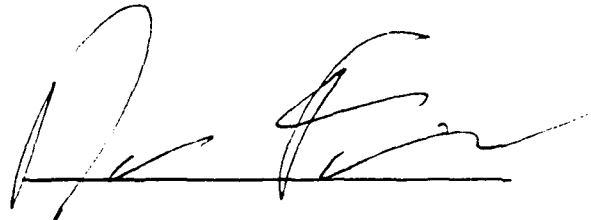

Norman S. Furniss, Ph.D.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to

my family

Chet: Whose high expectations for me led me to seek the challenge of graduate school, and whose sterling example showed me the path to success.

Eleanor: Who always knew whenever I stumbled on that path to success, and was there to dust me off and set me on track again.

Coco: Whose ever-present love and companionship made the sometimes rocky road easier to travel and much less lonely.

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WEST GERMAN REARMAMENT:

FROM ENEMY TO ALLY IN TEN SHORT YEARS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: Allied and German Policy is Permanent Demilitarization

Seen from the perspective of the bipolar, superpower-dominated world of 1987, it is perhaps not surprising to find that the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) is one of the most important members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the alliance created to protect Western Europe against communist aggression from the east. The FRG's twelve army divisions, with modern and sophisticated armament, form the largest national land contingent within the NATO alliance; and high-ranking *Bundeswehr* officers can be found on all of the NATO staffs. Given the nature of the threat from the Warsaw Pact, the FRG's economic and technological strength, combined with its strategic geographic position in Europe and its stable, anti-communist political regime make its prominent position in the NATO alliance seem quite natural. This is particularly true in the United States which, unlike France and to a lesser extent Great Britain, has no centuries-long history of rivalry with Germany; nor was the United States physically and economically devastated by two twentieth century world wars fought against Germany.

Every now and then, however, events occur to remind complacent Americans that the FRG's international status is not quite the same as that of our other allies. These reminders in recent years have taken the form of news stories about escapes from East to West Germany, about ideas for the possible reunification of Germany, about scandals concerning East German intelligence agents penetrating West German government and security organizations, or even about the shootings of Allied Military Liaison

Mission personnel in the vicinity of Berlin. These events may cause us to remember the political division of Germany which, through lack of a peace treaty legally changing its status, still must be considered as one nation divided into two states; but they rarely cause anyone to remember the unique military status of the FRG. Recent events in the Persian Gulf have done just that. While the United States and some West European nations have sent military contingents to that war-troubled area to help protect commercial oil-shipping lanes, the FRG is noticeably absent, despite this powerful country's significant imports of Middle Eastern oil. The reason is that, unlike other sovereign nations, the FRG is not free to deploy its own military forces as it sees fit. By international treaty, the armed forces of the FRG are one hundred percent subordinated under NATO command, and they may be deployed only in that limited theater of operations. This unusual situation is a vivid reminder that the FRG's status as an armed ally of the "Western World" is not quite as natural as it seems from the current perspective. Seen from the perspective of the victorious Allies in 1945, it is almost unbelievable.

In 1945 the victorious Allies, France, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States, had just defeated Germany in a world war for the second time in a little over a quarter century. This time, however, Germany was blamed not only for an incredibly destructive war, the magnitude of which made the world's survival of another one unimaginable, but also for horrifying crimes against humanity. Clearly, this could not be allowed to happen again. In the highly charged, emotional atmosphere of war, it was easier for the Allies to accept their own propaganda themes attributing the two world wars to German militarism and industrial might, than it was carefully to search for other contributing causes and conditions. The Allies feared a resurgence of German power, even though at the end of World War II the country lay abjectly crushed at their feet. They remembered the situation after the First World War, particularly France, who had argued in vain that Germany should be severely

crippled and carefully controlled. At that time, the restrictive limits placed by the 1919 Treaty of Versailles on the size and armament of the post-war German armed forces notwithstanding, Germany had been allowed to remain a sovereign nation with most of its former territory and much of its industrial capacity still intact. Much clearer in hindsight than it had been at the time, Hitler's rise to power in 1933 seemed to confirm the Allies in their immediate, superficial assessment of the cause of the Second World War. The German military and industrial establishments had tacitly, and sometimes actively, supported Hitler. The German populace had accepted him as their leader, despite his racist and expansionist aims, openly expressed in his book, *Mein Kampf*, even if not espoused in his oratory of the early 1930s. Although the victorious alliance was by 1945 already so severely strained by political, economic, and social differences that agreement on most subjects was virtually impossible, the Allies were determined not to make the same mistakes this time they believed they had made after the First World War.

Throughout the Second World War, the Allies fought with one main goal: to defeat Germany and impose a settlement which would ensure that Germany never again would be able to threaten the peace of the world. All agreed that, left uncontrolled with its full industrial potential, Germany would continue to be a danger; and for years during the war the only sure solution to this problem was thought to be some sort of division of Germany. The most punitive and radical such plan, which indicated the level of rage and fear inspired by Germany, was the one proposed by US Treasury Secretary Morgenthau. Among other things, he wanted German industry to be totally eliminated, either dismantled, destroyed, or put under international control. Furthermore, he proposed that the once powerful country be converted into a piece-meal group of agrarian states.[1] According to Morgenthau's plan, the Occupation Powers would assume no responsibility for the thus mortally crippled German economy. It would be the Germans' own problem how they would survive without any potential for exports with

which to earn money to pay for imports of much needed food and other necessities produced only as a result of industrialized processes.[2] Most suggested plans were not this inhumane, but all reflected a common desire to keep Germany weak. By early 1945, however, Allied opinion on the desirability of dividing and completely destroying Germany had changed--at least in the United States, the Soviet Union, and Great Britain.

Despite President Roosevelt's official acceptance of the spirit of Morgenthau's plan and most of its provisions, it did not represent the concensus of opinion in the United States. This concensus reflected a general US ambivalence of feeling toward modern Germany: "The peacetime stereotype of the civilized, intelligent, clean, diligent, and reliable German clashed with the wartime image of the arrogant and ruthless Teutonic aggressor and the sinister and brutal Nazi storm-trooper and concentration camp guard."[3] It generally seemed to be believed that the Germans would behave if they could permanently be kept out of military uniform. Although there was a certain amount of internal dissent, the US Departments of State and Defense officially espoused this viewpoint. They argued that Germany's greatest military asset was the minds of the people. If forced to live in wretched poverty during the Occupation, these minds, far from being "cured" of militarism, would be bent on revenge. Since the Occupation could not last forever, it appeared more reasonable to allow the Germans an acceptable standard of living while winning their minds through re-education in the ways of democracy, demilitarization, and a market economy; rather than to incite them to revert to the "old" ways, those of rebuilding their industry in an authoritarian society dedicated to changing the *status quo* through military action, once the Occupation was lifted.[4] Furthermore, the State Department was concerned about the strategic position of the United States in light of the ideologically bipolar world which was developing. Lessons from World War I had shown that the economic reconstruction of Europe was not possible without making use of the German economic potential. Logic seemed to dictate that the "Western World"

could be strengthened, not by destroying Germany, but only by reintegrating it, all of it, politically and economically into the Western system of states. By early 1945, and especially after President Truman took office, the official policy of the United States toward Germany was a compromise between the punitive and the positive plans. JCS Directive 1067, which was to govern the actions of the US occupation forces, called for such negative elements as the punishing of war criminals, the forceful eradication of Nazism and militarism, and the restriction and demilitarization of industry to include long-range controls; but it also advocated the positive elements of eventual reconstruction of a German political life based on democracy and of an extensive, but stable, German economic life.[5]

Stalin, in the Soviet Union, also had begun by early 1945 to have second thoughts about dividing up Germany politically and destroying it economically. While it was important for Soviet security to keep Germany from ever again becoming a great power, it was equally important for the Soviet economy that Germany be able to pay massive reparations. A completely destroyed German economy would be unable to support itself, much less make payments to the Soviet Union. Politically, Stalin was interested in treating all of Germany as one entity, because he hoped to install a new socialist order, or at least a cooperative spirit, in that country, thereby extending Soviet influence. Should this attempt fail, the division of Germany and the "sovietization" of the Russian zone of occupation could always take place later.[6]

The British government by early 1945 was caught between two fears: Germany and the Soviet Union. The rebirth of a powerful Germany had to be avoided by use of strict Allied controls; but it was equally important that Germany be able to stand on its own two feet, so that no dangerous power-vaccuum would exist between Great Britain and the Soviet Union. Furthermore, the British government recognized that a bankrupt Germany would only weaken Western Europe in the face of communism and that an economic reconstruction of Germany would bring in its wake a corresponding

strengthening of Western Europe. The official postwar British policy on Germany reflected the consideration that the best way both to control German power and to take advantage of its potential economic strength was to establish in **all** of Germany a Western-oriented democracy. That way the Soviet Union would be able to exploit neither a power-vaccuum nor an economically weak Western Europe.[7] This official policy, while demonstrating a greater fear of Germany, was easily reconcilable with that of the United States.

By contrast, the official policy of the French government in early 1945 under de Gaulle bore little resemblance to either the Anglo-American or the Soviet policies on Germany. Only recently liberated from four humiliating years of German occupation, and with the memory of two other invasions from Germany within the past 75 years, France's top priority was security against Germany--almost to the exclusion of other considerations. To this end, France still wanted Germany dismembered, with no central German institutions dealing with the country as one entity. In addition to the reinstatement of Austria as a separate state and the compensation to Poland out of German territory for its forced westward movement, both already agreed to by the other three Allies, de Gaulle wanted the territory west of the Rhine River to be separated from Germany and made politically and economically autonomous. He also wanted the Saar region of Germany to be joined to France in an economic and customs union, and the Ruhr industrial area to be placed under international control. De Gaulle insisted that what remained of Germany should then be divided into separate states only loosely bound together in a confederation. In this way, Germany would never be able to rise to great-power status again.[8] Only as a secondary consideration was France interested in using German resources to help the disastrous economic situation; and as a last priority came denazification, re-education, and the establishment of a democratic order in Germany.[9]

As a result of the May 1945 German unconditional surrender, Germany was partitioned into four zones of occupation, each administered by one of the victorious Allies. Germany was denied the slightest shred of sovereignty. Politically and economically the Allies administered their zones as they alone saw fit. German self-government/administration was allowed only at the local level, and even there it was subject to the supervision of the occupation forces. The centralized control of German national-level affairs was undertaken by the Allied Control Council. While the differing official policies concerning the future of Germany were to make Allied cooperation in the Control Council on many issues difficult; on one subject the four nations agreed: Germany was to be immediately disarmed, and over time it was to be permanently demilitarized.

To ensure the security of the occupation troops, and to prevent the clandestine stockpiling of weapons for use in any future rearmament attempt by the Germans, the entire German population was systematically searched for firearms and other implements of war. Confiscation teams were not limited by the requirements of ordinary security. They wanted to impress the Germans that never again would they be allowed to bear arms. Radios and cameras, hunting knives, and even toy weapons were impounded. According to one researcher:

> The paradox of an unexpected smile, a piece of chocolate, or some other friendly gesture reinforced the impact of the anti-militarist message . . . Guns and uniforms came to be widely regarded [among the German population] as harbingers of disaster; they had failed to protect the fatherland against the enemy and the home against foreign bombs.[10]

The Potsdam Conference, held after the end of hostilities in Europe, failed to produce permanent peace terms for Germany; but it did reiterate and reinforce the Allied wartime demilitarization decisions. The conference communique, issued August 2, 1945, stated: "German militarism and Nazism will be extirpated and the Allies will take

in agreement together, now and in the future, the other measures necessary to assure that Germany will never again threaten her neighbours or the peace of the world."[11] This was to be accomplished by the "industrial disarmament and demilitarization of Germany" and the "continuing control over Germany's ability to conduct war."[12] The Allied Control Council then issued a number of directives to implement this policy. Not only was Germany to be forbidden any kind of armed forces, but Germans were not to wear uniforms, rank insignia, or military decorations; nor were they to possess weapons, munitions, or explosives. A carefully controlled exception to this policy was made for small civil police forces needed to help maintain order and for demolitions crews needed for damage repairs and mining. Military schools, exhibitions, and ceremonies were banned; veterans organizations and paramilitary groups, including even student fraternities, many sports clubs whose developed skills could be put to military use (such as shooting, orientiering, and even camping) and some youth groups, were outlawed; and all military-related research and development was halted.[13] Industries which could be used for military production, and all industrial capacity not needed for permitted production to serve German peacetime needs, were to be either dismantled and removed according to reparations plans, or destroyed.[14]

Not assured that these measures would adequately dampen the suspected German military spirit, the Allies issued further directives which "ordered the destruction of monuments, placards, street signs and memorial tablets that were intended to maintain and preserve the German military tradition . . . or to glorify military events."[15] Even museums were forbidden to display military exhibits if they dealt with German military history after 1914. German libraries, publishing houses, and educational and scientific institutions were told to inventory their holdings and turn over to the occupation forces any books, pictures, or documents of a national socialist or militaristic nature. Anything that could be used to further military training or the maintenance of a war potential were likewise to be given to the Allied authorities--including maps, tactical

sketches, operations plans, regulations and instructional materials.[16] Normal civilian educational curricula were modified to stress the negative aspects of military influence in Germany's history, and militarism in general was actively denounced. Finally, the former ***Wehrmacht*** was dishonored and defamed. High-ranking military officers and other members of the German armed forces, like Nazi party leaders and officials, were accused of war crimes and tried in Nürnberg or other courts. Many were imprisoned as a result of these trials. Those not convicted, and others not so charged and tried, nevertheless were considered, depicted, and treated as criminals for having "helped to lengthen the war, keeping Europe the captive of the Gestapo and thus feeding the ovens of Auschwitz for months longer."[17] Usually branded as Nazis, military service members often shared the fate of most of the lower Nazi party officials: that of being denied positions of importance in civilian postwar employment. They were also denied their rights to pension benefits. According to Charles Naef, the Allied aversion to German military professionals was quickly spread to the German public. He recounts:

> In many working class communities former professional soldiers were socially ostracized. Signs hung from tavern doors bearing the inscription "Dogs and professional soldiers keep out." Employment ads and signs in hiring offices frequently specified "Professional soldiers not desired."[18]

While this extreme attitude of aversion was soon tempered, the German military profession had definitely been stigmatized as unrewarding, if not actually dishonorable. Public opinion surveys as late as January 1955 and February 1956, when the FRG was already comitted to rearming, revealed that 47 and 43 percent, respectively, of the West Germans sampled still would have recommended against becoming a regular soldier (versus only 19 and 16 percent, respectively, in favor of it).[19]

It was with this background of insistence on permanent demilitarization of Germany in mind that I began my research on West German rearmament. It seemed incredible that the FRG's current military strength ever could have come into being, given the prevailing negative attitudes in 1945. Yet, soon thereafter thought was being given to rearmament of the West Germans, and by 1949 serious discussion was afforded these ideas. In 1950 the United States officially proposed that the FRG be rearmed, and this proposal became NATO policy. By 1955, a scant ten years after World War II, the FRG was a member of NATO and was raising armed forces to fulfill its obligation to that alliance. As all-encompassing as the literature on West German rearmament seems to be, my initial survey of it left me with one question: How was such a rapid and complete reversal of policy accomplished?

To answer this question in its fullest sense would involve a study of the foreign and political policies of all the countries involved: France, Great Britain, the United States, the FRG, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, and Italy. Such a study would be beyond the scope of this thesis--more suited for a doctoral dissertation. The survey of literature had indicated, however, that the countries most opposed to West German rearmament were France and the FRG itself. It seemed reasonable that a study of the acceptance process in these two countries would adequately answer the question.

In the following chapters, therefore, I will first briefly portray the circumstances which led to the American proposal for West German rearmament and its acceptance by the NATO allies. Then, I will describe the French and West German political struggles with this issue. Finally, I will discuss the changes planned for the new *Bundeswehr* to make it acceptable to the German populace, and a few of the problems involved in implementing these changes. A concluding chapter will summarize how France and the FRG adjusted to the American idea of West German rearmament in a time span which seems incredibly short.

Chapter 1 End Notes

[1]Norbert Wiggershaus, "*Von Potsdam zum Pleven-Plan: Deutschland in der internationalen Konfrontation 1945 - 1950*," *Anfänge westdeutscher Sicherheitspolitik 1945 - 1956: Von der Kapitulation bis zum Pleven-Plan* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg *Verlag*, 1982), p. 36.

[2]Gerhard Wettig, *Entmilitarisierung und Wiederbewaffnung in Deutschland 194[illegible] - 1955: Internationale Auseinandersetzungen um die Rolle der Deutschen in Europa, Schriften des Forschungsinstituts der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik, E.V.*, Vol 25 (Munich: R. Oldenbourg *Verlag*, 1967), pp. 44 - 48.

[3]Charles R. Naef, The Politics of West German Rearmament 1950 - 1956 (Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International, 1979), p. 9.

[4]Wettig, *Entmilitarisierung*, pp. 42 - 51.

[5]Wiggershaus, *Anfänge*, p. 37.

[6]Ibid., p.39.

[7]Ibid., pp. 37 - 38.

[8]Wettig, *Entmilitarisierung*, pp. 122 - 125.

[9]Wiggershaus, *Anfänge*, p. 38 - 39.

[10]Naef, Politics, pp. 10 - 11.

[11]Konrad Adenauer, Mémoirs 1945 - 1953, trans. Beate Ruhm von Oppen (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1966), p. 70.

[12]Gordon A. Craig, The Germans (New York: New American Library, Incorporated, 1983), p. 237.

[13]Ibid. **AND** Wettig, *Entmilitarisierung*, p. 104.

[14]Adenauer, Mémoirs, p. 71.

[15]Craig, Germans, p. 237 **AND** Wettig, *Entmilitarisierung*, p. 104.

[16]Wettig, *Entmilitarisierung*, p. 105.

[17]Walter Henry Nelson, Germany Rearmed (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972), p. 16.

[18]Naef, Politics, pp. 13 - 14.

[19]Elizabeth Noelle and Erich Peter Neumann, eds., The Germans: Public Opinion Polls 1947 - 1966, trans. Gerard Finan (Allensbach: *Verlag für Demoskopie*, 1967), p. 445.

Chapter 2

The United States Changes Policy

Despite their very basic differences of opinion concerning the future of Germany on almost all subjects except demilitarization, the four member nations of the Allied Control Council managed to provide occupied Germany with some semblance of central administration for a couple of years. By 1947, however, these differences--particularly the ones which pitted the three Western Allies against the Soviet Union, such as the type of desired social structure and economy for Germany as well as the definition of "democracy"--had caused the World War II alliance, never very strongly held together, virtually to fall apart.[1] The Soviet refusal of Marshall Plan aid for itself and Eastern Europe publically dramatized the growing East-West ideological split. Both sides were forced to re-examine their policy concerning the permanent disarmament of Germany in light of the worsening international tensions. After all, this policy could be maintained indefinitely only as long as Germany posed the only threat to world peace, and only as long as all Occupation Powers remained basically uninterested in German potential and in winning German loyalty.[2] This was clearly no longer the case. As Churchill had said in 1946, an "iron curtain [had] descended across the continent,"[3] and two rival power-blocs engaged in a Cold War had ensued.

Politically, it became very important for the Western Allies to keep as much of Germany aligned with themselves as possible. This was no less true for the Soviet Union, which had begun to see that its hopes for control over a united Germany were most likely doomed to failure. The Soviet Union began more and more to intensify the "sovietization" of Germany's eastern zone of occupation. In view of prevailing East-West tensions, the Soviet Union also decided in the summer of 1947 to rearm the

Germans in this zone under the guise of "police" forces--which by the end of 1948 had 7,500 members trained according to former *Wehrmacht* regulations on military weapons, including artillery guns and tanks. The size and armament of these "police" forces continued to grow.*[4] The Western Allies decided to retain their policies concerning the demilitarization of Germany; but, like the Soviet Union, proceded to strengthen their influence in the western zones by setting up German institutions patterned after their own image. They did this by taking small, but progressive, steps leading the West Germans first into bi-zonal, then tri-zonal, economic unity under a social market system, and eventually into political unity under a western-style democratic system.

By 1947 it had become obvious that the countries of Eastern Europe, including the Soviet zone of occupation in Germany, would not be allowed to hold free elections or to choose to align themselves with any power but the Soviet Union. This was emphasized by the Soviet coup in Czechoslovakia in 1948. Nevertheless, the official, dramatic break-up of the victorious World War II alliance did not occur until the Berlin Blockade (June 1948 - May 1949), which ostensibly resulted from the two separate currency reforms enacted in Germany: one in the three western zones of occupation, and the other in the Soviet-occupied eastern zone. In reality, the blockade must be viewed as an extension of general Cold War tensions, which just had been further intensified by the March 1948 signing of the Brussels Pact. This was an agreement between France, Great Britain, and the Benelux countries to assist each other militarily in case of aggression against any of them. Although Germany, not the Soviet Union, was mentioned as a possible threat to be thus countered, the Soviet Union correctly interpreted this to be the first step toward a formal anti-Soviet coalition. After March

*In the fall of 1949 planning began for the establishment of East German naval forces in the form of "sea police," and in December 1950 similar planning began for an air "police" force. By the end of 1950 the East German military units (known as the *Volkspolizei*, or People's Police) encompassed 70,000 members.

1948, the Allied Control Council ceased to meet, and the pretense of joint Allied government of one, undivided Germany was abandoned.[5]

The April 1949 founding of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) by France, Great Britain, the Benelux countries, Italy, Denmark, Norway, Iceland, Canada, and the United States finished what the Brussels Pact had begun, since it could be seen as the public elevation of the Soviet Union and its satellite countries in Eastern Europe as the prime common enemies of the "Western World." Given the bipolar nature of international relations which had developed after World War II, and the continued control and occupation of Germany, no other nations seriously were considered as potential enemies. As if the death of the wartime alliance had not already been amply demonstrated, the year 1949 also saw a further widening of the East-West gap with the establishment of two, semi-sovereign German states: the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) in the West, and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in the East. By 1950 mistrust of Germany had not disappeared, particularly in France, but it was being overshadowed by a greater threat.

As early as 1948 ,the idea of a possible rearmament of the West Germans was raised during the negotiations which led to the signing of the Brussels Pact. Despite the general acceptance of the Communist-bloc threat as the reason for the proposed alliance, France and Great Britain were unwilling to risk antagonizing the Soviet Union by the formation of an overtly anti-Soviet pact. They, therefore, suggested naming Germany as the main threat to be countered by the alliance. The Benelux countries refused to accept this. They understood that, realistically, all of Western Europe would have to stand together if it hoped to be able to counter the Soviet threat. They recognized that one day the alliance would have to accept the West Germans as members. The Dutch delegates at the negotiating sessions were particularly adamant that no obstacle to future cooperation with "the German Territories" be placed in the treaty. Since most of the Netherlands was east of the Rhine River, they wanted the

allied line of defense to be as far forward into Germany as possible; and they could not foresee any possible way to defend this added area without the use of West German troops.[6] The idea that the West Germans might have to be rearmed in the interests of one's own security was also present outside the Benelux countries. Even France, which so opposed the rebirth of a unified German state that a future German army was inconceivable, was not immune. On March 9, 1948, de Gaulle--at that time a private French citizen--spoke out in favor of Germany, in the form of separate German states, joining the alliance.[7] In view of such opinions, the final wording of the Brussels Pact reflected a compromise in that the danger from Germany was mentioned as only one of the possible threats facing the alliance.

It was not until 1949, however, particularly after the detonation of the first Soviet atomic bomb, that serious discussion of the issue of West German rearmament was undertaken within and among the West European governments. Almost from the inception of the NATO alliance, military operational planners (the French included) had advocated renunciation of the policy of German demilitarization, and acceptance of the participation of the FRG in the defense of Western Europe.[12] In light of the military might facing NATO in the East, these planners felt an urgent need to increase NATO troop strength. They wanted to lessen the difference in conventional strength between the two sides, before the Soviet Union's recently acquired nuclear capability neutralized the American atomic superiority. Rearming the FRG appeared to be the only solution, because, for various reasons, the needed troops and materiel were not coming from other sources quickly enough.

This weakness was not entirely the result of an allied shortage of manpower or other physical resources necessary for defense. It is true that in 1949 both France and Great Britain, the major sources of military might in Western Europe, had colonial/Commonwealth obligations which drew military manpower and other resources from Europe. France was even involved in a costly war in Indochina. It is

also true that, economically, the European countries were just beginning to recover from the enormous damage of the war. Generous Marshall Plan aid to Western Europe had managed to keep the countries solvent, but it had not yet produced a significant rise in the standard of living there. To divert more money from consumer needs into defense would have been possible; but perhaps only at the cost of democracy, because the real problem was psychological. Popular morale remained low, the future did not seem to be worth much additional sacrifice, and there was little inclination to prepare for another war so soon after the last one.[9] According to McGeehan, the slow growth of the West European defense forces "reflected the unwillingness of European political leaders to impose additional burdens on their peoples in the absence of a genuine conviction that survival was at stake and that greater efforts would bring unequivocal results."[10] In light of the still-existing American nuclear superiority and the prevalent doctrine of massive retaliation, many felt that financial sacrifices for conventional rearmament were unnecessary.

Given the circumstances, the NATO military operational planners of late 1949 saw the new Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) as an untapped source of potential defensive strength. In order to avoid having to liberate occupied areas following an attack from the East, a forward defense in the FRG was necessary. It was felt this could be accomplished only with the active assistance of the FRG.[11] This echoed the stance taken by the Dutch a year earlier. Although not said until much later, the following words from President Truman illustrate the basic position taken by military operational planners early in the life of NATO:

> Without Germany, the defense of Europe was a rear-guard action on the shores of the Atlantic Ocean. With Germany, there could be a defense in depth, powerful enough to offer effective resistance to aggression from the East. The logic behind this is very plain. Any map will show it, and a little arithmetic will prove what the addition of German manpower means to the strength of the joint defense of Europe.[12]

These planners mentioned that history stood in mute testimony to the high quality of German armed forces--and the recent war had provided them with experience in campaigns against the Soviet Union. They argued that divided and occupied, Germany no longer was a grave threat to the West. According to one such planner:

> We had to have more manpower. The allies weren't able to man the lines between the two Germanies. The [West] Germans were the logical choice for more troops. By looking at East Germany, they could see what their lives would be like if they were to fall to the Soviets. They didn't want that. We felt they could be relied upon to fight the Communists. As for their becoming a threat to anyone else, we weren't really worried. The [West] Germans knew they could never stop the Soviets on their own, that they needed the strength of NATO for their own protection. Nobody thought they would be foolish enough to risk losing this protection by attacking anyone on their own. Besides, they were dependent on the West for their economic survival. They wouldn't risk their standard of living to start a war they couldn't support economically anyway. As long as [West] Germany couldn't control its fate, it wasn't a threat.[13]

Never mentioned openly, but undoubtedly on the minds of at least the American planners, was the question of whether NATO could afford to ignore the human and industrial potential of a country almost totally anticommunist; while depending on France, in which a quarter of the voters were communist and whose professional army was busy in Indochina.[14] Finally, NATO military operational planners strengthened their arguments by mentioning that a FRG contribution to the alliance could help to deter an attack by the People's Police of the GDR, who might be reluctant to fight fellow Germans. This benefit would assist in countering the significance of the rearmament taking place in Soviet dominated Eastern Europe.

In 1949, however, the arguments of military planners did not carry much weight. Although Western Europe strongly felt the threat of communist aggression, all official estimates of the strategic situation indicated there was no reason to expect that any such aggression was imminent.[15] Public opinion in Western Europe, still emotionally shaped by memories of the recently concluded war, did not favor German rearmament:

and allied foreign offices, reflecting this opinion, countered the NATO planners with arguments of their own: the Germans are against it, the German budget is already strained with occupation costs, more time is needed for German political development and anchoring in democracy, Germany might draw NATO into a conflict to regain lost territory, German rearmament might make the division of Germany permanent, and it might provoke a violent reaction from the Soviet Union.[16] Concerns stated less often, but, nonetheless, common to most European NATO allies were: fear German rearmament would once again upset the European balance of power (as opposed to the world, bipolar balance of power), apprehension that the equipping of German armed forces would divert scarce military resources from their own armies, and uncertainty whether France would remain in an alliance which also included Germany.[17]

The arguments of military planners gained in importance after the June 25, 1950, communist North Korean invasion of South Korea. Parallels between the North and South Korean situation and the East and West German one were inevitably drawn. Although they were not quite the same (no superpower occupation forces were stationed in either part of Korea), the similarity of the scenarios could not be overlooked. Western estimates concerning the threat of war in Europe were revised to include the possibility of imminent hostilities. The European NATO allies intensified their requests for American military financial aid and for increased American troop strength in Western Europe. They requested that the NATO forces become one unified command, rather than a coalition of separate national commands; and to further ensure American committment to their cause, they also requested that an American officer be designated as the supreme commander of this new unified force.[18] The United States' Department of Defense was able to exploit the international climate to convince a reluctant State Department to endorse its proposal concerning the rearmament of the FRG as the new American policy on the subject. The State Department was reluctant to accept the Pentagon's proposal, but this was not because it disagreed with the premise

that West German military participation was necessary to the unified defense of Western Europe. According to US Secretary of State Acheson: "This was indisputable. But there could be and was a difference of opinion on how to bring it about."[19]

With a political eye toward the special interests and fears of the West European allies, Acheson favored the granting of the allied requests, including the immediate formation of a unified European Defense Force (EDF). A West German military contingent could be introduced into the EDF after the French had been convinced, through demonstrated necessity, to agree to one. This EDF would require the member nations to give up a certain amount of their sovereign rights of command over their military forces to a multinational NATO command and staff structure. This structure would be able to provide a measure of control over the to-be-formed West German contingent, which additionally would be subjected to some limitations. This contingent would be a NATO military force, not a West German one, and the FRG would not be allowed to form a German General Staff. It would consist of land forces in units no larger than division strength, which would join units of other nationalities in integrated corps or armies. No West German air or naval forces would be formed, and the total number of army divisions from the FRG would not exceed the number of French divisions maintained in Europe. West German officers would hold command at no higher level than division, but they would be eligible to serve on the integrated General Staff. The FRG would eventually become a member of the NATO alliance.[20]

The Pentagon was less concerned with politics than it was with military effectiveness. The US Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) believed that Western Europe could not be defended without a much larger defense force than currently existed, so they argued that an American officer could not be expected to assume the responsibilities of NATO Supreme Commander until that alliance had been made more feasible through greater West European defense contributions, including the rearmament of the FRG. The JCS insisted that the allied requests for military financial aid, increased American troop

strength in Europe, and a unified NATO command with an American Supreme Commander, not be granted unless those countries first committed themselves to both stronger defense efforts and the raising of West German soldiers as soon as possible. The JCS opposed Acheson's EDF saying military integration could not precede political integration, although it is likely that what they really objected to was their loss of "sovereign" command rights over the US forces in Europe and the delay in forming the West German contingent.[21] The plan which emerged from the Pentagon recommended that the NATO contingents continue to exist as national commands, but that they be placed under the operational control of a unified NATO command and staff. The end result would be much the same as with Acheson's EDF, only the element of supranationality would be removed. Not totally unsympathetic to the probable allied reluctance to agree to the **immediate** formation of West German **national** military forces, the Pentagon agreed that the FRG should have no control over the West German contingent and should not be allowed to form a German General Staff. The other limitations found in Acheson's plan were also included in the JCS plan, which actually was even more restrictive, because it limited the West German divisions to only infantry-type divisions and the West German armament production to only light weaponry.[22]

Although it left him no room for diplomatic maneuver concerning either the timing or the form of the West German military contribution, Acheson did agree to present the JCS plan to President Truman as a joint Defense and State Department position concerning US policy on the issue.[23] Robert McGeehan gives three reasons for the State Department's capitulation to the Defense Department's plan:

1. It was an election year and the administration was under domestic attack for having failed to press the West Europeans into doing more, at once, for their own defense.

2. The next stage of NATO defense planning had to be undertaken at once, and if West German rearmament were to be a part of that planning, the related decisions would have to be made without delay.

3. An immediate agreement to get the rearmament of the FRG underway--a process sure to take a long time, given the material and psychological extent of demilitarization in that country--might keep the FRG from exploiting the situation and extracting a higher price for compliance.[24]

This last point was important because the American plan to rearm the FRG did not include a termination of the occupied status of that country, even though Chancellor Adenauer had already indicated that he saw rearmament as a way to regain national sovereignty.[25] The awkward American position has been stated as follows:

> [E]ven in Washington there was an awareness of an inherent danger; because of this there persisted a distrust as to what Germany might do if given a new opportunity to act independently. The policy of the United States had to adapt to a somewhat ambiguous situation: it was decided to make Germany an ally at a time when American opinion at the highest official level was **not** yet prepared to terminate, legally or psychologically, the status of the Federal Republic as a defeated enemy.[26]

President Truman agreed to the joint State and Defense Department proposal on September 9, 1950, making rearmament the new American policy for the FRG. But being American policy did not automatically make it happen. The NATO allies, particularly France and Great Britain, the other two Western Occupation Powers in the FRG, still had to agree to it. Thus, the American "package deal," making the granting of the allied requests for increased American economic and military contributions to Western Europe contingent upon allied acceptance of both greater defense burdens and the rearmament of the FRG, was presented first to France and Great Britain at the "Big Three" foreign ministers' conference, then to the rest of the NATO allies at the NATO Council meeting, both in New York during September 1950.

In light of the current world situation, both the French and British foreign ministers, Schuman and Bevin, arrived in New York expecting to discuss the subject of West German participation in the defense of Western Europe; but they certainly had not expected the "package deal" with which they were presented. The request for more active defense contributions was acceptable, but they were prepared to oppose the American plan for immediately rearming a national West German force, even if it was to be completely subordinated to NATO command. When they discovered that such an opposition would lose them everything they had asked for to strengthen the NATO alliance, the situation became much more complicated. During the three-day conference (September 12 - 14), the British and French official positions on the subject of West German defense participation were aired, but under the circumstances, a decision on the "package deal" had to be postponed until after the NATO Council meeting, so that further instructions could be obtained from the governments of France and Great Britain.

Bevin explained that Great Britain was not opposed to the principle of eventual West German rearmament, but that the time was still considered premature for such a move. In the meantime, the British government was prepared to discuss the limited integration of West German soldiers into allied troop formations and the establishment in the FRG of a federal paramilitary police force as transition steps toward rearmament. The British plans for the eventual West German military contribution to the defense of West Europe were more far-reaching, however, than the current American proposal, including as they did provisions for air and naval forces.[27] While Bevin, of necessity, remained noncommital concerning the "package deal," there were indications by the mid-conference point that Great Britain might be brought to accept it. Bevin apparently had decided to encourage his government to look favorably upon the "package deal," given the importance to NATO of the American contributions and the

likelihood that French opposition would be so strong as to forestall anything definite from happening quickly.[28]

Schuman was in a more difficult situation than was Bevin. France felt the need for increased American presence and military aid in Europe as much as did Great Britain; but not only did France need American aid more than Great Britain because of the war in Indochina, the French government was opposed to the principle of even the eventual rearmament of the FRG. Schuman had left France with explicit instructions "'to oppose any arrangement that would bring about the creation of a German army or of anything that could serve as the framework for such an army.'"[29] Schuman was caught between the proverbial rock and hard place: he knew his government could neither accept nor decline the "package deal." His only option was to try to delay making any decision in hopes that, over time, either the American "package deal" would break apart, or French public opinion and the National Assembly would become reconciled to it.

Schuman explained that the French government was opposed only to West German rearmament, not to the principle of the FRG's contributing to Western defense. While France rejected the British suggestion of a West German federal police force because such a force could form the framework of a national army, it was willing to allow an increase in the size of the German state (*Lander*) police forces. These could be put at the disposal of the federal government, with the consent of the states, during periods of declared emergency. Schuman also suggested that the FRG could contribute both financially and industrially to the Western defense effort. Finally, Schuman said that at some future time, when the allied defenses were fully re-equipped and up to maximal strength, France would be willing to consider the acceptance of battalion size units of West German soldiers into a pre-existing, integrated, West European army. To all of this, France was willing to agree; but when the conference adjourned for the

NATO Council meeting, Schuman gave no indication that a French decision, either way, on the "package deal" would be forthcoming soon.[30]

There is some confusion about whether or not the "Big Three" intended for the NATO Council to discuss the "package deal," since agreement had not been reached among themselves; but the decision was taken away from them when the Dutch representative asked about what would be done to strengthen the alliance and whether the FRG would participate.[31] Over the course of the NATO Council meeting (September 15 - 18), it became clear that the majority of the member nations had no real objection to West German rearmament in principle; but that there were numerous different suggestions concerning the form it should take, the degree of risk that would be acceptable as a result of it, and the timing of the rearmament.[32] By the second day, Bevin was able to say that the British government agreed to the "package deal" as long as the united NATO command structure was set up before bringing in the West Germans, the conditions of West German participation were thoroughly outlined and agreed upon in advance of rearmament, and the West German police forces were increased immediately to help lessen West German security fears until the rearmament could be completed.[33] The other NATO members began to fall in line behind Great Britain; and by the time the meeting adjourned, France was the only nation which had not agreed to the "package deal."

The foreign ministers of the "Big Three," this time joined by their ministers of defense as well, resumed their deliberations on September 22. Exploiting France's virtual diplomatic isolation, the representatives from the United States and Great Britain put severe pressure on the French representatives to accept the "package deal." Shinwell, the British defense minister, said Great Britain would join the United States in refusing to strengthen its forces in continental West Europe until France agreed to the "deal."[34] Schuman offered to increase the number of divisions they had pledged to the alliance; but Acheson reminded him that France could do that only with military aid

from the United States, which probably would not be approved by the US Congress unless France accepted the rearmament of the FRG.[35] The day ended with the official stances still at an impass.

The next day, in order to facilitate reaching an agreement, the United States relaxed its position somewhat. US Secretary of Defense Marshall, appointed to that position only the day before, told the French representatives that all that was needed immediately was a French agreement in principle to a West German rearmament, the form of which could be decided upon later. A compromise, of sorts, was finally reached. Schuman requested a month's delay before making an official decision, so that he could try to convince the National Assembly to support the idea. Acheson and Marshall recognized that request as a veiled and conditional agreement to the principle of West German rearmament, and granted the month's delay.[36] In a way, the first step toward making the new American policy for the FRG a reality had just been taken.

Chapter 2 End Notes

[1]Alfred Grosser, The Western Alliance: European-American Relations since 1945, trans. Michael Shaw (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, Incorporated, 1982), p. 61.

[2]Gerhard Wettig, *Entmilitarisierung und Wiederbewaffnung in Deutschland 194: - 1955: Internationale Auseinandersetzungen um die Rolle der Deutschen in Europa, Schriften des Forschungsinstituts der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik, E.V.*, Vol 25 (Munich: R. Oldenbourg *Verlag*, 1967), p. 204.

[3]Quoted in Grosser, Western Alliance, p. 42.

[4]Gerhard Wettig, *"Die politischen Überlegungen bei der ostdeutschen Wiederbewaffnung 1947 - 1952," Aspekte der deutschen Wiederbewaffnung bis 1955, Militärgeschichtlichen Forschungsamt*, ed. (Boppard am Rhein: Harald Boldt *Verlag*, 1975), pp. 1 - 3.

[5]Norbert Wiggershaus, *"Von Potsdam zum Pleven-Plan. Deutschland in der internationalen Konfrontation 1945 - 1950," Anfänge westdeutscher Sicherheitspolitik 1945 - 1956: Von der Kapitulation bis zum Pleven-Plan* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg *Verlag*, 1982), pp. 89 - 90.

[6]Wettig, *Entmilitarisierung*, p. 211.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Stanley M. Kanarowski, The German Army and NATO Strategy (Fort Leslie J. McNair, Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1982), p. 20.

[9]Robert McGeehan, The German Rearmament Question: American Diplomacy and European Defense after World War II (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971), p. 5.

[10]Ibid., p. 6.

[11]McGeehan, German Rearmament Question, p. 28.

[12]Quoted in Ibid., p. 26.

[13]Telephonic interview with Chester W. Cockman, Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) United States Air Force, Camarillo, California, 1 December 1987.

[14]Alfred Grosser, *Affaires Extérieures: La Politique de la France 1944 - 1984* (Unk: Flammarion, 1984), pp. 85 - 86.

[15]Ibid., p. 3.

[16]Ibid., pp. 30 - 31 **AND** Kanarowski, German Army and NATO Strategy, p. 20.

[17]McGeehan, German Rearmament Question, pp. 31 - 32.

[18]Ibid., pp. 32 - 33.

[19]Quoted in Ibid., p. 26.

[20]Norbert Wiggershaus, "*Die Entscheidung für einen westdeutschen Verteidigungsbeitrag 1950*," *Anfänge*, p. 354.

[21]Ibid., p. 355.

[22]Ibid., pp. 355 - 356.

[23]Wettig, *Entmilitarisierung*, p. 338.

[24]McGeehan, German Rearmament Question, p. 47.

[25]Konrad Adenauer, Mémoirs 1945 - 1953, trans. Beate Ruhm von Oppen (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1966), p. 270.

[26]McGeehan, German Rearmament Question, p. 38.

[27]Wiggershaus, "*Die Entscheidung...*," *Anfänge*, p. 360.

[28]Ibid., p 376 **AND** Wettig, *Entmilitarisierung*, p. 343.

[29]Truman quoted in McGeehan, German Rearmament Question, p. 52.

[30]Wettig, *Entmilitarisierung*, pp. 340 - 341 **AND** Wiggershaus, "*Die Entscheidung...*," *Anfänge*, pp. 360 - 361 and pp. 376 - 377.

[31]McGeehan, German Rearmament Question, pp. 54 - 55 **AND** Wettig, *Entmilitarisierung*, p. 344 **AND** Wiggershaus, "*Die Entscheidung...*," *Anfänge*, pp. 378 and 380.

[32]Wiggershaus, "*Die Entscheidung...*," *Anfänge*, p. 380.

[33]Ibid., p. 381.

[34]Wettig, *Entmilitarisierung*, p. 350.

[35]Wiggershaus, "*Die Entscheidung...*," *Anfänge*, p. 384.

[36]Ibid., pp. 385 - 386.

Chapter 3

France Gives in under Pressure

The European allies had had no real choice other than to accept the American "package deal" linking West German rearmament to increased American contributions to NATO. It was reluctantly and with a sense of danger, however, that they agreed to accept the principle that the FRG should, in some form to be decided later, participate in the defense of Western Europe.[1] Despite the returning of West German sovereignty not being a part of the American rearmament plan, Gordon Craig chronicles the allied apprehension as follows:

> For however compelling the military arguments, the fact remained that one could not expect a German contribution until the Federal Republic was given complete sovereignty, and a Germany which had regained her sovereignty and her armed strength might find herself tempted, or compelled, to use her new position for purposes other than those envisaged by the members of NATO.[2]

The European allies lived too close to the FRG, and had suffered too much at the hands of German armed forces serving previous regimes, to accept easily the thought of Germans once again bearing arms. Nonetheless, of all the NATO foreign ministers, the French foreign minister, Robert Schuman, found himself in the most difficult situation. Despite Korea, the majority of the French National Assembly seemed to believe that the United States overestimated the Soviet threat and underestimated the German one. Three times in less than a century, French soil had been invaded by German armed forces. Despite de Gaulle and the French Resistance, it could not be forgotten that France had been defeated and occupied by the Germans. Nothing could

have been more humiliating to this proud nation. It was unimaginable that the French National Assembly could be brought in 1950 to accept West German rearmament. The French government had to find a way for the FRG to participate in the defense of Western Europe which would satisfy the American desire for West German rearmament and the National Assembly's desire to prevent exactly that.

The French view of the entire situation was influenced by more than the pervasive European mistrust of Germany and the presence in France of a strong French Communist Party with close ties to the Soviet Union. It was influenced by a history of Allied negotiations on Germany that was disappointing to France. As mentioned in Chapter 1, France in 1945 had insisted that the following conditions concerning Germany were vital to future French security:

1. That there be no centralized German administration in the occupied country which eventually could become the framework of a new, centralized German state.

2. That the Ruhr, the Rhineland, and the Saar regions be separated from Germany; with the Ruhr coming under international control, the Rhineland becoming autonomous, and the Saar being joined economically to France.

3. That Germany be permanently demilitarized.

According to Dorothy Pickles: "To many Frenchmen, post-war foreign policy seem[ed], in retrospect, to have consisted of a series of rearguard actions, in which France was compelled to renounce, one after the other, conditions which she had postulated as being essential for her security."[3]

By 1947 the United States and Great Britain had decided to unite their zones of occupation economically, so that these zones could become self-sufficient and no longer a burden on American and British taxpayers. They also decided that a centralized administration was needed to run this new bi-zonal area efficiently.[4] In

February 1948 this administration, which was carefully designed so it could serve as the basis for a future German national government, was formally proclaimed in the Frankfurt Statute. In light of the worsening East-West international climate, they wanted to show Western solidarity in face of the Soviet Union; but they executed these decisions despite known French objection to them. At the London Conference (February 23 - March 6 and April 20 - June 7, 1948), they invited the French to join them in a tri-zonal endeavor. Since the United States and Great Britain already had shown themselves willing to act independently of France in order to achieve their aims in Germany, the French government saw that a refusal to cooperate soon would give them no voice at all in the control of Germany's most significant industrial area, the Ruhr, which was in the bi-zonal area.[6] France agreed to allow its zone of occupation to begin cooperating economically with the bi-zonal region; but, true to one of its previously stated security considerations, it refused tri-zonal fusion and acceptance of the central German administration set up under the Frankfurt Statute. Somewhat paradoxically, however, since the reason usually given for always refusing the establishment of any centralized German administration was to prevent the formation of a new centralized German state; France did agree that the three zones should be united politically under a federal constitution guaranteeing the rights of the *Länder*, but giving significant power to a central federal government. Economic fusion could follow this political fusion.[7*]

Another decision agreed upon at the London Conference in early 1948 signalled the partial abandonment of France's second security condition: the dismemberment of Germany. France had accomplished its desired economic union with the Saar region in late 1947, but it still wanted the Rhineland to become an autonomous state and the Ruhr

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*Despite this official policy, economic fusion--without acceptance of the bi-zonal central German administration--did occur in October 1948, prior to the September 1949 political fusion.

industries to be internationally administered with the distribution of their products internationally controlled. The United States and Great Britain were unwilling to concede these demands, but sympathetic to French fears--or, perhaps, grateful for French cooperation in the matter of tri-zonal economic and political fusion--they were prepared to compromise. France could continue its economic union with the Saar region, the Rhineland would remain a part of Germany, and international controls ccould be established over the products of Ruhr industries administered by the Germans. Faced with the possibility that the alternative to agreement to this compromise might be to see control over the distribution of the Ruhr products also put into German hands, the choice was clear. France dropped one more security condition and agreed to the compromise.[8]

Norbert Wiggershaus suggests that these concessions on two security considerations might not have been entirely painful for France. He implies their purpose was to keep Germany divided and unable to recover its former strength. In light of the steadily worsening East-West relations, the reunification of Germany was becoming questionable. Wiggershaus contends that France might have agreed to a West German state organization knowing this would help to cement the existing division of Germany, resulting in no further need for more dismemberment.[9] This argument has some validity, but it is a little weak. The primary industrial base for the power so feared by France was in the regions France wanted to separate from Germany, not in the Soviet zone of occupation. Furthermore, France remained steadfast behind their third security consideration, the permanent disarmament of Germany, despite the probability that West German rearmament also would strengthen the East-West division of Germany.

Undoubtedly, other factors influenced the French acceptance of the London Conference decisions. One may have been the March 1948 signing of the Brussels Pact, which militarily aligned France with the West and could also be viewed as insurance

against German aggression. Another may have been American Marshall Plan aid, which not only reduced France's need to exploit Germany's economic resources in the French zone of occupation and the Ruhr, but also increased the influence of the United States in French policy decisions. According to F Roy Willis:

> On April 3, 1948, President Truman signed the Foreign Assistance Act, which authorized a maximum allotment of $5,300,000,000 to the European Recovery Program for the next twelve months. Of this sum, France was to receive $989 million, and the French zone a further $100 million. The immense sums involved made it clear to all groups in France that by accepting this aid, France was definitely committing itself to alliance with the United States and was weakening its power to take an independent stand against American wishes with respect to Germany.[10]

A stronger economic and military position may have reduced France's fear of Germany enough to allow some concessions on established security considerations, but this did not mean Germany was forgotten as a threat. An indication of France's continued concern about its security *vis-à-vis* Germany, was the National Assembly's position on the North Atlantic Treaty in 1949. After ensuring that Germany never could become a member of the alliance without its approval, the National Assembly ratified the treaty establishing NATO. It saw in the treaty the implication of continued American military presence in Europe, which was an even stronger guarantee than the Brussels Pact against a German military threat to France as well as against aggression from the Soviet Union.[11] It was not until after the ratification of the North Atlantic Treaty that France felt secure enough finally to agree on the exact terms for the political establishment of the FRG.

Even with the NATO insurance against aggression from the FRG, France was still worried enough about the possibility of eventual West German control over its full industrial potential to propose in May 1950 the Schuman Plan for a European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). Conceived of by Jean Monnet as one of several projects designed to achieve the political unification of Europe through spillover from the

functional integration of less sensitive areas of national interest, the ECSC called for the close integration of the Ruhr coal and steel industries with those of other West European countries under the supranational control of a European High Authority. Whatever the many benefits of a united Europe were expected to be, one of them for France was that "in the absence of permanent military control over Germany, the integration of Germany within a larger European framework would offer a meaningful guarantee against renewed German aggression."[12] The ECSC was considered a start in this direction, which might neutralize the dangerous consequences which the French government saw in allowing the West Germans to administer their own heavy industry. In a letter to Chancellor Adenauer, Schuman clearly stated that, despite the economic implications, the objective of his plan was purely political. The ECSC was intended "'to eliminate all risk of war and substitute for a ruinous rivalry an association founded upon common interest,' and 'to join in a permanent work of peace two nations which for centuries have faced each other in bloody rivalries.'"[13] Obviously, by September 1950 France had not stopped trying to compensate for the loss or modification of two of the three conditions concerning Germany that it had proclaimed in 1945 as necessary to its security. It was extremely unlikely that the French people and the National Assembly could be convinced to relinquish the last remaining condition: permanent demilitarization of Germany.

This post-war history of French concessions concerning their policy toward Germany influenced the way the National Assembly would view the American "package deal;" but equally important were events in the French overseas territories since the Second World War, particularly in Indochina. Because of them, France was as wary of incurring Soviet displeasure as it was of encouraging German strength.

Immediately following World War II, France had become embroiled in a colonial war in Indochina. Despite the fact that the Vietnamese forces who were fighting for independence from France were led by Ho Chi Minh and his Vietminh, an outgrowth of

the Indochinese Communist Party; the Indochinese War was not initially viewed internationally as a struggle against communism. The prevailing world spirit was one of anticolonialism--even the two hostile superpowers agreed on that issue--and France was not given much support for its war effort.

The gravity of the Indochinese situation was brought home to the French government in 1947. The same year that found the European economies so weak they desperately needed American financial aid under the Marshall Plan, saw France having to pour resources badly needed at home into a war on the other side of the world. The same year which saw a distinct chilling of East-West relations, found France having to defend its native soil in case of attack with a conscript army, while the professional army fought and died in Southeast Asia. It became obvious that France needed peace in Indochina, and that peace could be obtained only by the granting of independence. By 1947, however, Cold War tensions made the French government loathe to jeopardize its relations with the United States through negotiations with a communist regime. The answer seemed to be to negotiate with a non-communist nationalist group. The former Emperor Bao Dai was considered to be the only person capable of rallying support and winning followers from the Vietminh. The French opened negotiations with Bao Dai in September 1947, and concluded them in March 1949. Bao Dai returned to Saigon as head of the newly independent state. This move did not allow France to end its military involvement in Vietnam, however. Enough French strings were still attached to the granted Vietnamese independence that it could not be considered **true** independence. The Vietminh saw the new government as nothing more than a French puppet, and refused to stop fighting. To complicate matters, Bao Dai failed to rally many supporters.

During the negotiations with Bao Dai, the French, who already controlled southern Vietnam, had been successfully gaining control of substantial areas in northern Vietnam. Unfortunately, October 1949 saw the Communist Chinese take

control of mainland China; and before the French could consolidate their military success into political success, the Communist Chinese recognized Ho Chi Minh's government and offered him extensive support and military reinforcement. The tide of battle turned against the French as Ho Chi Minh launched a major offensive. It culminated in the October 1950 fall of Cao Bang, a French garrison on the Sino-Vietnamese border. French Union troop losses numbered 3000 out of 3500.[14] It was against this discouraging background of relative weakness at home and significant setback in Indochina that France was forced to consider West German rearmament.

In light of the Korean War, the view in the United States of France's war in Indochina began to change. It was no longer seen as a colonial conflict--it became a Western crusade against encroaching communism. The sudden support of the United States for the French effort began to manifest itself in material terms. Indeed, estimates indicate that during the period 1950 - 1954, the United States underwrote two thirds to four fifths of the French war costs in Indochina.[15] Unfortunately, this assistance, as vital to France as American support in Europe, made it even more difficult for the French government to oppose the American wishes in the matter of West German rearmament.

In an effort to satisfy both the United States and the French National Assembly, Premier René Pleven turned to Jean Monnet's "European" ideas. Monnet's goal of an integrated Europe was one generally shared by the two dominant political parties of Pleven's government, the Catholic *Mouvement Républicain Populair* (MRP) and the Socialist *Section Française de l'Internationale Ouvrière* (SFIO). Furthermore, the popularity of these ideas recently had been demonstrated, both among the Western allies and in the French National Assembly, by the acceptance of Schuman's plan for the ECSC. Pleven decided that if European integration made West German administration of their coal and steel industries less dangerous, so, too, would it make West German soldiers less dangerous. Accordingly, the plan Pleven presented to the

National Assembly for approval on October 23, 1950, called for the integration of German combat teams into a multinational European army, subordinate to a European Minister of Defense, who would be responsible to a previously established supranational European political framework. Pleven stressed there would be no national German army and the Federal Republic would establish neither a General Staff nor a Ministry of Defense.[16] Schuman demonstrated this plan would not constitute rearming Germany in the following words:

> Now what does the rearming of Germany really mean? To arm a country means to make freely available to it--to its government--a national armed force capable of becoming the instrument of its policy . . . If Germany is prepared to authorize or compel her people to enlist in a European army, that does not mean that she is rearming herself.[17]

It is important to note that the Pleven Plan called for the integration of national units at no higher than battalion level, 500 - 800 men, and for the establishment of a supranational political framework prior to the formation of the European army.

The plan met firm opposition from the Communists, who claimed that "Europe is an idea of Hitler's"[18] and that the idea would lead to the rebirth of an aggressive and armed Germany, not to mention the growth of "American imperialism."[19] Likewise hostile to the plan were the Gaullists, for whom faith in the nation was the foundation of their philosophy, and who were, therefore, opposed to all transfer of national sovereignty to supranational institutions.[20] Despite the arguments of these two political parties, which were not members of the governmental majority, the National Assembly approved the Pleven Plan by a vote of 343 to 225. The order of the day made it especially clear that the National Assembly specifically opposed national rearmament of the FRG and the formation of a German General Staff.[21] The French government then had to sell the idea to its Western allies.

The Pleven Plan was rejected by all the NATO allies as being technically unrealistic, militarily ineffective, and politically impossible. While the allies found it difficult to agree on what they wanted, there was a general concensus on what they did not want:

--No one wanted an autonomous West German national army.

--No government advocated West German membership in the NATO alliance.

--There was to be no West German General Staff or Defense Ministry.

--The number of West German contingents (whatever their size) should be limited, and these contingents should be formed only under allied guidance and control.

--Some weapons systems and armaments should be forbidden the West Germans.[22]

In December 1950 a compromise plan (the Spofford Plan) was agreed upon. The technical problems and military inefficiency of the Pleven Plan were reduced by making the German contingents larger, approximately 5,000 - 6,000 members strong. The NATO allies finally agreed that the Pleven Plan could be made to work politically, but that it would take longer to set up than they could afford to wait for West German defense participation. Under the Spofford Plan the European army would be directly subordinate to NATO until the European political community framework could be established. It was decided that two conferences would meet after the start of the new year: one, in Paris, to work out the details of the European Defense Community (EDC) treaty; and the other, near Bonn, to discuss the technical and organizational issues connected with the raising and arming of West German contingents.[23] During the September to December 1950 NATO negotiations, the West Germans had been neither involved in the discussions, nor officially informed of their contents. As an occupied territory, they were not considered a partner, but rather an object of allied politics.

Nevertheless, as a future member of the EDC, and as the ones actually to be rearmed, it was deemed appropriate that the FRG should be represented at the conferences planned for 1951. By December 1951, the basic provisions of an EDC treaty had been agreed upon by representatives of the governments of the FRG, Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and France.

A quick look at French political history for the year 1951 might lead one to question how the French EDC negotiators were able to follow a consistent, MRP-inspired policy throughout the entire year. Despite the succession of three different governments in France during 1951, and the election of a new National Assembly which increased the strength of the "anti-European" Gaullists primarily at the expense of the "European" MRP, the position of foreign minister in each of the French cabinets was filled by a member of the MRP. He was able to pursue the EDC negotiations without interference from other cabinet members or deputies from the National Assembly with different foreign policy opinions, because difficulties over domestic affairs kept all attention diverted elsewhere.

The first part of the year found the government coalition concerned about revising the election procedures before the scheduled June elections brought about the end of the existing regime. The Gaullist and Communist parties had steadily been gaining strength in France, and it looked as if these parties together might be able to elect enough deputies to hold a majority in the National Assembly. Since neither of these parties would either join or support a coalition government, this situation would prevent the formation of **any** government and would cause the fall of the Fourth Republic. The election procedures had to be changed to prevent this from happening, but there was serious dissent over how this should be accomplished. It was over the contents of the new electoral law that the Pleven government fell in February.[24] It was replaced by a caretaker government, headed by Henri Queuille, pledged to stay in office only until the June elections. A new electoral law was passed, but there was no

support for any policy changes. The new electoral law did keep the Gaullists and Communists from together controlling a majority of the National Assembly, but forming a new government after the elections was not easy. The entire month of July was spent in this endeaver. The most divisive issue, preventing the achievement of any majority, was the secularization (or not) of schools; but party differences over economic and social issues were also severe, in view of France's still struggling economy. Pleven finally was allowed to form a new government in August, but it was not based on any permanent legislative majority. All the coalition parties had in common was their desire to maintain the Fourth Republic. New legislative majorities had to be formed for every issue under consideration. Some bills managed to get passed this way, but only by slight majorities, and usually only with the abstention of one of the coalition parties with an opposing viewpoint. Pleven's government fell in January 1952, when the Socialists failed to abstain on a bill they opposed, just to support the continuance of the government.[25] Clearly, this was a situation which favored the *status quo* over changes. By not drawing attention to them, the MRP foreign minister was able to pursue the EDC negotiations along previously established guidelines.

It was not until December 1951 that foreign issues started to come back into prominence in the National Assembly. When they did, they were of sufficient importance to keep attention away from the EDC negotiations. The ECSC treaty was ratified; but arguments surfaced, not yet strong enough to defeat ECSC, which were destined to cause problems for EDC: differences over the need for and/or type of "European" political institutions, the issue of loss of sovereignty, anti-Germanism. The Tunisian request for internal political autonomy was denied, prompting violent reactions in that country. Fortunately, in December 1950 General de Lattre de Tassigny had been put in charge of Indochina, and 1951 was a year of French success in that region. Hopes grew that an end to the war might be in sight. With so much to occupy

their attention, both in domestic and foreign affairs, the French governments and the National Assembly were hardly able to become involved with the EDC negotiations.

By February 1952, however, work could not proceed on the drafting of an EDC treaty until the principles worked out in the negotiations had been accepted by the countries involved. A vote in the National Assembly on these principles was necessary. They were accepted by a vote of 327 to 287,[26] but with the following reservations and conditions:[27]

-- The government was to ask for British and American guarantees of the EDC convention, by the maintenance of their troops on the continent.

-- The integration of national contingents into the European army was to occur in as small units as possible.

-- No German recruitment was to take place before the final ratification of the treaty.

-- Despite the demands of Adenauer, the FRG was not to gain membership in NATO by joining the EDC.

-- In no event was the FRG to be permitted more troops than France, after measuring the requirements of its domestic economy and the war in Indochina, was willing to maintain in Europe.

-- The entire European army project was to be subordinated to a previously created supranational political community (not specified whether to be federal or confederal in nature).

-- The FRG was to be permitted neither a national army nor a General Staff.

-- Finally, the government was to renew its efforts to obtain the participation in the EDC of as many other democratic nations as possible, especially Great Britain.

In May 1952 the EDC treaty was signed by representatives of the governments intending to participate. It called for an integrated European army consisting of

national troop contingents from France, Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Italy, and the FRG. No separate national units larger than division size (13,000 men) could be maintained in the European army by any contributing country. This was much larger than the French desire for integration at no more than battalion level. Overall command of this army would be completely integrated as well, to prevent any one country from dominating the forces of the other members. The whole European army would be incorporated into the NATO defense strategy. The EDC treaty prescribed the formation of supranational institutions: an executive council, a council of ministers, a court of justice, and an assembly. Among other functions, the EDC institutions would be responsible for a common defense budget and for preparation and execution of programs for common armament, equipment, infrastructure, and technical research and development.[28] Unlike the French plan, however, there was no stipulation that a European political community would be formed and operational before creating the European army. The subordination of the European army to NATO was believed to provide sufficient multinational control until a supranational European political framework could be constructed. The EDC treaty also outlined the military contributions of member countries, and established the limits of the total West German defense force (land, air, and naval units). The size of the German force did not exceed that of the French contribution.[29] In accordance with French desires, the FRG was denied a national defense force and General Staff; German recruitment would not occur until after ratification of the EDC treaty; and the FRG would not become a member of the NATO alliance. Additionally, Adenauer renounced West German production of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons.[30] In separate agreements, the United States and Great Britain agreed to maintain troops on the European continent; although they did not, specifically, guarantee the EDC treaty.

The signing of the EDC treaty in May 1952 was only the start of a long, two-year process of ratification. The Antoine Pinay government in France, which had

authorized its representative, Schuman, to sign the EDC treaty, did not immediately submit it to the National Assembly for ratification. In fact, this did not happen until January 1953, under the René Mayer government. Various explanations have been put forward for this eight month delay. The least convincing one was revealed by Schuman in his memoirs: the French Foreign Office, bogged down by other pressing issues, took that long to prepare and staff the accompanying memorandum. More credible is the explanation that the government was awaiting the results of the 1952 presidential election in the United States, out of concern that a new administration might decide to pursue foreign and defense policies not compatible with the EDC.[31] While other reasons undoubtedly influenced the situation, the most likely explanation for the delay was the French domestic political climate. Pinay's government owed its majority to votes from dissident Gaullists, who supported its domestic policy. While prepared to split from the traditional Gaullists over the question of supporting or participating in government coalitions, the dissident Gaullists had not relinquished their adamant opposition to EDC. Pinay could not submit the treaty to the National Assembly without alienating this vital bloc and assuring the fall of his government.[32] As it turned out, the Pinay government fell in December 1952 over a domestic financial bill; but the political picture for EDC in France did not improve as time went by. On the contrary, while Pinay's government, if not his entire base of support, had been generally in favor of EDC; René Mayer's (January - May 1953) and Joseph Laniel's (June 1953 - June 1954) governments became internally divided over the issue, with the decision of the Gaullists actively to join the coalitions. An agreement to liberalize domestic economic and social policy could have replaced the Gaullists in the coalition with Socialists; but since the Socialists were, themselves, becoming hopelessly split internally over EDC, this would have meant compromising on vital domestic issues without necessarily ensuring the success of the EDC treaty.

Those who opposed EDC in the National Assembly did not all do so for the same reasons. Three basic groupings of opposition could be distinguished:[33]

-- Those who categorically were against German rearmament. This group consisted of the Communists, the non-Communist left that was either pacifist or favored an East-West mediator's role for France (neutralists), and the part of the traditional right that was primarily motivated by anti-Germanism. This group also tended to oppose supranational "European" ideas.

-- Those who were more against giving up French sovereignty to supranational institutions than rearming the FRG. This group contained the Gaullists, part of the traditional right, and certain Radicals with Jacobin tendencies.

-- Those who were against neither the principle of European integration, nor the principle of West German rearmament; but who still feared "German dynamism" and felt the EDC provided insufficient safeguards for France and the infant West German democracy. This group joined the Socialist and center-left opposition.

In the face of international pressure, France could not delay forever submitting the EDC treaty to the National Assembly. The Mayer government did so in January 1953, without taking a position on it and without setting any dates for debate and voting. Simultaneously, in an attempt to win support for EDC from members of the third type of opposition group, Mayer proposed treaty protocols and preliminary agreements to his Western allies. These included:[34]

-- The need to settle the status of the Saar region, claimed by both France and the FRG, before considering EDC.

-- The need to settle the Indochina conflict before joining EDC.

-- The need for the EDC institutions to permit nations with colonies to engage in arms production for use in non-European areas.

-- The need for France to be allowed to decide what proportion of its armed forces would be part of the European army, and what proportion would be reserved for duty in the French Union. The manner of the interchange between the two was also to be a matter for exclusive determination by France.

-- The need to develop a political community first, which could accept the transfer of national sovereignty inherent in the EDC.

-- Finally, the need for Great Britain to be firmly committed to EDC, either through membership or through guarantee of the treaty.

The allies spent most of 1953 debating the precise meaning of these French proposals, and discussing their acceptability. Meanwhile, events in France and Indochina did nothing to strengthen support for the EDC.

In France, anti-German feeling among the public was higher than it had been in years, thanks to a succession of Nazi war-crime trials, most notably the trial starting in January 1953 of the twenty-one members of the *SS Reich* Division who had taken part in the massacre at Oradour, near Limoges, in June 1944. Alexander Werth mentions that "It was not perhaps a mere coincidence that the war criminals involved in these trials, and who had been in prison for several years, should have been brought up for trial just at this time."[35] Furthermore, French attention was once again, diverted to Indochina. It seems that French hopes for a quick and sure victory in that region had died with General de Lattre de Tassigny in January 1952. That spring, "it became increasingly clear that Indo-China was another Korea: when the weight of the Chinese military machine came in behind native Communists, the Western forces could not win unless they were willing to start a global war."[36] By the end of 1952, the French public was questioning France's goals in Indochina, and pressure was being put on the governments to find a way to end the war there.[37]

The March 1953 death of Stalin in the Soviet Union seemed to herald an era in which East-West tensions might be reduced through negotiation. This feeling was reinforced by the July 1953 armistice in Korea. The French began to press for a Big Four (France, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States) conference. It was hoped that an agreement on the "German problem" might make EDC and German rearmament unnecessary.[38] Furthermore, better relations with the Soviet Union might help to bring an end to the war in Indochina, which since April 1953 had spread into Laos. This new development in the war had caused the French to split their forces dangerously: the main body remained in the Red River Delta of Tonkin, while the garrison of Dien Bien Phu, across the country, was built up during November and December 1953 into a major stronghold, from which to disrupt support activity in the rear of the Vietminh forces conducting operations in Laos.

The Berlin Conference of the Big Four, which eventually convened in January 1954, failed to settle the "German problem;" but it did lay the groundwork for the April 1954 Geneva Conference, which was to include representatives from Communist China, and the purpose of which was to discuss peace in the Far East. The French representatives counted on negotiating this peace from the position of strength given to them by their possession of Dien Bien Phu and the Red River Delta. In March 1954, however, the Vietminh began an overwhelming offensive against Dien Bien Phu, which, despite the airlifting in of reinforcements, was doomed to fall in May. France's negotiating position at Geneva was seriously weakened not only by this development, but also because it was no longer certain that the French forces could continue to hold the Red River Delta. French hopes for a military victory died. According to Aron, "At this point one was obliged to wait and see whether M. Molotov and M. Chou En-lai would advise the Vietminh representatives to demand conditions no French government could ever accept or to limit their demands."[39]

The Laniel government fell in June 1954, and Pierre Mendès-France was selected Premier on a platform to end the Indochinese conflict, through negotiated agreement, by July 20, 1954. He also had pledged to bring the EDC treaty to a vote in the National Assembly before the end of August.[40] Interestingly enough, he did both. At midnight on July 20, 1954, an armistice, which granted the French more favorable conditions than the Vietminh might reasonably have been expected to give, in light of their military situation,[41] was signed in Geneva; and on August 30, 1954, the EDC treaty was rejected in the National Assembly by a vote of 319 to 264.[42] This set of circumstances has led some observers to question whether the Soviet Union traded a favorable settlement in Indochina for defeat of the EDC in the National Assembly. This is unlikely. The already strong opposition to the EDC in the National Assembly, which had long portended its failure, could not have been unknown to the Soviet Union. Furthermore, that country was probably aware that the United States could decide unilaterally to rearm the FRG without French approval in the case of defeat of the EDC. It would have served little purpose for the Soviet Union to have made such an agreement.

The activities of Mendès-France prior to the August 1954 vote on the EDC treaty were not those of a man committed to its failure. On the contrary, he seemed to believe France had a moral obligation to approve the treaty, since Pleven had originated the idea and since the National Assembly had so often throughout the years approved of it in principle.[43] When a committee comprised of opponents and supporters of the treaty failed to reach agreement on a compromise proposal, Mendès-France went to the August 1954 Brussels Conference with his own suggestions for the revision of the treaty. These were prepared with an eye toward satisfying those opponents of the treaty who were against its supranational provisions.[44] Mendès-France requested that provisions be approved which allowed the dissolution of the EDC in case any of the following events occurred: withdrawal from the EDC of a reunified Germany, failure of

the United States to maintain troops in Europe, and/or break-up of the NATO alliance. He further requested that integration of European army national contingents occur only in the forward area, i.e., in the FRG; and that the supranational clauses of the treaty be suspended for a period of eight years.

These proposals did not meet with success in Brussels. Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, and the FRG had already ratified the treaty, and Italy was on the verge of doing so. They were not interested in changes of that magnitude, which would have required them to send the treaty back through their parliaments a second time. They believed figures which had been provided to them, showing that EDC could pass in the French National Assembly without the requested amendments.* Finally, they were frustrated at the thought of more French changes. This comment was allegedly made at Brussels:

> We proposed German rearmament, you wanted a European army. We gave you a European army, you wanted protocols. We gave you protocols, you wanted preliminary guarantees. We gave you these, now you want something else. And if we give you this, in six more months another French government will want something else.[45]

Without his amendments, Mendès-France had little faith that the EDC treaty could find acceptance in the National Assembly; and given the differences of opinion within the political parties and the coalition, he had his government abstain from the voting on EDC. He did not make the issue a vote of confidence in his government. The treaty was rejected on a procedural vote, rather than on a vote against the treaty itself. One group of deputies moved that a vote be taken to send the treaty back for further negotiation among representatives of the participating countries. This group, primarily MRP deputies, agreed with the principle of the EDC as it had been conceived

*These figures were based on the assumption that, despite internal divisions of opinion, the SFIO would follow its strict voting discipline and support its Executive Committee's endorsement of the treaty. It did not. Like most other parties, its vote on the issue was split.

originally, but opposed some of the compromises found in the treaty as it read in 1954. They wanted to keep the idea alive, without ratifying the treaty. Another group of deputies, opposed to the entire concept of the EDC, simultaneously submitted a motion requesting that a vote be taken to both reject the treaty and keep it from being renegotiated. By the rules of the National Assembly, the first type of motion (*motion préjudicielle*) could be voted only after the other motion (*motion préalable*) had been defeated. It has been suggested that the 319 to 264 vote against EDC did not show the true strength of opposition to the treaty, since some votes which appear to be in favor of the EDC treaty were really cast in an attempt to defeat the *motion préalable* and keep the EDC idea open and to further negotiation.[46] This may be true; but the votes, nevertheless, fell into lines which could have been predicted from arguments previously presented for or against the EDC. All of the Communists and Progressists (non-Communist far left) voted against the treaty, as did 83 Gaullists. Sixteen Gaullists, along with approximately half of the Socialists and Radicals, voted in favor of EDC. Close to two thirds of the members of the smaller parties supported the treaty, as did nearly all of the pro-European MRP (80 - 2).[47]

Concerned that the French rejection of EDC might cause a rupture of the NATO alliance if the United States rearmed the FRG unilaterally, it did not take the European allies long to come up with an alternative plan. At a conference in London in September 1954, British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden proposed to rearm the FRG within the parameters of an extension of the Brussels Pact of 1948. This alliance, which pledged the countries of Great Britain, France, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands to mutual defense, was still in effect; although the greater part of its structure had been incorporated into NATO in 1951. The Brussels Pact contained provisions for the control of the member nations' arms. The Eden Plan suggested that the Brussels Pact be renamed the West European Union (WEU) and be expanded to include Italy and the FRG.[48] Controls on the original members would not change, but

the FRG would be admitted with the limitations specified in the EDC treaty (except NATO membership would be allowed). To counter the West German presence in the WEU, "the expanded alliance was given a British pledge to station four divisions, the 'British Army on the Rhine,' in West Germany for the duration of the West European Union."[49] All countries were in favor of this plan, and their agreement was internationally recognized with the signing of the Paris Accords in October 1954. The FRG and France also settled their conflict over the status of the Saar area, agreeing to allow the inhabitants of that area to decide the issue through the ballot box. Those nations which had previously ratified the EDC treaty, quickly ratified the new Paris Accords. Mendès-France had to gain their acceptance by the same French National Assembly which several times had already expressly rejected the idea of membership in NATO of a West German national army. In order to do this, he developed a "plan" of his own, designed to appeal to as many different parliamentary deputies as possible.

The "plan" Mendès-France presented to the National Assembly was a type of "package deal." It combined the Paris Accords, with a pledge to work gradually toward European union in non-military fields, followed by a commitment to continue trying to achieve detente through East-West negotiations.[50] The "package" was designed to appeal to those who had opposed EDC because of the loss of sovereignty it entailed, while retaining the support of those dedicated to the creation of a unified Europe. It also tried to gain the support of pacifists and neutralists through the pledge to work toward negotiated detente. Obviously, the plan would never appeal to those who were either Communist or intensely anti-German. Mendès-France emphasized that the wishes of France's allies could not forever be ignored, and that the FRG would most likely be rearmed regardless of whether or not France cooperated.[51] He mentioned the strong American guarantees which accompanied this new plan, and especially praised the British participation in the WEU, saying:

> We shall be seven instead of six. We were afraid that the price of rapprochement with Germany was the drawing away of England. We shall not have to pay that price. We shall reconcile ourselves with Germany without separating ourselves from England.[52]

By the time the Mendès-France "package deal" came up for voting in December 1954, the "European" members of the SFIO and Radical parties seemed prepared to support it, despite their disappointment about its weakened supranationality; likewise, most of the Gaullists and the anti-EDC Socialists appeared satisfied with the "package deal"--the Gaullists precisely because of the weakened supranationality, and the anti-EDC Socialists because the membership of Great Britain in the WEU would help to counter any threat of "German dynamism." The MRP held the decisive votes, and its support could not be guaranteed. The MRP disliked Mendès-France, ostensibly for his criticism of its handling of French foreign affairs, and for the first time since the inception of the party, it was not a member of the government coalition. As an opposition party, it tended to join the Communists in voting against government sponsored issues.[53] The MRP stressed the alleged dangers of West German rearmament within the limited controls provided by the Paris Accords. On December 23, 1954, the National Assembly voted 280 to 259 against the Paris Accords, not only calling into question the authority of Mendès-France, but also threatening to undermine what little confidence France's allies still had in the country as a worthwhile partner.[54] Conscious of the shock waves this negative decision had caused, both internationally and domestically, Mendès-France searched for, and found, a procedure to allow deputies to revise their earlier vote. After tying the vote to one of confidence in his government, Mendès-France, on December 29, 1954, again asked the National Assembly to vote on the Paris Accords and the other elements of his "package deal." The result this time was 289 to 251 in favor of the measure. According to Tint, though, "The fact that the prime minister had tied the second vote to one of confidence is less likely to

explain the government's majority . . . than fear of the reaction of France's allies to yet another rejection."[55]

Although a collective sigh of relief was probably the reaction of France's allies to this second vote, the French ratification procedure was not yet completed. The French Senate, the upper chamber of parliament, still had to vote on the issue. The Mendès-France government having fallen in February 1955 over the problem of reforms in Tunisia, this task was left to Edgar Faure's new government. In the face of threats from the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill to implement WEU anyway, leaving an "empty chair" for France if necessary, the Senate voted in March 1955 to accept the Paris Accords.[56] They went into effect May 5, 1955, finally authorizing the West German rearmament called for nearly five years earlier.

Chapter 3 End Notes

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[35]Alexander Werth, France 1940 - 1955 (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), p. 597.

[36]Gavin, Liberated France, p. 239.

[37]Bourdache, *Années cinquante*, p. 309.

[38]Furniss, Troubled Ally, pp. 85 - 86.

[39]Raymond Aron, "Historical Sketch of the Great Debate," France Defeats the EDC, Daniel Lerner and Raymond Aron, eds. (New York: Frederick A.. Praeger, 1957), p. 17.

[40]Bourdache, *Années cinquante*, pp. 86 - 87.

[41]Henri Brugmans, "The Defeat of the European Army," European Integration, F. Roy Willis, ed. (New York: New Viewpoints, 1975), p. 46.

[42]Alfred Grosser, *La IV^e République et sa politique extérieure* (Paris: *Librairie* Armand Colin, 1967), p. 319.

[43]Carmoy, *Politiques étrangères*, p. 41.

[44]Grosser, *IV^e République*, pp. 314 - 315.

[45]Ibid.

[46]Ibid., p. 319.

[47]Furniss, Troubled Ally, p. 99.

[48]Daniel J. Nelson, A History of U.S. Forces in Germany (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1987), p. 53.

[49]Alexander Rudhart, Twentieth Century Europe (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Incorporated, 1986), p. 238.

[50]Stanley Hoffmann, "The Postmortems," France Defeats the EDC, pp. 171 - 173.

[51]Werth, France, p. 603.

[52]Furniss, Troubled Ally, p. 107.

[53]Tint, French Foreign Policy, p. 63.

[54]Ibid., p. 66.

[55]Ibid.

[56]Bourdache, *Années cinquante*, p. 393.

Chapter 4

The FRG Trades Soldiers for Security and Sovereignty

The opposition of the French legislature to West German rearmament had not come as a big surprize to the NATO allies. They had expected to have to deal with France through veiled threats and workable compromises. Much more unexpected was the wide-spread resistance of the West German people to the idea. Although West German public opposition to rearmament had been mentioned as early as 1949 when giving reasons not to include the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) in the defense of Western Europe, it is doubtful the NATO allies fully recognized the depth of the German resistance to this idea. The decision to rearm was made without consulting them, and it was apparently assumed they would readily, and perhaps even enthusiastically, become again the militarized society the world had grown to fear. Most people had been convinced during the Second World War that Germans were by nature militaristic. It is conceivable that little faith was given to the idea that this supposed national characteristic lastingly had been affected by either wartime suffering or Allied demilitarization efforts. Since at least 1871, the concepts of Prussia and Germany had become more or less synonymous. The distinction between the militarism historically associated with the Prussian state, and the traditions of Germany as a whole, was often not made; but as Luigi Barzini points out in his book, The Europeans, the Germans, before the establishment of the Prusso-German Empire, were not internationally known for their fighting prowess:

> Only from the military point of view did Germans count for little. "Nothing is odder than the German soldiers," wrote Madame de Stael in her book published, stangely enough, after Waterloo, where Blucher and his Prussians carried the day (*De l'Allemagne*, I, chapter 2). "They fear fatigue or bad weather, as if they were all shopkeepers or literati. . . Wood burning stoves, beer, and tobacco smoke create a heavy and warm atmosphere around them which is difficult for them to leave. . . Resolutions are slow, despondency is easy. . . Imagination, which is the predominant quality of the Germans, inspires fear of danger. . . Among them a general who loses a battle is more assured of obtaining forgiveness than one who wins of being applauded.". . . Not only did Napoleon defeat Germany easily many times almost until the end, but so now and again did some of his more inept marshals.[1]

Prussia and Prussian institutions had ceased to exist after World War II, and so, apparently, had Prussian (or German) militarism.

Contrary to the fears of the World War II Allies, the Germans in 1945--even before the re-education efforts--no longer were motivated by nationalist or militarist spirit. A public opinion poll conducted in the American zone of occupation, the results of which were published in OMGUS Report 19 in August 1946, revealed that only nine percent of the Germans sampled still agreed that "a civilian is an unworthy (lower) person compared to a member of the army."[2] Further surveys conducted in the same zone during 1946 - 1947, indicated that 96 percent of the respondents agreed that "human spirit is not glorified by war alone;" 94 percent agreed that "war does not pay;" and 82 percent disagreed with the statement that "in all probability, foreign nations and races are enemies; therefore one should be prepared at all times to attack them first."[3] Two quotations, from Karl Bauer's somewhat poetic introduction to his compilation of documents relating to German defense policy, illustrate the prevelent post-war mood:

> As the Germans, after the 8th of May 1945, stood before the ruins not only of their cities, but also of everything which they had, until then, expressed and embraced with the words "German" and "Germany," they decided to leave the defense of their security to their conquerors and to live, in the future, on the edge of history.[4]

AND

> The Germans . . . who in 1945 believed they had lost their Fatherland, threw themselves that much more impetuously into the arms of a new Fatherland: Europe. . . . They saw no weapons on their path to Europe, and many of them had forgotten that Europe can live only when it is prepared to defend itself.[5]

Even in 1948, after the start of the Cold War, polls in the French zone of occupation indicated that the man on the street and most of the political groups were hostile to any idea of rearmament. The average German felt this would only make him "a gladiator in the service of the United States in a battle which did not concern him." The German business community felt it would be better served by investing in domestic production and the conquest of foreign markets, than in once again becoming burdened with a defense industry. Consumers agreed, since after years of suffering they were just starting to taste prosperity again.[6] The new West German government and most of the legislature were a little more realistic than the common citizen. They disliked the idea of rearmament, but they knew they were in no position to refuse the demands of those who still held West German sovereignty in their hands. They also were aware, however, of the importance to these same powers of a democratic and Western-oriented FRG. The Western Occupation Powers would not risk losing that by forcing upon the West Germans an unpopular rearmament decision that had no positive features to sweeten it. They would not be willing to sacrifice the fragile young democracy on the altar of rearmament. The depth of West German popular opinion against the issue, 62 percent in December 1949 versus only 12 percent in favor of it.[7] gave the government a bargaining chip. The FRG most likely would have to comply in the end, but the government intended to do so on its own terms, rather than those of the Western allies.

After the 1949 establishment of the semi-sovereign FRG, the new federal government, under the leadership of Chancellor Adenauer, found itself at least partially responsible for the welfare of the country. In light of the tense international Cold War climate, and especially in view of the strong Soviet presence in the German

Democratic Republic (GDR), which was augmented by the East German People's Police. Adenauer was concerned about the security of the FRG. Responsible government officials could no longer carelessly leave this vital subject solely to the discretion of the Western Occupation Powers; because, after all, these nations had to be concerned primarily about their **own** national interests. The FRG found itself in a curious situation. By virtue of its political, economic, and social systems, it was firmly tied to the Western world. As an occupied territory, however, it had not been accepted as an integral part of Western Europe--one to be defended at all costs in case of aggression from the East. To be sure, the NATO allies had declared that any Soviet or Eastern-bloc attack on any of the alliance members, to include the occupation forces stationed in the FRG, would be cause for all of them to go to war; but that was no guarantee that the FRG would be **defended**. Indeed, in view of the light strength of the occupation forces, Adenauer had reason to fear that, despite the NATO doctrine of forward defense, the territory of the FRG would merely become the battleground of any East-West war: first, as the allies fought a delaying battle, trading space for the time needed to concentrate the main bulk of their forces at the real line of defense (probably the Rhine River); then again, as the fully strengthened allies counterattacked to push the enemy back into his own territory. Clearly, this was a scenario which could hold no appeal to the West Germans.

Obviously, one of Adenauer's prime objectives was to obtain a security guarantee from the allies that the FRG would be defended against aggression. Hand-in-glove with this guarantee, to give it validity, would have to come a strengthening of allied forces in the FRG. It was not logical to expect the allies to be willing to fight **for** the FRG, a foreign country; but they might be convinced to fight **with** the FRG in defense of that country. Therefore, in order to obtain the allied guarantee of defense, the FRG would have to show itself willing to accept some responsibility for its own security.[8] This logic brought the question back around to a West German military contribution--a

subject which neither the allied foreign offices,* nor most of the West Germans, themselves, viewed favorably in 1949 or early 1950. Although by April 1950 the level of popular West German support for rearmament of some kind had risen to 39 percent, the level of opposition remained high at 56 percent.[9]

Arnulf Baring and Hans Buchheim both document[10] that Adenauer began working around this problem by dividing the concept of security into two parts: external security and internal security. External security was military defense in case of a military attack from outside the FRG, or the deterrence of such an attack. This was clearly the responsibility of the allies. The FRG was neither technically nor organizationally in a position to offer any useful contribution to external security; and it would not be willing to do anything to remedy that situation unless it received political equality with other nations--full sovereignty over its own affairs. In the era before the scare caused by the Korean War, there was no reason to even consider jumping into that particular kettle of political boiling water. Internal security, however, was a different matter. Adenauer saw that as defense against subversion, domestic unrest and armed revolt; civil defense; emergency services; and maintenance of open transportation and communication networks in areas of military operations, particularly in case of massive streams of refugees. This was an area in which the West Germans could offer a direct and immediate contribution to their own security. Furthermore, it was free of political implications, since it could be performed under the existing Occupation Statute. Accordingly, Adenauer began to press the Occupation Powers for permission to establish a federal police force (a type of rearmament, but not of remilitarization).

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the June 25, 1950, North Korean invasion of South Korea changed the international situation. The call for the West Germans to participate

*See Chapter 2 for more on the differences of opinion between the allied military planners and their foreign offices.

in the defense of Western Europe, definitely an external security mission, began to gain strength; and Adenauer began to give this issue more thought. In the summer of 1950, he unofficially (since, under the old Allied Control Council laws still in effect, such activity was illegal and severely punishable) asked former General Speidel to prepare a report on the subject; and in October, he likewise convened a meeting of former high-ranking *Wehrmacht* officers to discuss in detail the creation of a German contingent for an international military force to defend Western Europe [11]

Adenauer was not enthusiastic about militarily rearming the FRG. He had always considered the so-called German military virtues to have been the cause of many of Germany's problems. It was almost like tempting fate, now that these "virtues" no longer existed, to even consider bringing them back.[12] Adenauer was able to recognize, however, that rearmament could be used as a means to achieve other goals of West German policy: sovereignty, security from the East, and a closer European Union.[13] As early as December 1949, Adenauer had tested the international mood concerning West German rearmament in an interview he gave to a reporter from the Cleveland Plain Dealer. In response to questions from the reporter, Adenauer declared that, while an independent, West German national army was completely objectionable, he would be willing to consider a West German military contribution to an integrated West European army. The climate was not yet ripe for allied acceptance of such a suggestion. After the "Korean scare," Adenauer continued to use the opportunities available to him--press interviews, *Bundestag* speeches, and communication with the allied High Commissioners for Germany--to inform the allies of the conditions under which the FRG would agree to rearmament.

When the "Big Three" foreign ministers and the NATO Council met in New York in September 1950 to discuss the strengthening of Western defenses, they were aware, therefore, that the FRG would not be willing to rearm without charging the West a "price" for that "service." In order to leave himself room to negotiate, however,

Adenauer had never put the "price" into concrete terms. The conditions he continued to give for West German rearmament were always broadly stated concepts rather than specific and individual requirements.[14] For example, during a speech to the *Bundestag* in November 1950, Adenauer stated that the FRG should be prepared to contribute to the defense of Western Europe should the Western powers officially request it; but that the prerequisites for such a contribution were: that the resulting Western defense be so strong as to make any Soviet aggression impossible; and that the FRG be given the same duties, but also the same rights, as all of the other partners in defense.[15] He never outlined in detail the exact military and political conditions which would have to be fulfilled before the FRG would agree that it had been given equal rights as well as equal duties, and that Western defenses had been made strong enough to prevent Soviet aggression.

The Communist invasion of South Korea, and the subsequent fear that Germany might present an analogous situation, did not fail to have an impact on the West German populace. According to Charles Naef:

> It was as if a sudden shock wave had spilled over a dam of resigned antimilitarism. Attitudes were understandably ambivalent: a craving for protection combined with an unwillingness to countenance even a limited defense contribution to an integrated European army.[16]

Public opinion polls reflected this ambivalence. In the American zone of occupation, a full 63 percent of the West Germans sampled believed that the FRG could not be defended without West German help.[17] Acceptance of the need for, and therefore the principle of, West German rearmament rose accordingly In August 1950, survey results showed that 45 percent of the respondents favored the establishment of an independent West German army. Only 43 percent opposed it. Of those in favor of this independent West German army, two thirds would have preferred the integration of a West German contingent into a European army. The European army option also

changed the minds of half the respondents who had been against the independent West German army. In total, 64 percent of those surveyed expressed approval of West German rearmament in some form.[18] Their "craving for protection" is reflected in these results; but follow-up polls conducted in October 1950 also revealed their "unwillingness to countenance even a limited defense contribution." When asked whether they would be willing to **join** the army if the FRG were attacked from the East, 49 percent of the men questioned said they would **not**, versus only 38 percent who would.[19] Surveys of female opinion revealed similar results. Only 36 percent would not have tried to stop the men in their family from joining the army in case of attack from the East, versus 42 percent who would have tried to stop them.[20] Logically, the West Germans tended to approve of rearmament; but emotionally, it was still rejected. Naef explained:

> Germans, particularly youth, . . . wanted to be left alone. A skeptical, disillusioned generation needed time to develop and accept new foundations of public morality from which it could deduce a duty to bring the ultimate personal sacrifice of military service.[21]

Despite this emotionally-based public opinion against rearmament, none of the major political parties in the FRG, except the Communists, were against it in principle.[22] All agreed that to choose freedom and democracy implied a responsibility and a willingness to defend it. Even the leaders of the opposition Social Democratic Party (SPD), a party with a long tradition of socialist pacifism, acknowledged the need for the FRG to make a defense contribution. Although this did not represent the concensus of opinion in the party rank and file, most of whom were still strongly antimilitaristic, Schumacher declared on behalf of the SPD leadership: "Does anyone believe that the one who says, 'there are no wars because there ought not to be any,' has found the right basis? No, we as socialists cannot debate on this basis."[22] This near-consensual agreement on the principle of rearmament did not mean that all of

the parties agreed on the form it should take or the timing and pre-conditions of its occurence. In fact, they only agreed on the idea of joining an integrated European army because it "offered a practical compromise between the resurrection of the discredited *Wehrmacht* and an indefinite continuation of the protection afforded by the presence of foreign occupation forces."[23]

While Adenauer, on behalf of the governing coalition, carefully left himself room to negotiate on broadly stated terms for West German rearmament, the SPD, as an opposition party, was more specific about its position. The SPD insisted that the allies would have to complete their projected force build-up before the FRG could consider its own rearmament. Carlo Schmid, the SPD vice-president of the *Bundestag*, emotionally made this point when he said:

> We say **no** to a rearmament of Germany, because the defense of Europe is a bloody dilettantism under the present power relations. We shall say **yes** to rearmament only if we see the instruments of power which have the capability of repelling a Russian attack . . . We would prefer the bolshevization of unharmed people, in unharmed homes, to that of cripples in earth craters."[25]

Another condition put forward by the SPD was that the FRG would have to occupy a position of absolute equality with the other participants in the integrated army--the same armament and limitations thereof, the same command and staff opportunities, and the same defensive mission. It was felt that anything else would reduce the West German soldiers to mere canon-fodder. Schumacher emphasized this saying, "the Germans do not fit the role of partisans or that of a rear guard for a new Dunkirk."[26] The SPD's final condition was influenced by the lessons the party had learned from the time of the Weimar Republic. At that time, the SPD had taken an internationalist stance, leaving the path open for the Nazis to exploit nationalist sentiment and patriotism. This time, the SPD intended to take upon itself the role of spokesman for Germany's national interests. Accordingly, the leadership of the SPD demanded the full

restoration of national sovereignty in return for West German rearmament[27] Naturally, this nationalist spirit also demanded that the rearmament not take place in such a way as to preclude the reunification of the two German states.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the NATO allies agreed in December 1950 to rearm the FRG in accordance with the Spofford Plan. This plan reflected their ever-present distrust of Germany, in that it made no provisions for the end of the Occupation and it placed limitations on the FRG which were not applicable to the other participating nations. The allies planned the Bonn and Paris Conferences of 1951 in order to work out the details of the Spofford Plan and to agree on the appropriate wording of a treaty. The West German representatives, invited to these conferences almost as a courtesy only, went with an official agenda which did not exactly match that of the NATO allies. While the FRG had basically agreed to participate in the defense of Western Europe, this did not mean it was prepared to do so under the discriminatory terms of the Spofford Plan. The West German representatives attended the conferences prepared to negotiate a new plan, one which reflected a completely different spirit and incorporated as many of the following "conditions" for rearmament as possible:*

--The termination of the status of war against Germany and the return of full sovereignty, to include the end of the Occupation as well as political and economic equality with all other participating nations. Also requested was the recognition of the government of the FRG as the exclusive representative of all the German people and their rights in international affairs.

-- Complete military equality with all other participating nations, to include:

- The same equipment and armament for the West German contingents as possessed by the other national contingents.

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*Only the SPD was unwilling to negotiate and insisted these were prerequisites, **all** of which had to be fulfilled **before** the West Germans would consider rearmament. The West German conference-attendees represented the governing coalition, which believed the FRG was in no position to demand concessions and would be better served when asking for them if it showed itself willing to concede on certain issues.[28]

• The same size of national contingent for all participants--to be no smaller than army corps, supported by appropriate air and naval forces.

• The same opportunities for West German officers to serve in command and joint-level staff positions as afforded to officers from all other participating nations.

• Membership in the NATO alliance for the FRG.

• No further defamation of German soldiers.

• The release of German "war criminals" held by the Western powers, except for those individuals considered also guilty of serious crimes according to German judgements.

-- Increased allied troop strength in the FRG to protect the build-up of West German armed forces, and to help prevent the FRG from becoming the covering-force area of any future East-West war. Included in this condition was the request for an allied guarantee to defend **all** of the territory of the FRG.

-- At least a provisional ruling on the status of the Saar region, which would prevent France from effecting any more changes, in its own favor, concerning this territory.*

-- Continued outside financial aid to assist in defraying the costs of rearmament, so there would be no need either to cut funding to domestic social welfare projects or to raise taxes.[30]

For the most part, the West Germans were successful in their endeavor. Throughout the course of 1951 there were numerous indicators that the allies were willing to make some concessions. Immediately in January, the end of the defamation of German soldiers was initiated by an official apology from General Eisenhower. He

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*The Saar region had been economically joined to France but not politically severed from Germany. This issue was almost to shatter EDC negotiations in January 1952, when France's High Commissioner to the Saar was redesignated as an ambassador, and a diplomatic mission representing the Saar was opened in Paris.[29]

said he regretted his earlier position of equating the *Wehrmacht*, particularly its officers, with the likes of Hitler and his devoted followers. He restored the good reputation of German soldiers, saying they had fought bravely and honorably for their country--not necessarily for its criminal leaders.[31] Adenauer's government built upon this foundation. In May it passed the Rehabilitation Law, which restored the pensions and other rights of former professional soldiers--applicable to all except former members of the *Waffen-SS*.[32] In March the Occupation Statute was revised to give the FRG the right to conduct its own foreign affairs. Adenauer became his own Foreign Minister. In April the FRG regained a large measure of economic equality when it joined the new European Coal and Steel Community, effectively ending its exclusion from any control over the products of the West German heavy industries. In May the FRG became an associate member of the Council of Europe, and in July the Western Occupation Powers ended their status of war against Germany. More economic parity was gained when the FRG was allowed to participate in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) starting in August. Finally, after the Washington Foreign Ministers' conference in September, the Western Powers agreed to the principle of integrating the FRG into the family of Western nations as a fully sovereign member. Negotiations, the aim of which was to conclude a treaty granting sovereignty to the FRG, began immediately. This treaty (the Bonn Treaty) was signed in May 1952; but its implementation had been made contingent upon the ratification of the European Defense Community (EDC) Treaty, also signed that same month. In the terms of the EDC Treaty, the FRG had also been remarkably successful. The "unconditional surrender," discriminatory spirit of the Spofford Plan had largely been removed.*

Aware of allied sensitivity, especially French, concerning a rearmed Germany, and despite an often repeated insistence on complete equality among EDC members, Adenauer accepted a number of inequalities inherent in the EDC Treaty: he did not

*See Chapter 3 for the terms of the EDC Treaty of May 1952.

insist on being allowed to form a German General Staff; he accepted France's right to maintain national forces outside of the EDC; he agreed to limitations on the size and performance capability of planes and ships in the West German supporting air and naval forces; he renounced West German production of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons; and he did not insist on immediate NATO membership.[33] Adenauer accepted these inequalities, partly in order to gain ratification of the treaty and the concurrent implementation of the Bonn Treaty granting sovereignty to the FRG; and partly because

> the Federal Republic had nothing to lose: membership in a scheme for European military integration for a German state both richer and more populous than any other participants held out the possibility of not only equality but leadership, and in the interim concessions would be forthcoming at once: "[Adenauer] was prepared to sacrifice **potential** sovereign rights in return for the surrender of **actual** sovereign powers by other nations participating in the creation of a European defense community."[34]

He apparently believed that once established as an armed and sovereign nation firmly allied with Western Europe, the FRG would be in a strong position to negotiate away the original inequalities of the EDC Treaty.

Although the FRG was the first EDC participant to ratify the EDC and Bonn Treaties (March 19, 1953), Adenauer did not achieve this without opposition. Public opinion, which had remained at approximately the same levels of support for some form of rearmament in principle and emotional opposition to it in practice, had switched from favoring West German participation in an integrated European army to preferring an independent West German army incorporated directly into NATO. Much of the previous support for the European army had been contingent upon an equal status for the FRG within that army. By November 1951, although the final terms of the EDC Treaty had not yet been settled, it was clear that absolute equality would not be achieved; and public opinion polls revealed that only 20 percent of the West Germans surveyed still

favored integration, versus 48 percent who favored the NATO solution.[35] By the time the EDC Treaty was signed in May 1952, surveys showed that 53 percent of the respondents disagreed with Adenauer's attitude toward rearmament saying "If he has his way we shall have to stick our necks out for the others."[36] The Communist party took advantage of this popular opposition to stage strikes and demonstrations against the EDC Treaty.[37]

This extra-parliamentary opposition would not have caused Adenauer much trouble, but he also found resistance among the parties represented in the *Bundestag*. The SPD argued that its prerequisites to agreement on rearmament had not been fulfilled; that the EDC Treaty was discriminatory; that the linkage of the Bonn Treaty to the EDC Treaty was unacceptable; that the FRG was receiving not security, but merely the illusion thereof; and that the treaties made the accomplishment of German reunification impossible, since there was no escape clause, and the Soviet Union could not be expected to give up the GDR, knowing it would be included as part of a reunited Germany in an anti-Soviet military alliance. Schumacher, at that time, was advocating West German rearmament only in the context of a European collective security arrangement which also would include the Soviet Union.[38] Even the government coalition partners joining Adenauer's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) party and its Bavarian counterpart, the Christian Social Union (CSU) party, in the parliamentary majority raised criticism of the treaties. Neither the Free Democratic Party (FDP) nor the German Party (DP) approved of the clauses Adenauer had insisted on inserting in the treaties, which provided that a reunified Germany would be afforded under these treaties the same sovereign rights as granted to the FRG, but also would be responsible for the same duties--membership in the EDC. These parties did not believe the FRG had the authority to bind, in advance, a reunified Germany to treaties which had not been agreed to by a legislature representing all of Germany.[39] Furthermore, they did not wish to accept rearmament until a satisfactory ruling had been accorded the FRG on the

status of the Saar and the subject of "war criminals."[40] Nevertheless, these parties eventually voted with the CDU/CSU to ratify the treaties (Bonn: 225 - 165 and EDC: 224 - 166, both with 2 abstentions), because they had no desire to break up the governing coalition. The only alternative government was an SPD-led one, and for this there was no support.[41]

When the French National Assembly failed to ratify the EDC Treaty in August 1954, Adenauer was profoundly disappointed--not because it slowed his receiving full sovereignty for the FRG, but because he had truly favored the idea of a unified Europe that had been incorporated in the EDC Treaty.[42] He did not, however, oppose the subsequently suggested and ultimately approved Eden Plan, which called for West German membership in NATO and the West European Union (WEU), and the formation of national West German military forces totally subordinated to NATO.* For essentially the same reasons as in 1952, Adenauer accepted the other inequalities which had been present in the EDC Treaty. The new treaty based on the Eden Plan, the Paris Treaty signed in October 1954, contained no clause binding a reunified Germany to either NATO or the WEU; but there was also no clause allowing the FRG to abrogate the treaty in case of reunification. As corollaries, the treaty contained agreements on the status of the Saar region, the granting of sovereignty to the FRG, and the continued stationing of foreign soldiers on West German soil--as defense forces, not occupation troops.[43]

As before, Adenauer faced some opposition to the ratification of the Paris Treaty. A November 1954 survey indicated that 48 percent of the West Germans questioned thought the new West German army would not have enough independence, being subject to too much Western supreme command.[44] Polls taken in January 1955,

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*See Chapter 3 for more about the terms of the Eden Plan.

however, were generally more encouraging than any taken on the subject of rearmament since the Second World War. According to Naef:

> The four-year interval between the announcement of the Pleven Plan and the signature of the Paris Treaties was for the Bonn Republic a period of "phoney rearmament." The Germans were given an opportunity to get used to the inevitability of militarization without being immediately affected by it . . . the EDC interlude "gave the German people time to reconcile themselves to the idea of a defense contribution" for which they had been "totally unprepared."[45]

Whatever the reason, 60 percent of the respondents felt rearmament was necessary, no matter what their personal opinion about the military was; 45 percent favored the participation in NATO called for in the Paris Treaty; 54 percent of the men said they would serve in the army, either voluntarily (seven percent) or if drafted (47 percent); 41 percent favored compulsory military service; and only 11 percent said that all men should refuse to serve.[46]

The improvement in public opinion notwithstanding, Adenauer still faced parliamentary opposition to the treaty. After the death of Schumacher, and particularly after Adenauer's 1953 victory in the *Bundestag* elections, the SPD modified its position concerning West German rearmament. The new leader of the SPD, Ollenhauer, offered Adenauer his party's cooperation on foreign policy, if the government would adopt a flexible position on rearmament and reunification.[47] He argued that the "thaw" in the Cold War that had occurred with the recent death of Stalin meant that the time was ripe for negotiations with the Soviet Union about reunification. Instead of waiting to negotiate from a position of rearmed strength, which Adenauer advocated, Ollenhauer maintained that the FRG could use its possible rearmament as a bargaining chip in these negotiations. He offered a veiled endorsement of West German rearmament within the Western alliance when he suggested that the FRG still could follow that course of action if the negotiations failed

to produce an acceptable agreement for reunification.[48] The SPD Party Congress in 1954 formalized this offer in its official resolution, adding the following conditions to the rearmament:

> (1) that the efforts on behalf of the reunification of Germany be persistently continued; (2) that a European Security System within the framework of the United Nations be pursued; (3) that the treaties in which the Federal Republic commits itself to military contributions can be abrogated by the Federal Government if they should become an obstacle to the reunification of Germany; (4) that the equal rights of all participants and the equal value of all security measures serving their protection be guaranteed; and (5) that the democratic-parliamentary control of the armed forces is secured.[49]

Since the Adenauer government not only had failed to agree to reunification negotiations prior to rearmament, but also had signed a treaty which did not reflect their conditions, the SPD vigorously opposed ratification of the Paris Treaty, stressing it "would block the only likely path to German unity."[50]

Even within the governing majority parties, Adenauer met with resistance in gaining the ratification of the Paris Treaty. The FDP and DP, pleased over the removal of the offensive clause binding a reunified Germany to the treaty and still dissatisfied over the lack of an agreement about the "war criminals," this time opposed the Saar statute contained in the treaty. This statute, arrived at with great difficulty by the representatives of both countries claiming legal rights over the Saar region, France and the FRG, left the eventual status of the area up to a decision of its inhabitants as expressed in election results. They could choose to become either "European" citizens or West German ones--which they always had been legally (*de jure*) but not in practice (*de facto*). The FDP and DP claimed this statute neither sufficiently furthered German national interests, nor strongly enough upheld the FRG's political authority over the Saar. They were joined in this criticism by the SPD.[51] For essentially the same reason as in 1953, however, namely no desire to break up the governing coalition, the FDP and DP swallowed their complaints and West German ratification of the Paris Treaty was

obtained on February 27, 1955, by a *Bundestag* vote of 314 to 157 with 2 abstentions. The *Bundesrat* completed the ratification process with a favorable vote on March 18, 1953.[52] The Paris Treaty and corollary agreements became effective in May 1955; but unlike what soon was to happen in East Germany, a West German army did not immediately spring into being. Planning for the new *Bundeswehr* had begun, however, and it was hoped that the new, democratic spirit of these armed forces would eventually win the wholehearted support of the West German populace

Chapter 4 End Notes

[1]Luigi Barzini, The Europeans (New York: Penguin Books, 1984; copyright in 1983), pp. 72 - 73.

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[10]Buchheim, Aspekte, pp. 122 - 123 **AND** Arnulf Baring, *Außenpolitik in Adenauers Kanzler-demokratie: Bonns Beitrag zur Europäischen Verteidigungs-gemeinschaft* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg *Verlag*, 1969), p. 89.

[11]Baring, *Außenpolitik*, p. 25.

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[13]Konrad Adenauer, Mémoirs 1945 - 1953, trans. Beate Ruhm von Oppen (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1966), p. 270.

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[15]Udo F. Lowke, *Für den Fall, daß . . . SPD und Wehrfrage 1949 - 1955* (Hannover: *Verlag Für Literatur und Zeitgeschehen*, 1969), p. 58.

[16]Charles R. Naef, The Politics of West German Rearmament 1950 - 1956 (Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International, 1979), p. 91.

[17]Merritt, HICOG Surveys, p. 20.

[18]Ibid.

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[20]Ibid.

[21]Naef, Politics, p. 91.

[22]Ibid., p. 46.

[23]Lowke, *Für den Fall, daß . . .*, p. 63.

[24]Naef, Politics, p. 47.

[25]Ibid., pp. 91 - 92.

[26]Ibid., p. 92.

[27]Ibid., p. 93.

[28]Lowke, *Für den Fall, daß . . .*, p. 78.

[29]Dietrich Wagner, *FDP und Wiederbewaffnung: Die Wehrpolitische Orientierung der Liberalen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1949 - 1955* (Boppard am Rhein: Harald Boldt *Verlag*, 1978), p. 91.

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--Gerhart Binder, *Deutschland seit 1945: Eine Dokumentierte Gesamtdeutsche Geschichte in der Zeit der Teilung* (Stuttgart-Degerloch: Seewald *Verlag*, 1969), p. 302.

--Working Group of the *Militärgeschichtlichen Forschungsamt* (MGFA) led by Johannes Fischer, *Verteidigung im Bündnis: Planung, Aufbau und Bewährung der Bundeswehr 1950 - 1972* (Munich: Bernard and Graefe *Verlag für Wehrwesen*, 1975), p. 32.

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[31]MGFA Working Group, *Verteidigung im Bündnis*, p. 35.

[32]Naef, Politics, p. 531.

[33]James L. Richardson, Germany and the Atlantic Alliance: The Interaction of Stratgy and Politics (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966), pp. 22 - 23.

[34]McGeehan, German Rearmament Question, p. 143.

[35]Merritt, HICOG Surveys, p. 149.

[36]Noelle, Germans, p. 243.

[37]Fritz Krause, *Antimilitaristische Opposition in der BRD 1949 - 55* (Frankfurt am Main: *Verlag Marxistische Blatter GmbH*, 1971), p. 152.

[38]Lowke, *Fur den Fall, daß . . .*, p. 93.

[39]Wagner, *FDP und Wiederbewaffnung*, pp. 95 - 96.

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[41]Baring, *Außenpolitik*, pp. 179 and 218.

[42]Manon, *République Fédérale Allemande*, p. 122.

[43]Richardson, Germany and the Atlantic Alliance, pp. 22 - 23 **AND** Daniel J. Nelson, A History of U.S. Military Forces in Germany (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1987), p. 53.

[44]Merritt, HICOG Surveys, p. 149.

[45]Naef, Politics, p. 66.

[46]Merritt, HICOG Surveys, p. 250.

[47]Naef, Politics, p. 160.

[48]Ibid., p. 161.

[49]Ibid., pp. 162 - 163.

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Chapter 5

The West Germans Accept a New, Democratic Military

The only way a West German army could have come into being almost immediately after its reauthorization in May 1955, would have been to re-establish a traditional, authoritarian-style army similar to the old *Reichswehr/Wehrmacht*--much as was done in East Germany. Such a move would have seriously endangered the democratic regime of the FRG, for it would have found no popular support. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the Allied post-war demilitarization efforts had included antimilitaristic history education. Far from stressing the glorious military exploits of the German armed forces serving such figures as Frederick the Great or Bismarck, which had become almost canonized in German history; the Allies had avoided battles and had stressed the negative socio-political aspects of German military history in their special re-education programs for those expected to become the shapers of future German thinking--educators, church officials, journalists and other media personnel, to name a few. They had reminded this intelligentsia of the long, authoritarian history of the German/Prussian military and of its powerful influence over civilian governments, often to the detriment of the German national interests. For example, attention was drawn to the exhalted, special-caste status formerly afforded to the professional military cadre, which had allowed them to think of the army as a state within the state, able to operate outside of established constitutional boundaries for the good of the Fatherland--as they, not elected civilian politicians, defined it. Not only had this given them absolute power over soldiers, which allowed them free rein to harass and brutalize in the name of discipline, but it also had encouraged them to look at situations

only in terms of military expediency. With no political responsibility, not even the right to vote or to participate in the democratic process in any way, but with tremendous political influence as the armed agents necessary for the enforcement of national policies; this one-dimensional tunnel-vision led the military to such actions as the development of the Schlieffen Plan (which tied German diplomatic hands in 1914 and forced on Germany the disastrous two-front war it had been designed to avoid) and the facilitation of Hitler's rise to power. As expected, the Allied antimilitaristic message was disseminated to, and largely assimilated by, the German populace. With this negative military history as fresh in their minds as the memories of wartime suffering and post-war economic misery, which were only just beginning to be eased by returning prosperity; the West Germans were hesitant about re-establishing a military institution. They were, therefore, understandably opposed to the rearmament their government had agreed to undertake in exchange for full sovereignty, although most recognized the need for it. According to Gordon Craig:

> No one who passed through Western Germany in the first months after the Paris Agreement of December 1954, which admitted the Bundesrepublik to membership in NATO and authorized it to raise a contingent force of 500,000 officers and men could avoid being impressed by the scope and intensity of antimilitarism. The feeling cut across [political] party lines. . . The trade unions were critical of the rearmament policy. . . and so was a large part of the leadership of the Evangelical Church. That section of German youth that was eligible for military service showed their displeasure at the prospect. . . ; and the enormous success of Helmuth Krist's antimilitarist novel 0815 and the films based upon that book and Carl Zuckmayer's drama The Devil's General, which portrayed the military caste and army life in the worst possible light, indicated that this negative attitude was widely shared by the general public.[1]

Chancellor Adenauer was well aware that there could be no question of a return of the old militarism, the blind obedience, or the politically irresponsible military state within the state. When the question of West German rearmament began officially to raise its head in 1950, he immediately established a government office whose mission

was to plan a new type of German armed forces. With the knowledge of the Western occupation authorities, but not made known to the general public, Adenauer convened a conference of former *Wehrmacht* officers at Kloster Himmerod to discuss this issue. Adenauer was concerned that the FRG would not be protected by the NATO allies in case of aggression from the East unless it also participated in that defense. He knew the FRG would be allowed to rearm only if the allies were convinced that the feared German aggressive militarism of the past could be controlled by the civilian government. He also knew that rearmament could succeed only if the West German populace were convinced that the military would not become again a state within the state with absolute power over soldiers who had to give up their human and civic rights upon donning a uniform. Furthermore, he had no intention of recreating the situation of the Weimar Republic in which the government was dependent upon the services of armed forces hostile to the regime. Adenauer told the assembled military "experts" at Himmerod that their mission was to conceive of a military institution which

--would be completely under the control of popularly elected government officials, and unable to circumvent the system to achieve the relatively autonomous status of former German armed forces.

--would implement civilian policy decisions, rather than dictate them.

--not only would be required to operate within the boundaries of the Basic Law and other legislation enacted by the *Bundestag*, but also whose members would be allowed to retain their full human and civic rights as guaranteed in those documents.

--would share completely the new ideals of the FRG, would participate freely in the democratic process, and would not seek to overthrow the regime by force in favor of an authoritarian style of government.[2]

The *Himmerode Denkschrift* of October 1950, the recommendations which resulted from this conference, guided the in-depth planning for the establishment of the new *Bundeswehr*.

The drafters of the *Himmerode Denkschrift* were not traditionalists bent on re-establishing the old *Reichswehr/Wehrmacht*. They were carefully selected military reformers, invited to share in the planning of the *Bundeswehr* because their ideas were known to reflect the prevalent allied and West German concern that the new armed forces should reflect the proper character and mental attitude as befitting the servants of a democracy. For the first time in German history, the *Himmerode Denkschrift* suggested the legal prescription of the **rights** as well as the **duties** of future West German soldiers.[3] The idea of the citizen-in-uniform or citizen-soldier was born. The members of the new *Bundeswehr*, both volunteers and conscripts, were to be treated with dignity and respect; and they were to retain the freedoms guaranteed to all West Germans in the Basic Law, the FRG's equivalent of a constitution. Only to the extent absolutely necessary for the successful accomplishment of the military mission were these freedoms to be restricted. The new soldiers were to be encouraged to be a part of their local communities, not a separate caste. Finally, the *Himmerode Denkschrift* acknowledged the need to change the style of leadership in the military, if the ideal of the citizen-soldier were ever to be attained. The idea of *Innere Führung*, often translated as Leadership and Civic Education or Leadership and Character Training, was born in this important document. It was shaped by modern organization theory and management psychology;[4] and it outlined as the duty of commanders and training cadre "to cultivate respect for society's positive values as justification for the military sacrifice, rather than fear and hatred of the presumptive enemy."[7] Adenauer fully endorsed these novel military concepts, and directed that they be used as part of the foundation for the planning of the *Bundeswehr*, which he made the responsibility of the federal office headed by Theodor Blank.

Two other concepts joined the citizen-in-uniform and *Innere Fuhrung* to complete the foundation for *Bundeswehr* planning: the primacy of politics and the rule of law.[6] The idea of the primacy of politics was that the military establishment should be totally subordinate to the political direction of the elected representatives of civil society. The rule of law referred to the idea that the military should be integrated into the already existing constitutional and legal order, rather than be allowed to form itself outside of democratically established norms. These two concepts were part of the ideological legacy of German liberalism and progressivism, and were questioned in principle by nobody, other than a very small, politically unimportant, minority of extremists.[7] Not everyone, however, agreed with the concepts of military reform as expressed in the *Himmerode Denkschrift*. Although this document had been written by former military officers, it did not express the views of **all** former military officers. In fact, it probably expressed the views of very few of the former military elite. As previously mentioned, the "experts" invited to the Himmerod Conference had been selected for their democratic ideas. These ideas were not popular in the "old army," and those who espoused them often found themselves outside the "charmed circle" of military power. One of the interesting facets of *Bundeswehr* history, which seems to highlight the deliberate attempt to make the Bundeswehr radically different from the *Reichswehr* and *Wehrmacht*, is that the former military "outsiders" often became the influential leaders of the *Bundeswehr*, while the former military elite just as often either were excluded from the new officer corps or relegated to positions of relatively little importance in the hierarchy of military policy-making.

Some former soldiers were against the idea of rearmament--or, at least, of contributing to it themselves. Many were bitter about the way they had been treated after the war: as criminals, stripped of their rights and defamed. Even after the Rehabilitation Law of 1951 restored their right to social benefits, many were unwilling to rejoin the armed forces of a society which once again be might tempted to turn

against them.[8] A few rejected either the idea of serving a democracy or that of becoming an ally of Germany's World War II enemies. Another small number of former military members had been successful during their ten years of civilian life and did not want to give up that success to once again bear arms.

Other former military men were not against the idea of West German rearmament, but were opposed to the idea of military reforms. They preferred to see the "old army" restored. These traditionalists, usually the former military elite, argued that the concept of the citizen-soldier, involved in community life rather than separate from it, was impossible; that military and civilian life had little in common; and that the gulf that had always separated soldiers from civilians was even wider than ever before, given the conditions of warfare and the "hedonism of modern mass consumption society."[9] They advocated stern indoctrination and mechanical discipline, claiming that anything else would produce inadequately trained soldiers, unable to withstand the rigors of combat and captivity. One such believer noted:

> Soldiers will have to be single-minded robots, acting instinctively. Once their thoughts are allowed to stray . . . they may well be unmanned by the frightful conditions of a future struggle. Let this be a warning to those who imagine the armies of tomorrow as an association of democratic citizens.[10]

Baudissin, a military reformer often referred to as the "father" of *Innere Fuhring*, answered the first challenge with his philosophy that "The soldier cannot be asked to sacrifice during his time of service what he has decided to defend: freedom, the rule of law, and the preservation of human dignity."[11] To the second charge, reformers answered that camaraderie and a sense of self-sufficiency were what really would be needed in future struggles. According to Charles Naef, they felt

> it was more important for citizen-soldiers to learn how to keep their weapons functioning in mud and snow than to maintain an immaculate dress uniform and polished gear. It was more important

> that they learn to respect and trust their immediate superiors than to parrot the chain of command and salute every officer in sight.[12]

The military reformers working under Blank were not naive enough to believe that their arguments had been able to convince diehard traditionalists of the error of their old ways; but they understood these old soldiers well enough to know that most of them would try to implement the new policies, if they were reactivated in the *Bundeswehr*; simply because they had been trained to follow orders. It was hoped that a new generation of officers, trained to believe in *Innere Fuhring* and the idea of the citizen-in-uniform, would replace the traditionalists as they retired from service.[13]

Although the old military elite often complained that the *Bundeswehr* represented a total break from the traditions of the previous armed forces of the German nation, this was only partially true. The military planners of the early 1950s were aware that not everything in German military history was bad. They recognized that the principles of the military reformers of the 1807 - 1819 era could justifiably be built upon with pride. The ideas of Scharnhorst, Gneisenau, Boyen, and Grolman simply had to be reborn in the twentieth century.

Reflecting the liberal spirit which had spread to Prussia from revolutionary France, these early reformers wanted to bring the Prussian military out of isolation and closer to society. They realized that the willing support of the population would be needed if a conscript army were to be militarily successful. They recognized that

> Prussian subjects who were called to the colours [could not] be expected to fight loyally and bravely in an army which showed no respect for their individual moral worth, which allowed them no opportunity for advancement during their service, and which regarded them as cannon fodder rather than as citizens.[14]

Likewise, the reformers of the 1950's understood the need of soldiers to be treated with fairness and human dignity in order to fight effectively. Furthermore, they knew it was even more important for them to capture public support for military

service than it had been for the reformers of the nineteenth century The *Bundeswehr* planners knew the FRG could not supply enough troops to fill out the twelve divisions expected of it without resorting to conscription. Unlike old Prussia, however, the FRG was a democracy, and the public had to approve of the idea of conscription before it could be implemented. Prussian society had been so permeated with military values that it probably would have approved of conscription, had it been given a choice; but the same could not be said of modern West German society. It had to be convinced that democratic values had permeated the military, and that the new military profession would be held in neither greater nor lesser esteem than any civilian occupation. That alone would make military service less intolerable to the West Germans, but it would not be enough to make them approve of conscription. For that they had to be convinced that "just as the democratic idea demanded of every citizen a degree of involvement in the profession of politics, so the idea of a citizen's army required a universal military conscription"[15] In 1951, Adenauer's government launched a major information campaign designed to improve West German defense preparedness in general. Some of this effort included the dissemination of the principles of military reform, and the promotion of the idea of a universal military obligation as a corollary of democratic citizenship.[16] In March 1950, public opinion polls revealed that only 30 percent of the West Germans questioned favored conscription, while 55 percent opposed it. By March 1956, these figures had improved to 51 percent in favor of conscription versus only 31 percent against it.[17] Although this was only a slim majority in favor of conscription, it was enough to allow the *Bundestag* to pass the Conscription Bill in July 1956, without fear of weakening the young democracy in the FRG.

Making changes to garner popular support for military service was not the only issue on which the *Bundeswehr* planners could look to the earlier reformers for inspiration. Scharnhorst and his like-minded "disciples" had worked diligently for

major reforms in three main areas. The first was to put an end to the aristocratic monopoly of the officer corps. Despite considerable opposition from more conservative military leaders, who saw the proposal "as an attack on their own class and an unjust deprivation of prerogatives which belonged to them,"[18] the reformers convinced King Frederick William III to sign the following order on August 6, 1808:

> A claim to the position of officer shall from now on be warranted, in peacetime by knowledge and education, in time of war by exceptional bravery and quickness of perception. From the whole nation, therefore, all individuals who possess these qualities can lay title to the highest positions of honour in the military establishment. All social preference which has hitherto existed is herewith terminated in the military establishment, and everyone, without regard for his background, has the same rights.[19]

It was quite correctly recognized that knowledge and scholarship alone were not the only qualifications of good officers. Therefore, examination boards met to consider an officer candidate's "presence of mind, ready perception, precision, correctness in his duty and propriety in his deportment."[20]

Although the *Bundeswehr* planners of the 1950's did want personnel from all walks of life to be able to hold commissions if they met the specified requirements, their problem was not so much an officer corps dominated by aristocracy, but filling the *Bundeswehr* officer positions at all. Obviously, the only people qualified to hold the higher-ranking positions were those with prior military experience--which meant experience in the discredited *Reichswehr/Wehrmacht*. Unfortunately, many of these officers were tainted by advocation of Nazi and/or traditional militaristic values. The new, democratic *Bundeswehr* could not be led by either "criminals" or reactionaries. Some form of screening process had to be set up to weed out undesirables from among the applicants for *Bundeswehr* commissions. The earlier reformers' idea of examination boards to test an applicant's suitability above and beyond certain specified requirements was adopted for the new situation. Screening boards were established to

examine every applicant for a *Bundeswehr* commission. They all required that applicants show proof of "irreproachable" behavior before, during, and after the war--including any time spent in captivity. An applicant also had to have "proven" himself in civilian life. Although income or position attained were not a decisive consideration, every applicant who had been an utter failure in civilian life was rejected. If such former officers had been unable to adapt to civilian life, it was assumed they would be unable to serve in a somewhat civilianized citizen's army.[21]

Two types of screening boards handled the investigation of veteran officers applying for commissioning in the *Bundeswehr*. Those desiring new commissions at ranks below that of full colonel were screened by *Annahmeorganisationen*, or acceptance organizations. These performed a superficial investigation, usually just a review of the officer's official records and a brief interview. Veterans applying for commissions in the ranks of colonel or general, however, had to be investigated thoroughly by the *Personalgutachterausschuss* (PGA board). The President of the FRG appointed thirty-eight members to sit on this important board, including some former concentration camp inmates and other anti-Nazis, as well as a few *Wehrmacht* officers whose pasts previously had been found to be free of any pro-Nazi stigma.[22]

Only two types of veterans were rejected out of hand by the screening boards: those who had committed crimes or offenses against humanity, and those who had served at the ranks of colonel or general in the *Waffen-SS*. Very few applicants who had been members of the *Waffen-SS* at any rank were accepted as *Bundeswehr* officers, because most were unable to prove "'active disavowal' of the ideology of the Waffen-SS and of National Socialism."[23] Other types of veterans could receive a *Bundeswehr* commission only if the new Defense Minister of the FRG personally approved them after a detailed investigation. These included:

--Former members of the "ordinary" SS, which, among other duties, had helped to run the concentration camps and staffed the Gestapo.

--Former members of the *Sicherhietsdienst*, an intelligence network associated with the Gestapo.

--Members of post-war organizations which officially opposed the new, democratic defense policy.

--Former members of the French Foreign Legion, which many former SS members had joined after the war.

--Anyone sentenced by a non-German court.

--Anyone who had served the intelligence community of a foreign power.

--All not holding West German citizenship.

--Former members of the National Committee for a Free Germany, an organization formed by the Soviets from among captured German officers.[24]

These screening procedures were as thorough as possible, but they were in no way fool-proof. Since any intelligent individual could have figured out what the screening boards wanted to hear, test questions designed to catch applicants in falsehoods were incorporated into the system. Even so, some applicants who never should have received *Bundeswehr* commissions did manage to slip through the screening boards. According to Walter Nelson this was not too difficult since

> everyone--including the Western Allies--was in a hurry to get capable former Wehrmacht officers back in uniform again. Commitments to the new democratic state were offered and eagerly accepted. One checked a man's record as best one could, and then, by and large, one took him at his word. It was, after all, the word of "an officer and a gentleman."[25]

Scharnhorst, too, had found that his examination boards were not infallible, and could be subjectively manipulated--by the examiners in his case rather than by the applicants--to discriminate against non-aristocratic candidates or candidates with liberal views.

The second major reform initiative of the nineteenth century military planners was spearheaded by Boyen. He thought soldiers should also be citizens who played an active role in society, not a caste apart from it.[26] He believed the army could teach the citizens who served in it the meaning of duty, and could prepare them for intelligent participation in public life.[27] Boyen recognized that soldiers could not become responsible citizens if during their military service they learned only about authoritarian orders backed by brutal discipline. They must learn to make some decisions on their own authority--and then be held responsible for them. To protect soldiers who correctly followed their own judgement when this contravened established principles of mechanical obedience, Boyen got new Articles of War published which "abolished corporeal punishments for minor breaches of discipline and set up a system of military justice which protected the individual soldier from arbitrary verdicts of local commanders."[28]

Likewise, the planners for the new *Bundeswehr* wanted to eliminate any gap between soldiers and civilian society. Following Boyen's line of thinking, the leitmotif of *Innere Führung* became the citizen-in-uniform. There were three main aspects to this concept. First, the *Bundeswehr* soldier should regard himself, and also should be regarded by society, as a normal member of a democratic state with the same rights and privileges as any other citizen. These civic freedoms should be limited only to the extent absolutely necessary by the nature of military service. The soldier should be encouraged to take an active interest in politics, to think intelligently about political questions, and to form his own opinions based on solid facts. He should even be allowed to run for public office and to take a leave of absence from the military to hold that office, if elected.[29] Second, the *Bundeswehr* soldier should not be expected to fight when ordered to for just **any** cause with unquestioning obedience. He should understand against what he is expected to fight and why. He should understand and believe in the value of what he is supposed to protect through his military service. The

first concept can be rationally taught, the latter must be emotionally engraved. The *Bundeswehr* planners realized the soldier must experience in his daily life the benefits of a free and democratic society if he is to be expected to defend them with his life. With such a background, *Bundeswehr* soldiers could be expected to differentiate between legal and criminal orders better than their counterparts under the National Socialist regime had been able to do so. According to Baudissin, a soldier's obedience has a boundary where his conscience and his responsibility forbid the fulfillment of an order.[30] Finally, the *Bundeswehr* soldier should be encouraged to develop self-discipline and self-reliance, rather than to depend solely on discipline and explicit orders from above. The sophistication of the techniques and weapons of modern warfare would require soldiers to be trained as specialists rather than as generic warriors. These specialists would work together as teams, combining a new idea of partnership with an old tradition of comradeship. New standards of military discipline would have to reflect this new style of soldiering.[31]

The third major area of reform the early military planners wanted to shape was also an area of considerable interest to the political elite of the FRG in the 1950's. Around the turn of the nineteenth century, there was a confusion of high military agencies, all of which claimed the right to direct some aspect of the Prussian armed forces. With no intention of trying to take the military operational command authority away from the monarch, the reformers engineered the creation of a Ministry of War, under which all of the previously competing agencies were subordinated, to provide a detree of unity to the military establishment. In light of the changes that were being made concurrently in the Prussian political structure, it must be assumed that the military reformers intended the new ministry to be responsible to a popularly elected parliament. The Minister of War was to be a kind of bridge spanning the gulf between the military and civilian society.[32] The military establishment was too strong to allow such a curtailment of its autonomy in the nineteenth century, and much the same was

true in the Weimar Republic after the First World War Then, the fledgling *Reichstag* had tried, unsuccessfully, to assert its control over the veteran *Reichswehr*, which had retained its strong, firmly established, autonomous position in German society and popular political thinking. The situation was much different in the 1950's The modern military planners were backed by a strong, popularly elected *Bundestag*, which held the fate of the as yet non-existent military establishment in its hands The *Bundestag*'s position was further strengthened by the fact that it had been in existence for six years by the time the new military it had created was activated in 1955

The men planning the formation of the *Bundeswehr* envisioned a military establishment completely under parliamentary control. They wanted to place the new armed forces under the peacetime command of the Minister of Defense and the wartime command of the Chancellor, both of whom were responsible to the *Bundestag*. The NATO allies, however, did not feel comfortable allowing the West Germans to control their new armed forces operationally. The Paris Treaty of 1954 stipulated, therefore, that the entire *Bundeswehr* would be placed under the operational control of the NATO Supreme Commander. Accordingly, the *Bundeswehr* planners knew that the West German government actually would have complete control over only three matters: those concerning personnel, discipline, and supplies--the areas in which civilian control would once again be intended to bridge the gulf between the military and civilian society.[33] That was enough, however, to ensure the enactment of the rest of the planned military reforms.

Baudissin and the other *Bundeswehr* planners saw their concepts embodied in laws, once the Federal Republic of Germany was legally committed to rearmament. The Basic Law, with its amendments to authorize the formation of armed forces, guaranteed the civic rights of all citizens including soldiers, and expressly prohibited the conscription of a soldier against the dictates of his conscience It firmly set the inner workings of the *Bundeswehr* under civilian parliamentary control The military was

also required to swear an oath to uphold the Basic Law.[34] The Soldiers Act of 1956 defined the rights and duties of servicemembers, and legally established the principles of *Innere Fuhrung*.[35] Numerous laws, directives, instructions, and service regulations which determine the atmosphere of the *Bundeswehr* were then written to express the rationale of the Basic Law and the Soldiers Act. Some examples of these documents include: the Military Grievance Code, the Law Concerning the Election and Term of Office of Spokesmen in the Armed Forces, the Military Disciplinary Code, the Ministerial Order Governing Superior-Subordinate Relations, the Joint Services Regulation 10/5 on the Duty in Barracks, the Guidelines on Education within the Armed Forces, and the Regulation on Political Activities of Servicemen.[36]

Mindful of the lessons learned, however, from the demise of the earlier liberal reforms through lack of enforcement, the *Bundestag* also passed a law in June 1957, which established the office of the Defense Commissioner of the *Bundestag*.[37] Elected by and responsible to the *Bundestag*, the Commissioner's job was "to act as an auxillary organ of the Bundestag in the execution of parliamentary control over the armed forces, to protect the civic rights of Bundeswehr members, and to oversee the implementation of the basic concepts of *Innere Fuhrung*."[39] He was charged with carrying out and reporting on investigations as required by the *Bundestag*, as well as with looking into, on his own initiative, infringements of the guaranteed rights of the troops or of the principles of *Innere Fuhrung*. The Commissioner was given the authority to visit any unit without advance warning, and every soldier was entitled to appeal directly to the Commissioner with a grievance about *Innere Fuhrung* or infringement of his rights.[40] Inevitably, the Commissioner and his staff were initially perceived by the new military leadership as a hostile agency.

One must remember that this "new" military leadership was essentially the old military elite, recommissioned into the *Bundeswehr*. Most of them disapproved of the military reforms, and many of those who did agree with their spirit often did not fully

understand them. Thus, out of fear of violating the principles of *Innere Fuhrung* and of bringing the wrath of the *Bundestag* down upon their heads, believers and non-believers alike often failed to exercise the authority which had been left in their hands. Most complained that the new rules made it impossible for them to maintain the order in their units needed to accomplish the military mission. They believed that the existence of the Parliamentary Commissioner eroded discipline and encouraged insubordination by allowing the soldiers to go over their heads, and often behind their backs, to air grievances. They felt threatened and harassed when the Commissioner or his staff investigated the complaints.[40] As the concepts of Innere Führing began to be assimilated, however, the Commissioner more and more came to be accepted as an institution serving not only the individual soldier, but also the armed forces as a whole. Increasingly, the military leadership--sometimes the former Wehrmacht veterans, but more often the new generation of officers slowly replacing them in positions of importance--began turning to the office of the Commissioner for advice concerning such matters as past military traditions that would be appropriate for guiding and inspiring the *Bundeswehr*. Together they began to solve the complex problems inherent in training and disciplining a military force without excessively restricting the soldiers' basic rights.[41]

Naef studied West German public opinon trends during the rearmament of the FRG, and he concluded that

> the Bundeswehr was reluctantly accepted as the illegitimately conceived child of Adenauer's highly esteemed liaison with the United States. It was overwhelmingly rejected if its role was to be that of a warrior. It was welcomed as a trainer of youth, employer of labor, and client of industry.[42]

These were uses for a military institution far removed from Adenauer's desire for a defense force. Nevertheless, for whatever the reasons, public opinion polls from this period indicate a shift among the West German population from almost complete

rejection of rearmament (in December 1949 only 26 percent of survey respondents favored rearmament[43]), to tolerance of it (in May 1952, approximately equal numbers of respondents favored West German military participation in the defense of Western Europe as opposed it: 44 percent and 45 percent, respectively[44]), and finally to growing agreement with the Adenauer government's chosen course (in January 1955, 60 percent of survey respondents agreed rearmament was necessary,[45] and by May 1957, only 17 percent still disagreed with Adenauer's policy on rearmament[46]) The successful establishment of the *Bundeswehr* was certainly aided by this slow, but steady, change of public opinion. Although the opinion polls do not state the reason for this change of attitude, one must assume that the well publicized information concerning the new spirit of the *Bundeswehr* played a part in it The careful planning that went into the *Bundeswehr* did result in armed forces which, although they may fall a little short of the almost perfect vision of the modern reformers, reflect the democratic ideals not only of the FRG, but also of the entire free "Western World" which they help to protect. This has done much to ease the antimilitarism that was originally so strong in the FRG. According to the White Paper 1970:

> . . . the Federal Armed Forces have come to occupy a firm place in the consciousness of the public. Even the form and substance of criticism to which they are exposed are signs of normalization. In this respect, the Federal Armed Forces are no worse or better off than those of any other country. As an institution, they are not viewed with greater criticism than are parliaments, churches, or universities.[40]

While this West German government source is, admittedly, somewhat biased, the statement does seem to express the situation I observed in the FRG from January 1978 to January 1981.

Chapter 5 End Notes

[1]Gordon A. Craig, The Germans (New York: New American Library, Incorporated, 1983), pp. 242 - 243.

[2]Hans-Jurgen Rautenberg, "*Zur Standortbestimmung fur kunftige deutsche Streitkrafte*," *Anfange westdeutscher Sicherheitspolitik 1945 - 1956: Von der Kapitulation bis zum Pleven-Plan* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg *Verlag*, 1982), pp. 778 - 780.

[3]Carl-Gero von Ilsemann, *Die Bundeswehr in der Demokratie: Zeit der Inneren Fuhrung* (Hamburg: R. v. Decker's *Verlag*, G. Schenck GmbH, 1971), p. 5.

[4]Charles R. Naef, The Politics of West German Rearmament 1950 - 1956 (Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International, 1979), p. 542.

[5]Ibid., p. 547.

[6]Ibid., p. 542.

[7]Ibid., p. 571.

[8]Georg Meyer, *"Zur Situation der deutschen militarischen Fuhrungsschicht im Vorfeld des westdeutschen Verteidigungsbeitrages 1945 - 1950/51,"* Anfange, pp. 674 - 675.

[9]Naef, Politics, p. 545.

[10]Miksche quoted in Ibid., p. 546.

[11]Quoted in Ibid.

[12]Ibid., p. 547.

[13]Ibid., p. 549.

[14]Gordon A. Craig, The Politics of thePrussian Army 1640 - 1945 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1955; third printing with corrections, 1964), p. 41.

[15]Naef, Politics, p. 554.

[16]Ibid., p. 519.

[17]Elisabeth Noelle and Erich Peter Neumann, eds., The Germans: Public Opinion Polls 1947 - 1966, trans. Gerard Finan (Allenbach: *Verlag fur Demoskopie*, 1967), p. 443.

[18]Craig, Prussian Army, p. 44.

[19]Quoted in Ibid., p. 43.

[20]Ibid., p. 42.

[21]Walter Henry Nelson, Germany Rearmed (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972), pp. 67 and 98.

[22]Ibid., p. 64

[23]Ibid., p. 65.

[24]Ibid.

[25]Ibid., p. 69.

[26]Craig, Prussian Army, p. 80.

[27]Ibid., p. 48.

[28]Ibid.

[29]Richard Hiscocks, The Adenauer Era (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1966), p. 214.

[30]Wolf Graf von Baudissin, *Soldat fur den Frieden: Entwurfe fur eine zeitgemaße Bundeswehr*, Peter von Schubert, ed. (Munich: R. Piper and Company *Verlag*, 1969), p. 107.

[31]Press and Information Office of the German Federal Government, White Paper 1970 on the Security of the Federal Republic of Germany and on the State of the German Federal Armed Forces (Published by the Federal Minister of Defense on behalf of the German Federal Government, 1970), p. 126.

[32]Craig, Prussian Army, pp. 52 - 53.

[33]Nelson, Germany Rearmed, p. 106.

[34]White Paper 1970, pp. 25 and 171 **AND** Hiscocks, Adenauer Era, p. 217.

[35]Nelson, Germany Rearmed, pp. 35 - 36.

[36]White Paper 1970, p. 122.

[37]Hiscocks, Adenauer Era, p. 218.

[38]Nelson, Germany Rearmed, p. 194.

[39]Hiscocks, Adenauer Era, p. 218.

[40]Nelson, Germany Rearmed, p. 198.

[41]Ibid., p. 206.

[42]Naef, Politics, pp. 474 - 475.

[43]Anna J. Merritt and Richard L. Merritt, eds., Public Opinion in Semisovereign Germany: The HICOG Surveys, 1949 - 1955 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1980), p. 20.

[44]Ibid., p. 22.

[45]Ibid., p. 250.

[46]Noelle, Germans, p. 245.

[47]White Paper 1970, p. 117.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION: Not So Incredible after All

Upon closer inspection, perhaps the rearmament of the FRG just ten years after Germany's defeat in the Second World War was not so incredible after all. It seems that it was rational political policy, not human emotions, which changed so rapidly; and logical decisions changing political positions can quickly be triggered by new international circumstances, whereas deep-seated human emotions can be altered only slowly over time.

The United States, for example, changed its official policy toward Germany during the early postwar years, when it found it had much more in common with its defeated enemy than it did with its erstwhile ally and ideological rival, the Soviet Union. With the sudden responsibility of superpower and leader of the free world, the United States government recognized the potential of Germany as a valuable ally. It also saw a revival of Germany as one way to ease the high costs to the American taxpayer of the Occupation and the defense of Western Europe. On the emotional level, the United States had never been invaded or attacked by Germany and there was no real likelihood of that ever happening; therefore, the fear of Germany which was prevalent in most European countries was much less pronounced in the United States. Furthermore, the United States had provided shelter to many German refugees fleeing the Hitler-regime, many of whom had contributed significantly to the ultimate Allied victory over Germany. It was fairly easy for the American populace to recognize these German contributions, and once the general war-hysteria died down, it was realized that popular emotion had been directed more against the Nazis than against all Germans

The former were to be severely punished, but the latter could be accepted as friends--particularly in the face of a threat most Americans did fear greatly communist aggression from, or sponsored by, the Soviet Union

In France, the situation was quite different. France and Germany had been rivals for centuries, dating back at least to the division of Charlemagne's Empire in the ninth century. Furthermore, in 1870, 1914, and 1940, Germany had invaded France. Fear of Germany had been ingrained into the majority of French consciences by the end of World War II. During the post-war years, which found France economically dependent on the United States and militarily spread too thin across the French Union to defend its metropolitan borders from any communist-inspired aggression, it was not hard for the French governments rationally to admit the need for West German rearmament--both to help defend the "Western World," and to keep the United States happy and militarily entrenched in Europe, as well as providing financial aid to France. The problem was that this could be accepted emotionally only if France were to be able to exercise at least some control over these new German armed forces, and preferably with the FRG having no authority over them at all. Between 1950 and 1954 France's official position on the subject inched away from this scenario through a series of compromise plans In the face of the West German government's unwillingness to rearm under conditions of less than full equality with the NATO allies, of the official American support for that idea, and of the growing willingness of the other NATO allies to agree as well. France's government found itself between the "rock" of allied pressure and the "hard place" of popular French fears. McGeehan, in his book The German Rearmament Question, said "The French continued to fear German equality in theory because they regarded it as a certain step toward German superiority in practice."[1] In 1954, when the French National Assembly finally ratified the treaty to allow West German national rearmament as a member of NATO and the West European Union (WEU), it did so not because popular emotion had suddenly changed to accept it, but because of a fear that

the allies would rearm the West Germans even without French consent If that were to happen, the French would have no control at all over the new West German armed forces At least through the WEU the FRG would have limits placed on its rearmament, and France would be in a position to monitor West German compliance with those limits There had been a precedent for such a decision by the National Assembly Out of a similar concern to retain at least some control over the West German heavy industries, the National Assembly had ratified in 1951 the treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community French popular opinion did not come to accept West German rearmament until France had become a fairly strong economic force as well as an independent nuclear military power in its own right, and the FRG had proven itself over time to be a threat only to the Warsaw Pact.

The situation in the FRG was less simple than in the United States, but also less complex than in France. On a rational, official policy level it was fairly easy to see that rearmament would be inevitable if the Allied Powers decided it would happen After all, the FRG was still an occupied state. Besides, the FRG needed to rearm in order to ensure its territory could and would be defended by the NATO allies in case of Communist aggression from the East. Furthermore, logic dictated that rearmament could be used to regain West German sovereignty On the other hand, however, logic also dictated that rearmament and sovereignty for the FRG most likely would make the division of Germany permanent. This is something Adenauer refused to accept. Most government members and *Bundestag* deputies conceded that democracy demanded a willingness to defend the freedoms that went with it; and some even joined Adenauer in believing that rearmament, by helping to strengthen the "Western World," might also help to reunite Germany into one country again According to their argument, only from a position of relative strength *vis-à-vis* the Soviet Union could the West expect to negotiate successfully for German reunification On an emotional level, though there was strong antimilitarist sentiment. Understandably, nobody wanted to repeat the

suffering of the war years; but the emotion went deeper than that. German history had convinced most of the people that the military was a danger to liberal democracy. Germany had seen how military considerations could overrule diplomatic ones to the detriment of national best interests. Such a situation could not be allowed again, and to many, rearmament meant traditional remilitarization. When the West German parliament ratified the Paris Agreement of 1954 based on the Eden Plan, it did so because most of the FRG's political desires had been fulfilled and they could not really do otherwise. Emotionally, however, the pendulum had only just started hesitantly to swing back in favor of rearmament--and it had done this only because of the tense international situation and positive government reports concerning the nature of the new *Bundeswehr*. Popular support for rearmament was not fully won until legislation had been enacted to ensure civilian parliamentary control over a military establishment dedicated to the principles of *Innere Führung*, and the *Bundeswehr* had proven itself to be truly different from the military forces of German history.

Today, the *Bundeswehr* has been in existence a little over thirty peaceful years. It is an efficient and vital part of Western defense in Europe. In this respect, it has lived up to the expectations of the NATO allies. At the same time, the *Bundeswehr* disproved the old adage "you can't teach an old dog new tricks." Despite originally having been fielded with former *Reichswehr/Wehrmacht* soldiers and officers, the *Bundeswehr* did not revert to old German military traditions of authoritarianism and of being a state within the state. Instead, it gradually accepted the democratic principles of *Innere Führung* and subordination to parliamentary control. Most West Germans have been reassured by this democratization of the *Bundeswehr*. The French also seem to be breathing easier since the rearmament of the FRG did not cause the expected remilitarization of attitudes in the West German government and society. They apparently have accepted completely the FRG as an ally, and no longer fear German aggression. Indeed, in light of recent West European fears that the United States might

States might pull its military forces out of Western Europe, serious thought has once again turned to closer Franco-German military integration. A headline in a recent periodical proclaimed "France, Germany Moving Toward Military Cooperation," and the article reported the initiation of bilateral discussions about a Franco-German combat unit and about possible extension of the French nuclear "umbrella" over the FRG.[2] Since most of the factors which contributed to the defeat of the first attempt at European military integration no longer exist (such as French fear of Germany, governmental instability, problems in overseas territories, and economic inferiority), the chances are bright that the recent initiatives may bear fruit in the not-too-distant future.

Chapter 6 End Notes

[1]Robert McGeehan, The German Rearmament Question: American Diplomacy and European Defense after World War II (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971), p. 136.

[2]Robert E. Hunter, "France, Germany Moving Toward Military Cooperation," Army Times, 6 July 1987, p. 28.

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