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CRISIS AND FOREIGN POLICY: THE KOHL GOVERNMENT

AND GERMAN REUNIFICATION

by

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ABSTRACT

Crisis and Foreign Policy: The Kohl Government and German
Reunification, Wolfgramm, Doris G., Ph.D., University of
Kansas, 1995, pp. 424, Chairman: Ronald A. Francisco.

This case study analyzes the impact of crisis on
West German foreign policy. While previous research
focused primarily on threat and on the dynamics of
superpower crises in a Cold War international system,
this dissertation highlights the opportunity dimension of
a crisis, and how it can be exploited by local actors in
a post-Cold War context.

To explore this, the study examines the political
and economic collapse of the German Democratic Republic
(GDR) which began to unfold in late summer 1989. The main
hypothesis is that this crisis directly affected the Kohl
government and altered the content, process, and
structure of West German foreign policy, while presenting
Bonn with a unique opportunity to move forward a policy
of reunification.

To gauge the crisis effects, the case study compares
five dimensions of West German foreign policy before and
during the crisis. These include: decision-makers'
perception of the intra-German and external environment,
policy objectives, degree of consensus, centralization of
authority, and range of action to plan and implement

foreign policy.

The findings indicate that a crisis transforms policy-making. Profound restructuring in West German foreign policy occurred, allowing the Kohl government to complete unification. The study suggests that in a post-Cold War international context, states enjoy more flexibility to exploit a crisis and to conduct foreign policy based on their conception of the national interest.

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inspiration. I dedicate this work to them.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CDU   Christliche Demokratische Partei (Christian
Democratic Party)

CSU   Christlich-Soziale Union (Christian Social
Union)

DA   Demokratischer Aufbruch (Democratic Awakening
Party)

DSU   Deutsche Soziale Union (Democratic Social
Union)

EC   European Community

FDP   Freie Demokratische Partei (Free Democratic
Party)

FRG   Federal Republic of Germany

GDR   German Democratic Republic

NATO   North Atlantic Treaty Organization

PDS   Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus (Party of
Democratic Socialism)

SED   Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands
(Socialist Unity Party of Germany)

SPD   Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands
(Social-Democratic Party of Germany)

CRISIS AND FOREIGN POLICY: THE KOHL GOVERNMENT AND GERMAN

REUNIFICATION

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

Crisis is recognized as an important agent of

change. Its effects on individual, organizational, and

societal levels have been widely documented. In political

science much attention is focused on the impact of crisis

on foreign policy decision-making. Various studies

examining the effects on organizational variables

conclude that the policy organization functions

differently, and that a crisis may produce policy results

that are unattainable in a routine environment.[1]

In the bipolar international system, attention

centered on the threat aspect of a crisis and on the

superpowers who were challenged to prevent armed conflict

and nuclear confrontation. How smaller national actors

were affected by a crisis received less attention. This

was justified because the superpowers were ultimately

responsible for crisis management, while smaller states,

particularly in a crisis, relied on superpower protection

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[1]For some recent studies see, for example, Michael
Brecher, Crises in World Politics, Theory and Reality
(New York: Pergamon Press, 1993); L. Douglas Kiel,
Managing Chaos and Complexity in Government (San
Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1994); and The Modern
Presidency and Crisis Rhetoric, ed. Amos Kiewe (Westport,
Conn: Praeger, 1994).

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and enjoyed little room for independent action. Their ability to exploit the crisis for narrow national advantage was strictly limited by the need to maintain close alliance cohesion.

The fall of the Berlin Wall marked the end of the bipolar order. Yet, as recent events have shown, crises remain a feature of the post-Cold War international system. The new environment, however, is characterized by the demilitarization of international politics where the influence of major military powers is reduced, e.g., that of the US in the affairs of the West.[2] The focus now shifts from the superpowers to regional crises where local actors enjoy more flexibility to shape the outcome. "Emancipated from the crisis management of the great,"[3] they can bring to the fore types of national power other than military and exploit a crisis for narrow national objectives.[4] Post-Cold War crises therefore offer an opportunity for smaller powers to pursue foreign policy based on their conception of the national interest.

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[2]Christoph Bertram, "The German Question," Foreign Affairs, Spring 1990, p. 58.

[3]Coral M. Bell, "Decision-Making by Governments in Crisis Situations," International Crises and Crisis Management, ed. Daniel Frei (Westmead: Saxon House, 1978), p. 58.

[4]Bertram, "The German Question...," p. 58.

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To explore this, the present study examines the dynamics of the first post-Cold War crisis: the political and economic collapse of the German Democratic Republic (GDR), which began to unfold in late summer of 1989. This crisis directly affected the West German Kohl government. More specifically, the main hypothesis is that the crisis changed the content, process, and structure of policy-making in foreign affairs.[5] It presented Bonn with a unique opportunity to seize the situation and to move forward a policy of reunification. Consequently, German foreign policy became synonymous with solving the national question. Thus, a policy goal was achieved that seemed unattainable prior to the events, and which had been abandoned as a realistic political objective by successive West German administrations, including the Kohl government.

This study has a dual purpose: first, to determine the impact of the crisis on the content, process, and structure of policy-making by identifying specific changes in these categories. And, second, to examine the opportunity dimension of the crisis and how it was exploited to achieve a particular policy result.

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[5]John R. Oneal, Foreign Policy-Making in Times of Crisis (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1982), p. 44.

To meet these objectives, the study will explain important events and how West German policy-makers viewed and interpreted them; how the assessment was translated into specific policy steps culminating in reunification; and motivational factors and individual positions of decision-makers to determine who in the Kohl government supported or opposed the policy and why. The decision-making process will be examined in terms of who made decisions; how were they made; and, the role of the leader. Finally, the study explains what opportunities were created by the crisis and how they were exploited.

The study adopts primarily an organizational focus.[6] It examines how the policy organization was affected by a crisis and relates situational aspects to decision-making processes and change in West German foreign policy. Analyzing policy-making under the impact of crisis should help explain how a particular policy result--reunification--was achieved.

To get a more detailed understanding of the crisis effects, German foreign policy will be divided into Deutschlandpolitik and Westpolitik. The former refers to policy directed toward the GDR. It is a subset of Eastern policy, or Ostpolitik, which has a broader focus. The

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[6]Ibid., p. 32.

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latter refers to policy directed to the U.S.and Western
Europe. By dividing the two policy areas, the link
between them can be made more explicit.

To isolate the crisis effects, a research strategy
was chosen that compares policy-making in
Deutschlandpolitik and Westpolitik in two different time
frames--before and during the crisis. The method is the
qualitative single case study. With this approach, I hope
to make a contribution to the understanding of
contemporary German foreign policy, and to provide some
insights into the dynamics of a post-Cold War crisis.

The research problem can be posed as follows: for
more than forty years the German question was considered
one of the most intractable problems of international
relations. Hopelessly entwined with superpower politics,
no one expected a swift resolution, and reunification
lost importance. Yet less than a year after the fall of
the Berlin Wall, the Kohl government completed national
union with the blessing of the international community.

These events confound the logic of the postwar
world: why could the Kohl government pursue reunification
after more than forty years of division? What were the
specific attributes of the crisis; how did they affect
decision-making in the Kohl government? Why did the
crisis present a major opportunity for bold, innovative

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policy-making? How was it exploited by West German politicians?

To answer these questions, the study examines the crisis impact with respect to five dependent variables: decision-makers' perception of the intra-German and external environment, policy objectives, degree of consensus, centralization of authority, and range of action to plan and implement foreign policy.

First, the study investigates how the crisis affected policy-makers' perception of contextual conditions. With respect to the intra-German environment, the crisis changed the perception of the GDR from a passive foreign policy area where Bonn had few options, to one where the Kohl government perceived a unique opportunity to achieve unification. The crisis also changed the view of the external environment. Whereas before, administration officials considered the status quo stable and not transformable in the short term, they now saw a real chance to construct a new European order with a reunified Germany as its centerpiece. The perception of opportunity dominated the assessment of the situation and influenced subsequent strategy.

The crisis changed the foreign policy objectives of the Kohl government and made them much more specific. In Deutschlandpolitik, the focus shifted from easing the

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consequences of division, to recreating a single German

nation state. The crisis also clarified when unity would

be completed and how. In Westpolitik, the objectives

changed from security to reunification. Westpolitik was

now conducted to serve the national goal.

The crisis increased the level of agreement in the

Kohl government. In Deutschlandpolitik, it fostered a

consensus on policy goals, operational aspects, and on

the border issue with Poland. In Westpolitik, it resolved

the long-standing controversy over how to reconcile

Western and Eastern relations.

The crisis increased centralization of authority in

foreign policy. The crucial decisions in

Deutschlandpolitik and Westpolitik were made by

Chancellor Kohl and a small group of advisors. Other

actors with an influential policy role before the events

were deliberately excluded and had little opportunity to

influence strategy development. Despite this style, the

chancellor's leadership was fully accepted and the entire

policy organization stood solidly behind him.

Finally, the crisis broadened policy-makers' range

of action and flexibility in Deutschlandpolitik and

Westpolitik by reducing domestic and international

constraints. It created a setting where administration

officials had ample opportunity to manipulate situational

and contextual factors. As a result, they were in a position to develop a crisis response consistent with their preferences and their vision of unification.

With national union, the Kohl government abandoned the low profile approach to international politics it preferred before the crisis. A new assertiveness and willingness to play a high-profile international leadership role characterized Bonn's actions. Pursuing reunification with single-minded determination, the Kohl government demonstrated West German resolve and ability to conduct foreign policy based on national interest. This challenged the constrained actor model of German foreign policy and showed that the Kohl government can determine its own objectives in international affairs.

A study of crisis confronts definitional problems. This term is one of the most widely used verbal symbols of turmoil in international politics. Disputes, incidents, riots, and rebellions are described as crises, making the concept a universal term for disruption and disorder in the global arena.[7] The basic meaning adopted in this study is that a crisis presents a threat to values, offers an opportunity for innovative action, and

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[7]Brecher, pp. 2-3.

involves short decision time and surprise.[8]

This study contends that the situation in the GDR qualified as a genuine crisis. However, this was not a typical military-security crisis, where one state threatened the other with military action. Instead, it was triggered by an internal challenge to the Honecker regime, occurring in the context of fundamental change in Soviet security policy. Most immediately affected by these developments was the West German Kohl government. Faced with economic chaos and the quick erosion of political authority on all levels of government in the GDR, Bonn feared a spill-over effect in the West. The situation also went far beyond a foreign policy crisis for the Kohl government because of its international dimension. It clearly affected the immediate interests of the four World War II victors, and a violent turn in the GDR could have resulted in outside intervention disrupting established patterns of global relations. The events in the GDR therefore qualified as a genuine international crisis with wide-ranging ramifications.

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[8]Charles F. Hermann and Linda P. Brady, "Alternative Models of International Crisis Behavior," International Crises: Insights from Behavioral Research, ed. Charles F. Hermann (New York: The Free Press, 1972), p. 13; see also Linda P. Brady, "Threat, Decision Time and Awareness: The Impact of Situational Variables on Foreign Policy Behavior," PhD. Dissertation, Ohio State University, 1974, p. 252.

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The situation in the GDR illustrated that threat and opportunity are not mutually exclusive, but coexist in a crisis. The challenge is to neutralize the threat early on, so that existing opportunities can be fully exploited. Addressing the immediate threat determines how well the situation can be turned into an advantage. This linkage was evident in Bonn's approach to the crisis. By holding out the promise of quick unification, accompanied by a concrete time-table, the specter of civil war in the GDR was diffused. At the same time, Bonn convinced allies and neighbors that unification would leave intact established patterns of international relations, and that the situation in the GDR was under control. This reduced the danger of outside intervention and left Bonn in command of the unification process with wide latitude to shape the conditions and terms. Unification was therefore both a remedy to address the threat, while moving the Kohl government closer to a desired policy goal at the same time. In this case the solution to neutralize the threat was itself the opportunity to unify the two countries.

The crisis in the GDR suggests that in a post-cold environment, crises offer new opportunities for innovative action. With the end of bipolarity, the entire structure of world politics changed, and crises take

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place in a fundamentally different context. Superpower influence in the affairs of other states is reduced, and the internal dynamics of a crisis cannot easily be thwarted by external intervention.[9] As a result, national policy-makers enjoy greater flexibility and control over strategy development. They have more opportunity to exploit a crisis and to move forward their own national objectives.

Analytical emphasis therefore shifts to national policy-makers, their interests, and goals, and to the domestic political setting. Effective crisis management depends on how officials assess the internal and external environment, how they reformulate and clarify national objectives, how quickly they reach a policy consensus, and how effectively they streamline the leadership structure. Beyond that, their competence in bargaining is important, and determines their success in reshaping domestic and external constraints. This focus can best be accommodated by a decision-making approach. The study therefore analyzes foreign policy from the perspective of individual policy-makers in the Kohl government and interprets foreign policy primarily as the product of domestic political processes.

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[9]Brecher, p. 555.

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The significance of this case lies in its timeliness, insight into the decision-making process of the most powerful European country, and into the dynamics of a post-Cold War crisis. Undoubtedly, the events in the GDR will have a lasting impact, and the foreign policy of a reunified Germany will be different from that of the divided nation. More emphasis on national interest, however, may affect alliance relationships and pose questions about the future direction of the united Germany.

PART ONE: THE STUDY IN CONTEXT

Chapter 2: DECISION-MAKING IN TIMES OF CRISIS

Introduction

Most research on crises was developed in the United States and focuses primarily on the American political process. A German contribution to theory building is largely absent because there has not been a systematic and critical application of theoretical frameworks developed in the US. According to Haftendorn, the FRG is still a developing country with respect to the study of foreign policy decision-making.[1] The literature review that follows therefore evaluates primarily US research relevant to the present study. The survey covers three subject areas:

a. The impact of crisis on the policy process, i.e., how does a crisis affect information processing and related activities?

b. The role of leadership in crisis decision-making with respect to the effectiveness of constraints on the leader during a crisis, factors that strengthen his role, and leader perception and its impact on policy-making.

c. The opportunity dimension of a crisis, i.e., what

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[1]Helga Haftendorn, "Zur Theorie aussenpolitischer Entscheidungsprozesse," Politische Vierteljahreszeitschrift, Sonderheft, No. 21 (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1990), p. 407.

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are some positive effects of a crisis, and how can opportunities be exploited?

Crisis and the Policy Process

Snyder's decision-making approach focused attention on policy-makers operating within a complex organizational environment. It examined both the intellectual and organizational processes involved in strategy development and identified a large number of variables that determine the content, direction and adequacy of decisions.

Snyder's approach sparked a large body of research on the relationship between organizational structure and policy-making. Various models were developed to illustrate how decision-making functioned in a routine environment. The rational choice model based on classic economic theory identified the steps taken by a rational decision-maker to choose the best course of action. Janis refers to this as vigilant problem solving which includes the following: careful search for relevant information, critical appraisal of viable alternatives, careful contingency planning, and exercising caution to avoid

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mistakes.[2] Analytic decision-making envisions a policy

process characterized by utmost efficiency and the

ability to address and to correct existing problems.

Students of behavioral organization theory such as

Herbert Simon and James March challenged rational

decision-making and stressed that all agents have only

limited cognitive capacity.[3] A realistic model must

therefore stipulate that decision-makers are only

imperfectly rational.

Based on this assumption, Allison developed

organizational process and bureaucratic politics models

which identify obstacles to efficient policy-making. In

the former, incoming problems are handled by standard

operating procedures which limit and influence

organizational action. Institutional conservatism,

inflexibility, and resistance to change allow only

marginal adjustment in existing rules and procedures and

generate a pattern of satisficing rather than

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[2]Gregory M. Herek, Irving Janis and Paul Huth, "Decision-Making During International Crises, _Journal of Conflict Resolution_, Vol. 31, No. 2, June 1987, pp. 204-205.

[3]Jonathan Bendor and Thomas H. Hammond, "Rethinking Allison's Models," _American Political Science Review_, Vol. 86, No. 2 June 1992, p. 303.

optimizing.[4] In addition to organizational factors,
Allison identified bureaucratic politics--"the internal
politics of a government"[5]--as the most important
obstacle to efficient policy-making. Typically, a
decision is the outcome of "various overlapping
bargaining games among players arranged hierarchically in
the national government."[6] Allison termed their maneuvers
to influence the policy process "pulling and hauling."
Each player is primarily motivated by narrow loyalty to
his department or agency and will take positions that
protect and maximize those interests. Like organizational
decision-making, bureaucratic politics produces
suboptimal outcomes.

Allison's work was recently subjected to critical
reevaluation by Bendor and Hammond who challenge its
internal logic. For example, with respect to the second
model, they take issue with his contention that standard
operating procedures generate simple predictable
behavior. According to Bendor and Hammond, "use of simple
decision rules by individual decision-makers does not

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[4]Graham Allison, "Conceptual Models and the Cuban
Missile Crisis," <u>American Political Science Review</u>, No.
63:3, September 1969, p. 702.

[5]Ibid., p. 690.

[6]Ibid., p. 690.

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imply that the behavior of an organization will be simple, unsophisticated, or predictable."[7] This criticism notwithstanding, Allison's work points to satisficing rather than optimizing as a prevalent feature of decision-making.

Purkitt argued that this pattern remains the norm in a crisis. In her reevaluation of the Cuban Missile Crisis based on newly released data, she cast doubt on the interpretation that the process was an example of vigilant decision-making.[8] Instead, she found

> a pervasive tendency of Kennedy and his advisors to ignore the possible impact of their own actions on the responses of others; to rely on vague intelligence estimates in assessing the strategic, military, and political implications of the various options; and to engage in highly simplistic and uncritical analyses of proposed US action.[9]

She concludes that satisficing and intuitive decision-making described the process in this crisis more adequately than the vigilance model.[10]

A large body of research identifies specific aspects

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[7]Bendor and Hammond, p. 309.

[8]Helen E. Purkitt, "Political Decision-Making in Small Groups: The Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited--One More Time," Political Psychology and Foreign Policy, ed. Eric Singer and Valerie Hudson (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), p. 220.

[9]Ibid., pp. 220-221.

[10]Ibid., p. 221.

of decision-making most affected by a crisis. One is

information processing defined by Vertzberger as "the

plethora of activities, performed individually and

collectively, through which decision-makers strive for an

accurate and sophisticated understanding of their social,

political, and physical milieu...."[11] Information

processing entails the following: "recognizing and

attending to information, interpreting it, assessing its

relevance to problems at hand, [it is] an active process

of constructing reality."[12]

According to Snyder and Diesing, information

processing is crucial in a crisis--it is a vital

component of crisis bargaining. They view the bargaining

situation as a cycle of information exchange and

information interpretation. "Each bid reveals information

about the bidder's own values and intentions at the same

time as it seeks to elicit a reaction (counterbid) from

the opponent."[13] How policy-makers process information is

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[11]Yaakov Y. I. Vertzberger, The World in their Minds: Information Processing, Cognition, and Perception in Foreign Policy Decision-Making (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), p. 8.

[12]Ibid., p. 9.

[13]Eric Stern "Information Management and the Whiskey on the Rocks Crisis," Cooperation and Conflict, Vol. 27, 1 (London, Newbury Park and New Delhi: Sage, 1992), p. 49.

critical to the outcome of the bargaining game.

Stern divided information processing into three categories: search, which includes all efforts by decision-makers to amass information relevant to a particular problem;[14] processing, the framing of information into coherent arguments;[15] and, communication, the flow of information between decision-makers and between them and their external counterparts.[16] He then looked at how the three functions were performed in the 1981 "Whiskey on the Rocks Crisis" involving Sweden and the Soviet Union.

Stern's research supports the view that information processing often suffers during a crisis. For example, as Staw, Sandelands, and Dutton point out, fewer sources of information are typically considered.[17] Decision-makers also place a premium on cognitive consistency and tend to fit incoming information to preexisting images. These

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[14]Ibid., p. 62.

[15]Ibid., p. 64.

[16]Ibid., p. 75.

[17]Barry M. Staw, Lance E. Sandelands, and Jane E. Dutton, "Threat-Rigidity Effects in Organizational Behavior: A Multilevel Analysis," <u>Administrative Science Quarterly</u>, 26, 1981, p. 512.

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images and theories largely determine what they notice.[18] Discrepant information that does not fit these preconceived notions is ignored. This indicates that information processing is highly selective during a crisis, which has ramifications on other aspects of policy-making.

Herek, Janis, and Huth listed seven decision malfunctions related to poor information processing most often found in a crisis: gross omission of surveying alternatives, gross omission of surveying objectives, failure to examine costs and risks of a preferred choice, poor information search, selective bias of processing information at hand, failure to consider alternatives, and failure to work out detailed implementation, monitoring, and contingency plans.[19] They then examined presidential decision-making in nineteen international crises for these defects. They found that those decision processes with the fewest malfunctions were associated with better crisis outcome.[20] The authors conclude that the quality of decision-making procedures is closely

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[18]Robert Jervis, _Perception and Misperception in International Politics_ (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 117.

[19]Herek, Janis and Huth, pp. 204-205.

[20]Ibid., p. 203.

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related to type of outcome.

The most commonly observed decision malfunction in their study was failure to consider alternatives.[21] Haney confirmed this finding in a later critical reexamination of the data. But although policy-makers paid less attention to the development of a full range of alternative responses to the crises, they showed a fairly good record of reviewing US objectives.[22] This suggests, according to Haney, "that the same decision-making group can perform some of the tasks of decision-making effectively while it performs others poorly at the same time."[23]

Most scholars attribute decision malfunctions to the threat aspect of a crisis. Threat fosters more rigid perceptions which lead to a biased assessment of the situation. The result is a tendency to simplify and to stereotype.[24] This affects the search for alternatives and review of consequences. As the crisis intensifies, policy-makers will lock on a preferred option and will be

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[21]Ibid., p. 214.

[22]Patrick Haney, "Decision-Making During International Crises: A Reexamination," International Interactions, Vol. 19, No. 19, 1994, p. 183.

[23]Ibid., p. 188.

[24]Staw, Sandelands, and Dutton, p. 512.

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most concerned with the immediate, rather than the long-term consequences of their actions.[25]

Another factor related to threat is short decision time. Policy-makers select policy options more impulsively, because they are forced by the pressure of the crisis situation to act quickly.[26] This limits their ability to consider other options, and to evaluate the political implications of a preferred strategy. Under severe time constraints, they also tend to overestimate the benefit of preferred a choice and to underestimate its cost.[27]

A number of scholars attribute faulty decision-making in a crisis to groupthink. According to Janis, "groupthink refers to a deterioration of mental efficiency, reality testing, and moral judgement that

[25]Ole R. Holsti, "Time, Alternatives, and Communications: The 1914 and Cuban Missile Crises," in International Crises: Insights from Behavioral Research, ed. Charles F. Hermann (New York: The Free Press, 1972), p. 307.

[26]Raymond Tanter, "International Crisis Behavior: An Appraisal of the Literature." Jerusalem Journal of International Relations, Winter-Spring 1978, p. 355.

[27]Thomas W. Milburn, "The Management of Crisis," in International Crises: Insights from Behavioral Research, ed. Charles F. Hermann (New York: The Free Press, 1972), p. 319.

results from in-group pressures."[28] Concern to preserve

group cohesiveness and loyalty predominates and "requires

each member to avoid raising controversial issues" and

"questioning weak arguments."[29] There is strong pressure

to reinforce one another and to concur with an option

that has the support of other group members.[30] According

to Janis, some specific symptoms of groupthink include:

overoptimism, leading to excessive risk-taking;

collective rationalization of a preferred course of

action to discredit other alternatives; sloganistic

thinking about the opponent and belief in his moral

inferiority; lack of vigilance and reluctance to

challenge group consensus; pressure on dissenters to fall

in line.[31] The primary effect of groupthink is:

> premature closure before any critical
> assessment or comparison with other options
> occurs. The group thus may settle for an option
> with serious, and potentially detectable,
> defects that ought to have been recognized
> under more critical scrutiny. Rather than using
> the varying experiences, knowledge and values

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[28]Irving L. Janis, Groupthink: Psychological Studies of Policy Decisions and Fiascoes (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1982), p. 9.

[29]Ibid., p. 12.

[30]Charles F. Hermann, "Avoiding Pathologies in Foreign Policy Decision Groups," in Diplomacy, Force, and Leadership, ed. Dan Caldwell and Timothy J. McKeown (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), pp. 181-182.

[31]Janis, pp. 174-177, 256-259.

that a collective body offers to strengthen
inventive and evaluative capability, the
protective group process shuts it down.[32]

Janis concludes that "the more amiability and esprit de

corps among the members of a policy-making in-group, the

greater is the danger that independent critical thinking

will be replaced by groupthink."[33] The consequence is a

"distorted and biased process of search and deliberation"

resulting in policy failure.[34]

According to Paul t'Hart, groupthink is most

prevalent in decisional situations that are

unconventional, divisive, have large problem scope, and

great political and strategic implications.[35] Under such

non-routine conditions, which are most consistent with

crises, policy-makers are more likely to make decisions

in groups because they can find psychological and

political support in the collective process.

"Particularly if the problem is complex and unfamiliar

and information is uncertain, then policy-makers may seek

the advice and reassurance of a group to reduce the

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[32]Hermann, "Avoiding Pathologies...," p. 182.

[33]Janis, p. 13.

[34]Paul t'Hart, Groupthink in Government
(Amsterdam/Lisse: Swets & Zeitlinger, Inc. 1990), p. 125.

[35]Ibid., p. 196.

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personal stress of decision."[36]

According to t'Hart, two different types of groupthink can be distinguished. The first, collective avoidance, occurs when the decision group perceives the issue confronting it as a problem likely to result in policy failure. In such a setting, group members will attempt as much as possible to avoid being associated with the decision-making process and will try to evade personal accountability in various ways. One is hiding within the group--the loyalty option--which is an attempt to spread responsibility to the collectivity.[37]

Another type of groupthink is collective over-optimism. Here "members of a decision group perceive the issue confronting them as an opportunity for success rather than a problem that may result in failure."[38] Under these conditions "they will be strongly motivated to cooperate with one another in achieving the expected gains. The stronger the perceived likelihood of a major policy success, the greater the motivation to be associated with the group responsible for achieving it."[39]

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[36]Charles F. Hermann, "Avoiding Pathologies...," p. 180.

[37]t'Hart, p. 202.

[38]Ibid., p. 202.

[39]Ibid., p. 202.

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Like collective avoidance, collective over-optimism

may lead to faulty decision-making.

> The motivation to stick together on a joint
> venture likely to bring the participants
> bureaucratic or political fame and glory may
> come to override group members' concerns for
> the substantive quality of the policy, and
> blind them to potential risks and drawbacks.[40]

This type of groupthink is most compatible with the

illusion of invulnerability that prompts policy-makers to

make more risky decisions.[41]

The Role of Leadership

In addition to group loyalty and norms, some

scholars identify leadership as a pivotal aspect in group

think. The leader plays a role with respect to

consideration of options and influences whether premature

closure occurs or not. If he uses his influence to

encourage critical assessment of a course of action and

invites comparisons with other alternatives, premature

closure is less likely to occur. But if the leader

quickly advocates a personal preference, "the likelihood

of serious evaluation by the group greatly declines."[42]

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[40]Ibid., p. 202.

[41]Ibid., p. 202.

[42]Charles F. Hermann, "Avoiding Pathologies...," p.
186.

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The leader has such a profound effect because his behavior--advocating a preference or encouraging review of alternatives--provides others with cues of what is expected of them. Subordinates follow these signals out of respect or admiration for the leader, or because they recognize his power to reward or punish.[43]

A number of studies therefore stress the crucial role of leadership in decision-making. Taking issue with Allison's third model, Bendor and Hammond emphasize that the president has substantial formal authority in foreign policy, has personally appointed his top officials, and can dismiss them at any time. This points to the possibility of executive policy-making, challenging Allison's contention that the president must bargain with members of his administration.[44] According to Bendor and Hammond, Allison ignores that policy-making takes place within a political hierarchy and that those at the top are less limited by organizational and bureaucratic constraints.[45]

The effectiveness of organizational and bureaucratic factors also depends on the decision-making context: in a

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[43]Ibid., p. 186.

[44]Bendor and Hammond, p. 315.

[45]Ibid., pp. 314-315.

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crisis, such constraints are mitigated or removed, bolstering the role of a leader. Halper argues that the leader has so much flexibility that he is free to manipulate public opinion.[46] However, Holsti adds a cautionary note, pointing out that the Vietnam War challenged the consensus of public impotence. Yet he admits that it is not entirely clear how public opinion affects leadership in a crisis.[47]

Milburn, Billings, and Schaalmann point to the dynamics of a crisis increasing the role of the leader. The intense time pressure of the situation will create the need to react more quickly. Shorter lines of communication are established resulting in centralization of authority.[48] As the importance of decisions increases, they will be made at higher levels of the institutional hierarchy, and the top of the policy organization will be directly involved.[49]

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[46]Thomas Halper, Foreign Policy Crisis (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merril Publishers, 1971), p. iii.

[47]Ole Holsti, "Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: Challenges to the Almond-Lippmann Consensus, Mershon Series: Research Programs and Debates," International Studies Quarterly, Vol. 36, Nr. 4, December 1992, p. 453.

[48]Robert S. Billings, Thomas W. Milburn, and Mary Lou Schaalman, "A Model of Crisis Perception: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis," Administrative Science Quarterly, Vol. 25, June 1980, p. 314.

[49]Staw, Sandelands, and Dutton, p. 513.

Decision-making in a crisis therefore conforms more to Margaret Hermann's predominant leader model where a single individual has the power to make the choices for the government. "After such a leader's preferences are known, those with differing points of view stop public expression of their own alternative proposals" and defer to him. Other "points of view are no longer relevant to the political outcome."[50] In this type of decision unit, "the critical set of variables for explaining the decision becomes the personal characteristics of the predominant leader."[51] Particularly important for the formulation of policy are his interest and training in foreign affairs as well his sensitivity to the environment.[52] These factors shape the leader's orientation to foreign policy which in turn defines "his view of his own nation's and other nations' positions and

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[50]Margaret G. Hermann, Charles F. Hermann and Joe D. Hagan, "How Decision Units Shape Foreign Policy Behavior," in New Directions in the Study of Foreign Policy, ed. Charles F. Hermann, Charles W. Kegley, Jr., and James N. Rosenau (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1987), p. 313.

[51]Ibid., p. 313.

[52]Margaret Hermann, "Effects of Personal Characteristics of Political Leaders on Foreign Policy," in Why Nations Act, ed. Maurice A. East, et. al., (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications 1978), p. 49.

29

roles in the world."[53] Personality characteristics are especially salient under certain conditions. These include:

> (1) situations that force the political leader to define or interpret them, (2) in situations in which the political leader is likely to participate in the decision-making process (e.g., crises), and (3) in situations in which the political leader has wide decision latitude.[54]

This research emphasizes that the structure and the dynamics of a decision unit characterized by a predominant leader shapes the substance of foreign policy behavior.[55]

In a later study, Margaret Hermann developed two models of predominant leaders. They are based on the leader's degree of sensitivity to contextual cues which influences the type of response he or she will urge on the government.[56] The first category is the pragmatic predominant leader. His behavior is situation-driven. He

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[53]Hermann, Hermann and Hagan, "How Decision Units...," p. 313.

[54]Margaret Hermann, "Effects of Personal Characteristics...," pp. 51-52.

[55]Hermann, Hermann and Hagan, "How Decision Units...," p. 309.

[56]Margaret G. Hermann, "Leaders and Foreign Policy Decision-Making," in Diplomacy, Force, and Leadership, ed. Dan Caldwell and Timothy J. McKeown (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), p. 91.

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"searches the environment for cues about what is possible, and what will receive support."[57] A pragmatic predominant leader wants his actions to be appropriate to the situation and will postpone action otherwise. For this type of leader timing is everything, as he or she looks for signals indicating that the time is right politically for a particular move.[58]

Principled predominant leaders, Hermann's second model, are more insensitive to contextual information and act on the basis of principle. Their behavior is personality-driven. They have implicit theories about the way the world operates that guide their behavior in the foreign policy area. They work from schemata, and policy problems are fit to a script which suggests actions that are appropriate. To understand how such a leader will respond to a particular problem, the analyst needs to explore personality characteristics and the schema that is being triggered by the problem.[59]

Hermann's research points to the importance of perception in policy-making: the beliefs decision-makers have about themselves, the world around them, and their

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[57]Ibid., p. 90.

[58]Ibid., p. 91.

[59]Ibid., p. 87.

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attitudes towards events and processes, as well as their basic values.[60] Jervis confirmed that "cognitions are part of the proximate cause of the relevant behavior."[61] Because perception shapes action, there has been a renewed emphasis on cognitive mechanisms and their influence in decision-making.[62]

Robert McCalla, studied the role of misperception in crises--those situations where an actor's view or perception of reality is not accurate.[63] He distinguished two forms of misperception: situational and dispositional. The first is a situation where an actor's perception of events is a plausible one based on the information available to him, yet conclusions about reality are incorrect.[64] The second form, dispositional misperception, results from an actor's internal tendency

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[60]Richard L. Merritt, <u>Systematic Approaches to Comparative Politics</u> (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1970), p. 126.

[61]Jervis, p. 28.

[62]Dwain Mefford, "Analytical Reasoning and the Definition of the Situation: Back to Snyder for Concepts and Forward to Artificial Intelligence for Method," in <u>New Directions in the Study of Foreign Policy</u>, ed. Charles F. Hermann, Charles W. Kegley Jr. and James N. Rosenau (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1987), p. 221.

[63]Robert B. McCalla, <u>Uncertain Perceptions U.S. Cold War Crisis Decision-Making</u> (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), p. 21.

[64]Ibid., p. 22.

to see the world a certain way.[65] McCalla finds that
situational misperception in a crisis can be corrected by
providing more information to the decision-makers, while
dispositional misperception is more impervious to change.
Those crisis managers whose interpretations of their
opponents actions and motives rest on the information
that is coming to them, rather than on their internal
views, will be more likely to change their
interpretations when information changes. Change in
perception during a crisis is therefore more likely to
occur, when misperception is situational.[66]

Positive Aspects and the Opportunity Dimension of Crisis

The word "crisis" usually invokes visions of danger,
threat, and potential for harm. Yet the Chinese symbol
for crisis is actually a combination of two words--
danger and opportunity.[67] Similarly, Western philosophy
recognized the complementary nature of polar opposites,
such as life and death, order and chaos, "business as
usual" and crisis. According to Heraclitus of Ephesus,

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[65]Ibid., p. 23.

[66]Ibid., p. 27.

[67]Steven Fink, Crisis Management--Planning for the
Inevitable (New York: Amacon--American Management
Association, 1986), p. 2.

33

one of the founders of Greek and western philosophy, any

organized system needs both integrative and destructive

forces to be alive and functioning. The life of a system

is sustained by the paradoxical interplay of order and

chaos, being at the same time complementary, competitive,

and antagonistic.[68] Studying organizational behavior,

Pauchant argues that,

> perhaps the most erroneous misconception... is
> the refusal to see a crisis as a positive
> force, as a factor itself contributing to the
> existence of an enterprise... A crisis is both
> a danger and an opportunity--the destructive
> side of a crisis is itself a sine qua non
> condition for the development of an
> organization.[69]

In this view, crises are not only normal, but life-

enhancing and combine potential for harm with an

opportunity to achieve positive outcomes.[70]

The following research notes crisis effects that may

improve the overall effectiveness of the policy

organization. For example, a crisis pulls decision-makers

closer together and increases group cohesiveness.[71]

Policy-makers are more likely to support the programs and

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[68]Thierry C. Pauchant and Ian I. Mitroff,
Transforming the Crisis-Prone Organization (San
Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1992), p. 20.

[69]Ibid., p. 20.

[70]Ibid., p. 20.

[71]Staw, Sandelands and Dutton, p. 507.

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positions of the group leader, which makes it easier to formulate a common response.[72] The policy organization will be more streamlined to increase control and to ensure that organizational members act in a concerted way to address the crisis.[73] Centralization of authority and more extensive formalization of procedures may facilitate faster and more efficient decisions.

Most studies attribute this to threat, while the effects of perceived opportunity have not received the same attention.[74] But according to Jackson and Dutton, threat and opportunity share common characteristics. Both "are similar in the sense of urgency, difficulty, and large stakes associated with each."[75] This suggests that threat and opportunity have some effects in common. One is stress which is not only generated by threat, but also by perceived opportunity.[76]

However, threat is distinguished from opportunity by

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[72]Ibid., p. 509.

[73]Ibid., p. 515.

[74]Richard Herrmann, "The Empirical Challenge of the Cognitive Revolution: A Strategy for Drawing Inferences about Perceptions," International Studies Quarterly, Vol. 32, 1988, p. 186.

[75]Susan E. Jackson and Jane E. Dutton, "Discerning Threats and Opportunities," Administrative Science Quarterly, September 1988, p. 374.

[76]Richard Herrmann, p. 186.

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its clear negative connotation and the following characteristics: sense of likelihood of loss without gain; feelings of control are low; many constraints are perceived; and decision-makers are pessimistic about their ability to handle the situation.[77] In sharp contrast, opportunity is a positive issue. Decision-makers are confident that there is great potential for gain without loss; successful resolution of the crisis is likely; feelings of control are high because policy-makers are confident that they have the resources available to deal with the issue. Crisis managers are also likely to feel qualified and that they have autonomy to take action.[78]

This suggests that while threat and opportunity share some effects, they also have different consequences. For example, policy-makers, confident that a crisis presents an opportunity, might take bold and risky steps to exploit it. This contrasts with threat which may prompt them to take more cautious actions. How they view the crisis therefore determines how it is addressed.

According to Richard Herrmann, whether or not

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[77]Jackson and Dutton, p. 375.

[78]Ibid., pp. 375-376.

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policy-makers perceive an opportunity can be inferred
from how they portray the situation. The more simplified
and stereotyped the picture they construct, the greater
the opportunities they perceive. The degree of simplicity
therefore serves as an indicator of perceived
opportunity.[79]

Policy-makers searching for positive outcomes that
might be associated with a crisis can turn a threat into
an opportunity.[80] A crisis exploited as an opportunity
opens up new possibilities for innovative policy-making.
According to Milburn, this allows decision-makers to do
things that would not be possible in a routine
environment. For example, policy-makers may use the
crisis to change widely held definitions of the situation
and move forward values that have been of interest to
them for some time.[81] To achieve their goals, a crisis
can serve as a means to increase the motivation of the
leaders and their personnel to maximum effectiveness.[82]
Programs previously delayed by internal disputes can now
be implemented. According to Milburn, a crisis presents a

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[79]Richard Herrmann, p. 199.

[80]Billings, Milburn, and Schaalman, p. 315.

[81]Milburn, p. 270.

[82]Ibid., p. 270.

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chance for action and may prove less dangerous when seized and exploited as an opportunity.[83]

Taking advantage of a crisis depends on a policy-makers' ability to manipulate situational and contextual factors. One is time. Citing Coser, Snyder and Diesing argue that a crisis is a bargaining situation which is fundamentally time dependent. Time affects the value of an expected reward in the following way: if postponed, the reward may be worth less than a present one; and over time, the total cost of bargaining increases. These effects have the consequence that the more distant the reward is expected to be, the lower its expected value. This provides an incentive for the bargainers to speed up bargaining and make concessions faster, so they can reach agreement before the benefits dissolve.[84] It suggests that policy-makers can derive maximum advantage from a crisis, if they exploit the time element and act quickly before the value of the expected benefit declines or is lost.

As Moravcsik explains, the 2-level game approach identifies additional strategies that allow policy-makers

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[83]Ibid., p. 270.

[84]Glenn H. Snyder and Paul Diesing, Conflict Among Nations (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), pp. 76-77.

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to exploit a crisis. It begins with the assumption that
statesmen simultaneously calculate internal and external
factors which highlights the link between the two
levels.[85] In a bargaining situation, such as a crisis,
they will try to exploit domestic and international
politics simultaneously to gain maximum advantage.[86] As
to specific strategies, Moravcsik points to the
following: by exploiting control over information,
resources and agenda setting with respect to their own
domestic polity, decision-makers can influence an
international accord. Conversely, international
strategies can be employed to manipulate domestic
politics. Statesman may attempt to gain approval for an
important domestic measure by linking it to an attractive
international agreement, or vice versa, a tactic Putnam
calls synergistic issue linkage.[87] These strategies
suggest that domestic policies can be used to affect the
outcome of international bargaining, and that
international moves may be solely aimed at achieving

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[85]Andrew Moravcsik, "Integrating International and
Domestic Theories of International Bargaining," in
Double-Edged Diplomacy, ed. Peter B. Evans, Harold K.
Jacobson and Robert D. Putnam (Berkeley: University of
California Press, 1993), p. 4.

[86]Ibid., 33.

[87]Ibid., p. 15.

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domestic goals.[88] Manipulating domestic and international factors simultaneously opens up more possibilities to exploit a crisis.

Some scholars explain that a weaker actor can gain a net bargaining advantage even in a highly asymmetrical crisis. They point to the following factors that favor the smaller state. For example, the norms of the international community place constraints on the larger party's ability to translate strategic military superiority into a crisis bargaining advantage.[89] Lebow also finds this dynamic at work in alliance relationships and notes that norms of cooperation and consensus in NATO benefit smaller states and produce compromises favorable to them.[90] Snyder and Diesing suggest that a state can derive bargaining advantage by mobilizing international institutions in support of its position. This gives it legitimacy and denies it to the adversary.[91] A weak state also fares better in negotiations when it is defending

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[88]Ibid., p. 17.

[89]Robert L. Rothstein, The Weak in the World of the Strong: Developing Countries in the International System (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), p. 37.

[90]Richard Ned Lebow, "The long peace, the end of the cold war, and the failure of realism," International Organization, 48, 2, Spring 1994, pp. 268-269.

[91]Snyder and Diesing, p. 204.

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against the perceived injustice by a stronger one.

Another factor is "geographic field of play," which can

sometimes provide the small state with an advantage when

the action unfolds on the small state's turf.[92] In

addition, "asymmetries of attention and resolve may favor

the smaller party in a crisis."[93] Skill is also a

compensating asymmetry--the ingenuity of the smaller

state to outmaneuver the larger one and to persuade it to

make concessions.[94]

Stern and Sundelius confirm some of these points in

their analysis of the 1981 U-137 crisis involving Sweden

and the USSR. They identify the following factors that

allowed Sweden to prevail in the crisis: the country's

geographical location, cultural affiliation, and active

participation in international organizations. They served

to mitigate the impact of asymmetry in military

capability. "Specifically, Sweden's relatively high

profile role in the international community, neutral

status, and identification with the Western European

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[92]William Mark Habeeb, Power and Tactics in
International Negotiations: How Weak Nations Bargain with
Strong Nations (London: John Hopkins Press, 1988), p.
131.

[93]Eric Stern and Bengt Sundelius "Managing
Asymmetrical Crisis: Sweden, the USSR, and U-137,"
International Studies Quarterly, 36, 1992, p. 229.

[94]Ibid., p. 230.

41

cultural community made it likely that any Soviet use of violence against Sweden would raise an international outcry."[95] Stern and Sundelius conclude that such factors modified the capability discrepancy, creating a bargaining advantage for the smaller actor in the crisis.[96]

Conclusion

This survey of the literature shows that crisis is widely recognized as an agent of change with an impact on various aspects of policy-making. One weakness of the research is that it relies primarily on adversary crises in a cold war international context. The emphasis is therefore on threat, rather than opportunity. It would seem desirable for future studies to take the new international environment into consideration and to explore the dual nature of crisis. This will produce a more complete picture of its full impact on policy-making.

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[95]Ibid., p. 228.

[96]Ibid., p. 233.

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Chapter 3: WEST GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY AND REUNIFICATION

Introduction

The last chapter identified different aspects of crisis and its impact on policy-making. This chapter examines West German foreign policy. First, it reviews works explaining Bonn's objectives and various determining factors. Second, it addresses the theme of constraints, and whether the constraint model provides an accurate picture of West German foreign policy. Third, the survey evaluates the relevancy of reunification in the politics of the Federal Republic, i.e., was it considered the only way to solve the German question, or were other options deemed feasible? The goal is to explain the complexity of the national problem and to illustrate the nature of the debate over this controversial issue in the 1980s.

Objectives of West German Foreign Policy

In the Stable Crisis, Hanrieder specified three principal goals of West German foreign policy: "Security, political and economic recovery, and reunification." [1] Security was the most pressing priority for the Adenauer

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[1]Wolfram F. Hanrieder, The Stable Crisis--Two Decades of German Foreign Policy (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), p. viiii.

government in the immediate postwar period. In the growing East-West conflict, anchoring the Federal Republic in the Western alliance was a means to secure the territorial integrity and the democratic order of the West German state.

As Schwarz pointed out, membership in the community of the West also facilitated political and economic recovery. Over time, Bonn's economic and democratic development earned international praise and dispelled distrust and fear of German dominance and revanchism. As West Germany became a respected member of the international community, restrictions on its sovereignty were gradually lifted.[2] By placing security in the West first, Adenauer could also achieve political and economic priorities.

Adenauer always insisted that solving the German question could only be accomplished through firm integration in the West.[3] Close cooperation with the allies would assure their support in future reunification. His strategy placed a premium on alliance

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[2]Juergen Schwarz, "Deutschlands Aussenpolitik im Strukturwandel Europas," Politische Studien, Maerz/April 1991, p. 134.

[3]Manfred Knapp, "Westintegration," Politische Vierteljahreszeitschrift, No. 23 (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1992), p. 343.

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cohesion and coordination and made an autonomous West

German reunification policy unacceptable.[4] Adenauer

deliberately chose a policy of dependence and self-denial

to gain security and support for the national issue.[5]

Although the demand for non-communist reunification

remained central,[6] Adenauer actually placed a higher

priority on security in the West than restoring a German

nation state. This order of priorities remained

consistent and shaped the foreign policy of West German

governments in the following decades.

For Adenauer, membership in the West and

reunification were compatible--Western ties were an

indispensable prerequisite for later reunification.[7]

However, as the bloc structure solidified, critics

alleged a goal conflict, asserting that the FRG's

amalgamation in the West endangered reunification. For

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[4]Mattias Zimmer, "Nationales Interesse und
Staatsraeson," PhD. Dissertation, Universitaet Hamburg,
1991, p. 2.

[5]Josef Joffe, "The Foreign Policy of the Federal
Republic of Germany," in Foreign Policy in World
Politics, ed. Roy C. Macridis (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice
Hall, 1985), p. 81.

[6]Hein Hoebink, Westdeutsche
Wiedervereinigungspolitik 1949-1961 (Meisenheim am Glahn:
Hain, 1978), p. 5.

[7]Peter Jeutter, EWG--Kein Weg nach Europa (Bonn:
Europa Union Verlag GmbH, 1985), p. 84.

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example, the Free Democrats argued in the early 1950s that the superpower standoff in the heart of Europe, reinforced by West Germany's close reliance on its partners, made reunification under Western auspices unrealistic.[8] In the following years, security in the West and reunification therefore came to be understood as mutually exclusive goals of Bonn's foreign policy.[9] Hope faded that the German question could be solved in a Western democratic framework any time soon.

This pessimism was reflected in the foreign policy of the Brandt government. For the new chancellor a strategy aimed at changing the status quo in Europe had little credibility in an international environment characterized by two hostile blocs. A different course was in order based on the acceptance of two German states and existing power configurations in Europe. As Haftendorn explains, the "decisive new element of this policy was the endeavor to reach a modus vivendi with the Soviet Union and the East European states on the basis of postwar realities."[10] The core of the modus vivendi was the de facto recognition of the GDR which enabled closer

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[8]Ibid., p. 92.

[9]Knapp, p. 343.

[10]Helga Haftendorn, Security and Detente (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1985), pp. 23-24.

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cooperation between the two German states in many fields.[11] Instead of reunification, Brandt pursued the more modest goal of easing the consequences of division through gradual accommodation and normalization--the "policy of small steps." Though reunification was not formally ruled out, it "was subsumed in the vision of a European order of peace, with which the partition of Europe and thus the division of Germany would be overcome."[12]

Haftendorn explains that Brandt "did not jeopardize the fundamental Western orientation of the FRG but rather strengthened it by bringing Bonn into line with the West's detente policy."[13] Ostpolitik and Deutschlandpolitik were therefore not designed to renounce Bonn's membership in the community of Western nations. Although some on the left demanded a neutral reunified Germany, Brandt refused to accept a solution of the national problem at the price of neutrality. By placing Germany's membership in the Western alliance before reunification, Brandt kept intact the goal structure of West German foreign policy.

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[11]Ibid., p. 24.

[12]Ibid., p. 24.

[13]Ibid., p. 24.

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During the Schmidt administration, relations between
Bonn and Washington cooled. As Hacke points out, Carter's
human rights campaign and his nuclear and economic
policies[14] invited sharp criticism from the West Germans
and nurtured the perception that the American President
was weak and internationally unpredictable.[15] Relations
with the Eastern bloc, an important priority for Bonn,
were also a continued source of friction. Yet in
Schmidt's concept of global equilibrium, the Bonn-
Washington axis remained crucial and an indispensable
element for guaranteeing West German security.[16] The
administration therefore rejected conducting Ostpolitik
at the expense of Western ties. The basic structure of
West German foreign policy remained Atlanticist.

For the Kohl government taking office in 1982, the
order of priorities remained: alliance integration and
security before reunification.[17] Therefore, the new
administration "carried through with the deployment of

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[14]Christian Hacke, _Weltmacht Wider Willen--Die_
Aussenpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland
(Frankfurt/Main: Ullstein Verlag, 1993), p. 256.

[15]Ibid., p. 259.

[16]Ibid., p. 260.

[17]Clay Clemens, _Reluctant Realists--The Christian_
Democrats and West German Ostpolitik (Durham: Duke
University Press, 1989), p. 308.

48

Pershing II missiles on German soil in accordance with the NATO dual-track decision of December 1979."[18] At the same time, Bonn developed relations with the East to an unprecedented level. But as the Kohl government stressed, detente with the East could not be allowed to compromise its position in the West.[19]

Clemens explains that Ostpolitik was not motivated by the quest for reunification. It was an incremental policy whose ultimate outcome remained vague, rather than a comprehensive plan or long-term strategy with reunification as the end goal.[20] Many foreign observers of Ostpolitik therefore "tended to see strategic designs where there were none."[21]

To support this view, Clemens points out that in the 1980s, reformists in the Kohl government, who were most enthusiastic about Ostpolitik and advocated expanded relations with the GDR far beyond the level pursued by Chancellor Kohl, were often ready to give up on state unity altogether. Yet fundamentalists who stressed reunification were deeply ambivalent about Ostpolitik and

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[18]Haftendorn, Security and Detente, p. 28.

[19]Clemens, p. 308.

[20]Ibid., p. 8.

[21]Ibid., p. 312.

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hoped to restrict negotiations with the East.[22] Beyond that, according to Clemens, the Kohl government could not afford to pursue a policy explicitly aimed at reunification. Unity within the governing coalition could not have survived concrete answers to the possible forms of reunification.[23] Politically it was therefore much safer for Kohl to subordinate the national issue to other policy priorities.

This brief review illustrates the remarkable consistency in the basic objectives of West German foreign policy from Adenauer to Kohl. Although Ostpolitik illustrated the dual focus of Bonn's foreign policy, no West German administration was prepared to pursue normalization with the Eastern bloc and an end to division at the expense of Western ties.

Constraints on West German Foreign Policy

As to the factors conditioning West German foreign policy, the existing sources point to international constraints, while domestic influences are largely ignored. Bonn's delicate position in the East-West conflict explains why West German policy-makers

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[22]Ibid., p. 311.

[23]Ibid., p. 312.

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subordinated reunification to alliance integration. The policy was understood as a reaction to international pressures.

Analyzing Bonn's dilemma, Windsor explains that the question of reunification had implications for East-West relations at the superpower level, Western European integration, and European security.[24] A policy aimed at state unity had to be conducted in a web of international relations and constraints. It required the backing of two competing blocs--especially the approval and trust of the US, the Soviets, France and Britain.[25] But none of the four victorious powers was really prepared in the post-war era to relinquish its influence and power in Germany.[26] Although "both cold war camps considered it politic to give at least verbal support to German aspirations for reunification, neither side could be expected to support the creation of a unified Germany that would be genuinely free to conduct its external affairs."[27] Both superpowers mistrusted each other. "They

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[24]Philip Windsor, German Reunification (London: Elek Books, 1969), p. 7.

[25]Hoebink, p. 74.

[26]Ibid., p. 123.

[27]Wolfram F. Hanrieder, West German Foreign Policy, 1949-1963. International Pressure and Domestic Response (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967), p. 68.

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feared that if either secured the alliance of a reunified Germany it could mean a decisive shift in the balance of power."[28] Thus, the US was unwilling to accept a communist Germany just as the Soviets were unwilling to accept a capitalist Germany. Ideological and socio-political reasons accounted for that as well as considerations of national interest.[29] Equally unacceptable was a Germany allied to neither. A neutral and reunified Germany could have unpredictable consequences for the politics of Europe.[30] The political activities of the four powers in the post-war era were therefore always reduced to the attempt at achieving a modus vivendi in Europe which did not endanger their position in Germany.[31]

Germany's national question could therefore be defined as a problem of international security and strategic stability: the two superpowers confronted each other in the heart of Germany. This confrontation was tense but stable. That prevented either side from taking risks that might lead to war. Any change in the status

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[28]Windsor, p. 4.

[29]Hoebink, p. 123.

[30]Windsor, p. 4.

[31]Hoebink, p. 123.

quo had implications for their own security. It was therefore very much in the interest of the superpowers to prevent the Germans from inducing any changes in the military disposition of the great powers. For the superpowers, the German question was how to keep the Germans under control.[32]

As long as both Germanies belonged to different alliances, the problem of control was modified. NATO and Western integration allowed the allied powers to keep the FRG in check and to prevent a foreign policy strictly motivated by the national interest.[33] Bonn had to accept this because it had no alternative to security in the West; "at the same time, maintaining the status quo--including the division of Germany--became a prerequisite for the Western powers' protective guarantee."[34] Bonn faced a situation where any attempt to solve the German question outside the alliance had to be abandoned for security reasons.[35] The problem of how to control the Germans was effectively blunted.

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[32]Windsor, p. 2.

[33]Wolfram F. Hanrieder, Germany, America, Europe--Forty Years of German Foreign Policy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), p. 5.

[34]Haftendorn, Security and Detente, p. 5.

[35]Zimmer, p. 2.

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These limitations on West German foreign policy were summarized by Hanrieder. Analyzing the 1950s and 1960s, he portrays the FRG as a "penetrated system" whose foreign policy goals and means were determined by international contingencies which overshadowed domestic ones and in effect shaped them.[36] Political and military commitments to NATO imposed limits on decision-makers reducing their flexibility and room to maneuver. Lack of control and constrained choices characterized West German foreign policy, which was mainly determined by outside powers.

As Macridis observes, West German conduct in the early post-war period indeed conformed closely to the constrained actor model: Bonn's policy "was marked by a degree of loyalty, deference and even submission rarely seen in the annals of alliance politics."[37] In the 1950s and 1960s, West Germany acted as America's most loyal junior partner in Europe.[38]

According to Joffe, in the 1970s external constraints on West German foreign policy were easing with Brandt's Ostpolitik. Since diplomatically this

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[36]Hanrieder, <u>West German Foreign Policy</u>, p. 234.

[37]Joffe, p. 105.

[38]Ibid., p. 105.

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policy reintegrated the FRG into the overall trend of

Western detente diplomacy,[39] Bonn "could begin to conduct

a more normal foreign policy that reflected more self-

assertion."[40]

With respect to the 1980s, opinions differ as to the

continued relevancy of the constraint model. Gebhart

Schweigler points to the limited utility of understanding

West German foreign policy as a response to external

constraints. "The formal constraints, originally imposed

on the remnants of the German Reich, and later after its

establishment in 1949, on the Federal Republic were

gradually relaxed to the extent that they no longer

seemed appropriate or necessary."[41] In particular,

political and economic constraints have gradually eased,

while others, such as limitations on the use of force and

attachment to the West, have become internalized in the

attitudes that shape foreign policy.[42]

Analyzing West German foreign policy in the late

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[39]Ibid., p. 104.

[40]Ibid., p. 105.

[41]Gebhart Schweigler, "West German Foreign Policy--
The Domestic Setting," The Washington Papers/106 (New
York: Praeger Publishers, 1984), p. 7.

[42]Ibid., p. 7.

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1980s,[43] Staak argues that Bonn determines its own

foreign policy. Interpreting it as a response to

international constraints arising from the bloc structure

is inappropriate, because the superpower context no

longer serves as the main frame of reference for Bonn's

policy-makers. According to Staak, it has been replaced

with a European orientation which provides the overall

framework for West German foreign policy.

Hacke disagrees. He observes that in the eighties,

the FRG's influence in the transatlantic relationship

undoubtedly grew. As Bonn assumed important tasks and

responsibilities and played a larger international role,

divergent interests between the US and the FRG came to

the fore.[44] They were evidence of a more balanced

relationship--a "mature partnership."[45] Yet, according to

Hacke, structural limits and dependencies on the US

remain a reality, and the security interests of the FRG

set boundaries on Bonn's flexibility.[46]

The preceding literature focused on systemic

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[43]Michael Staak, "Die Aussenpolitik der
Bundesrepublik Deutschland auf dem Weg in ein neues
Europa," AusPuz B 4-5, 1990, pp. 20-30.

[44]Hacke, p. 357.

[45]Ibid., p. 356.

[46]Ibid., p. 414.

impulses conditioning Bonn's foreign policy. But as

Mueller and Risse-Kappen stress, such factors by

themselves rarely determine policies, but are usually

modified by internal conditions.[47] In addition to

systemic forces, domestic variables must be taken into

consideration to explain choice in foreign policy. They

include public opinion, interest groups, parliament, and

domestic bureaucracies.[48] Another variable is elite

consensus.[49] Volgy and Schwarz add the electoral calculus

of leaders.[50] They emphasize that electoral goals and

contexts must be included to explain policy choice.[51] As

these scholars stress, the domestic dimension affects

decision-makers' room to maneuver and has direct

influence on policy decisions.

Domestic impulses also condition security policy,

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[47]Harald Mueller and Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Internationale Umwelt, gesellschaftliches Umfeld und aussenpolitischer Prozess in liberaldemokratischen Industrienationen," Politische Vierteljahreszeitschrift, Sonderheft, Nr. 21 (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1990), p. 380.

[48]Ibid., p. 383.

[49]Ibid., p. 385.

[50]Thomas J. Volgy and John E. Schwarz, "Does Politics Stop at the Water's Edge? Domestic Political Factors and Foreign Policy Restructuring in the Cases of Great Britain, France, and West Germany," Journal of Politics, Vol. 53, No. 3, August 1991, p. 618.

[51]Ibid., p. 638.

although, as Nye and Lynn-Jones observe, the interaction between domestic politics and security affairs has been overlooked by most analysts.[52] Some recent studies, however, link the internal and external dimension and examine the impact of domestic factors on alliance choice. This research identifies constraints previously overlooked by a purely systemic focus.

Barnett, addressing how policy-makers mobilize resources for national security explains that they "must negotiate with domestic actors for access to these societally controlled assets." Attention is therefore "directed toward state-society relations, that is, toward the process by which the state attempts to mobilize these resources."[53] In addition to international factors, domestic political and economic variables have direct bearing on security strategy and alliance choice. Barnett and Levy identify when the domestic environment makes alliance formation more likely. For example, costly priorities at home make it more difficult for policy-

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[52]Joseph Nye, Jr. and Sean Lynn-Jones, "International Security Studies: A Report of a Conference on the State of the Field," International Security, Vol. 12, No. 4, Spring 1988, p. 24.

[53]Michael N. Barnett, "High Politics is Low Politics: The Domestic and Systemic Sources of Israeli Security Policy, 1967-1977," World Politics, 42:4 (July) 1990, p. 535.

makers to extract additional resources for security. This

provides them with an incentive to rely on external

alignments such as NATO.[54]

Seidelmann, argues that Western European governments

will have to rely on the alliance in the foreseeable

future. Budgetary constraints make it unlikely that a

European security mechanism such as the WEU can function

effectively any time soon. Insufficient means for power

projection sustain the dependence on US military

support.[55] Seidelmann therefore confirms the link between

domestic constraints and alliance choice.

Research incorporating the domestic dimension also

directs attention to the benefits external alignments

provide such as the opportunity to export defense costs

and to mobilize defense resources for minimal political

cost.[56] Therefore, alliances have value as sources of

military and economic resources as well as security

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[54]Michael N. Barnett and Jack S. Levy, "Domestic
Sources of Alliances and Alignments: The Case of Egypt,
1962-73," International Organization 45, 3, Summer 1991,
p. 378.

[55]Reimund Seidelmann, "Zur Neuordnung der
westeuropaeischen Sicherheitspolitik," Politische
Vierteljahreszeitschrift, No. 23, (Opladen: Westdeutscher
Verlag, 1992), p. 344.

[56]Barnett, p. 543.

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guarantees.[57] This suggests that alliance choice is based on a carefully calculated assessment of benefits and costs. According to Morrow, "the nation's policy-makers will judge the attractiveness of an alliance by comparing the benefits of the ally's ability to advance its interests to the costs of advancing the ally's interest. When the former exceeds the latter, they will want to form an alliance."[58] Focusing on the incentives that motivate policy-makers to pursue a certain strategy goes beyond systemic explanations and provides a better understanding of why the option was pursued.

The previous literature stressed that policy-makers must not only be sensitive to international influences, but also to domestic forces. But according to Knopf, two-level games fail to pay adequate attention to the differences among three logically separable forms of domestic-international interactions which can be labeled transgovernmental, transnational, and cross-level.[59]

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[57]Barnett and Levy, p. 371.

[58]James D. Morrow, "Alliances and Asymmetry: An Alternative to the Capability Aggregation Model of Alliances," American Journal of Political Science, Vol. 35, No. 4, November 1991, p. 905.

[59]Jeffrey W. Knopf, "Beyond Two-Level Games: Domestic-International Interaction in the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Negotiations," International Organization, 47, 4, Autumn 1993, p. 599.

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Therefore, Knopf proposes a three-and-three approach,
which improves two-level games by identifying
institutional links among a group of states such as they
exist in a military alliance.[60] It also accounts for the
role that alliance partners can play in bargaining
between military adversaries.[61] In addition, it is more
sensitive to the possibility that policy proposals and
their initiation can be generated by the interaction of
domestic groups.[62] Risse-Kappen also incorporates the
transnational dimension to explain foreign policy.
Transnational networks exchange foreign policy ideas
which interact with domestic structures to influence the
policy process.[63] Transnational links impose additional
constraints, and also serve as a source of fundamental
change.

Reunification--Is It the Only Answer to the German Question?

The previous chapter places German foreign policy in

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[60]Ibid., p. 600.

[61]Ibid., p. 627.

[62]Ibid., p. 600.

[63]Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Ideas do not Float Freely:
Transnational Coalitions, Domestic Structures, and the
End of the Cold War," International Organization, 48, 2,
Spring 1994, pp. 186-187.

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a complex web of international and domestic constraints. Domestic factors go beyond international explanations and suggest different reasons why Bonn continued to subordinate the national question to alliance integration. Over time, reunification lost relative centrality, and other alternatives were increasingly explored.

The most influential perspective on solving the German question short of reunification is provided by Karl Jaspers. In his book, Freedom and Reunification, Jaspers argues that freedom and constitutionalism are the most substantial demands for the Germans in the GDR--not reunification. West German governments should therefore concentrate on easing the consequences of division and press for political freedoms in the GDR without linking this policy to the demand for reunification. According to Jaspers, a policy aimed at restoring freedom without reunification is also more realistic in a cold war international environment and can count on the support of allies and neighbors.[64]

Jaspers challenges the concept of defining a nation as a nation state. He insists that the Germans have no

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[64]Karl Jaspers, Freiheit und Wiedervereinigung; ueber Aufgaben Deutscher Politik (Muenchen: Piper, 1960), p. 37.

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basic right or legal claim to reunifying a once existing territory,[65] i.e., Bismarck Germany (1871-1914), as argued by proponents of reunification. For Jaspers, the Bismarck state is no desirable ideal because it was unified by force with "blood and iron" and did not achieve political freedom.[66] It was also a "small Germany solution" to the national problem. Yet, as Jaspers points out, the German nation extends far beyond these narrow boundaries. It existed for centuries as a linguistic and cultural unit, rather than as a political one. It was a large Germany with a genuine apolitical identity.[67] According to Jaspers, a nation need not be a political construct, but can exist as a linguistic and cultural whole.[68] German national consciousness therefore need not be tied to a state.

Jaspers urges the Germans to develop a new apolitical national consciousness in the larger context of Europe. By identifying with Europe instead of insisting on a political national consciousness linked to

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[65]Ibid., p. 34.

[66]Ibid., p. 16.

[67]Ibid., p. 42.

[68]Ibid., p. 45.

a state, all Germans could gain political freedom.[69] The

national issue would be effectively solved: even though

the Germans would continue to live in two separate

states, they would comprise one nation united by common

values, language, and culture.

Jaspers thus offers a vaguely defined form of unity

without specific nation-state character. His perspective

allows for various answers to the national question,

i.e., the "Austria Solution," which was floated by

Adenauer in the late 1950s. This envisioned solving the

German question in a confederately reorganized European

House that might be oriented on the building principles

of the European Community.[70] This vision of settling the

German question retained its appeal in subsequent

decades.

Jaspers influenced the framers of social-liberal

Ostpolitik. One of its principle architects, the SPD

politician Egon Bahr, was pessimistic about reunification

and warned against too much emphasis on the nation state.

Given the distribution of power in the international

system and the constraints on German foreign policy, he

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[69]Ibid., p. 44.

[70]Barbara Lippert, "Deutsche Frage und Europaeische Integration," Politische Vierteljahreszeitschrift, No. 34 (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1993), p. 331.

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saw little possibility for state unity. Both Germanies therefore needed to work for peaceful coexistence and the preservation of world harmony, which were more important goals than the nation state.[71]

For Bahr and other social democrats, alternatives to reunification were conceivable, such as a German nation living in two states with an interchange of people and ideas and a high degree of political freedom.[72] The favorite option for many was the "submergence of Germany in a wider European system where all Germans had a common identity, but in which this identity was linguistic and cultural and had nothing to do with a political structure."[73] The idea is that as Europe gradually moved closer together, German division would be overcome as well. This illustrates that Bahr and others in the SPD no longer viewed reunification as a realistic option.

Bahr's influential perspective met with severe criticism from the extreme right. In the 1980s, this group insisted that reunification was achievable, provided the Germans recognize their common interest and pursue this objective with greater assertiveness and

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[71]Egon Bahr, <u>Was wird aus den Deutschen? Fragen und Antworten</u> (Reinbeck, 1982), p. 237.

[72]Windsor, p. 11.

[73]Ibid., p. 11.

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determination. Diwald argues that the Europeans would

support it because it would give them greater

independence from the US. He also considers European

fears of German resurgence fictitious and vastly

overblown.[74]

As to how to complete reunification, Oswald Feiler

advocates playing the Russian card, a popular idea on the

political right.[75] Reunification is only possible when

the interests of the Soviets are accommodated. If the

Germans provided economic help for the faltering Soviet

economy and signaled a willingness that a united Germany

would help maintain Soviet power, the great bargain could

be worked out.[76] Feiler's view, however, is not

undisputed. Some on the right reject the idea of

cooperating with the Soviets, reflecting a deep distaste

and suspicion of the communists, although many are not

necessarily anti-Russian.

As a fringe group with little influence, the extreme

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[74]Juergen Hess, "Westdeutsche Suche nach nationaler Identitaet," in <u>Die Deutsche Frage in der Weltpolitik</u>, ed. Jost Dulffer (Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag, 1986), p. 31.

[75]Ibid., p. 18.

[76]Eckhard Jesse, "Die (Pseudo-) Aktualitaet der Deutschen Frage--ein publizistisches, kein politisches Phaenomen," <u>Die Deutsche Frage in der Weltpolitik</u>, ed. Jost Dulffer (Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag, 1986), p. 55.

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right was scorned by the political mainstream. The liberal Wilfried von Bredow, for example, criticized that their perspective is not sufficiently oriented on political realities. He considers the East-West conflict permanent, which makes a solution to the national problem unlikely. Given ideological and nuclear-strategic differences between the superpowers, German reunification under a western, eastern, or neutralist option is impossible for the foreseeable future.[77] West German governments should therefore concentrate on more realistic goals such as securing more freedom for the people in the GDR and making division more tolerable.

Von Bredow accepts the existing status quo between the Germanies and sees little chance for change. For him the German question is no longer open, but has been solved in terms of two separate states.[78] The FRG must therefore be fully accepted, rather than viewed as a provisional construct.[79] This is in the interest of the nation's continued stability and solves the problem of national identity.[80]

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[77]Ibid., p. 60.

[78]Hess, pp. 36-37.

[79]Jesse, p. 60.

[80]Hess, p. 41.

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In the 1980s, this perspective was valued for its sober realism. It summed up the prevalent view on the German question--a position more widely accepted than many openly admitted.

Conclusion

The survey of the literature documents a remarkable consistency in the objectives of West German foreign policy: from Adenauer to Kohl, all West German governments subordinated reunification to alliance integration. Most analysts attribute this order of priorities to international factors and portray West German foreign policy as a response to systemic impulses. More research is therefore needed on the role of domestic forces. This will provide a more accurate picture of existing constraints. The systemic focus led to a generally pessimistic outlook on the German question. The consensus was that reunification was no longer a realistic policy option.

PART TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Chapter 4: CRISIS AND WEST GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY

Introduction

In the 1980s, the national issue was played down. Although not formally ruled out as a future possibility, it was more of a rhetorical goal rather than a pressing policy priority. This allowed the Kohl government to keep the German question open, even though in reality division came to be increasingly accepted as a political fact.

However, this began to change in late summer 1989. Within a few weeks, West German foreign policy underwent a fundamental transformation: reunification rose to the top of the political agenda and became the supreme policy priority of the Kohl administration. For the first time in post-war history, a West German government gave absolute primacy to the national issue, and pursued an end to division with unbelievable determination.

Responsible for this policy shift was a quickly escalating crisis in the GDR. The main hypothesis of this study is that the crisis had a profound impact on West German politics and changed the content, process, and structure of foreign policy. It presented Bonn with an opportunity to pursue a policy of reunification.

The events in the GDR and the resulting shift in West German foreign policy raise the following questions:

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what were the attributes of this crisis? What changes occurred in West German foreign policy and in the way decisions were made? Why did the crisis create a major opportunity for West German policy-makers to achieve a policy result unattainable under routine decision-making conditions? Why could the Kohl government exploit the crisis for its own national objectives?

Study Objectives

The study has the following objectives:

- To determine the effect of the crisis on the content, process, and structure of policy-making.

- To examine the opportunity dimension of the crisis.

To meet these objectives, I will explain the nature of the crisis and its situational attributes and how they influenced subsequent policy-making in Bonn. The study reconstructs how decision-makers viewed their environment and how this assessment affected subsequent policy-making. To explain policy content, the study analyzes motives and goals by examining key policy-makers and their positions. This will determine whether reunification was controversial or consensual; explain the main points of agreement and disagreement; and identify who supported or opposed the policy and why.

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With respect to the decision-making process and structure, I will analyze how decisions were made by focusing on: 1) policy-makers who took part in the process; 2) whether decisions were made by a single individual or collectively; 3) the role of the leader, i.e., did he provide the policy stimulus and determine the policy direction? 4) The leader's positions and how they were developed; and, 5) the leader's role in shaping a policy consensus and enlisting support from various departments and agencies.

The opportunity dimension of the crisis will be examined in terms of how the situation allowed the Kohl government to manipulate existing domestic and international constraints; Bonn's strategies to exploit the crisis; and the implications for policy-makers' flexibility to implement their preferred strategy.

The study adopts primarily an organizational perspective focusing on the policy apparatus conducting the nation's affairs and how it was affected by a crisis. It assumes that by examining the policy-making organization and how it functioned under crisis conditions, a particular policy result--reunification-- can be explained.

There are various definitions of reunification as it relates to the events of 1989. Broadly defined, the term

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refers to the recreation of a single German nation state in the borders of the German Reich of 1937.[1] A narrower definition, accepted by Bonn during the crisis, refers to state unity between the FRG, the GDR, and Berlin. Some reject the term altogether and prefer to use "unification," arguing that since the FRG and GDR were never before unified, it is inappropriate to speak of "re"unification.[2] This debate notwithstanding, both terms will be used interchangeably in this study.

West German foreign policy can be defined as a range of behaviors by decision-makers intended to influence the present or future activities of an international actor outside their own state.[3] Foreign policy-making in the Kohl government had two primary foci, one Western, directed toward the US and Western Europe (Westpolitik), and one Eastern, directed toward Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union (Ostpolitik). The centerpiece of Ostpolitik was Deutschlandpolitik, or policy directed toward the GDR.

This study is primarily focused on Deutschlandpolitik and Westpolitik. The main hypothesis can now be restated in a

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[1]Hoebink, p. 6.

[2]Martin Kriele, "Foederation oder Konfoederation," Handelsblatt, 7 December 1989.

[3]Brady, p. 15.

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more specific form: the crisis in the GDR changed the content, process, and structure of policy-making in Deutschlandpolitik and Westpolitik and allowed the Kohl government to achieve reunification.

Deutschlandpolitik means German policy, or policy to address Germany's national division. Although it is a subset of broader Ostpolitik, it is also a distinct policy area involving issues concerning East and West Germany--internal matters concerning the two states.[4] By examining Deutschlandpolitik, the study explains how the crisis affected issues pertaining to this relationship. It also provides information about how Bonn addressed the internal dimension of reunification during the crisis.

The other focus of Bonn's foreign policy was Westpolitik, involving a broad range of alliance issues. The centerpiece of Westpolitik was security, concerned with how to guarantee the nation's safety and protection from external harm.[5] The study explains how the crisis affected security issues and Bonn's alliance policies. Analyzing Westpolitik provides information about how Bonn addressed external aspects of unification, i.e., what steps were taken to enlist Western support for national

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[4]Clemens, p. 3.

[5]Zimmer, pp. 11-12.

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union.

The study examines Deutschlandpolitik and
Westpolitik separately as much as possible because they
involved different issue areas managed by distinct
bureaucratic agencies. Separation also makes the link
between them more explicit. For example, it can be shown
that during the crisis, policies directed at the GDR to
complete internal reunification influenced how and when
external issues were addressed.

The study treats Deutschlandpolitik as a subset of
West German foreign policy, the justification being that
the GDR was a separate state outside the boundaries of
the FRG. However, the Kohl government rejected this
classification. Because Bonn did not fully recognize the
GDR under international law, West German officials
treated relations with East Germany differently than
those involving other states. To underscore that the GDR
was not accepted as a foreign state, Bonn prevented East
German access to the West German foreign ministry. Formal
authority over Deutschlandpolitik therefore did not rest
there, but in the ministry of intra-German relations, and
later in the chancellery office. Because of status issues
involved, Bonn refused to treat Deutschlandpolitik as
part of foreign policy. For the Kohl government
Deutschlandpolitik was a special policy area that did not

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fit into the category of external relations.

Most previous studies analyze West German foreign policy from a systemic perspective focusing on the impact of the international environment. Foreign policy is understood as a response to international factors, rather than as the product of internal and domestic processes. This type of analysis emphasizes the perspective of the analyst, rather than that of national decision-makers, their perceptions and goals.

The present study adopts a subsystemic perspective and is based on a decision-making approach to crisis. Basic to this is the process by which decisions are made and the persons who, as individuals or in some collective form, constitute authoritative decision-makers.[6] This type of analysis stresses the decision-maker's subjective interpretation of a given situation and the motivational or psychological aspects that shape a nation's policy-making.[7] Therefore, "in attempting to explain how different kinds of situations influence the type of choice that is made, the analyst must interpret the

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[6]Charles F. Hermann, "Some Issues in the Study of International Crises," in International Crises: Insights from Behavioral Research, ed. Charles F. Hermann (New York: The Free Press, 1972), p. 12.

[7]Hanrieder, West German..., p. 2.

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situation as it is perceived by the decision-makers."[8]
Analytical emphasis rests on the subsystemic dimension of
foreign policy--the domestic rather than the
international system[9]--and strategy is understood as the
result of internal political processes. The present study
therefore examines West German decision-makers, their
perceptions, motives and goals, and the domestic
political process.

The study centers on the Kohl government. The Kohl
government is defined as individual policy-makers who
occupy authoritative positions to influence West German
foreign policy. Policy-makers in authoritative positions
are "individuals who have de facto or de jure authority
to structure, select, and execute the policies of the
nation."[10] "Although foreign policy activities may be
described solely in terms of aggregate units of
interaction,"[11] only individuals ultimately make
decisions. The study therefore examines individual

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[8]Charles Hermann, "Some Issues...," p. 13.

[9]Hanrieder, West German..., p. 2.

[10]Charles F. Hermann and Linda Brady, "Alternative
Models of International Crisis Behavior," in
International Crises: Insights from Behavioral Research,
ed. Charles F. Hermann (New York: The Free Press, 1972),
p. 283.

[11]Brady, p. 17.

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policy-makers in the Kohl government and their role in the decision-making process.

On the level of the executive, the chancellor has special significance. In the FRG, which is considered a parliamentary system with chancellor hegemony, he plays a key role in foreign policy decision-making because his constitutional mandate allows him to set the overall direction of policy.[12] The study therefore analyzes the chancellor's role by focusing on his positions, decision style, and strategies. The study also examines cabinet secretaries and members of the bureaucracy, i.e., officials in the chancellery office who played a key role in the policy process.

In the Kohl government the chancellor's party, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), forms a parliamentary alliance with the more conservative Bavarian sister party --the Christian Social Union (CSU). This two-party alliance is often referred to as the "Union." However, the CSU is a distinct party and differs from the CDU in various aspects such as leadership characteristics, organizational structure, ideological base, and size.[13]

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[12]Winfried Steffani, Parlamentarische und praesidentielle Demokratie, (Opladen 1979), p. 155.

[13]Alf Mintzel, Die CSU--Anatomie einer konservativen Partei 1945-1972 (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1975), pp. 38-39.

Though much smaller than the CDU, the CSU is represented in the Kohl cabinet with several ministers, and has a significant impact on West German foreign policy. Therefore the CSU deserves consideration in this study.

The CDU and CSU form a coalition with the liberal Free Democrats--the FDP. Although the FDP is also a relatively small party, it is needed as a majority-maker and occupies strategic positions in the Kohl government, such as the foreign ministry. The party is therefore particularly well suited to influence West German foreign policy. The role of the FDP will also be examined in this study.

With respect to the legislative level, separation between legislative and executive branch, parliament and government, is largely removed in the parliamentary system of the FRG because the interests of the parliamentary majority and the government overlap.[14] However, within the governing parliamentary group or fraktion (caucus), different positions may be articulated which influence the decision-making process in the executive. Consensus is not automatic and often involves considerable bargaining before the government can demonstrate a unified front in parliament. The

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[14]Zimmer, pp. 21-22.

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legislative level is therefore also included in the
study.

Justification

German reunification is a recent historical event
which caught politicians and scholars by surprise.
Although many newspaper and journal articles appeared in
the last years dealing with various aspects of
reunification, in-depth scholarly studies are scarce at
this point. The role of crisis in generating a specific
policy outcome--reunification--has not been examined. The
present study tries to fill this research gap by relating
different aspects of the crisis to the content, process
and structure of West German foreign policy. By focusing
on organizational and motivational factors and how they
were affected by the crisis, a particular policy result
is to be explained.

The study adds to the existing body of crisis
literature. It examines the dynamics of a post-cold war
crisis and provides some insight into how this new
international context affects decision-making, as well as
national and international relationships. In a departure
from previous research which concentrates on threat, the
study explores the opportunity dimension of a crisis
which plays a greater role in a post-cold war

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international system.

Previous analyses of crisis decision-making focused primarily on the US. In terms of theory development, this raises the problem of generalizing from American studies to foreign decision-making processes, despite considerable differences in structure and operation. The present study examines crisis decision-making in a West German government and offers an opportunity to test propositions derived from the US experience in a non-US context.

Finally, the study explains how reunification was achieved and contributes to an understanding of contemporary German foreign policy. By analyzing the Kohl government, it centers on a historical period not extensively covered so far. Understanding contemporary German foreign policy is important because it has implications for alliance relationships and provides clues about the future course of German foreign policy.

Chapter 5: Research Design

Introduction

The following section specifies independent and dependent variables, explains how they serve the stated purpose of the study, links the variables in hypotheses, specifies the methodology for testing them, and, finally, lays out the format of the study.

Definitions and Variables

The Independent Variable

The independent variable in this study is crisis. Snyder defined a crisis as a special decisional situation, an occasion for decision. The specific attributes of the situation determine whether the phenomenon at hand qualifies as a genuine crisis. This definition emphasizes that the concept of crisis is situational.[1] However, it allows the term crisis to be applied to a wide range of different situations. Compounding the definitional problem is the perspective of the analyst. When a decision-making approach is chosen, the perception of the individual matters most: a crisis exists when the decision-maker defines a situation

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[1]Richard C. Snyder, H.W. Bruck, and Burton Sapin, Foreign Policy Decision-Making (New York: The Free Press, 1962), pp. 80-81.

as such. However, a subjective definition raises the problem of recognizing a crisis and complicates prediction.

A more precise definition of crisis was provided by Hermann, which, with some modification, will be accepted in this study. According to Hermann,

> a crisis is a situation that (1) threatens high priority goals of the decision-making unit, (2) restricts the amount of time available for response before the decision is transformed, and (3) surprises the members of the decision-making unit by its occurrence.[2]

Therefore, a situation characterized by threat, shortness of decision time and surprise constitutes a crisis.

Surprise can be "defined as the condition in which decision-makers are confronted with an unexpected situation in either their domestic or international environments."[3] For surprise to be present, decision-makers did not anticipate the events. They are caught unprepared and have no contingency plans to deal with the situation. Any warning signs preceding the crisis were either not recognized or taken seriously.

However, some challenge the utility of surprise as a definitional criterion of crisis. For example, Billings, Milburn and Schaalman point out "that it is not the

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[2]Hermann and Brady, p. 13.

[3]Brady, p. 48.

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unexpectedness in itself, but the lack of contingency planning that leads to perceived crisis."[4] Other research suggests that surprise is too unreliable for valid use.[5] Because of these limitations, surprise as a defining characteristic of crisis has received less attention than threat and short decision time.[6]

Decision time can be defined as "the amount of time participants in the foreign policy process feel they have in which to make a decision, before characteristics of the situation vary to the point at which the occasion for decision is transformed."[7] Some scholars explain why policy-makers frequently perceive decision time to be short. According to Snyder and Diesing, time pressure in a crisis results from a quickly deteriorating status quo. Managers feel that if they do not act quickly, the situation will get worse, thereby minimizing their ability to achieve positive outcomes. The specter of potential policy disaster increases time pressure forcing decision-makers to speed up the bargaining and to press

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[4]Billings, Milburn and Schaalman, p. 307.

[5]Tanter, p. 351.

[6]Ibid., p. 351.

[7]Brady, p. 45.

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for rapid agreement.[8]

Although short decision time is widely used as a definitional criterion of crisis, the concept is not unproblematic. For example, it is not possible to specify in absolute terms what constitutes short decision time because this depends on the perception of the decision-maker and on the complexity of situational crisis aspects.

"Threat is defined as policy-makers' perception of impending harm to desired values, goals, or conditions which are created by the statements and/or actions of another nation's decision-makers."[9] Threat is a relational concept and implies a link between the acting nation and its goals as affected by the prior behavior of another nation.[10] This assumes that specific goals are known, that policy-makers acting on behalf of the nation in formulating and executing foreign policy always consciously pursue them, and that they envision certain outcomes which they hope to realize by pursuing a

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[8]Snyder and Diesing, p. 77.

[9]Brady, p. 41.

[10]Ibid., p. 129.

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particular course of action.[11] The threat dimension links

other nations' behavior to the acting nation's goals,

describing the impact of that behavior on the status of

those goals. If the consequences of the action are

negative, a threatening situation exists.[12]

Most studies focus on threat and view crises as

dangerous situations with the potential to inflict

serious harm if not handled properly. Brady, however,

argues that the focus on threat is too restrictive and

does not adequately describe all crisis situations.

Because crises often combine threat and opportunity, she

proposes the definitional category threat/opportunity to

capture this dual aspect. An "opportunity exists when

decision-makers view the situation as an occasion to make

progress or move closer to a desired goal, value, or

condition."[13] Like threat, opportunity is related to

goals. It "links other nations' behavior to the acting

nation's goals by describing the impact of that behavior

on the status of those goals." If the impact of the

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[11]David J. Singer, "The Level of Analysis Problem in
International Relations," in International Politics and
Foreign Policy, ed. Rosenau (New York: The Free Press,
1969), p. 25.

[12]Brady, p. 90.

[13]Ibid., pp. 41-42.

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action is positive, opportunity exist.[14]

Brady points out that decision-makers behave differently when faced with opportunity rather than threat. Because opportunity presents them with an occasion to make progress on a goal,[15] they "often act specifically to take advantage of it."[16] In an opportunity situation they perceive their range of responsive behavior to be broader than in a situation characterized by threat.[17] Opportunity seems to present greater choice of behavior and more flexibility.

Based on the works of Hermann and Brady, the study adopts the following definition: the crisis in the GDR was a situation that presented a threat to national goals, but also offered an opportunity to make progress on the national question; it imposed restrictions on available decision time, and surprised the policy-makers in the Kohl government.

The Dependent Variables

This study examines the effect of crisis on policy-

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[14]Ibid., pp. 89-90.

[15]Ibid., p. 95.

[16]Ibid., p. 194.

[17]Ibid., p. 42.

making. More specifically, I argue that a crisis situation in the GDR affected content, process and structure of West German foreign policy. To test this relationship, the following dependent variables were chosen:

1. Decision-makers' perception of the intra-German and external environment

2. Policy objectives

3. Degree of consensus

4. Centralization of authority

5. Range of action

In decision-making analysis, perception plays a central role. It is defined as policy-makers' awareness of the context or milieu in which decisions are made. Milieu includes the national as well as the international environment and therefore comprises aspects internal and external to the state.[18] Many different factors, such as the history of relations between nations, as well as events occurring at the same time in the domestic or international environment are all part of the total context in which decision-making occurs.[19] Because

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[18]Harold and Margaret Sprout, "Environmental Factors in the Study of International Politics," in <u>International Politics and Foreign Policy</u>, ed. James N. Rosenau, New York: The Free Press, 1969, p. 43.

[19]Brady, p. 256.

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policy-makers react to their environment through perception, their view of it, rather than the real environment, is the critical input in the decision-making process.[20] Foreign policy analysis must therefore begin with their perception of the internal and external context.

This study reconstructs how decision-makers in the Kohl government viewed the intra-German and external context, what factors shaped their perception, and how this assessment influenced subsequent Deutschlandpolitik and Westpolitik.

Objectives or "goals may be defined as preferred states of the international system expressed by foreign policy decision-makers."[21] It may well be a peculiarity of the Western philosophical tradition to exhibit a strong proclivity for a goal-seeking approach when confronted with the need to explain individual and collective behavior.[22] Goal oriented behavior is ascribed to actors, while "nations may be said to be goal-seeking organisms which exhibit purposive behavior."[23] This

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[20]Vertzberger, p. 35.

[21]Brady, p. 41.

[22]Singer, p. 25.

[23]Ibid., p. 25.

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approach compels the analyst to examine the process of how goals became crucial variables structuring the behavior of states. It raises difficult issues, i.e., can goals be correctly inferred from decision-makers' verbal and symbolic actions; are decision-makers' goals and motives identical with those of the state; and the problem of how and why nations pursue certain goals.[24]

Despite these limitations, motivational factors are widely accepted as crucial in foreign policy analysis because they are an important component of action, influence the behavior of decision-makers, and define the content and substance of policy. The study therefore analyzes the objectives and goals of West German officials with respect to Deutschlandpolitik and Westpolitik. This provides information about policy content and how it changed under the impact of crisis.

Consensus can be defied as "the measure of agreement on the ends and means of foreign policy in the domestic political scene."[25] Degree of consensus can be determined by examining individual policy-makers' positions as to

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[24]Ibid., pp. 25-27.

[25]Wolfram Hanrieder, "Compatibility and Consensus. A Proposal of the Conceptual Linkage of External and Internal Dimensions of Foreign Policy," in American Political Science Review, Vol. LXI, No. 4, December 1967, p. 977.

who supported or opposed a given policy and why.

Consensus is related to the content of foreign policy.

The more divided the political process, the greater the

likelihood that the resulting policy is unclear and

inconsistent. Degree of consensus is also related to the

decision-making process. A consensual environment makes

it easier to push through a preferred course of action

and to implement it without delay.

To determine degree of consensus, the study examines

the content of individual policy positions. This will

explain whether Deutschlandpolitik and Westpolitik were

controversial, who supported or opposed the policies, and

how the crisis affected overall consensus in the Kohl

government.

Centralization of authority is defined as "the

degree to which participation in the decision-making

process is limited to the head of state, ad hoc groups,

or private individuals in whom the head of state has

personal confidence."[26] When authority is centralized the

decision unit is small, power among group members is

unequally distributed, members share a common source of

information, and a primary loyalty to the group.[27]

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[26]Brady, p. 59.

[27]Hermann, et. al., "How Decision Units...," p. 320.

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Authority is diffused rather than centralized when representatives of bureaucracies acting in their formal roles participate in the policy process.[28] Authority refers to "the ability to issue orders, instructions, and commands with the probability that they will be obeyed."[29] Structure of authority consists of a set of rules which govern the interactions between top policy-makers and their subordinates.

Centralization of authority is related to policy process and structure. This variable explains who is in a position to make decisions, the size of the decision-making unit, how decisions are made, and how quickly they can be implemented. The study examines these issues in an effort to explain how the crisis affected centralization in the Kohl government.

Range of action is defined as decision-makers' ability to pursue and accomplish unique goals relative to other international actors.[30] It denotes room to maneuver and policy flexibility. It is a function of the number and type of constraints in the internal and external

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[28]Brady, p. 59.

[29]Snyder, et.al., p. 116.

[30]Helga Haftendorn, "Aussenpolitische Prioritaeten und Handlungsspielraum," Politische Vierteljahreszeitschrift, Vol. 30, No. 1, March 1989, p. 34.

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environment. If range of action is perceived to be broad, policy-makers will be in a position to formulate objectives and strategies autonomously, and will be able to influence other political systems. But if range of action is small, they will be forced to consider outside demands limiting their ability to pursue preferred policies.[31]

Range of action is related to policy process and structure. Decision-makers subject to few constraints can choose a strategy based on their unique interests with little outside input. They can also push through preferred policies more effectively. Range of action therefore provides information about the structure of the policy organization and how it functions.

The study examines how the crisis affected the Kohl government's range of action in foreign policy. This sheds more light on how decisions were made, and who was involved in the process.

The five dependent variables were selected to capture key effects of the crisis on the content, process, and structure of West German foreign policy. In the past, decision-making analysts have been criticized for overemphasizing process at the expense of content.

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[31]Ibid., p. 35.

Some showed such an overriding concern with the process
by which policy was made, that resulting research was
more concerned with the mechanics of producing policy
than its actual content.[32] However, this study tries to
give equal weight to policy content. Together, the five
dependent variables should give a more balanced account
of West German crisis decision-making.

Hypotheses

The main hypothesis of the study is that the crisis
in the GDR changed the content, process, and structure of
policy-making and allowed the Kohl government to achieve
reunification. To test this, the independent variable,
crisis, will be related to the five dependent variables
to generate the following additional hypotheses:

1. Perception of the Intra-German and External Context

1-1 The crisis changed the perception of the GDR as
a passive foreign policy area where Bonn had few choices,
to one where the Kohl government had a unique opportunity
to achieve unification.

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[32]B.P.White, "Decision-making Analysis," in
Approaches and Theory in International Relations, ed.
Trevor Taylor, (London: Longman, 1978), p. 159.

Before the crisis, the Kohl government viewed the GDR as stable with Honecker firmly in control. Bonn saw little prospect for affecting fundamental change in the system structure of the GDR. Based on this assessment, there was no alternative to continued accommodation and cooperation with the East German leadership, a policy initiated by the social-liberal Brandt government in 1969.

The crisis changed the Kohl government's view of the intra-German context, challenging the perception of system stability. As events unfolded, Bonn became convinced that the old leadership in the GDR had lost the confidence of the people and that the situation presented an opportunity to achieve unification. The Kohl government therefore ended accommodation, and subsequent Deutschlandpolitik centered on strategic moves to take maximum advantage of the opportunity situation.

1-2 The crisis changed the perception of the European status quo as stable and not transformable in the short term, to one where the Kohl government saw a real chance for constructing a new order with a unified Germany as its centerpiece.

In the pre-crisis phase the Kohl government perceived no realistic possibility for fundamental,

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short-term change in the bloc structure. Transformation was thought possible only in a long-term evolutionary process where the superpower standoff would be gradually overcome through a step-by-step process. Therefore, the Kohl government continued integration and cooperation with the Western partners--a policy that left intact the existing pattern of alliance politics.

The crisis changed the assessment of the external context. With the fall of the Berlin Wall, the old status quo in Europe had collapsed. Factors in the international environment now seemed favorable to solve the national question and allowed Bonn to channel change into a new stable order. Subsequent Westpolitik centered on how to convince the allies that reunification was in their interest and on how to enlist their support.

2. Foreign Policy Objectives

2-1 The crisis changed the goals of Deutschlandpolitik from easing the consequences of division to reunification.

Before the crisis, the most important goal of Deutschlandpolitik was to soften the human consequences of division through a policy of accommodation and cooperation with the GDR. How and when this would solve the national question remained vague. That

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Deutschlandpolitik was not aimed at reunification was illustrated in 1984 when GDR residents fled to the West German embassy in Prague. Chancellor Kohl stressed that this was an inappropriate way to force emigration and discouraged other prospective defectors from such a step.[33] The refugees in the embassy were persuaded to go back to the GDR and to obtain exist visas through official channels. The episode illustrated that the Kohl government was not interested in destabilizing the Honecker government to force reunification.

The crisis changed the main objective of Deutschlandpolitik to reunification. It also clarified when and how national union would be completed. The shift in Deutschlandpolitik was illustrated by Bonn's handling of the refugee crisis in fall of 1989. When hundreds of East Germans began to seek asylum in the West German embassy in Prague, administration officials negotiated free passage to the FRG. In the following months they also refused to limit the generous benefit package for East Germans crossing into the West although critics warned that it provided an incentive for more to come. These policies indicated that Bonn was no longer

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[33]Helmut Kohl, "Bericht der Bundesregierung zur Lage der Nation im geteilten Deutschland," Texte, III/3, 1985, p. 68.

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interested in stabilizing the old East German leadership, but wanted to expedite reunification.

2-2 The crisis changed the goals of Westpolitik from security to reunification.

Before the events, Bonn subordinated its national interest in reunification to alliance integration and security in the West. This order of priorities was illustrated by Bonn's Ostpolitik. The Kohl government was willing to subordinate Eastern relations to security and alliance politics, although a dynamic Ostpolitik and detente had a positive impact on the national question. Before the crisis, Bonn refused to conduct Ostpolitik at the risk of weakening Western ties.

The crisis changed this order of priorities: National interest in reunification was overriding. Westpolitik was now conducted to serve unity. Bonn was interested in a security arrangement that minimized allied objections and allowed Bonn to meet its ambitious time schedule for implementing reunification.

3. Degree of Consensus

3-1 The crisis fostered consensus between the pragmatic and the conservative faction in the Kohl government on operational Deutschlandpolitik, policy

objectives, and on the border issue.

Before the crisis, Deutschlandpolitik was a divisive issue area in the Kohl government. There was no consensus between pragmatists who advocated accommodation and cooperation with the GDR, and conservatives who demanded stricter emphasis on reunification, even if it meant a more confrontational policy vis-a-vis the GDR. Most controversial, however, was the question of borders for a future unified Germany, reflecting deep disagreement on the status of the Eastern territories beyond the Oder-Neisse border.

But during the crisis both sides agreed on operational Deutschlandpolitik supporting an end to cooperation with the old East German leadership. A broad patriotic consensus emerged in favor of reunification, ending the controversy over policy objectives in Deutschlandpolitik. Pragmatists and conservatives also reached agreement on the border issue: a reunified Germany was to comprise both West and East Germany, as well as Berlin. The Eastern territories were therefore accepted as lost. Thus the crisis ended the bitter dispute over the border issue which had burdened the coalition since its inception.

3-2 The crisis fostered consensus between

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pragmatists and conservatives on the direction of West German foreign policy with both sides supporting a unified Germany in NATO.

Before the crisis, the basic direction of West German foreign policy was in dispute with pragmatists and conservatives disagreeing on the relative weight of West- and Ostpolitik. At issue was whether pragmatists, such as the FDP foreign minister Genscher, overemphasized Eastern relations at the expense of Western ties.

The crisis ended this controversy by fostering a solid consensus in favor of a reunified Germany in NATO. At the same time, pragmatists and conservatives also supported the idea that security in the alliance must be broadened by an element of cooperation with the Soviet Union and the new democracies in Eastern Europe. A synthesis between Westpolitik and Ostpolitik was achieved, ending the dispute over proper balance in these two policy areas.

4. Centralization of Authority

4-1 The crisis increased centralization of authority in West German foreign policy.

Before the events in the GDR, foreign policy decision-making in the Kohl government was characterized by institutional differentiation and complex negotiating

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and bargaining routines.[34] With many different actors

involved and distinct rules to be followed, Chancellor

Kohl could not centralize authority in foreign policy.

That he was unable to dominate this policy area was

illustrated by his weak leadership image.

The crisis brought about a contraction of structures

involved in developing foreign policy: the chancellor

set the overall policy direction and made all crucial

decisions. Familiar consultation routines and negotiating

mechanisms were deliberately circumvented. Actors with a

strong policy role before the crisis were confronted with

a fait accompli.[35] Despite this style, Chancellor Kohl's

leadership was fully accepted and earned widespread

praise.

5. Range of Action in Foreign Policy

5-1 The crisis increased policy-makers' range of

action to plan and implement foreign policy.

Before the crisis, the Kohl government's room to

maneuver was constrained by domestic and external

factors. On the domestic side, coalition politics, the

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[34]Gerhard Lehmbruch, "Die deutsche Vereinigung: Strukturen und Strategien," Politische Vierteljahreszeitschrift, Vol. 32, Nr. 4, December 1991, p. 587.

[35]Ibid., p. 587.

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role of the opposition SPD, and resource constraints were most important. External constraints included military and political limits stemming from Bonn's alliance relationship. Domestic and international limits narrowed overall flexibility which was reflected in a modest, low-key approach to world politics.

The crisis provided a setting that allowed the Kohl government to manipulate domestic and external constraints. As a result, they were much less effective in limiting Bonn's flexibility, and the administration could take full advantage of the opportunities created by the events in the GDR. More room to maneuver translated into determined steps to address the internal and external aspects of reunification and to complete the merger in record time. During the crisis, West German foreign policy was characterized by unprecedented assertiveness and a willingness to play a high-profile international leadership role.

Methodology

To test the relationship between crisis and policy-making, the five dependent variables will be examined in two time frames:

a. The pre-crisis phase. This phase begins in October 1982 when the Kohl government took office and

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lasts through summer of 1989. The study first examines Deutschlandpolitik and Westpolitik in this time frame. Each area will be examined in terms of perception of contextual conditions, policy objectives, and degree of consensus. Next, the study analyzes level of centralization, and policy-makers' range of action in foreign policy. To determine the effect of crisis on policy-making, the five dependent variables are then reexamined during the subsequent period.

b. The crisis phase. This phase begins in late summer of 1989 with the exodus of GDR refugees to West German embassies in Eastern Europe and ends on 2 December 1990 with the first all-German Bundestag election. In this phase Deutschlandpolitik corresponds with Bonn's efforts to address the internal dimension of reunification, while Westpolitik corresponds with the handling of external aspects. By comparing German foreign policy in two different time frames, the study identifies how the crisis changed the content, process, and structure of West German foreign policy.

The method used to examine these relationships is the qualitative single case study. Case studies, according to Eckstein, are valuable at all stages of the

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theory building process.[36] They may be used for the interpretive application of general ideas to particular cases, (i.e. after theory has been established), as powerful means of determining whether solutions are valid, or, heuristically, for helping the inquirer to arrive at notions of problems to solve or solutions worth pursuing.[37] Case studies permit intensive analysis that does not commit the researcher to a highly limited set of variables, and thus increase the probability that critical variables and relations will be found.[38] They are suited for investigating political units of considerable magnitude and complexity, i.e., nations, political parties, governments, regardless of level of inquiry.[39] This research strategy best meets the purpose of this study which is to provide some tentative conclusions about the role of crisis in changing the Kohl government's foreign policy.

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[36]Harry Eckstein, "Case Study and Theory in Political Science," in Strategies of Inquiry, ed. Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby, (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1975), p. 80.

[37]Ibid., p. 95.

[38]Ibid., p. 106.

[39]Ibid., p. 80.

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<u>Data Sources</u>

This study deals with a recent historical period which presents a number of problems for the researcher. The events are too close to the immediate past to speak with certainty of events of which the meaning is still unfolding.[40] There are no comprehensive accounts of this chapter in German foreign policy which could serve as a reliable guide or data source. The most interesting internal documents necessary for a comprehensive treatment, such as private archives of the chancellor and the foreign minister are subject to tight restrictions and will not be publicly available for decades. The continued sensitivity of reunification in German politics makes it unlikely that significant new information can be uncovered in interviews with the main actors.

Despite these limitations, there is substantial published primary and secondary source material in the form of speeches, documents, and articles providing a large enough data base for constructing a case study. This study is based on such publicly available material. Primary sources include "Texte zur Deutschlandpolitik," containing speeches and official statements pertaining to Deutschlandpolitik and Westpolitik; publications of

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[40]Hanrieder, <u>Germany, America, Europe</u>..., p. x.

official government statements, opinions, speeches and interviews by members of the Kohl government; protocols of Bundestags debates; and both party and Fraktion (caucus) press releases. Secondary source materials include books, newspaper-, magazine-, and journal articles.

As an exact historical reconstruction, the study will remain incomplete as long as important internal documents are unavailable and political considerations constrain the main actors to provide additional details in personal interviews. Despite these limitations, I hope to provide a tentative account of how a crisis affected the Kohl government's foreign policy.

Format of the Study

Part three examines West German foreign policy before the crisis. Part four provides a brief historical background, and determines whether the crisis met the definitional criteria established by Hermann and Brady. It then examines West German foreign policy during the crisis phase. Part five presents conclusions about the impact of crisis on the content, process, and structure of German foreign policy. Finally, it makes some observations about the opportunity dimension of a crisis.

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PART THREE: WEST GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY 1982-1989

Chapter 6: Perception of the Intra-German and External
Environment

Introduction

The following chapter examines how policy-makers in
Bonn viewed the decision-making context in the pre-crisis
phase between October 1982 and late summer 1989. First,
it explains how they assessed the intra-German
environment, what factors shaped their view, and how this
assessment influenced subsequent Deutschlandpolitik.
Second, the study examines policy-makers' perception of
the external context, factors most relevant in their
assessment, and how this was reflected in Westpolitik.
The purpose is to explain policy-makers' images of the
intra-German and external environment before the crisis
and implications for Bonn's foreign policy.

Perception of the Intra-German Environment

In his first official policy statement after taking
office in the fall of 1982, the new Chancellor, Helmut
Kohl, made it clear that his government would pursue
continuity in Deutschlandpolitik.

> The cooperation between the German states must
> be improved in the interest of the Germans and
> their neighbors in Europe. We will continue the
> ongoing negotiations and talks. Based on
> already existing treaties, we are interested in

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comprehensive, long-term agreements to the
benefit of the people.[1]

By reaffirming the legal basis of social-liberal
Deutschlandpolitik initiated by Brandt in 1969, Kohl
signaled to the GDR that like his predecessors, he was
prepared to accept a relationship with the East German
state based on equality, mutual respect, and sovereignty
in internal and external affairs,[2] and that he would not
only abide by the existing treaties, but would use them
to broaden dialogue and normalization.

Kohl's commitment to a policy of continued
cooperation and accommodation was based on sober realism.
As the Soviet Union's most strategic ally, the GDR was
closely integrated in the Eastern bloc, both militarily
and economically. Without any organized political
opposition, the Honecker government seemed stable and
firmly in control. Bonn therefore saw no alternative to
the ruling SED and its monopoly of power in the
political, economic, and social sphere of East Germany.
According to Dorothee Wilms, Minister of Intra-German

[1]Helmut Kohl, "Regierungserklaerung vor dem
deutschen Bundestag," Minutes of Bundestag, 13 October
1982.

[2]Hans Apel, "Rede vor dem Deutschen Bundestag,"
Texte zur Deutschlandpolitik, III/3 (Bonn:
Bundesministerium fuer innerdeutsche Beziehungen, 1985),
p. 76.

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Affairs, "the existence of two states in Germany with differing social systems and alliance commitments is an indisputable fact."[3] It reflected Bonn's assessment that a communist East Germany had to be accepted as a political reality.

As long as the superpower standoff continued, the Kohl government perceived no realistic opportunity to affect an end to division in the short term. A return to a policy of confrontation and non-recognition, practiced by West German governments in the 1950s and 1960s aimed at destabilizing the GDR to force reunification, was unrealistic and counterproductive, undercutting most contacts between the Germans and burdening the superpower climate. As the SPD deputy Horst Ehmke argued, "a policy of non-recognition could not change human destinies in the divided Germany."[4] This logic convinced many in Bonn that pragmatic Deutschlandpolitik based on the de facto recognition of the GDR had more to offer. By facilitating human contacts, exchange of opinions and information, this policy allowed Bonn to soften the human consequences

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[3]_Pressemitteilung des Bundesministeriums fuer innerdeutsche Beziehungen_, Bonn, 25 January 1988.

[4]Horst Ehmke, "Rede im Deutschen Bundestag," _Texte II/5_, 1977, p. 83.

of national division[5] and preserved the substance of the German nation as long as it remained split into two separate states. Not reunification, but agreements with the GDR to benefit Germans living under communism should therefore remain the centerpiece of Deutschlandpolitik. This was a less ambitious policy reflecting Bonn's view that change in the status quo and an end to division was not likely in the near future, and that pragmatic acceptance of the East German state was more realistic in a superpower international climate.

The thirteen year record of social-liberal Deutschlandpolitik convinced many in the Kohl government that this policy was in Bonn's interest. Despite close ties to Moscow, Honecker demonstrated a greater willingness to improve dialogue and cooperation with the West than his predecessor Ulbricht. As a result, the relationship between the two Germanies grew closer and more dynamic, strengthened by increased political and economic ties. Although cooperation legitimized Honecker, it also gave Bonn political influence in East German affairs. Well aware of the "economic inferiority of the

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[5]Clemens, p. 278.

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East,"[6] the Kohl government knew that Honecker's interest

in good relations was due to economic reasons.

Particularly in the second half of the 1980s, the GDR

experienced its most serious economic crisis, increasing

pressure on the regime to seek better relations with the

West.[7] Economic weakness made the GDR susceptible to

material incentives, increasing Bonn's leverage in

Deutschlandpolitik. Throughout the 1980s, economic tools,

especially large amounts of credit, proved very effective

in moving the East German regime toward greater system

openness. By cooperating with Honecker, the Kohl

government gained a measure of influence in the affairs

of the East German state. Because the policy allowed Bonn

to achieve political ends in the relationship with the

GDR, it was widely perceived to be in the Kohl

government's best interest.

As the policy developed, there was also growing

convergence of interests between Bonn and East-Berlin and

consensus on some central points. For example, Honecker

and Genscher agreed that the Germans in East and West

formed a "community of responsibility" for peace in

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[6]Ottfried Hennig, "Die sowjetische Reformpolitik und die Konsequenzen fuer die Deutschen," Texte III/5, 1987, p. 258.

[7]Ehrhart Neubert, "Eine Protestantische Revolution," Deutschland Archiv 23, May-August 1990, p. 704.

Europe. Both Germanies were therefore obligated to continue dialogue and accommodation, and not let intra-German relations become an additional source of international tension.[8] Both sides also emphasized that intra-German detente could exert a moderating influence on the East-West conflict and help improve the overall superpower climate.

Over the years, Honecker was increasingly perceived as a partner with whom Bonn could work out mutually beneficial agreements. He was eager to continue cooperation with the FRG and Western Europe, and could not afford to jeopardize the special relationship with Bonn. Opening to the West strengthened the East German economy, legitimized the GDR internationally, and allowed him to demonstrate more foreign policy independence from the Soviets. To continue and strengthen a relationship viewed as mutually beneficial, the Kohl government refrained from actions that could weaken Honecker. Bonn's handling of the 1984 refugee crisis in the Prague embassy indicated that the Kohl government was not interested in destabilizing his regime.

The record of Deutschlandpolitik in the 1980s reflected the special importance the Kohl government

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[8]Rainer Barzel, "Zur Deutschlandpolitik der neuen Bundesregierung," Texte, III/1, 1983, p. 15.

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placed on intra-German ties. From the mid-eighties on, the relationship developed rapidly to an unparalleled degree of cooperation. Improved relations touched the lives of thousands of GDR residents, reflected in the growing volume of travel from the GDR to the FRG, the large increase in exit visas, and city partnerships. A host of agreements was worked out in various fields, i.e., an agreement on environmental protection and a cultural accord providing for far-reaching cooperation in science, education, and the arts.[9] There was also extensive economic cooperation. Many cabinet ministers traveled to East Berlin to confer with their East German counterparts, including Chancellery Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble. In 1986, Horst Sindermann, President of the GDR Volkskammer, visited Bonn and met with government officials, even though the Union had long shied away from official contacts with the East German legislature, arguing that it lacked democratic legitimacy and parliamentary weight.[10] In September 1987, Honecker made an official visit to Bonn, a trip planned originally for 1983 and 1984, but twice postponed due an adverse

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[9]Gebhard Diemer and Eberhard Kuhrt, Kurze Chronik der Deutschen Frage, (Muenchen: Olzog Verlag, 1991), p. 109.

[10]Apel, "Rede...," Texte, III/3, 1985, p. 79.

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superpower climate. He was received by Kohl like a head of state, complete with full military honors, national hymn, and flag.[11] After signing a number of new agreements, Honecker visited several West German states, including Bavaria. By the late 1980s the relationship between the two Germanies had developed to an unprecedented level of cooperation, far surpassing the record of Deutschlandpolitik of the Brandt and Schmidt administrations.

In early 1988, there were clear signs that internal dissent in the GDR was growing. In January, during a demonstration commemorating the assassination of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, GDR authorities arrested eighty members of peace and human rights groups demanding more political freedom.[12] Despite this incident, the CDU Mayor of West-Berlin, Eberhard Diepgen, met with Honecker for the first time to negotiate new travel improvements and the exchange of city land for which the East Germans were to receive generous compensation. The Diepgen visit sparked more violence. During the meeting, GDR security forces clashed with citizens outside the conference hall, demanding to see the West Berlin mayor. A month later, in

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[11]Clemens, p. 277.

[12]Diemer and Kuhrt, p. 113.

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an effort to stamp out dissident activity in the Protestant Church, GDR authorities interrupted church services and detained opposition leaders.

These events prompted speculation in Bonn that Honecker's influence in the party was waning. A return to repression was now considered uncharacteristic of him, because he had refrained from heavy-handed tactics in recent years, mindful of their negative effect on the relationship with Bonn. Honecker was believed to favor dialogue with the Protestant Church to contain further unrest, a view strengthened by his decision to release demonstrators detained during the Luxemburg/Liebknecht rally. The crackdown and arrest of opposition leaders was instead attributed to SED hard-liners jockeying for position in an internal power struggle. Careful not to undermine Honecker, the events in the GDR prompted only a relatively mild reaction from Bonn. Although Dorothee Wilms, Minister for Intra-German Affairs, expressed dismay over the repression, relations continued on schedule. For example, the German cultural exchange negotiated in 1986 opened as planned, and the GDR was able to establish diplomatic relations with the European Community. By continuing relations, the Kohl government hoped to strengthen the position of forces in the SED that favored continued cooperation and dialogue with the

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West. The events, however, raised concern in Bonn over leadership succession and the future of pragmatic Deutschlandpolitik.

Although generational change was expected sooner or later, it was not clear whether it would ultimately favor SED hard-liners or the reform element in the party. Complicating this assessment was uncertainty over how Gorbachev's perestroika and glasnost would affect internal politics in the GDR. However, irrespective of the outcome of the power struggle, administration officials in Bonn considered the SED's position in government and society firm and unquestioned. Speculation in the Kohl government centered on which party faction would ultimately prevail, rather than on a democratic alternative. The administration did not perceive the erosion of the entire power structure--a process that had probably begun long before 1989[13]--and did not expect the impending system collapse in the GDR.

Perception of the External Environment

In the 1980s, the Kohl government's view of the external environment and resulting Westpolitik was shaped by superpower politics. The status quo in Europe,

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[13]Robert Darnton, "Did Germany Have a Revolution," New York Times, 3 December 1990, p. 19.

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symbolized by the bloc structure and German division, was considered stable. Fundamental transformation was not expected in the foreseeable future. Change was thought possible only through a long-term evolutionary process, whereby the East-West conflict was transformed in a step-by-step process. In the context of gradual change, the Kohl government hoped that tensions in Europe would give way to cooperation, eventually leading to the resolution of the German question.[14] As Chancellor Kohl emphasized, "we all know: overcoming division is imaginable only in historical time frames."[15] It reflected Bonn's pessimistic global perception that prospects for fundamental transformation in the European status quo were dim, and that there was no realistic opportunity to solve the national problem in the foreseeable future.

In Chancellor Kohl's first three years in office, prospects for real improvement in the East-West conflict seemed particularly remote. This was a period of intense US-Soviet confrontation over the stationing of medium-range nuclear missiles. As both superpowers tried to achieve parity in this class of weapons, the block

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[14]Ottfried Hennig, "Die Deutschlandpolitik der Bundesregierung im Rahmen des West-Ost Verhaeltnisses," Texte III/5, 1987, pp. 270-271.

[15]Helmut Kohl, "Regierungserklaerung...," 13 October 1982.

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structure was further consolidated. In the early 1980s, the status quo in Europe and German division seemed frozen into place.

The appearance of Gorbachev in 1985 did not fundamentally change the Kohl government's view that the post-war order was stable. Bonn's initial assessment of the new Soviet leader reflected deep skepticism and doubt. Union conservatives and the CSU questioned Gorbachev's commitment to reform, and stressed that perestroika and glasnost were inconsistent with Soviet treatment of the Baltics. Ottfried Hennig, Deputy Minister of Intra-German Affairs, denounced the reform program as little more than "smoke and propaganda."[16] Chancellor Kohl also seemed unimpressed by the new Soviet leader and compared him to the Nazi Propaganda Minister Goebbels. Skepticism about Gorbachev was reflected in subsequent foreign policy: until 1988, relations between Bonn and Moscow remained cool, with official contacts mainly confined to Kremlin funerals.

Initial doubt about Gorbachev quickly changed to enthusiastic support, as perestroika raised real hopes that East-West confrontation would give way to more cooperation. However, the extent of change, its degree of

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[16]Hennig, "Die sowjetische Reformpolitik...," Texte III/5, 1987, p. 252.

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impact, and permanence remained far from certain in Bonn. This ambivalence was reinforced by mixed signals from the Soviets. For example, in September 1987, the chief of the secret service, Shchebrikov, warned against a "bourgeois interpretation" of perestroika. He tried to make it clear that reforms were conducted under the leadership of the party and within the context and the interest of socialism.[17] The Kohl government also noted that Gorbachev seemed to caution against exaggerated hopes for perestroika. Although he emphasized his commitment to replace the bloc structure with cooperative security arrangements, he argued in 1987 that "two German states were a reality" and implied that the Germans should accept division as a political fact for the indefinite future.[18] This led to the expectation in Bonn that Gorbachev would not allow perestroika to undermine the post-war order. The appearance of the new Soviet leader therefore did not change the administration's view that the status quo in Europe was stable. Chancellor Kohl summed up this sentiment by stating in late 1988 that there was "no reason to believe, that a solution to the

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[17]Ibid., p. 251.

[18]Ibid., p. 253.

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German question was closer."[19]

In the uncertain international environment of the late 1980s, Bonn's best alternative was still continued close integration in the West. Despite its shortcomings, the post-war order based on the US nuclear guarantee and German division had kept Europe stable for more than four decades. Bonn's membership in the community of Western nations helped rebuild its international prestige and economic prosperity during the post-war era. The trust and confidence generated through participation in the Western alliance gave Bonn greater foreign policy flexibility, i.e., in Ostpolitik and European policy. For Bonn, the utility of the alliance went far beyond security guarantees.

Increasingly, NATO was valued for domestic political reasons. It was a source of military and economic resources,[20] allowing Bonn to keep overall defense outlays low, and focus on important priorities at home. For example, the Kohl government could turn to perfecting the social safety net, and strengthen the German economy. Therefore, NATO membership was also a means to secure

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[19]Helmut Kohl, "Bericht zur Lage der Nation im geteilten Deutschland," Texte III/6, 1988, p. 465.

[20]Barnett and Levy, p. 371.

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scarce resources for domestic needs.[21] By choosing

continued reliance on the US, government officials "could

avoid imposing greater burdens on society and

jeopardizing their other political and economic

objectives."[22] Although NATO reduced autonomy by

requiring Bonn to adjust its actions and to demonstrate

continued commitment,[23] the overall benefits of a Western

orientation far exceeded costs. This provided a strong

disincentive for challenging existing patterns of

alliance relationships. Bonn had a vested interest in the

status quo and was comfortable with it. Fundamental

change was not considered in West Germany's interest.

The basic direction of West German foreign policy in

the 1980s therefore remained Atlanticist. Although

diverging interests between Bonn and Washington emerged

on such issues as the massive Reagan defense build-up,

relations with the Eastern bloc, economic policy, and

burden-sharing,[24] relations remained cordial. Chancellor

Kohl always tried to accentuate the pro-American

orientation of his foreign policy and the binding

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[21]Ibid., p. 373.

[22]Barnett, p. 561.

[23]Morrow, p. 912.

[24]Hacke, "Weltmacht...," pp. 338-339.

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elements between the two nations.[25] The prevailing view
in Bonn was that as long as the future of superpower
detente in Europe remained uncertain, the partnership
with the West best guaranteed the FRG's international
position and domestic prosperity.

Conclusion

Until summer 1989, the Kohl government considered
the GDR stable with Honecker firmly in control. Closely
integrated in the Warsaw Pact, Bonn was pessimistic about
affecting fundamental change in the system structure of
the GDR. Based on this assessment, the Kohl government
accepted the GDR as a political reality and saw no
alternative to continued cooperation and accommodation
with the East German leadership. Although pragmatic
Deutschlandpolitik seemed to strengthen Honecker
politically and economically, it was widely considered in
Bonn's interest because it moved the GDR toward greater
system openness.

Bonn's Deutschlandpolitik was based on a pessimistic
assessment of the international environment. For most of
the 1980s, the Kohl government saw no realistic chance
for fundamental, short-term change in the bloc structure.

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[25]Ibid., p. 338.

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This assessment did not change with the appearance of Gorbachev. In Bonn's global political perception, the future of superpower detente remained uncertain, and the security partnership with the West best guaranteed the FRG's international position and domestic peace. Therefore, Bonn's Westpolitik left intact existing patterns of alliance relationships.

Chapter 7: The Objectives of West German Foreign Policy

Introduction

Perception of the decisional context examined in the last chapter structured foreign policy objectives. The following section analyzes goals pursued by the Kohl government in Deutschlandpolitik and Westpolitik before the crisis. It begins with intra-German relations, demonstrating that Bonn's most important objective in Deutschlandpolitik was to ease the consequences of division, while the commitment to reunification weakened. To illustrate this, the study explains how prominent administration officials used the concepts of nation, unity, and freedom. The chapter then turns to the objectives of Westpolitik. The analysis shows that security and alliance integration remained paramount, while the national question was subordinated. Bonn's Ostpolitik in the 1980s illustrates this order of priorities.

The Objectives of Deutschlandpolitik

The preamble of the West German Constitution called upon the Germans to "complete the unity and freedom of

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Germany in free self-determination."[1] All West German

governments declared their commitment to German unity,

and saw to it that in foreign policy a "closing" of the

German question in the form of final division neither

occurred through the incorporation in the West, nor

through treaty provisions with Eastern Europe and the

Soviets.[2] The Kohl government was no exception, insisting

that the German question remained open. But the

fundamental question confronting Bonn was how to

reconcile the constitutional mandate with an

international environment that seemed to make

reunification remote. The Kohl government's response was

to keep a formal commitment to reunification, at least

rhetorically, while practical policy subordinated the

national issue to more realistic objectives. In the

1980s, solving the national question was increasingly

relegated to a long-term prospect, leaving it vague when

and how it would be achieved. Although a vague notion of

reunification allowed Bonn to keep the German question

open, it also illustrated that forming a single nation

state was no longer a pressing policy priority.

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[1]Helmut Kohl, "Bericht der Bundesregierung zur Lage der Nation im geteilten Deutschland," Texte III/1, 1983, p. 131.

[2]Schwarz, p. 133.

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This was evident in Deutschlandpolitik, where easing the consequences of division, not reunification, took center stage. This limited objective reflected Bonn's pessimistic view that the GDR was firmly integrated in the Eastern bloc and a political fact. Therefore, the Kohl government had to find a modus vivendi with the East German leadership through comprehensive normalization. The policy served the humanitarian goal of making division more tolerable for the Germans. This modest objective took center stage in Deutschlandpolitik, implying that Bonn had to work with Honecker, rather than against him.

Administration officials stressed that under conditions of ongoing division, a policy of dialogue and practical cooperation was best suited to help the people in the GDR in concrete ways.[3] Promoting contacts and a web of relations therefore had top priority for Bonn.[4] Close ties were developed in many fields, i.e., in the areas of culture, trade, commerce, the environment, science, technology, etc. The Kohl government placed special emphasis on the easing of travel restrictions

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[3]CDU-Dokumentation, 19/1988, p. 6.

[4]Ibid., p. 8.

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that hindered intra-German contacts.[5] Operational

Deutschlandpolitik centered on finding ways to increase

contacts between the two Germanies. It was a pragmatic

policy focused on mutual agreements to benefit Germans

living under continued division.

Proponents argued that although intra-German

cooperation could not end division in the short term, it

could at least modify it.[6] By promoting contacts between

the people, by bringing together families torn by

division, by facilitating friendships and marriages

beyond the intra-German border, Deutschlandpolitik

secured more freedoms for the East Germans and preserved

the bonds between the people. This prevented their mutual

estrangement and made division more tolerable.[7] Many

argued that as long as international factors did not

allow for reunification, it was incumbent on Bonn to

work out agreements with Honecker to secure improvements

for the Germans.[8]

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[5]Heinrich Windelen, "Zum aktuellen Stand der
Deutschlandpolitik," Texte III/1, 1983, p. 218.

[6]Hennig, "Die Deutschlandpolitik...," Texte, III/5,
1987, p. 270.

[7]Joseph Dolezal, "Die Deutschlandpolitik der SPD,"
in Die Deutsche Frage im Spiegel der Parteien, ed. Dieter
Blumenwitz and Gottfried Zieger (Koeln: Berend von
Nottbeck Verlag, 1989), p. 68.

[8]Ibid., p. 68.

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However, pragmatic Deutschlandpolitik seemed to lack a long-term strategic goal, "a guiding vision of the future."[9] Although Bonn did not specifically rule out reunification, it was generally left vague how cooperation with the East would solve the national issue. The Kohl government's Deutschlandpolitik separated political demands on the GDR from the German question: humanitarian improvements and intra-German contacts were not linked to specific steps to achieve reunification. The policy therefore divorced ends from means: improved relations, negotiations, agreements, and trade became ends in themselves, rather than elements of a long-term policy for resolving the national question.[10] By concentrating on easing the consequences of division, the perspective of a reunified Germany, as mandated in the constitution, was largely obscured.[11] The Kohl government's Deutschlandpolitik therefore lacked a clear concept for Germany's long-term future.

The diminished importance of reunification in the

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[9]Clemens, p. 272.

[10]Ibid., p. 272.

[11]Detlef Kuehn, "Die FDP und die Deutschlandpolitik," in Die Deutsche Frage im Spiegel der Parteien, ed. Dieter Blumenwitz und Gottfried Zieger (Koeln: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik Berend von Nottbeck, 1989), pp. 83-84.

goal structure of Deutschlandpolitik was illustrated by

how Chancellor Kohl and other prominent administration

officials employed the concepts of nation, unity, and

freedom.[12] Although commitment to reunification remained

the official government position, the term virtually

disappeared from their vocabulary in the 1980s. Most

notably, Chancellor Kohl made no mention of it in his

annual state of the nation address. Instead of

reunification, administration officials stressed their

commitment to the "unity of the nation."[13] This was a

vague and more neutral term without a nation-state

connotation that gave administration officials more

flexibility in the German question.

The Kohl government's definition of the concept of

"nation" suggested that a distinction was made between a

nation as a cultural unit and a nation state.[14] Primary

emphasis rested on the former, the German "Kulturnation."

For example, Chancellor Kohl explained, there

> ...are two states in Germany, but there is only
> one German nation... It has grown historically,

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[12]For an excellent discussion of these and other
concepts illustrating the goal conceptions of the Kohl
government, see Zimmer, pp. 91-126.

[13]Barzel, "Zur Deutschlandpolitik...," Texte III/1,
1983, p. 15.

[14]Helmut Lippelt, Minutes of the Bundestag, 1
December 1988.

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> is a part of Christian European culture and
> formed by its position in the middle of the
> continent. The German nation existed before the
> nation state and has survived it; this is
> important for our future.[15]

In this definition, a nation is a cultural community based on shared values, history, and identity. It transcends the nation state and can exist without it. Therefore, despite continued division and the absence of a single nation state, Germany as a cultural unit lives on. In this formulation, national consciousness is not identical with state consciousness.[16] It implies that a feeling of nationhood need not be political and connected to a state, but can rest on a sense of shared culture.[17] Common values, language, history, and identity form the basis of unity, rather than a nation state.

This formulation left room for answers to the German question other than reunification. It implied a vague form of unity based on common values. By defining a "nation" as a cultural community, and by stressing unity of values, the Kohl government moved away from a German nation state and reunification as the most important objective of Deutschlandpolitik.

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[15]Helmut Kohl, "Bericht...," Texte, III/1, 1983, p. 132.

[16]Jaspers, p. 47.

[17]Ibid., p. 42.

The concept of "freedom" also illustrated the diminished importance of reunification in Deutschlandpolitik. According to Chancellor Kohl, "the unity of the nation should and must first be fulfilled in the freedom of its people."[18] Indeed freedom is the "core of the German question."[19] This suggested that in the objectives of Deutschlandpolitik, securing freedom in the GDR was more important than reunification. Heinrich Windelen, Minister of Intra-German Relations, confirmed this view: "If personal and democratic freedom prevails in all of Europe... then a solution to the German question is conceivable. In light of this perspective, the territorial aspect moves to the background."[20] Windelen's statement suggested that if the GDR were to guarantee democratic rights, the German question could be considered solved. Making freedom the central issue therefore allowed ways to solve the German question that went beyond the reconstruction of a German nation

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[18]Helmut Kohl, "Bericht der Bundesregierung zur Lage der Nation im geteilten Deutschland," Texte, III/2, 1984, p. 74.

[19]Helmut Kohl, "Bericht der Bundesregierung zur Lage der Nation im geteilten Deutschland," Texte III/3, 1985, p. 60.

[20]Heinrich Windelen, "Dreissig Jahre Deutschlandvertrag," Texte, III/3, 1985, p. 213.

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state.[21] Unity of the nation was now conceivable in a dual state framework where broad personal and political freedoms existed in both German states, facilitating the free interchange of people and ideas and guaranteeing broad democratic rights.[22] Unity of the nation was also possible within the process of dissolving the traditional nation state framework in preparation of a European Peace Order--a united Europe based on common values and joint political and economic structures.[23]

By stressing freedom, the Kohl government implied that democratic rights could serve as the basis of unity. Although this did not rule out reunification, it suggested that Bonn was moving away from a German nation state as the only way to solve the national question. The concept of freedom illustrated that Deutschlandpolitik in the 1980s was no longer specifically aimed at reunification.

The Objectives of Westpolitik

In 1949, when Adenauer opted for the West, he hoped to achieve the consolidation and emancipation of the FRG

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[21]Ibid., p. 210.

[22]Windsor, p. 11.

[23]Zimmer, p. 95.

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after the devastation of World War II. The most important

priority of Westpolitik was to secure the integration of

a sovereign and equal FRG into the network of Western

relations. The national issue seemed secondary.[24]

This order of priorities also structured the foreign

policy of the Kohl government. Administration officials

stressed that the NATO alliance was the foundation for

West German security and freedom.[25] According to Alois

Mertes, CDU deputy and senior official in the foreign

ministry, European and American security were indivisible

as long as the political aims and military potential of

the Soviets were directed against Europe and the US.

Europeans could only survive as free nations, if they

formed a close-knit military and political community with

the US.[26] Although the defense aspect of transatlantic

relations was central, Bonn was quick to point out that

the alliance was more than a security partnership. It was

also a community based on the principles of Western

democracy--personal freedom, constitutionalism, and

political self-determination--standards that defined the

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[24]Schwarz, p. 133.

[25]CDU-Dokumentation, 19/1988, p. 10.

[26]Alois Mertes, "Westeuropa--40 Jahre nach dem 2. Weltkrieg," Bulletin des Presse- und Informationsamtes der Bundesregierung, Bonn, 8 May 1985.

substance of the West German state.[27] According to

Foreign Minister Genscher, the decision for the West was

a fundamental and permanent step.[28] In the 1980s, the

Kohl government had no interest in undercutting this

consensus order through an autonomous reunification

policy. By subordinating national interest to security

and alliance integration, the administration kept intact

the Adenauer priorities and ensured overall continuity in

Westpolitik.   When Chancellor Brandt introduced

Ostpolitik in 1969, he added an Eastern dimension to the

FRG's foreign policy which had been traditionally

oriented towards the West. Over the years Bonn officials

increasingly valued Eastern ties as a means to ease

division and to strengthen European peace. The Kohl

government was no exception. Many in the administration

saw no contradiction between Westpolitik and Eastern

initiatives, and stressed the importance of following

both tracks. In their view, it was the moral substance of

the links with the West that prevented Bonn from

abandoning the demand of the rule of law and freedom for

the East Germans and other East Europeans who were

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[27]Hans-Dietrich Genscher, "Neue Perspektiven der West-Ost Sicherheitspolitik," Texte III/6, 1988, p. 214.

[28]Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Minutes of the Bundestag, 27 February 1985.

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arbitrarily denied these rights.[29]

However, administration officials were greatly concerned about the negative reaction that an active Ostpolitik provoked in Washington. Although they vigorously defended the policy on ethical and moral grounds,[30] the administration also tried hard to dispel the notion that it was aimed at loosening Bonn's Western ties. Government officials stressed that Ostpolitik did not try to solve the German question through an arrangement with the East--a "German Sonderweg" or special path to unity via neutralism. According to Chancellor Kohl, "the Germans cannot overcome the division of Europe on their own. For us this means: anchorage in the alliance remains the unchangeable foundation of our politics."[31] By rejecting separate arrangements with the East to solve the German question, Bonn signaled that it was willing to accept limits on Ostpolitik.[32] Detente with the East with its positive effect on intra-German relations and the national

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[29]Alois Mertes, "Bonn Seeks Unification," New York Times, 12 October 1984, p. 35.

[30]Ibid., p. 35.

[31]Helmut Kohl, "Bericht der Bundesregierung zur Lage der Nation im geteilten Deutschland," Texte, III/4, 1986, p. 103.

[32]Clemens, pp. 307-308.

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question was not allowed to jeopardize Westpolitik.[33] For Bonn, security and alliance integration was a more important objective than Ostpolitik and the national question.

Although the Kohl government valued Eastern relations, it was also well aware of the risks. If the policy raised serious doubt in Western capitals about West German reliability as an alliance partner, Bonn would become politically isolated.[34] Lack of support from Western allies would constrain the administration's flexibility and room to maneuver in Deutschlandpolitik and Ostpolitik.[35] Therefore, detente with the East had to be conducted within the framework of Westpolitik, and progress in Eastern relations could not be achieved at the expense of Western ties.

In the 1980s, the Kohl government repeatedly demonstrated commitment to these priorities. Although the administration tried to pursue a Western and an Eastern

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[33]Ibid., pp. 307-308.

[34]Wolf-Ruediger Baumann, "Die deutsche Frage aus der Sicht der CDU," in Die deutsche Frage im Spiegel der Parteien, ed. Dieter Blumenwitz and Gottfried Zieger (Koeln: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik Berend von Nottbeck, 1989), p. 106.

[35]Ibid., pp. 106-107.

track in foreign policy,[36] it was willing to subordinate

the latter when the two objectives clashed.[37] For

example, the administration was determined to display

solidarity with the allies on detente and security,[38]

even if this jeopardized relations with the GDR and the

Eastern bloc.

This was illustrated by INF--the planned stationing

of US intermediate nuclear forces in Europe. By accepting

the new missiles the Kohl government risked seriously

harming intra-German relations. Honecker warned of a "new

ice-age" jeopardizing progress achieved so far and future

cooperation.[39] He also cancelled his planned visit to the

FRG, blaming the missile controversy. Nevertheless, the

Kohl government decided in favor of the new missiles.

Bonn had no desire to change its foreign policy, risk a

crisis in NATO, and a fundamental shift in the status

quo.[40] Although the Kohl government also tried to limit

the decision's negative fallout on intra-German relations

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[36]Clemens, p. 299.

[37]Zimmer, p. 174.

[38]Clemens, p. 270.

[39]"Generalsekretaer des ZK der SED und DDR-Staatsratsvorsitzender, Honecker: Schreiben an Bundeskanzler Kohl," Texte, III/1, 1983, p. 243.

[40]Clemens, p. 308.

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by granting the GDR generous amounts of credit, the missile controversy allowed the administration to demonstrate alliance allegiance and commitment to Westpolitik.

The Kohl government also subordinated Eastern policy when it refused to enter into a bilateral dialogue with the GDR on security, favored by Foreign Minister Genscher and the opposition SPD. Although Chancellor Kohl endorsed the idea that both German states formed a community of responsibility for peace and security in Europe, he emphasized that this did not include cooperation in security matters as the East German side insisted.[41] Therefore, when in 1983 Honecker proposed the creation of a nuclear-free zone in Europe, Kohl rejected the idea. His position was that given the conventional superiority of the Warsaw Pact in Europe, this zone would increase the risk of confrontation. It would also distract from ongoing negotiations on the superpower level to reduce nuclear arsenals and would complicate concrete results.[42]

Two years later Honecker floated another disarmament proposal drafted by a joint working group of the SED and

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[41]Clemens, p. 306.

[42]Helmut Kohl, "Brief an den Generalsekretaer des ZK der SED und Staatsratsvorsitzenden, Honecker," Texte III/1, 1983, pp. 60-61.

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the West German SPD. It aimed at eliminating chemical

weapons in Europe by setting up a chemical-free zone,

initially including the territories of the FRG, GDR, and

Czechoslovakia.[43] Honecker argued that a regional

solution to the problem of chemical weapons would be

easier to achieve than a global one, and would actually

promote a final agreement on an international ban.[44]

Again Kohl rejected the proposal, stressing that security

matters could only be addressed at the superpower level.

His position was that bilateral negotiations and separate

agreements on security between the two German states

undermined policy coordination and alliance cohesion with

the Western partners. Furthermore, atomic and chemical

free zones in central Europe did not protect in wartime

against such weapons. But politically they would make the

FRG a special area for NATO, with all the consequences

for the allies...[45] Bonn refused to enter into a security

dialogue with the GDR because it weakened the overall

Western defense posture. Commitment to the alliance had a

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[43]Honecker Brief an Helmut Kohl, Neues Deutschland,
Berlin (Ost), 16 September 1985.

[44]Werner Jarowinsky, "Bericht des Politbueros an die
11. Tagung des Zentralkommittees der SED," Neues
Deutschland, Berlin (Ost), 24 November 1985.

[45]J.B., "Die offene Flanke," Der Tagesspiegel, 25
September 1985.

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higher priority than Eastern initiatives and progress on the national question.

Conclusion

In the 1980s, the Kohl government's commitment to national reunification weakened.[46] This was illustrated in Deutschlandpolitik, where the most important objective was to ease the consequences of division through humanitarian improvements and intra-German contacts. Therefore, Bonn had to cooperate with Honecker to work out agreements that benefitted the Germans. How pragmatic Deutschlandpolitik would solve the national question remained vague. Reunification was increasingly relegated to a long-term historical process, and was no longer a realistic policy objective. Instead of reunification, Bonn officials used more neutral terms, such as "unity of nation,"[47] suggesting that a nation-state was no longer the only way to solve the German question.

Reunification was also subordinated in Westpolitik. Security and alliance integration remained central and had a higher priority than Ostpolitik and the national issue. This was illustrated by INF where Bonn opted for

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[46]Schwarz, p. 133.

[47]Barzel, "Zur Deutschlandpolitik..." Texte III/1, 1983, p. 15.

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alliance allegiance at the risk of jeopardizing Eastern ties. Bonn's subsequent refusal to enter into a bilateral security dialogue with the GDR also demonstrated that detente with the East, with its positive impact on intra-German relations and the national issue, had a lower priority than Western security.

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Chapter 8: Degree of Consensus in West German Foreign Policy

Introduction

In the 1980s, West German foreign policy was controversial between two primary factions in the Kohl government: pragmatists and Union conservatives.[1] This study adopts a breakdown into two groups because that captures the main divisions in the Kohl government. More complicated classifications[2] were rejected because they are often too issue specific, do not apply to Deutschlandpolitik and Westpolitik equally, and make it more difficult to compare these policy areas in two different time frames. The following chapter therefore examines the positions of Union conservatives and pragmatists, explains the main points of disagreement,

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[1]See Zimmer, pp. 91-126, who distinguishes between Union conservatives and pragmatists. These categories correspond broadly with those adopted by Clemens, in Reluctant Realists, who divides the Kohl government into reformists and fundamentalists.

[2]Zimmer (p. 67) cites Hacke (1975, p. 75) who lists five different foreign policy groups in the Union with respect to the late 1960s and early 1970s:
- a progressive group determined to achieve the ratification of the Eastern treaties;
- an undecided group;
- a group around Gerhard Schroeder leaning more towards opposition than approval of social-liberal Ostpolitik
- a conservative group categorically rejecting the Eastern treaties
- the CSU who opposed the Ostpolitik of the Brandt government from the beginning.

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and identifies who supported various policies and why.
Deutschlandpolitik will be examined first with respect to
three controversial issues: operational
Deutschlandpolitik, policy objectives, and the border
question. This will be followed by an analysis of
Westpolitik where the main issue dividing the two
factions was how to reconcile Ostpolitik with Western
relations. The purpose is to determine the degree of
consensus in the Bonn coalition before the crisis.

Controversial Issues in Deutschlandpolitik

There were two primary factions in the Kohl
government with different positions on
Deutschlandpolitik.[3] In the dominant and largest group
were pragmatists, who were strategically placed to
monopolize all important decision-making positions in
foreign policy.[4] The group was comprised of CDU moderates
and members of the FDP whose views overlapped on many
important issues. More specifically, pragmatists included
Chancellor Kohl, the most influential member; Rainer
Barzel, a Kohl ally during the Union's time in opposition
and the first Minister for Intra-German Relations;

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[3]Zimmer, p. 120.

[4]Ibid., p. 124.

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Barzel's successors Heinrich Windelen and Dorothee Wilms;

Wolfgang Schaeuble, Minister of the Chancellery, and his

successor Rudolph Seiters; Horst Teltschik, Kohl's

foreign policy advisor; Alois Mertes and Lutz

Stavenhagen, deputies in the foreign ministry; Heiner

Geissler, CDU Secretary-General, and his successor Volker

Ruehe; Walther Leissler-Kiep, CDU Treasurer; Norbert

Bluem, Minister of Labor and Social Affairs; the Federal

President Richard von Weizaecker. And last but not least,

the group included the FDP Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich

Genscher.[5]

Union conservatives formed a second faction in the

Kohl government. Although smaller in size and less

strategically placed, they were influential in foreign

policy. The group was comprised of conservative CDU

deputies and the Bavarian sister party CSU, located right

of center in the West German ideological spectrum. Some

prominent members included: Franz-Josef Strauss, Bavarian

Minister-President and Chairman of the CSU until October

1988; Theo Waigel, Finance Minister and Strauss'

successor as CSU Party Chairman; Eduard Lintner, CSU

spokesman; the expellee representatives in the Bundestag,

Hupka and Czaja; Ottfried Hennig, Deputy Minister of

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[5]Ibid., p. 124.

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Intra-German Relations; Alfred Dregger, Chairman of the

CDU/CSU Bundestag Parliamentary Group, etc.

Neither group was homogeneous. For example, among

pragmatists, Geissler was much more liberal than Kohl and

Schaeuble. Among Union conservatives, Strauss and the

expellee representatives were less compromising than, for

example, Dregger. Dividing the Kohl government into two

primary factions is therefore a simplification.[6] However,

the main splits in the coalition can now be brought into

sharper focus.

In Deutschlandpolitik, pragmatists in the Kohl

government pursued the direction outlined in the previous

chapters: comprehensive normalization and practical

cooperation with the GDR--essentially a continuation of

social-liberal Deutschlandpolitik initiated by Brandt and

Schmidt. They were convinced that accommodation was

superior to confrontation and nonrecognition, because it

improved the intra-German climate and made division more

tolerable as long as it could not be overcome. For

pragmatists, this limited objective took center stage in

Deutschlandpolitik.

Pragmatists generally remained vague how cooperation

with the East would solve the national problem. Although

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[6]Ibid., pp. 122-123.

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reunification remained the official position, they used more neutral language such as "unity of the nation," which did not specifically rule out a nation state option, but suggested more flexibility on a future settlement of the German question. They justified the lingering ambiguity surrounding policy objectives by pointing out that international uncertainties did not allow for a more precise formulation of Germany's long-term future. As Wolfgang Schaeuble explained, solving the German question will definitely presuppose fundamental changes in Germany and Europe--especially in the East-West relationship.[7] Because this was expected to take time, it was "...impossible to specify today when and in what form the problems of division of Germany... will be overcome."[8]

Union conservatives shared a perspective quite distinct from the pragmatists. As to operational Deutschlandpolitik, some were disturbed about the totalitarian nature of the East German regime, and the extent of cooperation pursued by the Kohl government. They urged a more confrontational course, even if it

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[7]Wolfgang Schaeuble, "40 Jahre getrennte Entwicklung--deutschlandpolitische Positionen und Handlungsfelder," Texte, III/7, 1989, p. 54.

[8]Ibid., p. 53.

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slowed progress in intra-German relations. The expellee representative Hupka opposed accommodation altogether and called on the Kohl government to seek destabilization of the GDR to force reunification. However, other Union conservatives were willing to support pragmatic Deutschlandpolitik to a point. But generally they placed greater emphasis on upholding traditional legal positions such as the right to state unity.[9] Many demanded a stricter quid pro quo, insisting on concrete measurable concessions from East Berlin in return for Bonn's financial largesse. Conservatives were also less flexible on status issues. Overall, the conservative approach reflected more ambivalence towards the GDR, contrasting with the pragmatists' enthusiasm for cooperation. For conservatives, interaction with the GDR could at best be limited, given the nature of the regime. As the official CSU position put it, "the horizon of expectations in intra-German relations should not be too high."[10]

Union conservatives were also much more specific on policy objectives: they insisted on reunification--the restoration of a German nation state. According to the CSU deputy Eduard Lintner, asserting the claim to

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[9]Clemens, p. 278.

[10]CSU Gedanken zur Deutschlandpolitik, Texte III/3, 1985, p. 22.

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reunification and keeping alive the will to unity among all Germans was of central importance.[11] Therefore, a policy of humanitarian improvements and intra-German contacts could not be an end in itself. Instead, Deutschlandpolitik had to remain focused on the end goal: restoring the unity of all Germans in a single nation state.[12]

Consistent with this perspective, Union conservatives defined "nation" as a nation state. Only a nation state could be the basis of unity, rather than culture and values as stressed by the pragmatists. According to Ottfried Hennig,

> ...far from outliving its usefulness, the
> nation state provides a basic framework for a
> legal and political order that guarantees the
> independence and autonomy of a people... The
> nation state continues to be the norm in the
> contemporary international system... Lets be
> realistic: a world without nation states is not
> conceivable at the present time.[13]

Therefore, as long as a single German nation state was not restored, the German question could not be considered

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[11]Eduard Lintner, Minutes of the Bundestag, 15 October 1987.

[12]Ottfried Hennig, "Zu einigen Ergebnissen der Deutschlandpolitik der Bundesregierung," Texte, III/4, 1986, p. 261.

[13]Ottfried Hennig, Pressemitteilung des Bundesministeriums fuer innerdeutsche Beziehungen, Bonn, 24 August 1987.

solved.

Union conservatives were very specific on how to achieve this goal. They were not content with demanding more personal freedom for the people in the GDR, but insisted on political self-determination. According to the CSU, self-determination was a universal political and human right anchored in various international treaties, i.e., the Charter of the UN, granting all peoples the right to decide their political status and their economic, social, and cultural development.[14] The right to self-determination found concrete expression in free elections.[15] As Eduard Lintner explained, because the people in the GDR had not exercised their right to self-determination, they must be given the opportunity to declare in what type of state they want to organize themselves.[16] Conservatives were convinced that if given the chance to vote in democratic elections, East Germans would decide in favor of reunification. For conservatives, self-determination was therefore a means to achieve a single German nation state.[17]

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[14]CSU Gedanken...," Texte, III/3, 1985, p. 20.

[15]Ibid., p. 20.

[16]Eduard Lintner, Minutes of the Bundestag, Bonn, 1 December 1988.

[17]Zimmer, p. 106.

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The conservative position illustrated that some in the Kohl government shared a vision of Germany's future quite distinct from the pragmatists. It revealed a lack of consensus on long-term objectives, periodically erupting into bitter controversies. For example, in 1988 CDU Secretary-General Geissler spearheaded an effort to change the party's official position on reunification. In a draft proposal to be introduced at the Wiesbaden party congress, he omitted any reference to reunification. When Strauss and the conservatives got wind of it, they raised a storm of protest. Chancellor Kohl subsequently disavowed the draft, although Geissler insisted that he had been briefed in advance. However, Kohl could not afford to admit openly that his government had given up on reunification and accepted division as final. The coalition would not have survived.

Lack of consensus on goals also translated into constant controversy over operational Deutschlandpolitik, particularly in the early 1980s. At issue was how far Bonn should go to normalize relations with the GDR which involved highly contentious status issues. Honecker's planned visits to the FRG in 1983 and 1984, and official contacts with the GDR Volkskammer were particularly controversial and ignited bitter disputes between pragmatists and conservatives. They were rooted in

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different assessments of the ultimate impact of pragmatic Deutschlandpolitik on the German question: while pragmatists defended accommodation because it improved the intra-German climate and therefore represented evolutionary movement toward some form of unity, conservatives worried that cooperation with the GDR legitimized and strengthened socialist rule making division permanent.

Disagreements over operational Deutschlandpolitik lost importance after 1984 as intra-German cooperation won more support. Even Strauss, a staunch critic during the Union's time in opposition, cultivated contacts with Honecker and arranged a one billion Mark credit for the GDR in 1983. By the late 1980s, many conservatives in the coalition were willing to go along with pragmatic Deutschlandpolitik, more or less reluctantly, although ambivalence about the policy's long-term consequences remained.

After 1984, a more serious dispute erupted between pragmatists and Union conservatives over the territorial implications of the reunification mandate in the constitution. More specifically, what was the scope of the mandate? Did it apply narrowly to the FRG, the GDR, and Berlin, a small Germany (figure 1), or did it also include former German territories East of the Oder-Neisse
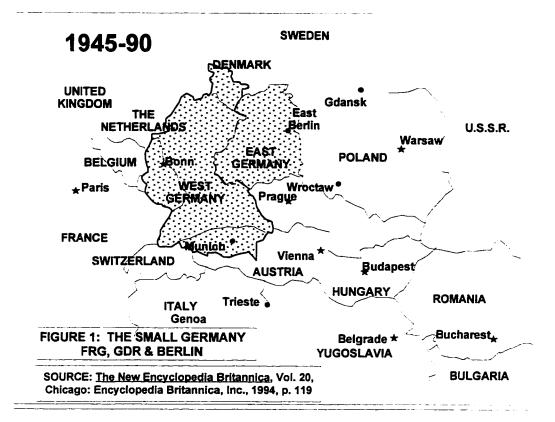
now part of Poland, a large Germany (figure 2)? This controversy raised the sensitive border issue with Poland and seriously strained the climate in the coalition.

The official government position was that with the capitulation of the Wehrmacht on 8 May 1945, the German Reich did not cease to exist. Because Germany survived in its 1937 borders, the territories East of the Oder-Neisse still belonged to the German question.[18] This position, according to Dorothee Wilms, Minister of Intra-German Relations, was not just a legal fiction by the FRG, but the determination of the allied victors who enshrined it in the London Protocol of 1944, and subsequently reaffirmed it in the 1954 Deutschland Treaty.[19] This document signed by the three Western powers and the FRG stipulated that Germany continued to exist in the 1937 borders. The ultimate fate of Germany could only be decided in a peace treaty. Therefore, as long as it was still outstanding, there could be no final determination on Germany's borders.[20]

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[18]Theo Waigel, CSU Pressemitteilung, Nachrichten aus der CSU Landesgruppe im Deutschen Bundestag, 2 July 1989.

[19]Dorothee Wilms, "Deutschlandpolitik im Rahmen der Europaeischen Einigung," Texte III/6, 1988, p. 27.

[20]Wilms, "Die Europaeische Dimension der Deutschen Frage," Texte, III/6, 1988, p. 254.

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1945-90

SWEDEN

DENMARK

UNITED KINGDOM

THE NETHERLANDS

BELGIUM

★Paris

FRANCE

SWITZERLAND

ITALY

Genoa

Gdansk

East Berlin

Bonn

EAST GERMANY

WEST GERMANY

Munich

Wroctaw•

Prague

Vienna★

AUSTRIA

Trieste•

POLAND

Warsaw★

Budapest

HUNGARY

Belgrade★

YUGOSLAVIA

U.S.S.R.

ROMANIA

Bucharest★

BULGARIA

FIGURE 1: THE SMALL GERMANY FRG, GDR & BERLIN

SOURCE: The New Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 20, Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1994, p. 119

1920-38

SWEDEN

LATVIA

DENMARK

LITHUANIA

UNITED KINGDOM

THE NETHERLANDS

BELGIUM

★Paris

FRANCE

SWITZERLAND

ITALY

•Genoa

Danzig•

Berlin

Bonn

GERMANY

Munich

Breslau

Prague

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Vienna★

AUSTRIA

Trieste•

East Prussia

GERMANY

★Warsaw

POLAND

U.S.S.R.

★Budapest

HUNGARY

Belgrade★

YUGOSLAVIA

ROMANIA

Bucharest★

BULGARIA

FIGURE 2: THE LARGE GERMANY FRG, GDR, BERLIN & EASTERN TERRITORIES

SOURCE: The New Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 20, Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1994, p. 119

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With respect to the Eastern treaties, i.e., the 1970
Warsaw agreement with Poland signed by Chancellor Brandt,
they only renounced violence and established a modus
vivendi between the FRG and the countries in Eastern
Europe. However, they did not affect previously made
international agreements,[21] and therefore did not change
the legal status of the German territories east of the
Oder-Neisse. Although in the Warsaw Treaty the FRG
recognized the Oder-Neisse line as Poland's Western
border and accepted the loss of the Eastern territories,
the treaty made no final determination on Germany's
borders. Because it was signed by the FRG, it was legally
binding only on West Germany, but not on Germany as a
whole, or the government of a future unified Germany.
According to Dorothee Wilms, the FRG represented only a
part of Germany and could not speak for Germany as a
whole. Therefore, the Kohl government could not make
decisions about the Eastern territories in the name of
the entire Germany.[22] Given the additional proviso of a
peace treaty which was to have the final say on Germany's
borders, Bonn had no legal right to formally give up the

[21]Helmut Kohl, "Verantwortung fuer den Frieden im
Geiste der Versoehung," Texte, III/3, 1985, p. 318.

[22]Wilms, "Deutschlandpolitik im Rahmen...," Texte
III/6, 1988, pp. 27-28.

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Eastern territories in the name of all Germans.

This implied less than full recognition of Poland's Western border. The territorial concessions made by the FRG to Poland in the Warsaw Treaty were therefore conditional. A future all-German government could reopen the border question and make territorial demands on Poland.

Union conservatives and pragmatists differed in their interpretation of the official position. For the conservatives who insisted on a nation state settlement to the German question, the border issue was central.[23] They stuck to a narrow legalistic view, citing various post-war treaties and declarations which supported the continued existence of the German Reich in the 1937 borders and the peace treaty proviso. Therefore, according to Dregger, the Warsaw Treaty did not change the legal status of Germany in its prewar borders and did not formally give up German territory in Poland.[24] Based on this strict interpretation, Union conservatives insisted that the Eastern territories were still

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[23]Zimmer, p. 99.

[24]Alfred Dregger, Minutes of the Bundestag, 27 February 1985.

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German.[25] The reunification mandate in the constitution therefore referred to restoring Germany in the 1937 borders, which included West Germany, East Germany, Berlin, and the territories east of the Oder-Neisse. The goal perspective of Deutschlandpolitik was to restore a large Germany in the 1937 borders.

This position was most forcefully defended by the expellee representatives, Hupka and Czaja, who were unwilling to compromise on the border issue. They drew support from a ruling by the German Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe affirming that Poland did not have full territorial sovereignty over the Eastern territories.

Pragmatists were more flexible in their interpretation of the official Union position. Because reunification was no longer a central objective, territorial aspects and borders were secondary. This sentiment was expressed by von Weizaecker and other pragmatists who stressed that the main objective was not to move borders, but to change their dividing character by promoting contacts and humanitarian improvements.[26] Although the official government position was that the

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[25]"Weder jetzt noch in Zukunft," Der Spiegel, 8 January 1990, p. 21.

[26]Richard von Weizaecker, "Die Deutschen und ihre Identitaet," Texte, III/3, 1985, p. 275.

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German Reich continued to exist in the 1937 borders

pending a peace treaty, pragmatists restated this view

more reluctantly and only when pressed. Wolfgang

Schaeuble did so in 1984. Responding to an interview

question, he said: "this position is in accordance with

the preamble of the constitution [and] has been

sanctioned by the constitutional court."[27] However,

pragmatists were also quick to point out that they fully

respected the inviolability of existing borders, and that

territorial integrity and sovereignty of all states in

Europe in their present borders was a fundamental

condition of peace.[28] Referring to the Warsaw Treaty with

Poland, Chancellor Kohl reiterated that "pacta sunt

servanda," and that his government would abide by the

agreement "to the full extent."[29] According to Kohl, the

FRG had no territorial claims against Poland and would

not make them in the future.[30] However, legally he could

not speak for Germany as a whole.

The border issue took center stage when Chancellor

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[27]Wolfgang Schaeuble, "Zu Fragen innerdeutscher Politik," Interview, Texte, III/2, 1984, p. 494.

[28]Helmut Kohl, "Politik der Aussoehung und Verstaendigung mit Polen," Texte, III/3, 1985, p. 47.

[29]Ibid., p. 47.

[30]Kohl, "Verantwortung...," Texte, III/3, 1985, p. 318.

Kohl accepted an invitation to speak at the 1985 convention of the Silesians, a large expellee group and powerful voting bloc. Kohl's decision to attend the rally, which was titled "Silesia remains ours," reignited the controversy over the status of the Eastern territories. While Union conservatives welcomed Kohl's decision, pragmatists worried that his attendance would legitimize refugee claims to the disputed region. Volker Ruehe, then deputy chairman of the CDU/CSU parliamentary group, tried to clarify the Union position on the border question. In a speech before the Bundestag in early February 1985, Ruehe argued that the Warsaw Treaty specifying the Oder-Neisse as Poland's western border had a "political binding effect" on a future united Germany, "even though it created no legal obligation."[31] This implied that a future all-German government had a political responsibility to accept the Oder-Neisse border and the loss of the Eastern territories as final.

Although this implied less than full recognition, Ruehe moved closer into this direction departing from the official Union position. Ruehe's view was supported by Genscher, who argued that ambiguity on the border question raised suspicion abroad and alarmed neighbors.

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[31]Clemens, p. 302.

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Ruehe expressed what other pragmatists were admitting privately: that reunification in the 1937 borders was unlikely, if not impossible. In their view, if a chance to solve the German question were to present itself at all, reunification would include only the FRG, the GDR, and Berlin. Hopes for a larger Germany therefore lacked realism.

Ruehe's speech put Chancellor Kohl in a difficult position. Strauss and other conservatives emphatically rejected the "binding effect" of the Warsaw Treaty and warned against giving up legal positions. Yet many pragmatists welcomed Ruehe's stand. For Chancellor Kohl, too much flexibility on the status of the eastern territories invited controversy with the CSU and would lose his party votes to the Republicans. Too much intransigence, however, burdened relations with party moderates and the coalition partner FDP. Kohl therefore took the middle ground. Although he criticized Ruehe and reiterated that he had no legal right to give up the Eastern territories in the name of all Germans, he also signaled some flexibility on the border issue. He conceded that aside from the legal situation, life had gone on for forty years, and that the disputed region was

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now inhabited by Polish families.[32] According to Kohl, the injustice committed by the expulsion of millions of Germans could not be followed by another unjust expulsion, this time of Poles.[33]

Kohl was actually much closer to Ruehe's position, although, mindful of the conservatives, he could not admit it openly. Therefore, when pressed about the border issue, he remained evasive and vague, frequently quoting passages from the Warsaw Treaty which were also invoked by fundamentalists to bolster their point. His critics argued that he did this "to make himself unassailable in his own party."[34] Kohl tried to stay flexible by fudging the border issue, by playing it down, and by remaining noncommittal. His tactic worked and avoided an open split in the coalition. Yet the ambiguity on the status of the Eastern territories remained, until the crisis in the GDR forced the Kohl government to take a clear stand.

Controversial Issues in Westpolitik

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[32]Kohl, "Politik der Aussoehnung..." Texte, III/3, 1985, p. 47.

[33]Kohl, "Verantwortung...," Texte, III/3, 1985, p. 317.

[34]Hans-Jochen Vogel, Minutes of the Bundestag, 27 February 1985.

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Beyond Deutschlandpolitik, disagreements between pragmatists and conservatives carried over into broader foreign policy issues. In the 1980s, the general direction of West German foreign policy was controversial, a conflict rooted in Chancellor Kohl's commitment to strengthen Western ties, while simultaneously pursuing detente with the East. The dilemma was how to reconcile the dual priorities. More specifically, pragmatists and conservatives argued over the relative weight of Ostpolitik and Westpolitik, and whether Foreign Minister Genscher overemphasized Ostpolitik at the expense of Western ties. This revealed splits in the coalition, primarily between the FDP and the CSU.

For the FDP Foreign Minister Genscher, accommodation with the East was vital and of equal importance as Western relations.[35] As one of the main architects of Ostpolitik under previous social-liberal administrations, Genscher was totally committed to normalization with the East, and vowed that as long as the FDP remained in the Kohl government, there would be no turning back.

According to Genscher, active engagement in the East was also in West Germany's best security interest.

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[35]Zimmer, p. 136.

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Although in the foreseeable future there was no alternative to deterrence, sole reliance on nuclear weapons was too risky. It was therefore important to supplement deterrence with "cooperative structures" that broadened overall security and made war less likely.[36] Genscher increasingly stressed cooperative security transcending traditional defense.

A crucial prerequisite for cooperative security was normalized relations with the Eastern bloc and the Soviets. This required an end to political and military confrontation and more cooperation between East and West. The goal was to dismantle enemy images and to build an ever closer network of relations promoting common interests, interdependence, and arms control. In Genscher's view, these steps gradually eliminated tension and distrust between the FRG and its neighbors, and moved Europe closer together. Detente with the East and the Soviets was therefore a vital aspect of overall security, and made peace in Europe more reliable and permanent. As Genscher put it, Ostpolitik is European peace policy.[37]

Genscher always stressed that cooperative security

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[36]Genscher, "Neue Perspektiven...," Texte III/6, 1988, pp. 221-222.

[37]Hans-Dietrich Genscher, "Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland auf Friedens- und Entspannungskurs," Texte III/2, 1984, p. 306.

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was not an alternative to the Western alliance. It was only to supplement nuclear and conventional deterrence with an additional layer of security based on cooperation and mutual trust.[38] By stressing the complementary nature of Western security and detente with the East, Genscher tried to calm widespread concern over Ostpolitik.

As Genscher shaped Bonn's relations with Eastern Europe and the Soviets, and as affairs of that region took up more of his time,[39] the CSU and other conservatives in the Kohl government charged that Genscher overemphasized Ostpolitik at the expense of Western ties. Mistrusting Soviet intentions, they stressed that foreign policy had to deal from a position of strength. Containment and nuclear deterrence-- military, rather than cooperative security--remained the most effective safeguards for peace. Therefore, traditional Westpolitik based on a strong NATO had to have clear priority over Ostpolitik. According to the conservatives, the foreign minister pushed for too much detente with the East and was too ready for disarmament

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[38]Genscher, "Neue Perspektiven...," Texte III/6, 1988, p. 222.

[39]Clemens, p. 295.

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measures damaging the FRG's position in the West.[40] His

emphasis on cooperative security and greater West German

foreign policy independence from the US was seen as an

attempt to distance the alliance partners and to weaken

transatlantic ties.[41] Some considered Genscher anti-

American. Many conservatives also did not like his style

and denounced him for acting tricky and for practicing a

cult of ambiguity.[42] In the 1980s, Genscher was a

political lightning rod for the conservatives, which

burdened the climate in the coalition.

Union conservatives who disliked pragmatic

Deutschlandpolitik by and large opposed Genscher's policy

of detente with the East.[43] An exception was Strauss who

cultivated close ties with Honecker, but constantly

criticized Genscher's Ostpolitik. Dissatisfaction with

the foreign minister prompted Strauss to call for a

radical course correction in West German foreign policy,

although he remained vague on specifics. Strauss made no

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[40]Theo Sommer, "The German Political Scene after Reykjavik," in _Germany through American Eyes--Foreign Policy and Domestic Issues_, ed. Gale A. Mattox and John H. Vaughan, Jr. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989), p. 153.

[41]"Schwerer Moerser," _Der Spiegel_, 20 June 1988, p. 34.

[42]"Wir Schwarze," _Der Spiegel_, 1 July 1985, p. 20.

[43]Zimmer, pp. 135-136.

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secret of his contempt for Genscher and the Liberals.[44]

He felt that they exerted "an influence on government

policy far beyond the weight of their numbers."[45] His

problems with the FDP dated back to the 1962 Spiegel

affair,[46] and in 1980 the Liberals did not back him as

chancellor candidate. Strauss considered the Liberals

notoriously unreliable and opportunistic and advised

Chancellor Kohl not to stake the political survival of

his government on the small party. Instead, he wanted

Kohl to pursue an absolute majority through the

systematic weakening of the FDP. The fight between

Strauss and Genscher was on and proved to be the major

feature of the Bonn coalition.[47]

With the emergence of Gorbachev, the feud between

Genscher and the conservatives reached a new high. Both

disagreed on the proper assessment of the new Soviet

leader and what to make of his reform agenda. Genscher

particularly welcomed the advent of Gorbachev and

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[44]Franz-Josef Strauss, Die Erinnerungen, (Muenchen: Siedler Verlag, 1989, pp. 510-511.

[45]Sommer, "The German Political Scene...," p. 153.

[46]Christian Soe, "Not Without Us! The FDP's Survival, Position, and Influence," in The Federal Republic at Forty, ed. Peter Merkl (New York: New York University Press, 1989), p. 335.

[47]Sommer, "The German Political Scene...," p. 153.

stressed the historical dimension of the developments in the Soviet Union.[48] In a speech in Davos in early 1987, Genscher argued that Gorbachev must be taken seriously, and that the West should not pass up the historic opportunity to end the East-West conflict. He stressed that the reforms in the Soviet Union were in the interest of the West, and deserved a constructive response.[49] Failure to take Gorbachev seriously would be a mistake of historic proportions. Greatly encouraged by the US-Soviet arms control dialogue, Genscher spoke of a totally new phase in East-West relations. This earned him scorn and ridicule from the conservatives,[50] especially Strauss who saw no realistic possibility for real change in the superpower conflict.

The CSU and other conservatives were more skeptical of the new Soviet leader, and argued that a positive assessment was much too premature. They also warned Genscher not to appear overly anxious to harmonize relations with the Soviets. Particularly irritating for conservatives was Genscher's constant reference to the

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[48]Genscher, "Neue Perspektiven...," Texte III/6, 1988, p. 220.

[49]Ibid., p. 220.

[50]"Auf kleiner Flamme," Der Spiegel, 26 May 1986, p. 50.

"Common European House," a phrase originally coined by
Gorbachev referring to a Europe free of hostility with
universal freedom and self-determination.[51] This was
denounced as simple-minded acceptance of a "smooth-
sounding Soviet propaganda slogan."[52] Conservatives
considered Genscher naive and taken in by Gorbachev. They
demanded that the foreign minister maintain a watchful
distance to Soviet-style communism.[53]

How to assess the new Soviet leader also dominated
the 1987 parliamentary election campaign. The really
rough and rude exchanges did not take place between the
government coalition and the opposition. They took place
within the coalition, especially between the CSU and the
FDP.[54] There had often been complaints about a
"Nebenaussenpolitik," or parallel foreign policy
conducted by the Social Democrats. But the real
"Nebenaussenpolitik" was conducted by the CSU.[55]

Although Genscher faced constant criticism, he

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[51]Genscher, "Neue Perspektiven...," Texte III/6,
1988, p. 227.

[52]"Stalin rein, Stalin raus," Der Spiegel, 6 October
1986, p. 19.

[53]"Schwerer...," Der Spiegel, 20 June 1988, p. 34.

[54]Sommer, "The German Political Scene...," p. 153.

[55]Ibid., p. 153.

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increasingly dominated West German foreign policy. His

position in the Kohl government was firm, because he

enjoyed the support of Chancellor Kohl, and his own party

stood almost unanimously behind him. When critics

complained about his policies, he replied, "the

chancellor thinks exactly as I do."[56] Kohl and Genscher

moved closer together whenever Strauss and the CSU

launched another attack against him. This angered the

conservatives even more, who complained that CDU politics

increasingly approximated FDP interests.[57] They charged

that Kohl was being outmaneuvered by Genscher, and warned

"that placating or imitating the FDP was already costing

the Union conservative voters."[58] As for Genscher, he was

not about to change a foreign policy that enjoyed

overwhelming public support documented in numerous

opinion surveys.

Conclusion

In the 1980s, Deutschlandpolitik was controversial

in the Kohl government. Pragmatists and Union

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[56]"Haemmern, bis der Nagel sitzt," Der Spiegel, 11
August 1986, p. 29.

[57]"Wir Schwarze," Der Spiegel, 1 July 1985, pp. 20-
22.

[58]Clemens, p. 301.

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conservatives disagreed on operational aspects, that is, how far Bonn should go to normalize relations with the GDR. There was also no agreement on policy objectives. While conservatives insisted on reunification, pragmatists were more flexible, and moved away from a nation state as the only way to solve the German question. The most serious dispute was over the status of the Eastern territories which raised the sensitive border issue with Poland. This long-running controversy was never fully resolved until the crisis forced a consensus.

Beyond Deutschlandpolitik, the general direction of West German foreign policy was controversial. At issue was the relative weight of Ostpolitik and Westpolitik, and whether the FDP Foreign Minister Genscher overemphasized Ostpolitik at the expense of Western ties. This brought to light deep disagreements in the coalition, particularly between the CSU and the FDP. Although Genscher faced constant criticism from the conservatives, he continued an active Ostpolitik.

Chapter 9: Centralization of Authority in West German Foreign Policy

Introduction

This chapter analyses the decision-making process and structure of West German foreign policy before the crisis. It explains how decisions were made in the Kohl government and identifies who took part in the process. To determine the level of centralization, it examines how much authority Chancellor Kohl exercised in this policy area. The chapter concludes with a portrait of Kohl's leadership image and decision style before the crisis.

The Chancellor and the Chancellery Office

According to Arnulf Baring, an analysis of West German foreign policy and foreign policy decisions after 1949 must make the respective chancellor the focal point. His personal interpretation of foreign policy reality and requirements, and his ability to secure his own power and decision-making center to push through foreign policy concepts, are the points of departure and the pivotal aspects for understanding the West German state.[1] Hacke agreed that the chancellor is the most important decision-maker in West German foreign policy, because "in

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[1] Arnulf Baring, "Ueber deutsche Kanzler," Der Monat, October 1969, p. 14.

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style and in substance, he determines the foreign policy image of the Federal Republic in his own unique way."[2] However, Hacke also observed that since Adenauer, chancellor-democracy under foreign policy aspects lost relevancy.[3]

A chancellor's ability to maximize his influence depended on the effective functioning of the chancellery office--the nerve center of government operations and the key to an administration's success and achievement.[4] This office was responsible for the overall political coordination between government, Fraktion (caucus), and the coalition for all fields of politics.[5] The chancellor's staff monitored departmental processes, harmonized particular ministerial policies, and coordinated them. It was also responsible for securing the continued loyalty of CDU, CSU, and FDP deputies once a bill reached the Bundestag. In charge of this office was a political appointee, close to the chancellor and chosen by him, who held one of the most strategic

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[2]Hacke, "Weltmacht...," p. 417.

[3]Ibid., p. 417.

[4]"Der ist Kohl's letzte Patrone," Der Spiegel, 19 November 1984, p. 17.

[5]Schaeuble, "Zu Fragen...," Texte, III/2, 1984, p. 493.

positions in the policy process.[6]

The first West German chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, effectively governed from the chancellery office by transforming it into his own power and decision-making center. The origin of the term "chancellor-democracy" was based on the total monopolization of foreign policy activities by this office, which was solely controlled by him and shielded from party and interest group influence.[7] As Adenauer made the most critical decisions affecting the future course of the FRG, it was entirely up to him when and how he informed members of his government.[8] Frequently, they were deliberately excluded or informed too late, so that they had little chance to influence the process. However, since Adenauer, successive chancellors were unable to monopolize foreign policy decision-making in the chancellery office. Kohl was no exception, and until 1984 the chancellery office lacked a clear leadership structure.[9] There was poor coordination of the day to day business of government,

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[6]Lewis J. Edinger, West German Politics (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), p. 241.

[7]Arnulf Baring, Aussenpolitik in Adenauers Kanzlerdemokratie (Muenchen: 1971), p. 339.

[8]Ibid., p. 165.

[9]"Der ist Kohl's...," Der Spiegel, 19 November 1984, p. 17.

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and long-term political planning did not function. In 1984 there was chaos in the chancellery office prompting a thorough shake-up in the leadership structure. Ineffective management suggested that Chancellor Kohl could not optimize his influence in foreign affairs.

However, this improved with the appointment of Wolfgang Schaeuble in 1984. Under his tenure, the importance of the chancellery office in decision-making expanded, as reflected in the steady growth of staff levels to a total of 488,[10] and the elevation of Schaeuble to federal minister with a seat in the cabinet. Officially responsible for administration and political management, Schaeuble quickly brought a lot more order to the day to day business of government, and improved political planning and coordination between the executive and legislative branch.[11]

Schaeuble was also responsible for Deutschlandpolitik. Before his appointment, precise authority in this policy area remained a matter of dispute with the ministry of intra-German relations. It was widely expected that Schaeuble's appointment would

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[10]Werner Filmer and Heribert Schwan, Helmut Kohl (Duesseldorf: Econ Verlag, 1990), p. 373.

[11]"Der ist Kohl's...," Der Spiegel, 19 November 1984, p. 19.

translate into more decision-authority for Heinrich Windelen, the minister in charge of this department, because Schaeuble lacked prior policy experience. However, Schaeuble soon made it clear that operational Deutschlandpolitik was made in the chancellery office, translating into a loss of influence for Windelen. By effectively transferring authority in Deutschlandpolitik to the chancellery office, Kohl's control over this policy area increased.

Genscher and the Foreign Ministry

Although Schaeuble's skillful management translated into more direct influence for Kohl, he could not dominate foreign affairs. This was the domain of Genscher, who, because of his long tenure in office, could be considered the "Stresemann" of West German foreign policy.[12] Under Genscher, the foreign ministry continued to cultivate its own foreign policy tradition of stability and continuity--a development that actually began in 1961 under Foreign Minister Schroeder, when Adenauer's chancellor-democracy began to unravel. "From then on the chancellor's decision authority in foreign

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[12]Hacke, "Weltmacht...," p. 416.

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policy diminished in principle."[13]

Genscher and his staff were determined to keep responsibility in foreign affairs and were particularly sensitive to outside interference. The FDP's defining identity and electoral survival rested on this policy area. Therefore, he insisted on independence and always defended the interests of his ministry. This frequently brought him on a collision course with the foreign policy division of the chancellery office, headed by Horst Teltschik. All proposals concerning foreign and security policy were to originate in Teltschik's department. He also advised the chancellor in these fields, similar to a U.S. national security advisor. In addition, he was to work closely with the various ministries involved in a particular decision, critically following their work, helping to resolve problems, and moving forward the chancellor's agenda.[14] However, his role in foreign policy fueled a long-standing rivalry with Genscher, who disagreed with Teltschik's positions and viewed his division as a threat to the authority of the foreign ministry.

In these turf battles with Teltschik, Genscher

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[13]Ibid., p. 416.

[14]Filmer and Schwan, p. 231.

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successfully defended ministerial prerogatives, illustrating that beyond Deutschlandpolitik the chancellery office could not exercise controlling influence. Kohl could not afford to alienate Genscher because he needed the FDP as a coalition partner. Reliance on Genscher affected how decisions were made: in the 1980s, Kohl and Genscher prenegotiated confidential agreements on key foreign policy issues. These prior arrangements were the key to subsequent foreign policy and provided the basis for understanding the actions of the governing coalition.[15] Because a basic understanding existed between Kohl and Genscher on key issues, the chancellor gave the foreign minister broad latitude. The prevailing view in Bonn was that Genscher, not Kohl, controlled West German foreign policy.

However, Genscher's role, though significant, had to be viewed in an overall context. For a number of reasons neither Genscher nor Kohl could exercise full authority. Foreign policy questions and the decisions they required were increasingly complex and structured with more institutions in the country and in neighboring states involved in the process.[16] The routine pattern of

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[15]Hacke, "Weltmacht..." p. 335.

[16]Ibid., p. 416.

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decision-making involved intricate policy networks consisting of top bureaucrats, interest groups, and outside experts who played a consultative role. Political power was distributed among a variety of actors[17] reducing Genscher's influence, as well as affecting the number of decisions the chancellor could make autonomously.[18] This illustrated that the FRG did not resemble a rigid hierarchical system, but an intricate pattern of decentralized influence structures.[19]

Institutional differentiation affected how foreign policy decisions were made. In a routine environment, policy-making was characterized by a complex process of consultation and negotiation,[20] with distinct rules governing the various routines, common conventions, and the strategies of political actions.[21] The need to involve various actors, follow accepted practices and rules, and adequately consider all important aspects of a given problem and its long-term consequences complicated

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[17]M. Donald Hancock, West Germany--The Politics of Democratic Corporatism (Chatham: Chatham House, 1989), p. 62.

[18]Hacke, "Weltmacht...," p. 416.

[19]Lehmbruch, "Die Deutsche Vereinigung...," p. 587.

[20]Ibid., p. 587.

[21]Ibid., p. 598.

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and slowed the decision process.[22] Effective agenda management depended on the cohesiveness of key actors, including the chancellor, ministers, and party and Fraktions chairmen.[23] Unilateral directives from the chancellor did not work, especially when there were policy conflicts in the coalition or in the chancellor's own party.[24] Instead, bargaining and negotiating between the key players, consensus building, the art of persuasion, and prior arrangements were now more important.[25] In a normal environment, absent strong pressure to produce a decision, a complex policy-making structure was coupled with a complex process of developing political strategy, reducing the authority of the chancellor.[26]

Other Ministries

Beyond Genscher's department, other ministries were increasingly involved in foreign policy. Effective

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[22]Ibid., p. 588.

[23]Edinger, p. 240.

[24]Renate Mayntz and Fritz W. Scharpf, Policy-Making in the German Federal Bureaucracy (New York: Elsevier, 1975), p. 40.

[25]Hacke, "Weltmacht...," p. 416.

[26]Lehmbruch, p. 586.

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decision-making depended on close cooperation between them and the chancellor. Too much interference in a department or bypassing a minister was not conducive to broad-based agreement. Kohl's principle therefore was to let the ministers work out concepts and reach consensus. His department chiefs enjoyed much leeway in developing solutions to policy problems, and no one in the Cabinet argued that the chancellor was stifling his creativity in a particular policy area. Kohl was not a micromanager, preferred to delegate authority, and intentionally did not keep a tight reign on his ministers.[27]

Although the ministers played an important part in the policy-process, the role of the cabinet as a formal decision-making body decreased. Consultation and debate usually occurred behind the scene, rather than at the cabinet table.[28] Chancellor Kohl and his office saw to it that all parties affected by a particular problem came together and negotiated until a consensus was worked out. By the time the issue reached the cabinet, it had been extensively prenegotiated and already decided, eliminating the need for divisive discussions. The

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[27]Heinz-Joachim Melder, "Der qualvolle Weg innenpolitischer Reformen," in Helmut Kohl, ed. Werner Filmer and Heribert Schwan (Duesseldorf: Econ Verlag, 1990), p. 211.

[28]Filmer and Schwan, p. 356.

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cabinet was reduced to a panel that mainly accepted and ratified prior agreements.[29]

The Koalitionsrunde

The cabinet was eclipsed by the "Koalitionsrunde" (coalition roundtable) where increasingly the important decisions were made.[30] In this forum, party chairmen and the leaders of the parliamentary groups in the Bundestag (Fraktionen) came together under the leadership of the chancellor to decide the political direction of the government. This group determined what was politically feasible and could achieve a majority in the coalition.[31] By bringing together the key personalities of the three parties forming the coalition, the Koalitionsrunde was best suited to meet the unique demands of decision-making in such a governmental alliance. The role of this body illustrated that effective agenda management depended on negotiation, consensus-building, and compromise. The "Koalitionsrunde," rather than the cabinet, was probably the true center of decision-making power in the Kohl

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[29]Ibid., p. 356.

[30]Helga Haftendorn, Sicherheit und Stabilitaet-- Aussenbeziehungen der Bundesrepublik zwischen Oelkrise und NATO Doppelbeschluss (Muenchen: dtv, 1986), p. 254.

[31]Filmer and Schwan, p. 357.

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government.

The Party

Chancellor Kohl could not make foreign policy
without his party. Much stronger in terms of organization
and political influence than in the times of Adenauer,
the party played an important role in decision-making.
Kohl attached great importance to his party, because it
was his power base. He was always party leader first and
chancellor second. How important the party was to the
survival of a chancellor was driven home to him by his
predecessor Schmidt, who ignored the party and was then
ultimately abandoned by it.[32] Kohl knew the party held
the key to his remaining in office and determined the
success of his legislative agenda. For these reasons the
chancellor involved the party in political
responsibility.[33]

A number of party organizations played a role in
developing political strategy, including state party
organizations (Landesverbaende), the Federal Council,
(Bundeshauptausschuss) and special committees.
Particularly important was the CDU Praesidium, a "circle

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[32]Ibid., p. 357.

[33]Ibid., p. 357.

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of the highest-level elected party officials."[34] It

comprised the chancellor, the party chairman, the

secretary-general, important members of the government,

and state governors, who simultaneously represented the

interests of the Bundesrat. In regularly scheduled

meetings, the Union's political direction on the federal

and state level was developed, decided, and

coordinated.[35] In this forum, Kohl usually conducted

numerous face to face conversations with the most

important members to form opinions and to make

preliminary decisions.[36]

The complex structure of the party did not place

absolute power in the hands of any one institution. The

Praesidium normally acted in concert with the governing

Fraktion in the Bundestag, state party organizations, and

the central party apparatus. However, in the 1980s,

political power became more concentrated in the hands of

Kohl, who had been national chairman of the CDU since

1973 and increasingly directed the party from his

position as chancellor.[37] Although Kohl exercised more

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[34]Russell J. Dalton, <u>Politics in Germany</u> (New York: Harper Collins College Publications, 1993), p. 308.

[35]Filmer and Schwan, p. 357.

[36]Ibid., p. 358.

[37]Dalton, p. 309.

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control than any previous chancellor since Adenauer, his authority in the party was not fully asserted. Until 1989, he had prominent rivals in the Praesidium who criticized him openly. This made it all the more important for him to pay close attention to the party and include it in political responsibility.

The Parliament

Important foreign policy decisions also required extensive involvement of parliament. This occurred on a number of different levels, beginning with the CDU/CSU Fraktion. The two parties were organized in a single parliamentary group or Fraktion (caucus) in the Bundestag, led by a chairman whose dual task it was "to help forge party policy and factional unity on pending legislative matters."[38] Members of the Fraktion were assigned to various party working groups, which corresponded to important areas of national legislation. These internal committees played a crucial role in determining the fate of prospective legislation. Their members could strongly influence the formation of party policy before particular bills were formally debated in

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[38]Hancock, p. 53.

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parliament.[39]

The Fraktion's approval of the chancellor's
proposals was not automatic. Sometimes extensive
negotiations and bargaining were required before the
Fraktion could reach a consensus. On some occasions, the
Fraktion seemed determined not to follow the chancellor
at all. For example, on the proposed reduction of
Pershing II missiles, the conservatives in the Fraktion
stubbornly held out against Kohl until it damaged his
position at home and overseas.[40] Although a coalition
compromise was eventually worked out and "Fraktion's
discipline" prevailed, the case illustrated that tensions
between conservatives and moderates in the Fraktion
complicated decision-making and Chancellor Kohl's
authority in foreign policy.

The role of the Fraktion already underscored the
importance of parliament. Extensive parliamentary
involvement was the norm in all important foreign policy
decisions. It comprised an elaborate framework of rules
and procedures, resulting in a complex process for
studying and debating the issues. The process offered
many points of intervention and potential for delay. The

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[39]Ibid., p. 53.

[40]Filmer and Schwan, pp. 209-210.

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role of parliament suggested that the chancellor could not dominate foreign policy.

Illustrating the complexity of the process, a number of steps had to be followed to complete the legislative cycle. After a proposal received Fraktion's endorsement, it required a first reading in the Bundestag, followed by referral to the appropriate committee for detailed deliberation and potential modification.[41] The bulk of legislative deliberation occurred in the Bundestag's elaborate committee structure,[42] underscoring the influence of committee members and chairmen. After a committee majority endorsed a proposal, it was resubmitted to the Bundestag for a second and third (final) reading, completing the policy process in the Bundestag.[43]

Measures endorsed by the Bundestag then required Bundesrat approval. Because of the partisan alignments among its members, the Bundesrat could complicate the task of policy formulation enormously. It could exercise a suspensive veto, or in certain cases, it had the power

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[41]Hancock, p. 59.

[42]Ibid., p. 53.

[43]Ibid., p. 59.

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of an absolute veto over proposed legislation.[44] The role
of the Bundestag suggested that political power was even
more dispersed, weakening the authority of the chancellor
in foreign policy.

The Bureaucracy

The chancellor's influence was also limited by
bureaucratic politics. It affected every stage of the
policy process, and was especially acute when policy
responsibility was divided among several departments.
Interbureaucratic conflicts were rife and apt to be all
the more intense when they engaged civil servants who had
pursued most of their careers in one department. They
tended to be the most jealous guardians of their
department's prerogatives and identified themselves
closely with the promotion of its particular policy
interests.[45] Bureaucratic politics also impeded
centralized implementation of decisions. The persistence
of bureaucratic politics therefore made it difficult for
the chancellor to control foreign policy.

External Actors

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[44]Ibid., p. 54.

[45]Edinger, p. 246.

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Institutional differentiation was increased by the involvement of external actors. A growing number of foreign policy decisions were made in the framework of NATO, the EC, the CSCE process, and other multilateral and multinational institutions.[46] External actors increased the structural complexity of foreign policy decision-making and reduced the influence of national players, e.g., the chancellor.

An important external actor involved in West German foreign policy was NATO. The organization played an influential role, especially when security issues were affected. The institutional structure of the alliance was to promote and strengthen cooperation. NATO policies were agreed upon among all members, illustrating a need for consensus building and compromise. To maintain overall unity of purpose and alliance effectiveness, extensive political consultation and coordination was required and usually the norm. Dependence on NATO for security made the Kohl government reluctant to leave the partners out of important decisions. In the 1980s, the role of NATO in West German foreign policy increased, as member states tried to expand the scope and intensity of efforts to ensure that respective approaches to problems affecting

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[46]Hacke, "Weltmacht...," p. 416.

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the common security were complementary.

The Kohl government's efforts to promote greater European cooperation also gave the EC more input into West German foreign policy. Bonn stressed that the role of the EC went beyond economics, and that political cooperation, i.e., in foreign policy, had to be put on the same footing as economic integration, if European Union was to be achieved.[47] In the 1980s, political cooperation was gradually developed, expanded and formalized in a number of stages, culminating in the Single European Act in July 1987. Key features of political cooperation included: the commitment to consult and cooperate on foreign policy issues and to work towards coordinated positions and joint action; the commitment to consult before adopting national positions on foreign policy issues of general interest; and decision-making by consensus among governments.[48] Although political cooperation lagged behind economic integration, efforts to achieve a gradual transition from a national foreign policy to a more cooperative approach to international affairs translated into greater

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[47]NATO Review (Brussels: NATO Office of Information and Press, August 1988), p. 12.

[48]European Political Cooperation (Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 1988), p. 1.

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involvement of external actors and a corresponding loss of influence for national policy-makers.

Leadership Image and Decision Style

Chancellor Kohl's authority in foreign policy was also affected by his poor leadership image. For most of the 1980s, the party remained unimpressed by his performance as chancellor.[49] A number of factors contributed to his weak image. In foreign policy, Kohl had to go through a long learning phase[50]--he was primarily a domestic politician.[51] He felt uncomfortable overseas, appeared clumsy and unsophisticated, and had trouble being fully accepted on the world stage.[52] Embarrassing policy blunders added to his poor image. For example, he compared Gorbachev to Goebbels, and then had to dispatch the Federal President von Weizaecker to Moscow to smooth relations before he formally apologized for his remark. Also, he insisted on taking Ronald Reagan to Bitburg where members of the SS were buried, causing

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[49]"Hausbacken, aber erfolgreich," Der Spiegel, 19 November 1990, p. 24.

[50]Ibid., p. 26.

[51]Hacke, "Weltmacht...," p. 335.

[52]"Hausbacken...," Der Spiegel, 19 November 1990, p. 26.

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widespread outrage in the US and around the world. Further, he angered the Poles by attending refugee rallies at home and by refusing to fully accept the Oder-Neisse border. Genscher, the foreign policy professional suffered from Kohl's gaffes which complicated his work.[53] Critics lamented about the chancellor's apparent lack of feel for international sensibilities, and some even called him an embarrassment for the German nation.

Kohl's decision-making style also contributed to his weak leadership image. He always avoided situations that required immediate and concrete decisions on controversial issues.[54] Instead, he took a wait and see attitude, and sometimes seemed to believe that problems best solve themselves by taking no action at all.[55] He was always cautious and hesitant, trying to please all sides. Instead of taking clear positions, he remained evasive and vague, because this preserved maximum flexibility. Deutschlandpolitik was a primary example of his ambiguous, noncommittal style where he fudged the issue of reunification. Because of his reluctance to take sides, Kohl was widely considered weak and indecisive.

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[53]Ibid., p. 26.

[54]Filmer and Schwan, p. 363.

[55]Ibid., p. 362.

Critics complained that clear policy guidelines,

effective leadership initiatives, and resolute

implementation of decisions were lacking.[56] Kohl's

inability to make decisions was said to result in a slow

and laborious policy process characterized by endless

discussions, before concrete results were achieved.

According to Strauss, with Kohl in command a mood of

demoralization, paralysis, and boredom emanated from

Bonn. New policy impulses were lacking, not to mention

charismatic leadership.[57]

Other critics, such as finance minister Stoltenberg,

complained about improvised leadership. Kohl seemed

reluctant to study documents, made appointments

independent of the chancellery office, and sometimes

summoned ministers without regard for their schedules or

the resulting conflicts.[58] When in 1984, the chief of the

chancellery office was forced to resign, many felt that

"Kohl was really to blame that the business of governing

did not function."[59]

The impression of improvised leadership also stemmed

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[56]Strauss, p. 518.

[57]Ibid., p. 511.

[58]"Der ist Kohl's...," Der Spiegel, 19 November 1984,
p. 19.

[59]Ibid., p. 18.

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from Kohl's reliance on loyalists. He regularly consulted
a small inner circle who shared his policy views and
enjoyed his full trust. Some of its members had already
worked for him when he was regional governor, and later
during his time as opposition leader in the Bundestag. In
return for their loyalty and support, members of the
inner circle enjoyed wide-ranging powers which often went
far beyond their official positions. With the full
backing of the chancellor, they could fire unsupportive
bureaucrats or promote others.[60] Beyond the inner circle,
Kohl liked to surround himself with people of his trust.
He could work wonders with patronage,[61] placing his
followers into important positions who then felt indebted
to him. Rather than relying on an anonymous bureaucracy,
he preferred to count on loyal supporters. As a result,
official routes were sometimes circumvented, and
important decision-makers were ignored.[62] Critics argued
that this contributed to confusion in the government and
improvised policy-making.

Kohl also did not connect with the voter: public
opinion surveys consistently documented his poor

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[60]"Der Kanzler wuenscht das so," Der Spiegel, 9 June
1986, p. 25.

[61]Sommer, "The German Political Scene...," p. 149.

[62]Filmer and Schwan, p. 362.

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leadership image. In 1985 his ratings were lower than those of any other chancellor in the middle of a legislative period.[63] The erosion of support for Christian Democracy in the 1987 Bundestag election and in subsequent regional elections inevitably "spawned another round of internal debate about leadership qualities and style,"[64] and revived the issue of "Kanzlerbonus"--the question of whether the chancellor was still a plus for the party or an electoral liability. Particularly disappointing about the election result was that Kohl could point to an impressive economic record, yet the CDU was not rewarded with spectacular numbers. Critics argued that many voters no longer supported the CDU because of Kohl. The chancellor shrugged off his poor showing, insisting that the public mood did not mirror the actual situation in the country.[65]

The election setbacks emboldened Kohl's rivals in the party, including Heiner Geissler, Kurt Biedenkopf, Rita Suessmuth, Lothar Spaeth, Eberhard Diepgen, and

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[63]"Die Lage ist gut, die Stimmung schlecht," Der Spiegel, 1 July 1985, p. 26.

[64]Peter Merkl, The Federal Republic of Germany at Forty (New York: New York University Press, 1989), p. 300.

[65]"Hausbacken...," Der Spiegel, 19 November 1990, p. 22.

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Norbert Bluem. Mounting dissatisfaction with Kohl's

leadership was already evident at the 1987 annual party

congress, where Kohl was reaffirmed as party chairman

with a smaller than expected margin. In early 1988, Kohl

was increasingly criticized in the Cabinet, the Fraktion,

and in the CDU-Praesidium. Reflecting these strains,

Kohl's rivals led by Geissler began plotting his ouster

at the 1988 party congress in Wiesbaden. In an internal

document outlining future party strategy, they planned to

replace Kohl as chancellor before 1990.[66] Kohl fought

back by firing Geissler from his post as CDU secretary-

general in summer of 1989, replacing him with the more

loyal Volker Ruehe. Geissler, refusing to accept this,

convinced his ally Lothar Spaeth, the state governor of

Baden-Wuerttemberg, to challenge Kohl for the party

leadership at the upcoming party congress in Bremen.

However, this coup attempt failed because Geissler

overestimated his support in the party, and his allies

deserted him in the last moment.[67] Spaeth ultimately did

not have the courage to run against Kohl, who was then

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[66]Heinz-Joachim Melder, "Koalitionsstreit und der Vorwurf der Fuehrungsschwaeche," in Helmut Kohl, ed. Werner Filmer and Heribert Schwan (Duesseldorf: Econ Verlag, 1990), p. 207.

[67]"Hausbacken...," Der Spiegel, 19 November 1990, p. 24.

reelected party chairman. This episode illustrated that until late summer 1989, Kohl's authority as chancellor and party chairman was severely challenged, and that some were so dissatisfied with his leadership that they were determined to oust him.

Although he remained in power, Kohl's public image in the 1980s was one of a mediocre, lackluster leader, a second-rate choice for chancellor. In foreign policy, Kohl was never perceived as a man with great vision and moral authority, who was willing to take risks to affect fundamental change or devise grand new designs. Instead, Kohl was a man of the status quo, firmly rooted in the existing order, a realist interested in his own power and not in distant utopias.[68] Theo Sommer summarized the common perception about the chancellor as follows,

> There are three sorts of politicians: those who make events happen, those who watch events happen, and those who wonder what happened. We do not have any in Germany or elsewhere in Europe who make events happen. There is no genius for architectonics around; and we are not governed by men or women of a stature comparable to that of founding fathers Robert Schumann, Konrad Adenauer...[69]

Conclusion

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[68]Nina Grunenberg, "Der richtige Riecher," <u>Die Zeit</u>, 5 October 1990, p. 3.

[69]Sommer, "The German Political Scene...," p. 157.

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Before the crisis, Chancellor Kohl was unable to centralize authority in foreign policy. Because of coalition politics, he had to involve Genscher and the FDP. Beyond the foreign minister, a growing number of other domestic and external actors had to be included in the policy process. Institutional differentiation reduced Chancellor Kohl's influence, illustrating that decision authority was diffused rather than centralized.

Institutional differentiation affected how decisions were made, translating into a complex process of developing political strategy.[70] Established consultation routines and negotiating mechanisms had to be followed. Policy-making required more bargaining, consensus building, compromise, and the art of persuasion.[71] Complex decision-rules mitigated against a central policy-maker issuing directives to the government.

Chancellor Kohl's decision authority was also affected by his poor leadership image. He was widely perceived as weak, indecisive, and risk-averse. Until late 1989, Kohl was a controversial, embattled leader who lacked full authority.

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[70]Lehmbruch, "Die Deutsche Vereinigung...," p. 586.

[71]Hacke, "Weltmacht...," p. 416.

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Chapter 10: Range of Action in West German Foreign Policy

Introduction

The following chapter explores the Kohl government's range of action and room to maneuver in foreign affairs. Because policy flexibility is a function of existing constraints, a number of domestic and external limits will be examined. First, this chapter analyzes the most important domestic constraints: coalition politics, the role of the opposition SPD, and resource limitations. Second, external constraints are examined including military and political factors stemming from Bonn's alliance relationship. Third, the chapter explores how domestic and international constraints shaped the overall character of West German foreign policy.

Domestic Constraints

Coalition Politics

German post-war politics has been coalition politics affecting Bonn's strategy in Deutschlandpolitik and Westpolitik. The importance of broad, moderate coalitions was based on historical animosity to one-party government, fear of ideological extremes, and a preference for normalcy and centrism.[1] Coalition politics

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[1] Clemens, p. 249.

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cast the FDP into the strategic role of power broker in Bonn. The party's main gambit was to present itself as a coalition party... using the functional argument that it was needed to promote a certain policy, build a working government majority, or prevent the alleged dangers endemic in "Alleinherrschaft," or single party rule.[2] On two occasions the small party shifted course, facilitating major transfers of power that first produced a center-left era of West German government in 1969, and then the present center-right one in 1982.[3] Strategically placed to determine the parliamentary balance between the Christian and Social Democrats, the FDP was determined to seek concessions for continued cooperation from Chancellor Kohl.

Coalition politics was complicated by the relationship between CDU and CSU, two parties united in a parliamentary alliance or "union." They were often referred to as "sister parties," because they shared a basic commitment to conservatism and pledged cooperation in Bonn. To avoid splitting the conservative vote, they did not contest each other in elections--the CSU remained confined to Bavaria, while the CDU ran in the remaining

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[2]Soe, p. 325.

[3]Ibid., p. 313.

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West German states. However, the CDU and CSU were in many ways distinct parties, with the latter located to the right of the more pragmatic and liberal CDU. Below the surface there was constant tension, reflected in the intense personal rivalry between Chancellor Kohl and CSU-chief, Strauss. At issue was Kohl's relationship with the coalition partner FDP. Strauss' conservatism clashed with the Liberals, who were ideologically left of the CDU. He was unhappy that Kohl placated the FDP and urged him to appeal more to the conservative vote. The conflict exposed the ideological fault lines in the three party coalition.

However, Chancellor Kohl owed his position to the Liberals. He was convinced that without the FDP there would be no CDU chancellor, and no Christian-Liberal coalition if the CDU was dominated by Strauss.[4] For the foreseeable future, his government needed the FDP as a majority maker. Kohl therefore tried to safeguard the survival of the FDP on the national level by awarding it the most strategic ministries, and through a strategy of

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[4]Paul Pucher, "Der Pfaelzer und der Bayer," in Helmut Kohl, ed. Werner Filmer and Heribert Schwan (Duesseldorf: Econ Verlag, 1990) p. 263.

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utmost support and protection.[5] Kohl's fate was tied to the Liberals and he could not afford to alienate them. The need to play coalition politics affected the type of policies pursued in Deutschlandpolitik and Westpolitik. Generally, coalition politics restrained the Kohl government from following a constant, strict conservative line.[6] For example, in Deutschlandpolitik a return to confrontation with the GDR to force reunification was unrealistic, because Genscher and the Liberals would not support it. In Westpolitik, the Kohl government could not stress military strength and confrontation with the Soviets as long as the FDP insisted on detente and disarmament. Normalization and accommodation with the East was the FDP's price for entering a coalition with the CDU and CSU in the first place, and remained the most important condition for continued cooperation. It illustrated that coalition politics limited Bonn's range of action and room to maneuver in foreign policy.

The Opposition SPD

Another important domestic constraint was the

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[5]Heinz-Joachim Melder, "Sand im Getriebe der Wendekoalition," in Helmut Kohl, ed. Werner Filmer and Heribert Schwan (Duesseldorf: Econ Verlag, 1990) p. 188.

[6]Clemens, p. 250.

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opposition SPD. It could influence government policy through its role in the Upper House--the Bundesrat. In addition, procedural routines provided "a constant avenue of legislative pressure" on the administration to change or modify its policies.[7] Although for most of the 1980s, the Kohl government had a concurrent majority in the Bundestag and Bundesrat, the opposition could seriously complicate policy-making.

The main rivalry in the West German parliamentary system was between the CDU/CSU and the opposition SPD. Party competition was a means to develop and maintain a distinct profile in the eyes of the voter. Therefore, both sides tried to seek political advantage by supporting policies with broad public appeal. Party competition complicated the policy process making it more difficult to forge a national consensus, as the government rarely enjoyed unanimous support from all political forces.

Party competition affected foreign policy strategy. Opinion surveys consistently documented that the public strongly supported normalized relations with the East. When Gorbachev appeared, he was more popular than President Reagan. Therefore, the Kohl government had to

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[7]Hancock, p. 61.

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continue an active Ostpolitik or suffer voter backlash. A return to confrontation would have played into the hands of the opposition SPD, who, as the main architect of Ostpolitik, was identified with cooperation and normalization. Party competition and the role of the opposition therefore influenced the strategies of the Kohl government.

Domestic Resource Constraints

Beyond coalition politics and the opposition, domestic resource constraints limited Bonn's range of action in foreign policy. They affected policy-makers' ability to mobilize additional means for security[8] and helped explain why the administration continued to stress alliance politics and Western integration.

After the appearance of Gorbachev, West Germans were increasingly unwilling to absorb additional costs for security. In a more cooperative international environment, defense budgets faced pressure to shrink, programs were under financial restrictions,[9] and there was considerable "political and social questioning of the

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[8]Barnett, p. 560.

[9]Thomas-Durrell Young, <u>The Normalization of the Federal Republic of Germany's Defense Structures</u> (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 1992), pp. 9-10.

need for a Bundeswehr."[10] In this climate administration officials could not afford "costly internal efforts to deal with external security."[11] Imposing additional burdens from defense would have been very unpopular and would have exacted a heavy political price.[12] Bonn stressed Western integration because an alliance strategy allowed policy-makers to mobilize security "resources at a minimal political cost."[13] It was an effective way to export defense costs and to shift more resources to social needs.[14] Therefore, public aversion against military spending and structural limitations of the Bundeswehr necessitated "the continuation of close relations with the Western integrated defense structures."[15] Domestic resource constraints affected Bonn's range of action, mitigating against a more independent foreign policy.

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[10]Ibid., p. 19.

[11]Barnett and Levy, p. 378.

[12]Barnett, pp. 560-561.

[13]Ibid., p. 542.

[14]Ibid., p. 561.

[15]Young, p. 28.

External Constraints

Military and Political Constraints

In addition to domestic factors, external constraints affected the Kohl government's range of action in foreign policy. These included military and political factors stemming from post-war allied prerogatives. They opened "the way for a subtle form of political control"[16] and highlighted dependencies and structural limits of West German foreign policy.[17]

Formal constraints included four-power prerogatives and NATO treaty obligations. They allowed outside actors to control the FRG's postwar development and gave the country only limited sovereignity. For example, the Western allies retained the right to station troops on West German soil, which gave them direct veto power over the country's future course and served as the ultimate restraint.[18] The FRG was also subject to restrictions on the size and use of its army. Bonn lacked national command authority, since full integration of the Bundeswehr into the NATO command structure was required. West Germany was also barred access to biological,

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[16]Schweigler, p. 16.

[17]Hacke, "Weltmacht...," p. 414.

[18]Schweigler, p. 19.

chemical and nuclear weapons. Furthermore, it had no control over the use of nuclear missiles on or from German soil by Western powers.[19] The purpose of these restrictions was to give the West German army a purely defensive character, oriented toward a democratic purpose and alliance cooperation.[20]

Existing treaties restricting West Germany's sovereignty could also not easily be revoked by the FRG. Although membership in NATO could be cancelled with one year's notice, treaties stipulating the right to station Western troops could not be abrogated unilaterally. Therefore, Bonn was prevented from enforcing by legal means a withdrawal of allied forces.[21] As long as formal restrictions on West German sovereignty remained, the Kohl government enjoyed only limited flexibility in foreign policy.

West German dependence on the allies was particularly evident with respect to Berlin. Legally, West Berlin remained under the authority of the allied powers.[22] The Kohl government's reliance on their

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[19]Ibid., p. 10.

[20]Hacke, "Weltmacht...," p. 422.

[21]Schweigler, pp. 14-15.

[22]Ibid., p. 16.

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steadfastness to protect the status of Berlin set limits on what kind of foreign policy Bonn could pursue. The administration could not afford to tamper with existing treaty obligations, because it might endanger allied commitment to the divided city.[23]

Structural limits and dependencies also prevented Bonn from pursuing an autonomous reunification policy. Restrictions imposed by four-power prerogatives regarding Germany as a whole made it possible for NATO to frustrate a West German attempt to pursue a solution to the national problem contrary to Western interests. "Remaining treaty provisions granted allied powers the right to interfere."[24] Should treaty obligations be breached, the four powers could declare Germany an occupied country again, with allied troops as an occupation force. Allied strength was in any case "sufficient to prevent the Federal Republic from taking measures to which the allies were unalterably opposed."[25] It underscored that Bonn had only limited flexibility in the national question.

The degree of constraint also depended on the

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[23]Ibid., p. 15.

[24]Ibid., p. 19.

[25]Ibid., p. 15.

international climate. As long as superpower relations remained confrontational, structural limits of Bonn's foreign policy and dependencies were magnified, limiting flexibility. But after 1985, the superpower climate improved, and Gorbachev indirectly broadened the Kohl government's room to maneuver.[26] Less constrained by external factors, Bonn insisted on more foreign policy independence from the US. For example, together with Genscher, Chancellor Kohl resisted pressures from the NATO allies to make an early commitment to the modernization of short-range nuclear missiles.[27] The administration also rebuffed demands by the US for more equitable burden-sharing, insisting that the US had an obvious self-interest in the defense of Western Europe regardless of European contributions.[28]

Yet displays of greater policy autonomy were also marked by considerable hesitation and ambivalence.[29] International uncertainty and concern about the

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[26]Hacke, "Weltmacht...," p. 399.

[27]Heinz-Joachim Melder, "An der Seite von Genscher," in Helmut Kohl, ed. Werner Filmer and Heribert Schwan (Duesseldorf: Econ Verlag, 1990) p. 210.

[28]Schweigler, p. 12.

[29]Roger Morgan, "West Germany's Foreign Policy Agenda," The Washington Papers, no. 54, (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1978) p. 10.

durability of superpower detente accounted for that, as

well as Germany's historic legacy. The memories of World

War II still continued to inhibit administration

officials from forthright statements of their country's

interests and from taking an active lead on issues which

might raise fears of a bid for German dominance.[30] Many

in Bonn remained convinced that there was only "a narrow

scope for autonomous action."[31]

Critics insisted that Bonn had much more flexibility

due to the FRG's economic strength and international

prestige. In their view, an unmistakable discrepancy

existed between available room to maneuver and the Kohl

government's cautious approach.[32] Calling for a much more

forceful assertion of West German interests, Strauss

described the FRG as an economic giant, but political

dwarf in security matters and foreign affairs.[33] Former

Chancellor Schmidt always replied that striving for a

dominant position in Europe was not in the German

interest for reasons of principle. In the century of

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[30]Ibid., p. 16.

[31]Alois Mertes, "Kontinuitaet und Wandel in der Deutschen Aussenpolitik," in Texte, III/1, 1983, p. 91.

[32]Hacke, "Weltmacht..." p. 421.

[33]Klaus Boelling, "Voices of Europe: Need for Germany Far Outweighs any Fears," New York Times, 29 September 1992, p. 10.

Auschwitz, Germans had to contend with the continuing

suspicions and doubts of neighbors, and even a hint of

hegemonic ambition could only hurt them. The Kohl

government followed the same maxim.[34]

Policy Results

Low-Profile Foreign Policy

In the 1980s, Bonn continued a foreign policy whose

official character in style and in substance remained

deliberately moderate and restrained.[35] Chancellor Kohl

always played the role of follower rather than leader,

letting others take control in generating policy. He also

showed deference to the US and alliance politics in

crucial moments. For example, when IMF threatened to

undermine the transatlantic friendship, it was Kohl who

was credited for repairing US-German relations and for

dispelling doubts about Bonn's alliance solidarity.[36]

Eager to smooth concern in Washington about Ostpolitik,

Kohl, more than Genscher, stressed the importance of

harmonizing Eastern relations with US interests.[37] In

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[34]Ibid., p. 10.

[35]Hacke, "Weltmacht...," p. 413.

[36]"Hausbacken...," Der Spiegel, 19 November 1990, p. 25.

[37]Sommer, "The German Political Scene...," p. 153.

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general, Kohl took a much more conciliatory approach toward the U.S. than the confrontational Schmidt.[38] When giving advice to Washington, he did so in a discreet, ambiguous manner, avoiding direct criticism, and always stressing the binding elements between the two nations.[39] Although critics demanded a more self-assured approach stressing German interests,[40] he always replied that modesty was in Bonn's best interest.

Kohl also tried to play down German strength by promoting solidarity and cooperation with his neighbors. Membership in the EC allowed Bonn to play a somewhat less prominent role in European politics than might have otherwise been the case.[41] Relations with France had special significance. Because Mitterrand had dual concerns about too close a relationship between the FRG and the US and the specter of German neutralism and drift to the East, Kohl supported intensified bilateral cooperation in defense and security.[42] Efforts to promote closer ties, including the security area, explained why

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[38]Hacke, "Weltmacht...," p. 346.

[39]Ibid., p. 339.

[40]Ibid., p. 346.

[41]Schweigler, p. 21.

[42]Hacke, "Weltmacht...," p. 359.

controversial topics between Paris and Bonn were often deliberately left off the agenda.[43] Bonn promoted cooperation and was reluctant to pursue a foreign policy too much at odds with the partners.[44]

The Subordinated Issue of Reunification

Particularly in the national question the Kohl government seemed to lack foreign policy determination and courage.[45] Bonn downplayed reunification by identifying the division of Germany with the division of Europe and by placing the national question into the larger European context. According to administration officials, the ultimate objective was a European Peace Order based on "shared cultural norms, a common awareness of larger global problems, and a high degree of economic, political, and military interdependence."[46] Building this order was a long-term historical process by which the division of the continent and German division would be overcome simultaneously.

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[43]Ibid., p. 358.

[44]Wolfgang Klein, "Nett! Aber harmlos? Aus Bruesseler Perspektive," in Helmut Kohl ed. Werner Filmer and Heribert Schwan (Duesseldorf: Econ Verlag, 1990), p. 385.

[45]Hacke, "Weltmacht...," p. 402.

[46]Anne-Marie Burley, "The Once and Future German Question," Foreign Affairs, Winter 1989/1990, p. 70.

The Kohl government stressed a European path to
unity because it understood that Germany's neighbors and
the US were likely to be far more comfortable with the
reunification of Europe than with the German corollary.[47]
A European path to unity implied a direct role for them
in solving the German question, translating into more
control over the process. Bonn reassured the partners
that the Germans would never force reunification against
their will, but would seek their active support. By
stressing a European path to unity, the Kohl government
tried to link a settlement of the German question to
Western interests. It was an attempt to "fix European
eyes on a higher prize, while simultaneously reassuring
all concerned that the FRG would not move too far out in
front of its neighbors."[48] By identifying the division of
Germany with the division of Europe, a settlement of the
national question was postponed to the indefinite future
and the issue was obscured. This helped Bonn allay fears
of German aspirations.[49]

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[47]Ibid., p. 70.

[48]Ibid., pp. 70-71.

[49]Ibid., p. 71.

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Berechenbarkeit

Subordinating reunification was part of an overall approach that valued, above all, Berechenbarkeit, the principle that foreign policy had to remain reliable, predictable, and calculable for others.[50] The prominence of Berechenbarkeit stemmed from Germany's historical legacy and the upheavals inflicted by two world wars. As a result, successive administrations developed a strong predilection for stability with its emphasis on harmony and a corresponding abhorrence of conflict.[51] Berechenbarkeit, was a variant of stability: It implied a strong interest in continuity, for not upsetting any balance, and for status-quo oriented policies.[52]

Berechenbarkeit precluded radical shifts and risky foreign policy experiments. It required that Bonn remain faithful to traditional Westpolitik. As Genscher explained, "...we owe it to our neighbors, that our foreign policy remain calculable and predictable. A German zig-zag course, aimed at loosening the FRG's Western ties and risking detente, would undermine

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[50]Schweigler, pp. 87-88.

[51]Ibid., p. 87.

[52]Ibid., pp. 87-88.

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security and stability for all of Europe."[53] Chancellor

Kohl stressed that a stable and predictable foreign

policy earned international trust and increased Bonn's

overall room to maneuver.

Berechenbarkeit and stability as guiding principles

shaped the general character of West German foreign

policy: in the 1980s, it was primarily concerned with

accommodation and adjustment. Desire to conform also

explained in part why the national question was

neglected.[54] Bonn was unwilling to play a more prominent

international role because that might rekindle images of

German militarism. There was a growing tendency to hide

behind the allies on controversial issues. Content with

the status quo and determined not to upset any balance,

West German foreign policy was devoid of traditional

considerations for power politics.[55]

Chancellor Kohl epitomized this approach. He was

always an Atlanticist trying to accommodate Washington.

He refrained from asserting sovereign rights and did not

show his muscle.[56] Until the fall of the Berlin Wall,

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[53]Hans-Dietrich Genscher: Speech before the German
Bundestag, Minutes of the Bundestag, 27 February 1985.

[54]Hacke, "Weltmacht...," p. 424.

[55]Ibid., p. 421.

[56]Klein, "Nett! Aber harmlos?..., p. 385.

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Kohl embodied the trustworthy German, the "good European" par excellence, who stood hand in hand with Mitterrand, Thatcher, and the US, but who also did not forget to woo smaller partners to gain their benevolence.[57] He was very much part of a culture of restraint in foreign policy, that for decades made the FRG a model of behavior in modesty and self-restriction in the EC and in the Atlantic Alliance.[58]

Conclusion

In the 1980s, domestic and external factors limited Bonn's range of action in foreign policy. On the domestic side, this included coalition politics, the role of the opposition, and resource constraints. External limits involved political and military factors stemming from four-power prerogatives and Bonn's alliance membership. Together domestic and external factors narrowed overall flexibility, setting limits on available strategy. The result was a low-profile foreign policy subordinating reunification and stressing a stability-oriented strategy.

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[57]Ibid. p. 383.

[58]Boelling, "Voices of Europe...," New York Times, 29 September, 1992, p. 10.

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PART FOUR: WEST GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY 1989-1990

Chapter 11: The Crisis in the GDR

Introduction

This chapter examines the independent variable--crisis. It briefly examines antecedents and presents a chronology of the most important events. This is followed by an evaluation in terms of Hermann's and Brady's definitional categories of threat, opportunity, short decision time, and surprise. The purpose is to determine whether the situation in the GDR met the conditions of a genuine crisis.

Background

When Soviet-style communism was transferred to the GDR, it posed a fundamental problem from the beginning: repression and the lack of democratic structures created internal opposition, which prompted more stringent measures by the authorities to stamp it out. A vicious cycle was set in motion culminating in periodic crises.[1] Particularly in the 1950s, there was serious internal turmoil in the GDR. Hundreds of thousands fled to the West until the Berlin Wall stopped the exodus. In the following two decades the regime was able to secure its

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[1]Hermann Weber, DDR Grundriss der Geschichte, 1945-1990 (Hannover: Fackeltraeger Verlag, 1976), pp. 9-10.

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hold on power and enjoy increased international standing. After the mid-eighties, the arrival of Gorbachev increased pressure on the East-German leadership to implement fundamental social, economic and political reform. But the ruling elite remained intransigent and stepped up repression of dissidents. By late summer 1989, the GDR was in a deep crisis undermining the authority of the state.

Chronology

Efforts by state authorities to crack down on opposition groups backfired, and a new refugee wave challenged the Honecker government in the midst of preparations for East Germany's 40th anniversary on 7 October 1989. In July and August, a stream of East Germans took refuge in the West German embassies in Budapest and Prague. Overwhelmed by the numbers, the Hungarian government opened its borders on 10 September 1989, granting GDR refugees in Hungary free passage to the FRG via Austria.[2] This decision was widely seen as the precipitating event for subsequent political

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[2]Theo Sommer, "Nach der langen Nacht der Barbarei," Die Zeit, 5 January 1990, p. 1.

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developments in central Europe.[3] While the refugee

problem in Hungary was resolved, the continued exodus

from the GDR threatened to overwhelm the West German

embassy in Prague. As the numbers grew, the situation

became critical in late September. Eager to end the

embarrassing situation before the anniversary, the

Honecker government granted exit visas to the refugees in

the embassy and transported them from Prague to the FRG

in specially sealed trains. As the trains crossed GDR

territory, desperate citizens tried to get on board and

had to be restrained forcefully by the authorities. Far

from calming the situation, the decision to let the

refugees go further de-legitimized the Honecker regime.

Amidst this turmoil, the anniversary celebrations

began in early October. Gorbachev, attending the

festivities, publicly criticized the lack of democratic

reform in the GDR and reminded Honecker that, "...life

punishes those who come too late."[4] By not supporting the

long-time ally, Gorbachev closed a chapter of Soviet

Deutschlandpolitik that had guaranteed the survival of

the East German state for four decades.

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[3]Axel Schuetzack, "Exodus in die Freiheit,"
Deutschlandreport, No. 12, p. 53.

[4]Wolfgang Schaeuble, Der Vertrag, (Stuttgart:
Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1991), p. 289.

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Gorbachev's refusal to intervene emboldened the people. Throughout October, mass demonstrations swept the GDR forcing the ouster of Honecker, who had ruled the country for 17 years. Defiant to the end, he had favored a "Chinese Solution" to restore order, but lacked support in the party. He was replaced by Egon Krenz who promised democratic reform. Yet thousands continued to leave the GDR for the West, expressing their distrust and lack of support for the new leader. Amidst growing chaos, the Politburo and the Council of Ministers resigned in early November. In a desperate move to stabilize the situation, the decision was made to abolish travel restrictions. After a misunderstanding in the Politburo, the Berlin Wall and the intra-German border were opened on 9 November 1989. GDR officials had hoped that abolishing travel restrictions would actually halt the flow of refugees. Instead, it encouraged even more to leave and hastened the demise of the East German state.

The situation remained highly volatile during the next three months, and a growing sense of crisis settled over the GDR. After only 47 days in office, Egon Krenz was replaced by Hans Modrow. Like his predecessor, Modrow inspired little confidence. The exodus to the West continued unabated, and mass demonstrations swept the country. Efforts to halt them failed. Instead, the

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demonstrations grew larger, overwhelming the authorities. At first, the protestors did not challenge socialism. But then they quickly proceeded from moderate to more radical demands and increasingly called for reunification.[5] The rising popular rejection of the communists and the Modrow government threatened to make the country ungovernable.[6] Manfred Stolpe, a high official in the East German protestant church, warned of an impending catastrophe.[7]

The refugee numbers best illustrated the desperate mood in the GDR. By early 1990, an estimated 85,000 refugees came to West Germany in search of a new future, after 340,000 had left the GDR in the previous year.[8] This outflow of primarily young and skilled workers undermined the GDR economy. As the situation became more dire, calls for reunification intensified. Increasingly, this was seen as the only option to prevent total collapse and a possible civil war.

The deteriorating situation forced the Modrow

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[5]Ronald A. Francisco, "Theories of Protest and the Revolutions of 1989," American Journal of Political Science, Vol. 37, No. 3, August 1993, p. 667.

[6]Serge Schmemann, "East German Premier Offers a Coalition," New York Times, 23 January 1990, p. 10.

[7]Christoph Bertram, "Kopflose Hast," Die Zeit, 23 February 1990, p. 5.

[8]CDU/CSU Fraktion im Deutschen Bundestag-- Pressedienst, 14 February 1990, p. 3.

government to agree to democratic elections on March 18.
On that date, the East Germans overwhelmingly supported
the Bonn-sponsored conservative coalition led by East
Germany's Christian Democrats. The victory was a personal
triumph for Chancellor Kohl who had promised what the
voters clearly wanted most: a quick break with socialism
and the fastest possible route to German unification.[9]
The election replaced the old order with a democratically
elected alternative and ended a painful chapter in German
history.

But hope that the new de Maziere government could
stabilize the political and economic climate in the GDR
soon faded. After a brief lull, the refugee exodus
resumed unabated, reflecting lack of confidence in the
new administration. De Maziere's coalition was paralyzed
by internal disputes from the beginning. There was a
growing sense in the population that the bold revolution
of last fall had fallen stagnant and that the new leaders
were dragging their feet to implement promised reforms.[10]

The growing crisis accelerated plans for
implementing economic and social union between East and

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[9]Craig Whitney, "West Europe Leaders Voice Praise
Plus Worry About German Elections," New York Times, 20
March 1990, p. 12.

[10]Schmemann, "East German Premier...," New York
Times, 23 January 1990, p. 10.

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West Germany on 1 July 1990. This move, however, did not

stabilize the situation in the short term as the Kohl

government had hoped. If anything, it forced policy

makers in Bonn to expedite full political union to avert

the complete collapse of the GDR.

However, final consensus was complicated by bitter

infighting in the de Maziere government over how and when

to accede to the FRG. Then, in a move that deepened the

political crisis, the GDR-SPD withdrew from the

coalition. Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands took to the

streets in mid-August to protest the economic policies of

the de Maziere government. The mass demonstrations

underscored the urgency of reunification, and forced the

East German parliament to reach agreement on the

modalities and a date. On 31 August 1990, a critical

milestone was passed when Bonn and East-Berlin signed the

unity treaty. Full political union took effect on 3

October 1990, followed by the first all-German election

on 2 December 1990, ending the crisis.

Definitional Categories: Threat, Opportunity, Short Decision Time, Surprise

The crisis posed a threat to stability, long

considered the central pillar of German social order.[11] From the beginning, the situation raised the specter of violence. In the early days of October, when hundreds of thousands of demonstrators in Leipzig, Dresden and in many other cities demanded democratic rights, a Deng Xiaoping in East-Berlin could have caused a blood-bath with unpredictable consequences.[12] The Kohl government was also greatly alarmed by the growing impatience in the population and the intensity of anger directed against the old communist leadership.[13] The growing economic malaise made the situation more volatile, with wildcat strikes cutting into production and the continuation of mass flight. GDR authorities seemed powerless, which undermined confidence in the government and respect for police even more. On every level of government, authority was disintegrating as people refused to obey the law.[14]

Bonn's biggest fear was uncontrollable escalation leading to outside intervention. Speculation centered on

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[11]Ferdinand Protzman, "As Marriage Nears Germans in the Wealthy West Fear a Cost in Billions," New York Times, 24 September 1990, p. 6.

[12]Theo Sommer, "Unser nunmehr fertiges Vaterland," Die Zeit, 6 July 1990, p. 1.

[13]Serge Schmemann, "Unification: Caution Flag," New York Times, 14 December 1989, p. 22.

[14]Serge Schmeman, "The New Politics," New York Times, 30 January 1990, p. 13.

the Soviets. How would they react? What was their tolerance limit? Administration officials were convinced that they would not accept the eruption of violence after they had already swallowed so much.[15] Therefore, the struggle in the GDR had to remain on a level that excluded unnecessary provocation.[16] But the people directed growing hostility against Russian soldiers who were viewed as occupiers. The situation grew explosive, prompting East German Defense Minister Eppelmann to warn that the problem could assume a political dimension of European proportions.[17]

Reaction in the US also raised the specter of outside intervention. In early 1990, George Kennan warned the US Senate that the East German government was facing impending collapse and that this could result in de facto unification before the rest of Europe was ready for it. Therefore, the four powers should be prepared to form a government in Berlin which could stabilize the situation.[18]

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[15]Schaeuble, Der Vertrag, p. 17.

[16]Ibid., pp. 18-19.

[17]Gisela Dachs, "Nun kriegen die noch West-Mark," Die Zeit, 20 July 1990, p. 2.

[18]Theo Sommer, "Vom Aufbruch zum Zusammenbruch," Die Zeit, 2 February 1990, p. 1.

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The crisis jeopardized domestic stability in the FRG. As the refugees streamed westward at a rate of about 2000 a day, it presented an extraordinary challenge to the FRG's social, economic, and political order.[19] German cities and states felt the weight. Youth hostels, gyms, prisons and ships were converted into emergency housing. More and more local communities declared themselves saturated, unwilling or unable to accept any more refugees.[20] The situation fed growing resentment among West Germans, angry that the new arrivals received generous social benefits and preferential treatment. The Kohl government feared a demographic crisis in the FRG and a spillover effect which could pose a potential threat to the West's democratic order.[21]

Although the crisis threatened important values, it also presented an opportunity to complete reunification. As the East German governing coalition lost social-democratic support, as the economy continued to unravel, and as an increasing number of accusations about security

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[19]Schuetzack, p. 45.

[20]Serge Schmemann, "West's Welcome Sours for Fleeing East Germans," New York Times, 1 March 1990, p. 16.

[21]Gunter Hofmann, "Die Stunde der Taktierer," Die Zeit, 17 August 1990, p. 5.

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police-Stasi cooperation surfaced,[22] Chancellor Kohl

provided the sole source of stability for the East

Germans in the disintegrating political field.[23] With the

old leadership discredited, Kohl personified success,

freedom, unity, and well-being. The people in the GDR

could easily identify with him as the chancellor of all

Germans.[24] This allowed Kohl to step into the growing

political vacuum and present reunification as the only

option to end the crisis. The old East German leadership

was much too weak to bloc it--a very unequal partner in

the bargaining game.

The international dimension also presented

opportunities for Bonn. Neither the US nor the Soviets

had an alternative to reunification. Moscow was too

indecisive and weak to block it. The US did not want to

jeopardize relations with its most important European

ally. Therefore, both superpowers went along with

reunification and let Bonn handle it, as long as the

Germans secured an orderly transition and avoided

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[22]H.G. Peter Wallach and Ronald A. Francisco, United
Germany--The Past, Politics, Prospects, (Westport:
Praeger, 1992) p. 74.

[23]Susanna Elm and Theodore Correl, "East Germany's
Fizzled Revolution," New York Times, 12 March 1990, p.
17.

[24]Christian Wernicke, "Schatten auf den neuen
Maennern," Die Zeit, 23 March 1990, p. 4.

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bloodshed. Kohl was in a position to control crisis management and to shape the desired outcome.

Another defining characteristic of the crisis was short decision time. Administration officials knew that they had to act quickly before domestic and international obstacles overwhelmed efforts to implement unification. More players would become involved reducing Bonn's control over the process. Waiting therefore raised the cost of a settlement. This provided an incentive to speed up the process, and complete unification before the favorable circumstances were transformed.[25]

Illustrating the importance of the time element, international developments put great pressure on the Kohl government to act. Bonn's greatest concern was the ambivalent situation in the Soviet Union and the uncertain future of Gorbachev. There was real concern that he might get ousted by hard-liners for letting developments in the GDR get out of hand. This would deprive Bonn of its most crucial ally in the quest for unity. It could also turn the refugee exodus into a flood, ending any chance of an orderly transition.[26]

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[25]Snyder and Diesing, p. 77.

[26]Serge Schmemann, "How to Hammer Germany Back Together: The Nuts and Bolts," New York Times, 27 February 1990, p. 8.

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Factors in the GDR also reduced available decision time. As central authority crumbled and the economy deteriorated under the impact of mass flight, the mood in the GDR soured. The Kohl government knew that the East Germans were willing to endure economic hardship as long as they had reason to hope that their condition would improve soon. The question was how long they would remain calm. If Bonn could not stop the economic decline and keep hope alive, there was a real danger of civil war.[27] Potentially, chaos in the GDR could undermine efforts to achieve unification.

Domestic factors also shortened available decision time. When the Berlin Wall tumbled, West Germans joyously welcomed their Eastern brothers, but public opinion quickly turned against the refugees. Because this was an election year, Kohl had to stop the exodus before it created real problems in the FRG and hurt him at the polls. The opposition SPD already capitalized on the situation, warning West Germans of the mounting cost. There was growing concern in Bonn that on the national level unification would be framed in terms of threatening the social achievements of the FRG.[28]

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[27]Peter Bender, "Wenn auf die Freiheit nichts als die Armut folgt," Die Zeit, 7 September 1990, p. 3.

[28]Schaeuble, Der Vertrag, p. 22.

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Another defining element--surprise--was present in the crisis. Although the Kohl government had some warning, "no one foresaw it" and recognized its true scope once it was under way.[29] Therefore, Bonn was surprised by the mass exodus after the Hungarian border was opened.[30] The administration also did not expect that the strong impulse for unity would come from the East,[31] and that Communist power would crumble so quickly, as manifested in the dramatic fall of the Berlin Wall. On that fateful day, Chancellor Kohl was not even in Bonn, but on an official visit in Poland. The timing of his trip suggested, that the developments caught Bonn by complete surprise. The administration was as unprepared as any of its allies and had no contingency plans ready for implementation.[32]

Conclusion

The crisis met Hermann's definitional criteria of threat, short decision time, and surprise. Further, it had a strong opportunity element, allowing West German

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[29]Francisco, p. 663.

[30]Schuetzack, p. 45.

[31]Schmemann, "Unification...," New York Times, 14 December 1989, p. 22.

[32]Ibid., p. 22.

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decision-makers to exploit the events and implement reunification. In that regard, the situation met Brady's definitional criteria, which include opportunity as a defining characteristic of crisis.

Chapter 12: The New Perception of the Intra-German and External Environment

Introduction

The previous section examined the properties of the crisis and the most important events. Next, I will explain how the crisis affected policy-makers' perception of the decision-making environment. The chapter begins with administration officials' view of the intra-German context, followed by their assessment of external conditions. I then explain what factors shaped their view, and how this translated into subsequent foreign policy. The purpose is to explain policy-makers' images of the decision environment during the crisis and the resulting effect on strategy.

Perception of the Intra-German Environment

Until summer 1989, the status quo in Europe and German division were considered stable. Honecker and the SED seemed firmly in control due to Soviet guarantees.[1] But the crisis changed this definition of the situation. The growing refugee wave in late summer and early fall and mass demonstrations slowly generated a sense of crisis in Bonn. Unsure about the depth of discontent, the

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[1] Weber, pp. 9-10.

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Kohl government took a wait and see attitude at first and tried to carry on business as usual. For example, in August 1989, Chancellor Kohl declared that his government was determined to continue the policy of dialogue and cooperation with the GDR, and that "no one was interested in a crisis development with possible disastrous consequences for all of Europe."[2] At the CDU party congress in Bremen in mid-September, the events in the GDR were deliberately played down and not allowed to dominate the agenda. In this early phase of the crisis Bonn was cautious about commenting on the events and careful not to prejudge the situation. A premature reaction could burden the intra-German relationship later. The hands-off approach became more difficult in October when mass protests rocked the GDR, culminating in the ouster of Honecker. Although it was clear that his regime had lost the confidence of the people, most in the Kohl government did not expect that this would translate into a complete rejection of socialism. The assumption was that the situation in the GDR would calm down after a leadership transition, and Bonn would have to coexist with the SED in the future.

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[2]Helmut Kohl, "Erklaerung zum wachsenden Fluechtlingsstrom aus der DDR," Texte, III/7, 1989, pp. 224-225.

The unexpected fall of the Berlin Wall heightened the sense of crisis and uncertainty. From then on problem definition was increasingly dominated by the perception of a state of emergency with great pressure to act.[3] Some immediately argued that the fall of the Wall signaled the complete breakdown of socialism in the GDR and presented a tremendous opportunity to solve the German question. Interior Minister Schaeuble who had insisted for weeks that the GDR was in a "pre-revolutionary state," asserted that reunification could be completed by the end of next year.[4] Confident about his assessment, he immediately began to develop concrete ideas for preparing political union between the two states.[5] Dorothee Wilms, Minister of Intra-German Relations, observed in late November that "the chance for reunification was never greater than today."[6] However, the majority, including Chancellor Kohl, did not share this optimistic assessment. He was much more cautious and seemed unsure of what to make of the developments. Unwilling to commit himself, his position was that unity

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[3]Lehmbruch, "Die deutsche Vereinigung...," p. 588.

[4]Schaeuble, Der Vertrag, p. 20.

[5]Ibid., p. 25.

[6]Dorothee Wilms, "Neue Herausforderung an die Deutschlandpolitik," Texte, III/7, 1989, p. 435.

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will come if the people want it. Until December, many in

Bonn seemed to believe that the majority of the East

Germans would probably not want to abandon the human

aspects of socialism and might be content with reform.[7]

After forty-five years of Communist education and

propaganda, some form of socialism would therefore

survive.[8]

This assessment was reflected in subsequent policy.

Chancellor Kohl initially offered to work with the new

Krenz government on the way to change and promised "a

completely new dimension of economic aid."[9] Kohl's Ten-

Point Plan, introduced in late November 1989, was a

blueprint for gradual reform, proposing "confederate

structures" that would eventually culminate in a German

federation. Under this plan, according to Chancellery

Minster Seiters, both states were to intensify

cooperation in many fields, expand existing commissions,

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[7]Nikolai Portugalov, "The Soviet View: Two Germanies in Confederation," New York Times, 15 December 1989, p. 43.

[8]Henry Kamm, "East German Race Is Neck-and-Neck," New York Times, 14 March 1990, p. 19.

[9]Rudolf Seiters, "Erklaerung der Bundesregierung zur Oeffnung der Grenzen durch die DDR," Texte, III/7, 1989, p. 389.

create new ones, and build common institutions.[10]
Economic aspects included development of economic
partnerships, direct investments by FRG businesses and
banks, and an intra-German economic commission.[11] The
purpose was to enmesh the two Germanies into a growing
network of interdependencies that would pave the way for
political and economic change.[12] This illustrated that in
the early stage of the crisis, some in the Kohl
government believed there was a chance for reform--a
gradual shift to democracy and a free market system. Two
months after the overthrow of Honecker, an alternative to
quick reunification was still conceivable.[13]

However, events in the GDR soon changed this
assessment. When Chancellor Kohl visited the GDR shortly
before Christmas 1989, the East Germans came by the
hundreds of thousands, and cheering crowds celebrated him
as a charismatic leader. There was jubilation and
enthusiasm, tears and waving flags. "Helmut we need you"

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[10]Rudolf Seiters, "Vertragsgemeinschaft als
Durchgangsstation," Stichworte dieser Woche, CDU/CSU
Bundestagsfraktion, 19 January 1990, p. 5.

[11]CDU/CSU Fraktion im Deutschen Bundestag--
Pressedienst, 20 December 1989.

[12]Seiters, "Vertragsgemeinschaft...," p. 5.

[13]Theo Sommer, "Unser nunmehr...," Die Zeit, 6 July
1990, p. 1.

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signs were everywhere, and the masses cried we are one people.[14] The visit was a turning point for Kohl. He was convinced that the old system had lost the confidence of the people, and that the East Germans would not be content with reform. The democratic uprising was a national movement against dictatorship and division[15]--a historic opportunity to solve the national question that hardly seemed conceivable before.[16] Kohl returned to Bonn with the reassurance he needed to take on the monumental task, and was determined to exploit the opportunities created by the crisis.

The situation in the GDR was quickly drawn into election politics. Chancellor Kohl discovered some promising electoral perspectives in the crisis, "and his highly developed power instinct led him to grasp them quickly."[17] It was a great opportunity to bolster his weakened position and to reclaim his leadership role,

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[14]Johann Michael Moeller, "Jubel und Begeisterung fuer Kohl in Eichsfeld," Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 6 September 1990, p. 4.

[15]Sommer, "Unser nunmehr...," Die Zeit, 6 July 1990, p. 1.

[16]Schaeuble, Der Vertrag, p. 15.

[17]Gerhard Lehmbruch, "The Process of Regime Change in East Germany," The Domestic Politics of German Unification, ed. Christopher Anderson, Karl Kaltenthaler and Wolfgang Luthardt (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1993) p. 25.

which was strongly challenged before the events.[18] Kohl

calculated that if unification could be achieved before

the next parliamentary election, it would almost

certainly rejuvenate him and his party and would allow

him to make history by becoming the first all-German

chancellor.[19] Therefore, he quickly seized the national

issue and identified himself and the Union with this

great cause, always reminding the voters that "we are the

party of German unity."[20] The crisis was a great personal

opportunity for Kohl: he could make a historic

accomplishment by uniting the nation and at the same time

strengthen his own power.

The events in the GDR and the electoral dimension

favored certain problem definitions and prompted hectic

policy activity in Bonn.[21] Only quick unification gave

the people "a clear and unmistakable signal of hope and

encouragement."[22] It would stabilize the situation in the

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[18]Ibid., p. 25.

[19]John Breuilly, "Conclusion: Nationalism and German Reunification," The State of Germany, ed. John Breuilly (New York: Longman, 1992), p. 231.

[20]Union Magazin der CDU Deutschlands, Bundesausschuss, 18 June 1990, p. 26.

[21]Lehmbruch, "Die deutsche Vereinigung...," p. 587.

[22]CDU/CSU Fraktion im Deutschen Bundestag--Pressedienst, 14 February 1990, p. 7.

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short term, while reassuring the East Germans that Bonn had a long-term vision for their future.[23] "The old GDR structures could be abolished faster, the hoped for private investments would flow more quickly, and the danger of an even larger refugee wave would be averted. More waiting only made the process of transition more difficult and expensive."[24] Early union was also supported by short-term electoral calculations. A growing number of West Germans were increasingly nervous about the cost of unification which could hurt the government's election prospects. To finalize national union and to maintain the strategic advantage, much depended on quick action and on preserving the "basic positive mood in the country before the elections."[25]

Therefore, Bonn stepped up the tempo of unification. A plan to implement economic and currency union by 1 July 1990 was announced. Administration officials explained that previous schemes for more gradual reform, i.e., confederate structures, were made obsolete by the deteriorating situation in the GDR. As Chancellor Kohl

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[23]Schaeuble, Der Vertrag, p. 18.

[24]Carl-Christian Kaiser, "Hoher Preis fuer die Einheit," Die Zeit, 25 May 1990, p. 4.

[25]"Ihr werdet Euch noch wundern," Der Spiegel, 22 October 1990, p. 21.

put it, "in a normal political and economic situation the road would have been a different one--one of step by step reform and adjustment... But the political and social upheavals have led to a dramatic shortening of the political time horizon."[26] The revolutionary developments in the GDR required an equally revolutionary answer.[27] However, economic and currency union was also based on tactical considerations. With de facto unification completed in early July, de jure unification would not be far behind. It was a strategic move to complete reunification and to translate it into maximum political advantage for Kohl and his party.

Another crucial element in Bonn's unification strategy was the election in the GDR on March 18, 1990. Both the CDU/CSU and the opposition SPD speculated that this election might turn out to be what voting researchers called a "realigning" or critical election. The SPD hoped that a victory would give the Social Democrats the leadership position in a united Germany. And the CDU/CSU feared the definitive loss of "strukturelle Mehrheitsfaehigkeit" (a structurally determined capacity to win a majority), a concept

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[26]CDU/CSU Fraktion im Deutschen Bundestag-- Pressedienst, 14 February 1990, pp. 6-7.

[27]Ibid., p. 6.

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suggesting that German voting was strongly determined by the social context.[28] Therefore, the East German election had critical implications for the governing parties and the opposition, as well as Kohl's unification strategy. If he succeeded in leading political forces to victory who shared his commitment to quick unification, he would have a democratically legitimized counterpart in the GDR with whom he could promptly work out the concrete terms. The manner in which unification would be carried out would then be more orderly and predictable, in the sense that there would not be two governments on either side of the inter-German border with significantly different agendas. Therefore, a conservative election victory in the GDR would give Kohl more control over the unification process.[29] The election outcome also had important international ramifications. A democratic mandate by the East Germans to join their West German brothers could not be ignored, and would make it more difficult for outside powers to bloc unification.

A SPD victory would jeopardize unity and had to be avoided. A mandate for the opposition would complicate

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[28]Lehmbruch, "The Process of Regime Change...," pp. 25-26.

[29]Andrew Rosenthal, "US Officials Say Outcome Promises to Benefit NATO," New York Times, 20 March 1990, p. 12.

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Kohl's efforts to merge the two states by forcing the CDU/CSU administration in Bonn to work with a Social Democratic government in the East. It would also make it more difficult to press for the demand that a united Germany remain in NATO, due to the SPD's generally weaker commitment to the alliance. This, in turn, could complicate the relationship with the US and the European allies. Bonn was convinced that a SPD victory would result in much slower fusion.[30] Therefore, the conservatives had to win the March elections. At stake was Kohl's unification strategy.

In preparation for this event, Bonn dropped its support for the Modrow regime. This marked the end of pragmatic cooperation with the SED, which had been pursued by all West German governments since 1969. The spectacular election victory by the Bonn-sponsored conservative "Alliance for Germany" was seen as the final rejection of socialism. Many were now convinced that reunification was not too far behind.[31]

In subsequent months the administration concentrated its efforts on working out the internal aspects with the new de Maziere government. Because the situation in the

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[30]Schmemann, "How to Hammer...," New York Times, 27 February 1990, p. 8.

[31]Schaeuble, Der Vertrag, p. 25.

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GDR remained highly volatile in spring and summer, Bonn

insisted on full political union by early October,

followed by all-German elections in December. The motto

in the administration was "all-German elections as soon

as possible, an all German parliament as soon as

possible, an all-German government as soon as

possible."[32] Kohl was convinced that the longer the

unification process dragged on, the more expensive and

difficult it would be. He had to complete the national

task before the negative ramifications, such as

joblessness and rising prices, made the electorate more

volatile.[33] Deutschlandpolitik centered on how to

implement unification without delay.

Perception of the External Environment

Before the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Kohl

government viewed the international environment with

great uncertainty. Bonn was encouraged by what could be

described as radical detente, which had led to

unparalleled arms control agreements between Washington

and Moscow, promising to reduce forces in Europe to much

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[32]Bulletin, 26 June 1990.

[33]Walter Bajor, "Ein Daempfer zur rechten Zeit,"
Rheinischer Merkur, 18 May 1990, p. 1.

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lower levels.[34] In Eastern Europe, profound political and economic change was under way facilitated by Gorbachev's perestroika. According to Chancellor Kohl, the reform policies of General Secretary Gorbachev allowed, for the first time since the end of World War II, the substantive hope that the East-West conflict could be overcome. There was now a perspective for real change in Europe.[35] But Kohl cautioned, "we are only at the beginning of such a development, and no one can overlook or underestimate the risks of failure and the resulting dangers."[36] In early fall 1989, it was far from clear in Bonn how political and economic change in the Eastern bloc might affect the status quo in Europe. Although the continent seemed in a state of flux and there was hope for positive change, fundamental transformation was not expected overnight.

The fall of the Berlin Wall changed this assessment. Gorbachev's historic decision not to support Honecker signaled that the Soviets were not only willing to give up their Eastern allies, such as Poland and Hungary, but

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[34]Thomas Friedman, "US Hestitates to Cash in on a Cold-War Victory," New York Times, 13 February 1990, p. 10.

[35]Helmut Kohl, "Bericht der Bundesregierung zur Lage der Nation im geteilten Deutschland," Texte, III/7, 1989, p. 320.

[36]Ibid., p. 320.

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also the GDR--the linchpin of their security. The postwar

security system--the existing international structure

relying on two superpowers, their allies, and two

Germanies--had collapsed.[37] As Chancellor Kohl declared,

> Today we are... at the beginning of a new
> chapter in European and German history that
> transcends the present status quo and the
> existing political structures in Europe... We
> are all called upon to construct a new
> architecture for the European House, a
> permanent and just peace order for our
> continent.[38]

The momentum touched off by the fall of the Berlin

Wall soon convinced administration officials that they

had a historic chance to solve the national problem.

However, proponents of unification were convinced that

the window of opportunity was small, and that no one

could assume that the chance would still exist after

1990.[39] Gorbachev, Bonn's best hope for unity, faced an

uncertain future. He was weakened by a succession of

crises at home, and his status was in doubt jeopardizing

his long-term ability to lead.[40] Chancellor advisor

Teltschik warned that developments in the Soviet Union

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[37]Bertram, "The German Question," p. 44.

[38]CDU-Dokumentation, 38/1989, p. 5.

[39]Schaeuble, Der Vertrag, p. 75.

[40]R.W. Apple, "Besieged at Home, Gorbachev Arrives in US For Summit," New York Times, 31 May 1990, p. 10.

could call unification into question overnight.[41] Because

of this uncertainty Bonn had to act quickly. Therefore,

in the following months, the Kohl government tried to

close out as many agreements as possible, before

developments in the Soviet Union threatened

unification.[42] The perception of an opportunity that

might quickly be lost dominated subsequent strategy and

exerted great pressure to act.

Before February 1990, Bonn was not sure about the

level of international support for unification. How would

the US and European allies react? The dynamism of the

developments in the GDR quickly brought external

reservations to the surface.[43] A unified Germany was

perceived as a threat due to its economic power and

population size.[44] At the Strassbourg summit in early

December 1989, the international community was full of

skepticism about developments in Germany.[45] Although

President Bush reaffirmed the right of self-determination

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[41]Christian Schmidt-Haeuer, "Hilfe ohne Netz," Die Zeit, 23 November 1990, p. 1.

[42]William Hyland, "The First Post-Cold War Summit," New York Times, 25 May 1990, p. 27.

[43]Schaeuble, Der Vertrag, p. 20.

[44]Ibid., p. 20.

[45]Ibid., pp. 70-71.

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for all Germans, and his ambassador, Vernon Walters, declared that it was not normal that there were two German states,[46] Bush cautioned that "he expected the unification of Germany as the result of a step-by-step process that should not be speeded up."[47]

Mitterrand's reaction caused great irritation in Bonn. In December, only a few weeks after the fall of the Berlin Wall, he made an official visit to the GDR--the first ever by a head of state of the three victorious powers. In East Berlin, Mitterrand pledged solidarity with the GDR and stressed that there were two German states with a "sovereign existence."[48] The timing of his visit was an affront to Bonn and left little doubt that he opposed unification.

Margaret Thatcher, the most critical of the allies, insisted that unification was not on the international agenda. She estimated a time frame of ten to fifteen years before the process could be completed. She also set preconditions, i.e., first completing political and economic reform in Eastern Europe. In addition, she

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[46]Dorothee Wilms, "Die Deutsche Frage steht auf der Tagesordnung," Texte, III/7, 1989, p. 235.

[47]Eckhard Fuhr, "Von der Spaltung zur Einheit," Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 24 August 1990, p. 10.

[48]"Splitter im Koerper," Der Spiegel, 1 January 1990, p. 26.

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demanded active participation by NATO, the EC, the four
victors, and the CSCE states in the decision-making
process regarding unity.[49] The reaction among the allies
was typical of the skepticism and open opposition in many
foreign capitals in the first few months after the fall
of the Berlin Wall, heightening uncertainty in Bonn over
external support.[50]

However, by February 1990, external factors seemed
more favorable, and Bonn felt more secure in its
assessment of the international context.[51] Washington
assured Kohl that the U.S. supported unification without
reservations. According to Bush, if the road should prove
shorter than anticipated, then this meant only "that we
can reach the common goal more quickly."[52] Administration
officials welcomed U.S. support. A grateful Chancellor
Kohl later declared: "I cannot imagine a more supportive
partner than the US... they not only talk about self-
determination, they really mean it."[53] With US support

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[49]"Mrs. Thatcher's tadelnder Ton," Der Spiegel, 19
February 1990, pp. 160-162.

[50]Schaeuble, Der Vertrag, p. 20.

[51]Ibid., p. 29.

[52]Fuhr, "Von der Spaltung...," Frankfurter Allgemeine
Zeitung, 24 August 1990, p. 10.

[53]Nina Grunenberg, "Zur Macht auch den Zweck
gefunden," Die Zeit, 19 October 1990, p. 4.

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certain, Bonn was not too concerned about continued British opposition. The perception was that Britain had lost international weight and could not bloc unification. FDP-Chairman Lambsdorff, returning from a visit with Prime Minister Thatcher, declared, "she will get on board when the ship takes off."[54] There was more concern about France. The prestige-conscious Mitterrand had to be handled carefully, and Bonn could not create the impression that he was being sidelined. To enlist his support, Bonn had to reassure him that a unified Germany strengthened stability in Europe and the overall Western position.

Kohl knew that France and the other allies wanted to see Germany bound up in a security framework that calmed fears of a potential revival of German militarism. Mitterrand also wanted the continuation of the American presence in Europe as a counterweight to German military power.[55] Therefore, Kohl came out early in support of a unified Germany in NATO. He also sent clear signals to Mitterrand that unification would not slow the process of European integration. During his visit to Brussels on 23

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[54]"Mrs. Thatcher's...," Der Spiegel, 19 February 1990, p. 160.

[55]"Komplott gegen Europa," Der Spiegel, 16 July, 1990, p. 112.

March 1990, Kohl assured the EC that Bonn not only remained committed to this goal, but also favored early economic and monetary union, and would support a new push toward political union. France liked to hear this, because closer European integration was another way to anchor a unified Germany more firmly in the West.[56] Bonn's Westpolitik centered on convincing the allies that reunification was in their interest and on enlisting their support.

These efforts paid off. In April 1990, at the European Summit, skepticism and opposition to unification gave way to support. As Interior Minister Schaeuble observed, there was enthusiasm in Dublin about the way unity was to be completed and about the new perspectives for Europe resulting from an end to division.[57]

However, the Soviet position was more ambivalent. Getting Moscow on board for a unified Germany in NATO was the biggest external obstacle standing in the way of early union. Bonn was convinced that they were the key to unification--if they endorsed it, no one could block

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[56]Alan Riding, "West Europeans Near a Consensus on East-Block Ties," New York Times, 2 April 1990, p. 8.

[57]Schaeuble, Der Vertrag, p. 71.

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it.[58] Therefore, they had to be convinced that a unified Germany was a potential boon, not a threat.[59]

Initially, administration officials were optimistic about Soviet support. During a meeting with Kohl in Moscow in early February, Gorbachev supported unification in principle by declaring that it was up to the Germans themselves to solve this issue. They had to choose in what national form, in what time frame, how soon, and under what conditions they would make unity a reality.[60] The Soviets also dropped the precondition that a unified Germany should be neutral which was considered the most important result of the Kohl visit.[61] Returning home, an exuberant chancellor declared: "The road to German unity has been finally cleared by General Secretary Gorbachev..."[62] But in the following months the Soviets stubbornly held out against a unified Germany in NATO, making a number of unacceptable demands. Because of the

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[58]"Enormer Schaden fuer Moskau," Der Spiegel, 5 February 1990, p. 146.

[59]Serge Schmemann, "Bowing to the Inexorable," New York Times, 18 July 1990, p. 6.

[60]CDU/CSU Fraktion im Deutschen Bundestag--Pressedienst, 14 February 1990, p. 2.

[61]"Wir muessen es behutsam tun," Der Spiegel, 19 February 1990, p. 17.

[62]CDU/CSU Fraktion im Deutschen Bundestag, 14 February 1990, p. 1.

impasse, there was widespread skepticism that the difficult alliance issue could be solved any time soon. Many still could not imagine that the Soviets would really accept the destruction of the Warsaw Pact and the loss of their Western perimeter in Europe without resistance.[63]

However, Chancellor Kohl was more confident that Moscow would give in. He stressed that it was important to proceed carefully vis-a-vis the Soviets, so that Gorbachev did not come under too much pressure at home for concessions to the Germans. He was already accused of neglecting national interests and of selling out Soviet security. According to Kohl, the impression must be avoided that after 45 years, the Soviets were losing World War II after all.[64] This implied respect for legitimate Soviet interests in solving the German question. Therefore, Kohl was prepared to give Gorbachev a number of security guarantees contained in the 2+4 Treaty and in bilateral agreements. Kohl also knew that Gorbachev needed sizeable economic support to lead his country out of backwardness, and would have to ask himself how he could best get it. The answer, according

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[63]Schaeuble, Der Vertrag, p. 18.

[64]"Wir muessen es...," Der Spiegel, 19 February 1990, p. 16.

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to Kohl, would be compelling: "He [Gorbachev] knows that all paths lead to Europe via Berlin and German unity."[65] It illustrated that Bonn was prepared to give the Soviets what they needed to endorse unification without losing face. Although Gorbachev held out for a while, Bonn was confident by early summer that he would not block unification.

Conclusion

The crisis changed Bonn's view of the intra-German context. It shattered the perception that the GDR was stable, and convinced the Kohl government that the old leadership had lost legitimacy. The situation presented a tremendous chance to complete unification. This assessment determined subsequent strategy. Deutschlandpolitik was increasingly dominated by determined moves to take maximum advantage of the opportunities so that unification could be implemented without delay.

The crisis also transformed Bonn's perception of the external environment. With the fall of the Berlin Wall the post-war status quo had collapsed. The situation presented an opportunity to replace it with a new

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[65]"Die Hoffnung heisst Germanija," Der Spiegel, 23 July 1990, p. 17.

European order centered around a reunified Germany.

Subsequent foreign policy efforts were directed towards

enlisting support for the national goal from allies and

neighbors.

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Chapter 13: Foreign Policy Objectives Transformed

Introduction

The previous chapter examined how the crisis in the
GDR affected decision-makers' views of the internal and
external environment. The following explains the crisis
impact on the objectives of West German foreign policy.
It begins with an examination of Deutschlandpolitik,
followed by an analysis of Westpolitik. The purpose is to
identify specific change in strategic objectives that
occurred in the crisis phase.

The Objectives of Deutschlandpolitik

Before the crisis, reunification was no longer a
realistic policy goal of Deutschlandpolitik. Eager not to
offend the GDR, the issue was played down. If the term
appeared at all, German unity was always discussed as a
long-term evolutionary process that might take centuries
to complete. Although Bonn kept a formal commitment to
reunification, a settlement of the German question was
not expected in the near future.

But with the events in the GDR, the German question
was taken out of its historical perspective and suddenly
became a pressing political issue.[1] It quickly rose to

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[1]Schuetzack, p. 46.

the top of the policy agenda dominating all other
matters, such as the controversial asylum debate and the
dilemma with the Republicans. As Chancellery Minister
Seiters observed, the question of German unity was the
dominant theme of the day.[2] The term reunification,
previously absent from speeches and public statements
suddenly reappeared. For example, Norbert Bluem, Minister
of Labor and Chairman of the CDU in Nordrhein-Westfalia,
stated, "we want reunification."[3] According to official
Union sources, reunification--the restoration of state
unity for Germany--was the political goal of the CDU.[4]
The change in tone indicated that a major shift in West
German foreign policy was under way.

This was reflected in Deutschlandpolitik. Before the
crisis, the Kohl government's pragmatic approach always
separated political demands on the GDR from the national
issue. Improved relations, economic concessions, etc.,
were not specifically tied to progress on the German
question. Bonn's primary objective was a more modest one:
easing the consequences of division through bilateral
agreements that improved the lives of millions of East

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[2]Rudolf Seiters, "Rede ueber deutschlandpolitische
Fragen," Minutes of the Bundestag, 7 February 1990.

[3]Deutschland Union Dienst, 27 November 1989.

[4]CDU-Dokumentation, 40/1989, p. 8.

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Germans. Close cooperation with Honecker was essential to the success of the policy, which inevitably stabilized and legitimized the regime.

But during the crisis, the Kohl government quickly changed its approach. Increasingly unwilling to support the old leadership, the administration pursued a Deutschlandpolitik that risked further destabilization to expedite unification. This was illustrated by Bonn's handling of the refugee wave. When early in the crisis hundreds of East Germans fled to the West German embassy in Prague, Genscher personally went to see them and negotiated their free passage to the FRG. This encouraged more to leave and helped turn the refugee flow into a flood. Kohl and his supporters also refused to reduce the generous benefit package greeting each new East German arrival in the FRG, which included "welcome money," cost of living allowances, and housing subsidies. Critics, even from Kohl's own party, charged that this policy was a strong incentive for thousands and sustained the refugee wave. By refusing to send the East Germans back early on and by providing them with generous benefits, Bonn helped destabilize the East German leadership. These moves hastened unification, indicating that the primary objective of Deutschlandpolitik was being transformed.

From the fall of the Berlin Wall onward, Bonn

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increasingly stepped up the pressure on the East German

regime. In his Ten-Point Plan announced in late November

1989, Chancellor Kohl made continued cooperation with the

SED contingent on fundamental reform. According to

Chancellery Minister Seiters, "Bonn was ready to provide

comprehensive help, if... the SED gave up its power

monopoly, allowed independent parties, and agreed to free

elections. Cosmetic corrections were not enough, and Bonn

was not willing to stabilize untenable conditions."[5]

These demands linked Deutschlandpolitik to progress on

the national issue, indicating that the policy was no

longer divorced from the German question. Increasingly,

Bonn was not content with the modest objective of easing

the consequences of division, but pursued a much more

ambitious goal.

In the early days of the crisis, the Kohl government

considered a final break with the regime premature. But

when the East German masses demanded immediate

unification, Bonn took a much harder line toward Modrow,

reflecting growing urgency to implement unification.

According to Volker Ruehe, promised reforms did not meet

the expectations of the people, who demanded an end to

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[5]Seiters, "Erklaerung der Bundesregierung zur Oeffnung der Grenzen durch die DDR," Texte, III/7, 1989, p. 389.

central planning and fundamental economic renewal.[6]
Rather than supporting his bankrupt regime, Bonn pressed
for free elections and for early economic and currency
union. Because the administration wanted democracy
restored as soon as possible, Kohl denied Modrow's
request for an immediate economic aid package of 15
billion DM for the ailing GDR economy.[7] Administration
officials explained their growing unwillingness to work
with East Berlin by stressing the regime's lack of
constitutionalism. Schaeuble noted that Modrow's
administration was only a transitional government that
lacked the confidence of the people. Therefore, Bonn no
longer expected any substantial contributions from Modrow
or his party to solve the problems in the GDR.[8]
Administration officials increasingly viewed Modrow as a
political liability. The assessment was that supporting
his regime ran contrary to the popular mood in the GDR
and jeopardized the chances of Bonn-sponsored
conservative parties in the East German elections in

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[6]Union in Deutschland, 37/1989, p. 4.

[7]CDU/CSU Fraktion im Deutschen Bundestag--
Pressedienst, 6 February 1990.

[8]Schaeuble, Der Vertrag, p. 29.

March.[9] Continued backing intensified the refugee wave, soured the mood in the West, and slowed unification.

So great was Bonn's desire to distance itself from the regime that in preparation for the upcoming GDR elections, some in the Kohl government initially refused to support any groups with ties to the SED. For example, CDU Secretary-General Ruehe argued strongly against providing material and organizational support for the East-CDU, a party that had cooperated with the SED for forty years and was currently represented in Modrow's SED-PDS government with several cabinet ministers. Because of its tainted past, the East-CDU and its newly elected chairman, Lothar de Maziere, presented a serious problem for Bonn. Supporting this party might jeopardize conservative election prospects in the GDR.[10] However, Interior Minister Schaeuble wanted to make the East-CDU Bonn's official partner. He considered the name "CDU" indispensable because it made a full identification of the GDR electorate with Chancellor Kohl and his government easier and more likely.[11] The controversy complicated Bonn's efforts to forge an alliance of all

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[9]Sommer, "Vom Aufbruch..., Die Zeit, 2 February 1990, p. 1.

[10]Schaeuble, Der Vertrag, p. 30.

[11]Ibid., p. 24.

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Christian and Liberal-Conservative parties in the GDR
that could run effectively against the East-SPD, which
was heavily favored to win. The episode illustrated
Bonn's reluctance to jeopardize the election and
prospects for early unity.

Ending support for Modrow and free elections were
part of a comprehensive strategy to complete unification.
Other steps included implementing economic and currency
union and finalizing the unity treaty. All elements of
Deutschlandpolitik were strategically connected. The
policy now had a guiding vision of the future and no
longer divorced ends from means.

The shift to reunification was reflected in the
concepts of nation, unity, and freedom. In the course of
the crisis, an obvious shift occurred from the previous
notion of "Kulturnation" to the German nation state.[12]
Administration officials stressed that "the CDU was
fighting for... the restoration of a German nation
state."[13] According to Volker Ruehe, "...for us Germans
the question of... state unity of our fatherland is on
the agenda."[14] In this formulation, a nation state rather

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[12]Schwarz, p. 140.

[13]CDU-Dokumentation, 40/1989, p. 2.

[14]Union in Deutschland, 1/1990, p. 2.

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than culture and values formed the basis of unity. German unity meant state unity, and nation was now synonymous with a state. It illustrated that the crisis brought forth a new relationship to the nation and changed the meaning of unity.[15]

The crisis also redefined the concept of freedom. Before the events, consistent with Bonn's goal to ease the consequences of division, the emphasis was on expanding personal liberties, such as freedom of speech, the right to travel, and the development of contacts across the border. But during the crisis, Bonn insisted on much broader political freedoms for the East Germans: national self-determination--the right to determine their own form of government. According to Dorothee Wilms, Minister of Intra-German relations, the people in the GDR must be given the opportunity to decide the political, social, and economic format of their state in free and open elections, "even if this calls into question socialism as such."[16] This was a shift from personal freedom to comprehensive political freedoms, including the right to change the government in free elections.

According to Chancellor Kohl, he would fully respect

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[15]Schwarz, p. 140.

[16]Wilms, "Neue Herausforderung...," Texte, III/7, 1989, p. 436.

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the decision of the East Germans.[17] However, there was

little doubt in Bonn how they would choose. An optimistic

Wilms stated, "I am more certain than ever that all

Germans, including our countrymen in the GDR, will opt

for the unity and freedom of Germany."[18]

The crisis also clarified when and how the German

question would be solved. Unification was no longer

discussed in historical time frames, instead, the Kohl

government agreed on the modalities and set a concrete

date. Convinced that the window of opportunity was small,

the consensus in the administration was that the shortest

and easiest path to unity was the best. Therefore, the

Kohl government favored unification based on article 23

of the West German constitution, which simply extended

its provisions to the GDR upon joining the FRG. However,

the fast track to unity was opposed by the SPD, demanding

unification based on article 146, which required the

drafting of a new all-German constitution to be ratified

in a plebiscite. However, the administration had great

political and practical reservations against article 146.

Interior Minister Schaeuble argued that this path to

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[17]Helmut Kohl, "Rede vor der Frauenkirche in Dresden," Texte III/7, 1989, p. 466.

[18]Wilms, "Neue Herausforderungen...," Texte, III/7, 1989, p. 440.

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unity was too cumbersome and time-consuming and caused unnecessary delay. A plebiscite raised the theoretical possibility that the Germans would reject the new constitution. In that case the unified Germany would be without one. If participation in the plebiscite was low, because the voter considered it unnecessary, it would be a bad start for a unified Germany.[19] Supporters of article 23 stressed that the present constitution had worked well for forty years and that a new one was therefore unnecessary. This argument eventually prevailed. Government and opposition agreed on article 23--the short path to unification--and set October 3, 1990 as the official date.

The Objectives of Westpolitik

Beyond Deutschlandpolitik, the crisis had implications for the objectives of Westpolitik. Before the events, Bonn always subordinated national interest in reunification to Western security. But during the crisis, this order of priorities was reversed: solving the German question was overriding, and security policy was

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[19]Deutschland Union Dienst, 27 June 1990.

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conducted to serve unity.[20]

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Kohl
government wanted to reestablish a sovereign state
unburdened by the hostility of neighbors and alliance
partners. This required a new security framework that
allowed Germany to stay closely aligned with the West
while gaining the trust and support of the Soviets. As
the administration embarked upon this task, the maxim
was: "history had offered the Germans an almost
unbelievable chance. It was therefore crucial to do
everything that furthered the goal of unity, and to
refrain from any actions that might jeopardize this great
aspiration."[21] A future security framework had to be
compatible with quick unification, and policies that
might delay or jeopardize this goal were a priori ruled
out.

To get the Western allies on board, Bonn supported a
unified Germany in NATO and rejected neutrality. As
Volker Ruehe emphasized, "our Western ties are not
negotiable. The Atlantic Alliance is the guarantor of a

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[20]This formulation was originally used by Friedrich
von Weizaecker. See "Alle Faeden in der Hand," Der
Spiegel, 1 October 1990, p. 21.

[21]Schaeuble, Der Vertrag, p. 15.

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secure transition into a new European era."[22] According

to Chancellor Kohl, "we do not want a German Sonderweg.

The CDU rejects any form of neutrality or

demilitarization, a Germany between alliances or blocks.

Any singularization of Germany destroys the static of

Europe."[23] Bonn knew that neutrality raised alarm that

the Germans might turn East. Therefore, a neutral unified

Germany would be opposed by the US, Britain, and France.

Without Western support, the entire unification effort

would be jeopardized. Therefore, neutrality was

incompatible with unity.

In Bonn's estimation, NATO membership virtually

guaranteed Western support, making it difficult for the

partners to bloc unification. Administration officials

could argue that a united Germany in the community of

free nations strengthened the overall position of the

West. Dregger emphasized that a unified Germany in NATO

also made a contribution to overall stability in

Europe.[24] Bonn stressed the positive impact of

unification on alliance effectiveness and European peace

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[22]Union in Deutschland, 12/1990, p. 29.

[23]Union Magazin der CDU Deutschlands, 18 June 1990, p. 27.

[24]CDU/CSU Fraktion im Deutschen Bundestag-- Pressedienst, 12 June 1990.

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to convince the Western partners that unity was in their interest and deserved their support. Allied approval brought the administration a big step closer to unification, and left only the Soviets to appease.

Alliance membership served unity for other reasons as well. Beyond Bonn's immediate concern of merging East and West Germany by a certain date lay the much larger task of uniting the two countries economically, politically, and socially, which posed a tremendous financial challenge. Such costly domestic priorities provided an incentive to anchor all of Germany in NATO.[25] In a political environment where the rebuilding of East Germany was expected to run in the hundreds of billions, the administration could ill afford costly internal efforts to deal with external security.[26] The German taxpayer, already severely burdened, would not accept this. Because government officials knew that they would pay a heavy political price for too much extraction,[27] they were searching for a security strategy that allowed them to provide for defense at a minimal political

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[25]Barnett and Levy, p. 378.

[26]Ibid., p. 378.

[27]Barnett, p. 552.

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cost.[28] They opted for NATO because alliance membership reduced the security burden on a unified Germany and freed up the country's resources for the challenges in the East. This approach served the immediate goal of implementing unification and the long-term strategic objective of rebuilding the East--the key to real internal unity. For Bonn, anchoring all of Germany in the alliance was the most sensible and accessible strategy.

However, a unified Germany in NATO created problems for the Soviets. The danger was that by accepting the Western terms, they appeared as the clear losers, a perception that could undermine the position of Gorbachev at home and jeopardize the quick implementation of reunification. To bring the Soviets on board, Bonn had to find a face-saving solution for Gorbachev. This had top priority and shaped subsequent security strategy.

Administration officials calculated that Moscow would accept German NATO membership as the contours of a European security framework became more apparent.[29] Therefore, primarily to a Soviet audience, Bonn stressed the declining value of NATO as a strict military and security alliance. Administration officials talked more

[28]Ibid., p. 542.

[29]Gerhard Spoerl, "Die Last mit Lust und Laune tragen," Die Zeit, 13 April 1990, p. 2.

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about transforming the pacts, building a pan-European security system, and giving the CSCE a larger institutional role.[30] The Federal President von Weizaecker emphasized the declining weight of military means and stressed that real security rested on mutual cooperation.[31] This reflected Bonn's view that the Soviets would accept German NATO membership, if they were confident that the alliance was being transformed into a political body reaching out to the East.

Sensing that Gorbachev's problems were largely political, Kohl and Genscher tried to persuade the Western allies to soften their stance toward Moscow.[32] At the sixteen-member NATO summit in London, Chancellor Kohl spearheaded an effort to change the alliance from a military to a political organization. He pressed the members to formally agree to reconciliation with the Warsaw Pact, to make a commitment to the thorough restructuring of NATO, to grant financial assistance to the Soviets, and to invite Gorbachev to address the

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[30]"Es kann auch anders kommen," Der Spiegel, 10 February 1990, pp. 26-27.

[31]"Wichtigste Aufgabe meiner Amtszeit," Der Spiegel, 30 April 1990, p. 45.

[32]Schmemann, "Bowing to...," New York Times, 18 July 1990, p. 6.

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organization at a later date.[33] According to Kohl, "our

alliance...must concentrate more on its political

role."[34] The conciliatory approach had solid support in

Bonn, and during the entire unification process only few

still supported a militarily strong NATO.[35] This was

aimed at the Soviets. The Kohl government wanted to be

able to present the accession of the GDR to the FRG and

to NATO as the joining of a partnership organization,

rather than an enemy alliance.[36] Much of Bonn's

Westpolitik revolved around getting enough concessions

from the allies to gain Soviet approval for German NATO

membership.

The national priority also shaped the terms of the

2+4 treaty. Most of the guarantees were explicitly

written to satisfy the Soviets.[37] Because Bonn knew that

Gorbachev could not accept the eastward expansion of

NATO, 2+4 enshrined the Genscher idea that the unified

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[33]Craig Whitney, "Promise of Yalta: Redeemed at Last," New York Times, 17 July 1990, p. 8.

[34]Union in Deutschland, 7/1990, pp. 3-4.

[35]"Es kann auch anders kommen," Der Spiegel, 5 March 1990, p. 28.

[36]Christoph Bertram, "Ein Weltrekord der Diplomaten," Die Zeit, 14 September 1990, p. 4.

[37]Thomas Friedman, "Four Allies Give Up Rights in Germany," New York Times, 13 September 1990, p. 6.

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Germany was to belong to the Western alliance without positioning allied troops on the former territory of the GDR.[38] Foreign NATO units and installations of the alliance could therefore not be pushed closer to the Soviet border.[39] The Kohl government also agreed to limit the size of the all-German army, promised not to acquire chemical, nuclear, or biological weapons, and pledged that the definitive borders of the unified Germany would consist of what was now East and West Germany.[40] The driving force behind these concessions was Bonn's determination to complete unification. They were part of a calculated strategy to remove Soviet opposition as quickly as possible. Reunification shaped Bonn's security strategy.

According to Chancellery Minister Seiters, unification did not concern the Germans alone. Therefore, internal developments had to be closely linked with the settlement of external aspects, both in terms of time and in subject matter.[41] But during the crisis, domestic

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[38]Spoerl, "Die Last mit...," Die Zeit, 13 April 1990, p. 2.

[39]Union in Deutschland, 7/1990, p. 4.

[40]Friedman, "Four Allies...," New York Times, 13 September 1990, p. 6.

[41]Union in Deutschland, 15/1990, p. 11.

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unification consistently out-paced efforts to coordinate
security issues with the Western partners. By the time
the first 2+4 meeting was convened, Bonn had almost
completed de facto unification. Although 2+4 was only one
aspect of the overall attempt to deal with security, it
suggested that during the crisis this issue area lost
relative importance.

Conclusion

The crisis changed the objectives of West German
foreign policy. In Deutschlandpolitik, a shift occurred
from easing the consequences of division, to
reunification. The crisis also clarified when and how
reunification would be completed. Government and
opposition agreed on the modalities and a concrete date.

The shift to reunification was reflected in
operational Deutschlandpolitik: the Kohl government was
no longer willing to support the East German regime.
Bonn's handling of the refugee crisis suggested that the
administration accepted further destabilization of the
old regime to expedite unification.

The crisis also changed the objectives of
Westpolitik. National interest in reunification replaced
security as the most important foreign policy objective.
Westpolitik was conducted to serve unity. Bonn wanted a

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security framework that minimized allied objections and

facilitated prompt implementation of unification. NATO

membership was the most sensible and accessible strategy.

After allied support was assured, much of Bonn's

Westpolitik revolved around how to get the Soviets on

board. It illustrated that the national issue shaped

Bonn's security policy.

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Chapter 14: The New Consensus in West German Foreign Policy

Introduction

The third dependent variable examined in the crisis phase is degree of consensus in foreign policy. This chapter begins with Deutschlandpolitik and explores how the crisis affected consensus on policy objectives, operational Deutschlandpolitik, and the border issue. Next, it analyzes Westpolitik--the debate over its policy priorities and its relative weight to Ostpolitik. The purpose is to examine the content of individual policy positions, and to explain how the crisis affected the level of agreement in the Bonn government.

Consensus in Deutschlandpolitik

Before the events in the GDR, the Kohl government was divided into two primary groups, pragmatists and Union conservatives, who frequently clashed over foreign policy. But the crisis influenced the factional infighting and generated a patriotic consensus in favor of unification. All disagreements were overshadowed by the prospect of German unity. As a result, Deutschlandpolitik was much less controversial and long-standing disputes were resolved.

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<u>Consensus on Goals</u>

Before the crisis, the different factions in the Kohl government did not agree on the long-term objectives of Deutschlandpolitik. For example, was reunification the only way to solve the German question, or were other options conceivable, i.e., two separate states sharing common values and culture? The crisis unified the policy organization on this contentious issue. Pragmatists put aside the vague concept of "Kulturnation" and embraced a German nation state. Their position now overlapped with Union conservatives, who had always insisted on state unity. Therefore, solving the German question in the form of a single nation state was no longer controversial. All members of the Fraktion as well as the coalition partner FDP supported this goal. The conservative view of unity prevailed, resolving the internal dispute over long-term objectives of Deutschlandpolitik.

<u>Consensus on Operational Deutschlandpolitik</u>

The crisis also fostered consensus on operational Deutschlandpolitik. Before the events, pragmatists and conservatives in the Kohl government disagreed on how to treat the GDR. While the former were enthusiastic supporters of expanded relations, some conservatives in the Kohl government remained ambivalent and skeptical

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about this policy. But under the impact of growing unrest in the GDR and a large refugee wave, a consensus emerged on operational Deutschlandpolitik. Convinced that continued support for Modrow sent the wrong signal and worsened the crisis, pragmatists and conservatives agreed to end cooperation in favor of reunification. Prominent Union pragmatists who championed accommodation before the events, now made it increasingly clear that they were no longer willing to stabilize the East German regime. For example, Chancellor Kohl stressed that Bonn was not interested in propping up a socialist GDR. According to CDU Secretary-General Ruehe, the alternative was SED or democracy.[1]

Only a handful of pragmatists, including Biedenkopf and Spaeth, still favored continued cooperation and demanded that Kohl grant Modrow's request for a large financial aid package. Spaeth argued that Bonn should stabilize the GDR in the short term to avoid total collapse. Biedenkopf insisted that the Kohl government had a moral responsibility to ease the growing hardship in the GDR. But their position was so unpopular in Bonn that Chancellor Kohl could safely ignore it and press on with unification.

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[1] Union in Deutschland, 2/1990, p. 5.

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Even the FDP, one of the architects of pragmatic

Deutschlandpolitik in the 1970s, abandoned the policy.

Instead of continued cooperation with the old East German

regime, Genscher urged Kohl early in the crisis to pursue

a faster pace of reunification. FDP Chairman Lambsdorff

demanded that Modrow's planned visit to Bonn in February

1990 be cancelled. He argued that this event would give

the East German leader television coverage in his country

which he could translate into political capital in the

upcoming March elections.[2] Even the FDP, closely

identified with pragmatic Deutschlandpolitik, no longer

supported the policy.

The position of pragmatists now overlapped with

those Union conservatives, who, distrustful of

cooperation, always urged the Kohl government before the

crisis to take a more confrontational approach. United

behind unification, Deutschlandpolitik was no longer

controversial with respect to its content and tempo of

implementation. There were still differences in nuances,

but not with respect to the overall approach.[3]

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[2]dpa, 8 January 1990.

[3]"Phatos und Zuversicht--Die CDU Spitze zeigt sich
geschlossen," Koelner Stadtanzeiger, 15 May 1990, p. 1.

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Consensus on the Border Issue

More difficult to resolve was the border issue. As Interior Minister Schaeuble observed, this was one of the most complicated foreign and domestic political problems standing in the way of unification.[4] With events in the GDR quickly unfolding, the national problem was no longer a hypothetical issue. The Kohl government had to decide whether to unite East and West Germany and Berlin--a small Germany--or pursue a larger state that included the disputed territories east of the Oder-Neisse. This was an explosive question, and finding a consensus took several months.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, Chancellor Kohl stuck to his familiar position that a binding guarantee of Poland's Western border could only be given by an all-German sovereign, and that his government had no legal right to give up the territories east of the Oder-Neisse. The opposition SPD immediately accused Kohl of trying to unify a large Germany, and demanded full recognition of the present border. While Kohl's position was applauded by Union conservatives, it also prompted criticism from pragmatists, especially the coalition partner FDP. To settle the controversy, Rita Suessmuth, CDU-deputy and

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[4]Schaeuble, <u>Der Vertrag</u>, p. 58.

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President of the Bundestag, proposed in mid-January 1990 that the West German parliament and the GDR Volkskammer draft a joint resolution guaranteeing Poland's Western border before the two Germanies unified. Her proposal met with massive criticism, especially from Union conservatives, and the CDU/CSU Fraktion accused Suessmuth of stabbing the chancellor in the back.[5] Kohl also rejected the idea, stressing that, "whoever demands a declaration from the government, demands something my administration cannot give and does not want to give."[6] While some in the Union still balked, Suessmuth's initiative was supported by the coalition partner FDP. Genscher stressed that it was important to tell "all our neighbors what we want to unify: the Federal Republic, the GDR and Berlin, no more and no less."[7] He pressed the hesitant Kohl to declare unequivocally that the Germans had no territorial claims against Poland, and that Bonn would give up the territories east of the Oder-Neisse.[8] Kohl's continued intransigence angered the FDP and threatened a coalition crisis. The controversy

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[5]dpa, 16 January 1990.

[6]Union in Deutschland, 1/1990, p. 5.

[7]Bulletin, 15 February 1990.

[8]Bertram, "Ein Weltrekord...," Die Zeit, 14 September 1990, p. 8.

illustrated that early in the crisis the administration was deeply split on the border question.

At first, Chancellor Kohl was reluctant to change his position. In an election year, he had to be mindful of the conservatives and the expellees, the CDU's largest and most loyal voting bloc. Therefore, he tried "to delay as long as possible offending the eight to ten million West Germans with family roots in places like East Prussia."[9] He did not want to be perceived as insensitive to expellee interests, because that would lose conservative votes to the Republicans. To placate the conservatives, Kohl tried to link final recognition of the border with the issue of reparations and German minority rights in Poland. According to Kohl, a unified Germany would guarantee the Oder-Neisse border, but would also require that Poland formally renounce any demands for reparations and guarantee rights for ethnic Germans. As Union conservatives stressed, fairness vis-a-vis the voter required that these issues were put on the table.[10]

While publicly Kohl remained firm on the border question, in private the chancellery office was

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[9]R.W. Apple, Jr., "A Disquiet on Germany," New York Times, 26 February 1990, p. 8.

[10]dpa, 5 March 1990.

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beginning to change its mind.[11] As events in the GDR

unfolded, there was growing pressure at home and abroad

to accept the Polish border.[12] Many in the administration

increasingly argued that prolonging the controversy only

burdened the political climate. There was growing

recognition that unless Bonn gave up the Eastern

territories and accepted a small Germany, international

support for unification would be lost. Genscher reminded

Kohl that "all foreign governments were... concerned,"

because of his position on the border issue.[13] FDP

Chairman Lambsdorff, returning from a trip to Washington,

told Kohl that the Bush administration expected full

recognition and considered this a vital prerequisite for

unification. It was also becoming increasingly clear that

without these concessions, the Soviets would never agree

to German unity. Concerned that unification could suffer

foreign policy damage and be delayed,[14] influential Union

officials began to take a public stance in support of

full recognition. Schaeuble declared that the Oder-Neisse

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[11]"Weder jetzt noch in Zukunft," Der Spiegel, 8 January 1990, p. 21.

[12]Schaeuble, Der Vertrag, p.59.

[13]"Unehrlich und zweideutig," Der Spiegel, 5 March 1990, p. 23.

[14]Ibid., pp. 24-25.

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border must be accepted as final. According to Ruehe,

"politically it is clear: the current boundary between

the GDR and Poland will be the eastern border of a

unified Germany."[15] Even Chancellor Kohl, after months of

hesitation, came out in favor of recognition. He told the

conservatives straightforward that without giving up the

disputed territories, unification could neither be had

from the West nor from the East.[16] According to Kohl,

"either we reaffirm the existing border, or we squander

our chance for German unity."[17]

Kohl now supported the idea of drafting a joint

resolution with the newly elected GDR Volkskammer

guaranteeing the border. The resolution was to be worded

as follows: "the Polish people shall know that the

Germans will neither now nor in the future question their

right to live in secure borders by making territorial

demands."[18] The administration also announced plans for

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[15]Union in Deutschland, 9/1990, p. 3.

[16]"Ein Land, eine Wahl," Der Spiegel, 25 June 1990, p. 17.

[17]Helmut Kohl, "Erklaerung der Bundesregierung zum Vertrag ueber die Schaffung einer Waehrungs-, Wirtschafts- und Sozialunion zwischen den beiden deutschen Staaten, zu den aeusseren Aspekten der deutschen Einheit und zu den deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen," Minutes of the Bundestag, 21 June 1990.

[18]Union in Deutschland, 9/1990, p. 2.

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signing a bilateral treaty formalizing the Oder-Neisse

line immediately after unification. In June 1990, the

Bundestag passed the joint resolution with overwhelming

majority. Only 15 CDU/CSU deputies voted no[19]--a

remarkable consensus on a very emotional issue.

Most Union conservatives realized that Kohl had no

other option. Dregger declared that, "recognizing the

Oder-Neisse is the price we have to pay for unity"[20]--a

painful but necessary decision. CSU-Chairman Waigel also

backed the chancellor and told his colleagues in the CSU,

"when historic opportunities of such dimensions present

themselves, then politics must seize them; because no one

knows whether they come again."[21] Although Union

conservatives empathized with the expellees, most took

the position that those who wanted unity must accept the

border, and that it would be irresponsible not to take

advantage of the chance to solve the German question.[22]

Only a group of eight staunch conservatives mostly

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[19]"Ein Land,...," Der Spiegel, 25 June 1990, p. 17.

[20]CDU/CSU Fraktion im Deutschen Bundestag--
Pressedienst, 29 October 1990.

[21]"Aussprache im Deutschen Bundestag zum Vertrag
ueber die Schaffung der Waehrungs-, Wirtschafts- und
Sozialunion der beiden deutschen Staaten," Minutes of the
Bundestag, 23 May 1990.

[22]Union Magazin der CDU Deutschlands, 18 June 1990,
p. 27.

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from the CSU and affiliated with refugee organizations still held out against recognition and demanded that Kohl reclaim the eastern territories. They filed suit at the constitutional court in Karlsruhe to block the unity treaty which formalized the unification of a small Germany. The refugee representative Czaja denounced the treaty as "the amputation of one fourth of Versailles Germany a quarter of German territory"--the home of Germans for seven or eight hundred years.[23] However, the suit was not a serious challenge to unification. With the exception of one, none of the plaintiffs was to be represented in the next Bundestag. Therefore, many in the Fraktion viewed it as a case of sour grapes.[24] Even Czaja admitted that the chances of winning the case were slim. When Germany's highest court rejected the suit accepting the Oder-Neisse border, it created the legal clarity the Kohl government needed to finalize unity.[25]

The episode illustrated that the conservative vision of restoring a German nation state in the 1937 border did

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[23]Henry Kamm, "Anxiety Tugs at Germany's Jews, Bitterness Sears the Die-Hard Nationalists," New York Times, 25 September 1990, p. 10.

[24]"Entschliessungsantrag zum Einigungsvertrag," Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 14 September 1990, p. 2.

[25]"Einheit ohne Restrisiko," Die Zeit, 28 September 1990, p. 2.

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not prevail. Most conservatives now accepted the political reality of a small Germany. For the first time since the Kohl government took office in 1982, there was broad agreement on the borders of a unified Germany.

Factors Facilitating Consensus

A number of factors fostered consensus on the sensitive border issue. Strategic and tactical considerations played a role. There was great optimism and excitement about solving the German question in an election year. The CDU/CSU was convinced that reunification was a sure vote getter and allowed the Union to assume the best starting position at the polls. In an election year, Kohl and his party could not afford a bruising fight over the border issue. As the chancellor stressed, "the guiding principle of the coming months is national solidarity. Solidarity in this hour is our self-evident human and national duty."[26] Dissension in the ranks jeopardized reunification and the Union's chances at the polls. Therefore, consensus was a tactical necessity. For this reason the administration viewed the suit by the eight fundamentalists to block the unity treaty as a breach of loyalty. Administration officials

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[26]CDU/CSU Fraktion im Deutschen Bundestag--Pressedienst, 14 February 1990, p. 16.

were concerned that it might have a negative impact on the upcoming election, because the opposition could argue that the Union bragged about supporting German unity, but then failed to mobilize all of its own members to create the legal prerequisites for it.[27]

International factors also helped unify the Kohl government. By accepting the Polish border before unification, Bonn could avoid a peace conference and a final peace treaty which required negotiations with all former war-time enemies. This route was unacceptable for Bonn because it would have complicated and delayed unity. The administration preferred to settle the border issue with Poland bilaterally, rather than let outside powers become involved.

The historical memory of the 1848 unification movement also played an important role. According to Waigel, that revolution failed because the democrats then wanted too much at the same time: freedom, democracy, and a large German nation state.[28] In Bonn's view, exaggerated demands, failure to accept a small Germany, and indecisiveness doomed the first effort to carve out a

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[27]Klaus Dreher, "Vorsichtiger Aufstand gegen den alten Haudegen," Sueddeutsche Zeitung, 14 September 1990, p. 2.

[28]Theo Waigel, Minutes of the Bundestag, 23 May 1990.

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German nation state. This time the administration was
determined not to repeat the same mistakes.

Consensus in Westpolitik

The crisis also fostered consensus in Westpolitik.
Before the events, Union conservatives argued with
pragmatists such as Foreign Minister Genscher over the
general direction of German foreign policy and the
relative weight of West and Ostpolitik. The resulting
controversies over security and defense policies burdened
the coalition for most of the 1980s.

But the crisis united the disparate factions in a
common foreign policy approach. Everyone supported
reunification, and the FDP and the conservatives agreed
that a unified Germany must remain in NATO. Genscher
stressed that "because we know the peace and security
generating effect of the Western alliance, ...a unified
Germany without strong ties to NATO would not be a
benefit for Europe."[29] This corresponded with the
position of prominent conservatives, i.e., Fraktions
Chairman Dregger, who emphasized that a Germany in NATO
can make a contribution to the overall stability in

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[29]Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Zwei-plus-Vier-Konferenz in
Bonn zur Vorbereitung der deutschen Einheit, Texte,
III/8a, 1990, p. 205.

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Europe.[30] The positions of the conservative and

pragmatist faction now overlapped, resolving the

controversy over basic foreign policy direction.

Genscher welcomed NATO membership, because it

strengthened cooperative security in Europe. It was a

concept he was already committed to before the crisis and

made even more urgent now by the events in the GDR. With

fundamental transformation in the East, Genscher wanted

to safeguard stability in a future Europe through

economic cooperation with all parts of the continent,

including Moscow. For Genscher, it was conceivable to

involve the Soviets in international financial

institutions and to give them a place at the summits of

the seven largest western industrial nations.[31]

Therefore, he supported Chancellor Kohl's efforts to

define the role of NATO more in political terms and to

develop security-building cooperation with the East.[32] In

Genscher's view, by deemphasizing military aspects and by

reaching out to the East, NATO could play a vital role in

strengthening cooperative security in Europe.

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[30]CDU/CSU Fraktion im Deutschen Bundestag--
Pressedienst, 12 June 1990.

[31]"Gleichberechtige Partnerschaft," Der Spiegel, 23
April 1990, p. 18.

[32]Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Statements and Speeches,
Vol. XII, Nr. 10, 23 April 1990.

Even Union conservatives, traditionally committed to a strong defense, accepted the notion of broadening security through cooperation, though reluctantly at first. This was illustrated by the debate over troop strength of the future all-German army. In early spring 1990, Union conservatives such as Defense Minister Stoltenberg still argued that it was a serious mistake to respond to the erosion of the Warsaw Pact with a deliberate weakening of NATO. Therefore, he favored a strong all-German fighting force of at least 400,000.[33] However, Genscher's position was that the military structures of the two alliances would lose importance much faster than anticipated. A small German army, about 300,000 men strong, was therefore sufficient.[34] Although the controversy continued for months, the conservatives eventually moved into Genscher's direction and accepted a compromise when events in the GDR made early union more likely. They realized that significant reductions in the German army were necessary as a signal to the Soviets to make it easier for them to accept a unified Germany in NATO. Genscher ultimately succeeded in convincing the conservatives that talk of a strong fighting force

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[33]"Kritische Gemuetslage," Der Spiegel, 26 March 1990, p. 25.

[34]Ibid., p. 25.

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prompted suspicion about German intentions abroad, and might quickly squander the historic chance for unity.[35] Even the stubborn Stoltenberg changed his tune and showed more flexibility. In June 1990, shortly before the upcoming NATO summit in London, he demanded that the Western alliance supplement the concept of defensive capability with an element of cooperation. According to Stoltenberg, this included expanded collaboration with the new democracies of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in the fields of economics, science, and the environment.[36] Waigel from the CSU also endorsed the idea of cooperative security. He observed that before the crisis, division of the continent into blocks was considered the best guarantee for security. But now the understanding is that stability in Europe can best be achieved by... transcending borders. According to Waigel, this moved the continent closer to Kant's ideal of a permanent peace.[37] This illustrated that conservatives in the Kohl government accepted the notion that security could not rest on armaments alone, but had to be built on

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[35]Ibid., p. 25.

[36]"Neues Verhaeltnis," Der Spiegel, 18 June 1990, p. 25.

[37]Theo Waigel, Minutes of the Bundestag, 23 May 1990.

community--a key idea of Genscher and the Liberals.[38]
Now, the position of pragmatists and conservatives
overlapped in a synthesis between West and Ostpolitik,
and controversies over relative policy weight became
moot.

Factors Facilitating Consensus

This rare foreign policy consensus was facilitated
by the crisis. The quickly unfolding events in the GDR
minimized differences and held personality conflicts in
check. Everyone agreed that a long debate over foreign
policy priorities and security jeopardized prospects for
unification, and that cooperation was required in this
critical moment.

The atmosphere in the coalition had already improved
after the death of the contentious Strauss in October
1988. The new CSU-Chairman Waigel was much less
controversial and had no personal axe to grind with
Genscher. But the unprecedented cooperation between the
liberals and the conservatives was primarily due to the
crisis. Waigel, as finance minister, was firmly tied to
Kohl and unification, and was not interested in
complicating the already difficult task through feuds

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[38]"Neues...," Der Spiegel, 18 June 1990, p. 25.

with the coalition partner.[39]

Genscher was no longer the lightening rod for conservatives he used to be before the crisis. In fact, conservatives had little reason to complain about his dominating style, because the foreign minister was overshadowed by Kohl, who made all the important decisions. In this new spirit of cooperation, Genscher even received praise from the conservatives for his efforts to win Eastern European and Soviet support for German NATO membership. According to Dregger, "Chancellor Kohl and his foreign minister must be credited for establishing a relationship of trust and cooperation with the East that made NATO membership possible, and "we thank them for this historic accomplishment."[40]

Consensus on foreign policy priorities and security strategy did not imply that there was total harmony in the coalition. In fact, there were many disagreements. For example, Waigel's support for the conservative DSU in the GDR angered the FDP. Other hotly debated issues included election dates, election laws, and how to apply the 5 percent hurdle, limiting parliamentary

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[39]"Ihr werdet euch...," _Der Spiegel_, 22 October 1990, p. 20.

[40]Alfred Dregger, Minutes of the Bundestag, 23 May 1990.

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representation.[41] But given the number and magnitude of the decisions, it was remarkable how quickly consensus was achieved. It demonstrated that the crisis changed relationships and facilitated an unprecedented level of cooperation in the coalition.

Conclusion

The crisis in the GDR fostered consensus in West German foreign policy. In Deutschlandpolitik, there was broad agreement between pragmatists and conservatives on the objective of unification and a German nation state. Both sides also reached consensus on operational Deutschlandpolitik: cooperation with the Modrow regime was to be suspended to expedite unification. On the contentious border issue, the Kohl government agreed to give up all claims to the former German territories East of the Oder-Neisse line and to accept a small Germany as final. Although this was a difficult decision, especially for the conservatives, in the end it won almost unanimous support.

The crisis also promoted consensus in Westpolitik.

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[41]Max Kaase, "Electoral Politics in the New Germany: Public Opinion and the Bundestag Election of December 2, 1990," The Domestic Politics of German Unification, ed. Christopher Anderson, Karl Kaltenthaler and Wolfgang Luthardt. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1993), p. 46.

It eased the tense relations between Genscher and the
conservatives, and ended the long dispute over the
direction of West German foreign policy which burdened
the Christian-Liberal coalition since its inception.
There was solid support for a unified Germany in NATO.
Both sides agreed that security in the alliance must be
broadened by an element of cooperation with the Soviet
Union and the new democracies in Eastern Europe. West and
Ostpolitik were now compatible, rendering moot the
disputes over foreign policy priorities.

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Chapter 15: Centralization of Authority in West German Foreign Policy

Introduction

The following chapter examines how the crisis affected the decision-making process and structure in the Kohl government. It explains how decisions were made, i.e., singularly or collectively, and who took part in the process. Chancellor Kohl's role will be analyzed in terms of his ability to set the overall foreign policy direction, and his effectiveness to push through a preferred response strategy. This determines how much authority he exercised during the crisis. Finally, the chapter examines how Kohl's handling of the situation affected his leadership image. The purpose is to explain general characteristics of the decision-making process and structure during the crisis phase.

The Chancellor and the Chancellery Office

Before the crisis, Chancellor Kohl was unable to monopolize foreign policy decision-making in the chancellery office. Although under Schaeuble the influence of this institution steadily grew, many different actors were involved, resulting in a complex pattern of policy formulation. Institutional differentiation translated into less control for the

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chancellor and his office over foreign affairs.

The crisis brought about a contraction of structures
involved in developing political strategy.[1] Chancellor
Kohl provided the policy impulse and made all big
decisions. His leadership prerogative and his
constitutional right to determine the direction of West
German foreign policy were now exerted to an extent not
experienced since the early days of Adenauer.[2] Kohl drove
things forward by confronting others with a fait accompli
and by deliberately circumventing familiar consultation
routines and negotiating mechanisms.[3] Many actors with a
strong policy role before the crisis where now excluded,
and the incrementalism of the corporatist approach,
characterized by extensive, time-consuming bargaining
among various interests, was nowhere in evidence.[4] After
the chancellor made his preferences known, the policy
organization was instructed to develop concrete concepts
and to work out the details. No one questioned whether

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[1]Lehmbruch, "Die Deutsche Vereinigung...," p. 587.

[2]Ibid., p. 587.

[3]Ibid., p. 587.

[4]Wolfgang Seibel, "Necessary Illusions: The
Transformation of Governance Structures in the New
Germany," in The Domestic Politics of German Unification,
ed. Christopher Anderson, Karl Kaltenthaler and Wolfgang
Luthardt (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 1993),
pp. 117-118.

certain steps such as economic and currency union were
necessary, but all efforts were concentrated on carrying
out the strategy. Everyone was making plans to minimize
the economic and social consequences of such a merger and
to implement it without delay.[5] Kohl considered
unification "Chefsache"--a matter best handled by the
boss[6]--and expected everyone to fall in line. The result
was a highly centralized and personalized structure of
political strategy development unprecedented in recent
political memory.[7]

For much of the crisis, Kohl governed from the
chancellery office. Solely controlled by him, this office
was the power center during unification. It was here
where policy was formulated and implementation was
coordinated. Top level strategy sessions were held here
to chart a course of action, to solve problems, and to
reach consensus on controversial issues. Kohl managed the
crisis from the chancellery office to control the
response strategy. It allowed him to push unification

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[5]"Es wird ein anderer Staat," Der Spiegel, 19 March
1990, p. 34.

[6]Gunter Hofmann, "Wer zahlt hat auch das Sagen," Die
Zeit, 23 February 1990, p. 2.

[7]Lehmbruch, "Die deutsche Vereinigung...," p. 587.

through from the top down.[8] By fall 1990, Germany

resembled a chancellor-democracy, based on the dominant

position of Kohl.[9]

The centralized structure of policy development was

illustrated by the plan to offer the GDR an economic and

currency union. The chancellor made this monumental

decision himself after only brief consideration.[10]

Afterwards, he held a hastily arranged meeting with de

Maziere, then chairman of the East-CDU. It was reported

that it took only ten minutes before de Maziere agreed,

with details to be worked out in a commission.[11]

This politically motivated decision ignored the

advice of the Bundesbank, the West German central bank,

many expert bodies and think tanks, who favored a more

gradual transition to a market economy in the GDR. The

entire policy network involved in economic decision-

making before the crisis was now largely circumvented.[12]

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[8]Hofmann, "Die Stunde...," Die Zeit, 17 August 1990, p. 5.

[9]Robert Leicht, "Alles gelaufen?" Die Zeit, 26 October 1990, p. 1.

[10]"Hausbacken...," Der Spiegel, 19 November 1990, p. 25.

[11]Hofmann, "Wer zahlt...," Die Zeit, 23 February 1990, p. 2.

[12]Lehmbruch, "The Process of Regime Change...," p. 27.

When the President of the Bundesbank, Otto Poehl, first

heard of the idea to introduce the German Mark in the GDR

and to transfer economic and monetary sovereignty to the

West, he termed it pure fantasy.[13] He was especially

opposed to the plan of converting East German currency

into West German Marks at a 1:1 exchange rate, and warned

of a serious inflation risk. But, "Kohl felt so much

pressure from the feeling of crisis generated by the

increased stream of refugees and from what he believed

was at stake, ...that conventional notions of economic

rationality were deliberately set aside."[14] Therefore, he

ignored the experts and pressed on.

Convinced that the window of opportunity was small,

Kohl made the national issue his top priority and stepped

up the tempo of unification. Whenever problems threatened

to bog down the process, he intervened personally. For

example, in January 1990, when the Union grappled with

the problem of finding a suitable partner in the East

German elections only weeks away, Kohl took the matter

into his own hands and resolved the issue by early

February. It was announced that the CDU and CSU had

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[13]Rainer Hupe, "Das muss doch die DDR entscheiden,"
Die Zeit, 2 February 1990, p. 8.

[14]Lehmbruch, "The Process of Regime Change...," p.
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agreed to form an electoral coalition with East German
conservative and liberal groups, the "Alliance for
Germany," which was to act as a counterweight to the
East-SPD and the SED-PDS. Then again, when the
controversy over exchange rates threatened to delay
implementation of economic and currency union, Kohl
intervened and found a compromise within 48 hours.[15] Kohl
always kept up the pressure to move the process forward.
Many complained that he was pushing too hard. However, he
was much more concerned about not doing enough than about
criticism that he was over-accelerating the tempo.

The Role of Loyalists

During the crisis, Kohl relied more than ever on his
small inner circle. Unification had an isolating effect
on him. He harbored deep-seated mistrust against
potential rivals and worried that involving too many
people would complicate the process.[16] The inner circle
included familiar names who had already served him well
before the crisis: Interior Minister Schaeuble,
Chancellery Minister Seiters, his political advisors
Horst Teltschik and Wolfgang Bergsdorf, his personal

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[15]Deutschland Union Dienst, 27 April 1990.

[16]"Das hat mir jetzt gutgetan," Der Spiegel, 19
November 1990, p. 31.

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assistant, Juliane Weber, and Eduard Ackermann, responsible for public relations. With the exception of Schaeuble, all members of the inner circle worked in the chancellery office. They were constantly consulted in the decision-making process and had free and unimpeded access to the chancellor.[17] There were regular morning strategy sessions in the chancellory office to start the workday, and many evening meetings in the chancellor's private residence. The kitchen cabinet even met on some Saturdays, which was unprecedented in Bonn.[18] Kohl expected from the members of the inner circle information, sound analysis and advice.[19] This group helped Kohl formulate policy, i.e., the Ten-Point Plan was drafted by him and his kitchen cabinet.[20] Beyond that, the members of the inner circle also played a role in implementation by monitoring and intervening in departmental processes.

The crisis brought the inner circle still closer together. Decision-making in the most immediate Kohl

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[17]Filmer and Schwan, "Die Crew des Kanzlers," p. 226.

[18]Horst Teltschik, "De Baern is g'schaelt," Der Spiegel, 23 September 1991, p. 108.

[19]Filmer and Schwan, p. 226.

[20]Gunter Hofmann, "Lauter Versuche auf der Hoehe der Zeit zu bleiben," Die Zeit, 23 March 1990, p. 2.

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group had a strong emotional component.[21] Members of this exclusive club enjoyed the chancellor's full trust and loyalty, and the same was expected of them in return. There was a deep mutual bond between them, and they relied on each other.[22] The inner circle had a supportive function for Kohl, which was especially important during the crisis.[23] It provided the chancellor with friends he could count on, who always backed him up.[24] During the crisis Kohl demanded from his closest advisors an unbelievable willingness to perform.[25] Each worked to the extreme which meant sixteen hour days, forgoing weekends, and a private life.[26] Fiercely loyal to Kohl, the inner circle resembled a religious order: sworn-in to the point of serfdom, devoid of personal needs, and ready for self-sacrifice.[27]

Kohl generally relied on people of his trust to develop and implement the unification strategy. Although

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[21]Filmer and Schwan, p. 227.

[22]Ibid., p. 226.

[23]Ibid., p. 226.

[24]Ibid., p. 227.

[25]Ibid., p. 227.

[26]Ibid., p. 226.

[27]Ibid., p. 226.

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this was a monumental task, only ten to twenty

individuals played a key role. As Chancellery Minister

Seiters explained, "on their shoulders responsibility

rested to an unusual degree."[28] Besides those belonging

to the inner circle, the younger leadership generation in

the Union was most visible during unification:

Chancellery Minister Seiters, chairman of the cabinet

committee for "German Unity;" Interior Minister

Schaeuble, who worked out the critical unity treaty;

Finance Minister Waigel, chief negotiator for economic

and currency union; and CDU Secretary-General Ruehe, who

helped negotiate the electoral formation, "Alliance for

Germany." The chancellor and his loyalists formed a

"community of responsibility" united by the common goal

to achieve a German nation state.[29] Kohl's talent to

surround himself with capable people and to let them work

for him now really paid off.[30] By relying on political

allies, Kohl maximized organizational talent and

increased his control over the unification process.

The critical role of loyalists was demonstrated by Rudolf

Seiters in the chancellery office. He had held the job

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[28]Torsten Wilhelm Krauel, "Herr des Bonner
Taktmasses," Rheinischer Merkur, 28 September 1990, p. 2.

[29]Ibid., p. 2.

[30]Filmer and Schwan, p. 226.

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since April 1989, after replacing Wolfgang Schaeuble, who

moved on to become interior minister. Seiters, whose

official title was "Federal Minister for Special Tasks,"

was considered unquestionably loyal to Kohl, reliable and

highly effective. He was a consensus builder who avoided

the limelight and preferred to work quietly behind the

scene. As the second man behind Kohl, he pulled the

strings in Deutschlandpolitik.[31] Because he was so highly

regarded by the chancellor, Seiters enjoyed considerable

room to maneuver. He explained his role during

unification this way: "everything happens in close

coordination with him (Kohl). But when one knows that

there is agreement in the evaluation of the situation,

one can make decisions without further inquiry."[32]

As the crisis unfolded, Seiters was in one of the

most critical positions. He played a role in strategy

development, coordination, and execution. He was involved

in all aspects of unification and in all negotiations.

Seiters' central role was especially illustrated by his

chairmanship of the committee for "German Unity," which

was formed by Kohl in February 1990. In that capacity,

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[31]Carl-Christian Kaiser, "Erst Wadenbeisser, jetzt
Moderator," Die Zeit, 27 April 1990, p. 2.

[32]Ulrich Reitz, "Leise, loyal, wirkungsvoll:
Seiters," Die Welt, 3 January 1990, p. 2.

Seiters played a crucial coordinating function by
conferring regularly with high level representatives from
the various ministries involved in unification.[33] He
constantly monitored departmental processes and
intervened in specific policy areas when necessary.
Seiters was also effective in coordinating the
legislative strategy in the Bundestag. He was a consensus
builder, allowing Kohl to be more effective in
parliament. Seiters laid the ground work by
prenegotiating crucial agreements and by resolving
problems that could delay unification. Kohl's spectacular
foreign policy achievements were due in no small part to
Seiters' tireless efforts. He had a huge workload
occupying him practically day and night.

Seiters was so effective because he brought
excellent personal qualifications to the job, and Kohl's
commitment to unification was very specific. With
concrete policy guidelines, Seiters could exercise the
supervisory directive function of the chancellery office
systematically and execute Kohl's decisions more
efficiently. By involving the chancellery office in all
aspects of unification, Kohl could bring to bear his full
influence over the crisis strategy.

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[33]Kaiser, "Erst Wadenbeisser...," <u>Die Zeit</u>, 27 April
1990, p. 1.

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Even more valued by Kohl was Interior Minister
Schaeuble, Seiters' predecessor in the chancellery
office. One of the most brilliant politicians in German
post-war history, he was widely regarded as the manager
of unity. Schaeuble was a superb strategist with keen
political instincts, who saw unification coming before
Kohl. The plan to offer the GDR an economic and currency
union was his idea, which he proposed almost immediately
after the fall of the Berlin Wall. During the entire
unification process, Schaeuble was most instrumental in
policy formulation and in executing the chancellor's
decisions. No one else was so closely involved in the
decision-making process--he wrote the script for
unification.[34] Schaeuble was Kohl's most trusted advisor.
He was also considered his most likely successor. He was
the crown prince, deemed capable enough to step into the
chancellor's shoes should he decide to step down sometime
in the future.[35] However, Kohl had more immediate plans
for Schaeuble. He planned to make him fraktions chairman
after unification, a position critical to the Union's
legislative cohesion and effective functioning in the
all-German parliament. This position was also widely

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[34]Schaeuble, Der Vertrag, p. 8.

[35]"Wir brauchen Leuchttuerme," Der Spiegel, 8
October, 1990, p. 21.

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considered a launching pad for chancellor.

As Interior Minister, Schaeuble was chiefly responsible for preparing full political union between the two German states. He began to lay the legal groundwork as early as February 1990. This was done in strict secrecy so that no one would get wind of it. Kohl would otherwise be accused of preparing the annexation of the GDR even before the East German people had an opportunity to vote in their first free election. But Schaeuble preferred to take this risk rather than being empty-handed, should unification come quickly.[36]

After Kohl launched the committee for "German Unity," Schaeuble was in charge of the working group, "State Structures and Public Order," which reported to the chancellery ministry. To maximize efficiency, Schaeuble formed his own working group in the interior ministry. It consisted of twenty officials, chaired by a high-ranking civil servant who reported to Schaeuble. This internal staff proved itself as a type of cell where ideas on how to implement full political union were generated.[37] Schaeuble's instructions to the working group were to develop different models. Without knowing

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[36]Schaeuble, Der Vertrag, p. 151.

[37]Ibid., pp. 53-54.

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the path to unification or a concrete date, he wanted to
be prepared for all contingencies. He told his colleagues
that conceptually they should assume the fastest
development toward unification. According to Schaeuble,
if one was prepared for that, then one could also handle
the slower variant.[38] He then immediately began to
familiarize himself with the complicated details of the
GDR judicial system to get an exact idea of existing
statutes.[39] Because the GDR did not have a codified set
of legal norms, Schaeuble's staff had to collect and
inventory the existing laws to the best of their ability.
On the West German side each statute had to be reviewed
and examined as to whether it could be applied to Germany
as a whole. This was such a huge task that the various
ministries had to be involved. They were responsible for
reviewing those laws that affected their respective
jurisdictions.[40] Despite the daunting challenge,
Schaeuble and the ministries completed the task in a
short time.

Schaeuble's preliminary work paid off. As the crisis
unfolded, he came armed with concrete concepts. Treaty

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[38]Ibid., p. 54.

[39]Ibid., p. 151.

[40]Ibid., pp. 151-152.

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negotiations with the GDR to finalize political union could therefore begin quickly. Still many controversial issues had to be settled. This included property rights, election procedures, income sharing and financing, abortion, Stasi files, etc. But Schaeuble proved to be a highly skilled chief negotiator for the West German side. He had a keen ability to zero in on the crucial points, and always managed to find a settlement or a compromise, even for the toughest problems.[41] For example, when the opposition SPD threatened to scuttle the unity treaty over abortion rights, Schaeuble found a way out.[42] During the negotiations Schaeuble regularly reported back to the chancellor. But, as a man Kohl could rely on, he enjoyed a free hand.[43] In the end, Schaeuble effectively balanced the interests of the GDR, the different West German ministries, and the federal states. All details relating to the GDR's accession to the FRG were worked out, and a treaty comprising 45 articles and roughly 1000 pages was drawn up.[44] Schaeuble accomplished this in less than two months: the negotiations began on 6 July 1990 in East-

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[41]Union in Deutschland, 27/1990, p. 4.

[42]Deutschland Union Dienst, 31/1990.

[43]Schaeuble, Der Vertrag, p. 210.

[44]Union in Deutschland, 27/1990, p. 11.

Berlin, and were concluded in the late-night hours of 31 August, 1990.[45] With the unity treaty, Schaeuble helped Kohl clear the last hurdle to unification.

Kohl and his supporters managed to complete the epic task of unification in a short time because decision-making was dominated by strategic problem simplification and improvisation.[46] Bonn chose the most accessible strategies, focused only on the most essential aspects, and oriented its strategy on short-term success criteria. Administration officials were willing to improvise as long as they moved closer to the national goal.[47]

This approach was illustrated in the preparation of crucial treaties. During negotiations for the unity treaty, many controversial issues were left out, and some provisions were formulated in vague language to facilitate faster consensus. As Schaeuble explained, "if one needs solutions that bring together basically irreconcilable positions, then one cannot be too specific, and questions that cannot be settled at the moment must be left out."[48] With respect to procedural

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[45]Ibid., p. 11.

[46]Lehmbruch, "Die deutsche Vereinigung...," p. 588.

[47]Ibid., p. 588.

[48]Schaeuble, Der Vertrag, p. 173.

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matters, Schaeuble determined that the various West German departments involved in the negotiations were to be represented by deputies instead of cabinet ministers.[49] With this arrangement, he avoided having to negotiate with equals and could bring his full authority to bear.

Problem simplification also characterized other aspects of Bonn's strategy. Unification was promoted as the only way to end the crisis, and alternatives were not considered. To expedite the process, analogies were made between the West German situation in summer 1948 and the GDR's current predicament. Economic reconstruction in the East was portrayed as a problem that could be handled in the same way the Federal Republic mastered the rebuilding task after World War II.[50] For example, Kohl said in a Fraktions meeting, "if... we hold fast to basic principles, which after World War II elevated the FRG from economic ruin to the top group of industrial nations, we can also meet the challenges of the 90s."[51] Therefore, the administration insisted on economic and currency union, which introduced a social market economy

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[49]Ibid., p. 116.

[50]Lehmbruch, "Die deutsche Vereinigung...," p. 588.

[51]CDU/CSU Fraktion im Deutschen Bundestag--Pressedienst, 14 February 1990, p. 15.

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in the East. According to Bonn, it provided the GDR with a tried and proven system of laws and regulations which had already worked for forty years.[52]

Administration officials promised that with economic and currency union the problems in the GDR would pretty much take care of themselves. For example, FDP Economics Minister Haussmann argued in May 1990, that the GDR would develop into an area of small and large business operators on its own. Federal help from Bonn was necessary only "on a temporary, short-term basis, if it did not hinder structural change" already in progress.[53] Bonn then took from the contradictory projections of economic forecasters those which backed up this view.[54] The message was that institutional transfer from West to East offered the chance for quick re-regulation in the GDR and an end to the crisis. All this could be accomplished in a way that did not burden the West.[55] This interpretation had tremendous pragmatic advantage: it reduced insecurity through ideological rationalization

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[52]Nikolaus Piper, "Das Ende des Laissez-faire," Die Zeit, 13 September 1991, p. 8.

[53]Ibid., p. 8.

[54]Lehmbruch, "Die deutsche Vereinigung..." p. 588.

[55]Piper, "Das Ende des...," Die Zeit, 13 September 1991, p. 8.

of a chosen strategic option.[56] A simplified view of the problems reduced the complexity of the rebuilding task and reassured a West German public increasingly nervous about the costs of unification. It minimized opposition to a very risky move.

Administration officials adopted strategic simplification because efficiency concerns dominated. They were determined to expedite unification and to avoid complications and delay. Efficiency concerns also explained why the number of actors with real policy influence was kept deliberately small, and why authority was centralized in the chancellery office. As a result, political relationships were fundamentally altered. Many actors with a strong policy role before the crisis lost influence.

Genscher and the Foreign Ministry

Genscher and the foreign ministry were among those losing influence. Early in the crisis, Kohl confronted them with a fait accompli, when he announced the Ten-Point-Plan in the Bundestag. Although this was a major foreign policy initiative, the plan was not coordinated between the chancellery office and the foreign ministry,

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[56]Lehmbruch, "Die deutsche Vereinigung...," p. 588.

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and not even Genscher knew about it in advance.[57] In May

1990, when Genscher seemed inclined to accept the

Shevardnadze proposal to separate the internal and

external aspects of German unity, Kohl rejected this out

of hand and admonished the foreign minister that a

unified Germany demanded nothing less than unrestricted

sovereignty.[58] The idea to offer the Soviets a non-

aggression pact was born in the chancellery office, as

well as the plan for a general treaty between the two

states covering all aspects of their future

relationship.[59] Genscher was also upstaged by Kohl when

the alliance issue was resolved. It was not he who

achieved the big breakthrough in a 2+4 meeting, but Kohl,

negotiating directly with Gorbachev in the Caucasus until

Soviet approval for a united Germany in NATO was

secured.[60] These episodes illustrate that there was less

policy coordination with the FDP, and that Genscher was

overshadowed by a dominant Kohl, particularly early in

the crisis. Only after a while, Genscher and his

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[57]Presseservice der SPD, 3 December 1990, p. 2.

[58]"Hausbacken...," Der Spiegel, 19 November 1990, p. 25.

[59]Bertram, "Ein Weltrekord...," Die Zeit, 14 September 1990, p. 4.

[60]"Ein Land...," Der Spiegel, 25 June 1990, p. 16.

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diplomats could insert themselves into the unification process again.[61]

Although Genscher experienced a relative loss of influence, he supported Kohl during the crisis and executed his strategy. Without Genscher, unification could not have been completed on time. He was responsible for coordinating external aspects and for developing concrete concepts, i.e., concerning the military status of a unified Germany. Genscher had to grapple with a myriad of issues: should a united Germany belong to NATO? Should alliance authorization end at the Elbe river or go beyond? Could a unified Germany belong to two alliances simultaneously? What should be the future strength of an all-German army?[62] He conducted tireless shuttle diplomacy--50 hours with Shevardnadze alone--to prepare Kohl's July summit with Gorbachev.[63] Without Genscher, Kohl's spectacular breakthrough would not have been possible. Genscher's tremendous personal effort qualified him as one of the architects of unification.

Genscher's role illustrated how the crisis changed

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[61]Lehmbruch, "Die deutsche Vereinigung...," p. 587.

[62]"Wir brauchen einen Vertrag," Der Spiegel, 23 April 1990, p. 19.

[63]Craig Whitney, "Kohl Gets German Spotlight But Genscher Had the Vision," New York Times, 20 July 1990, p. 6.

familiar relationships in Bonn. Previously, the Liberals always stressed policy autonomy, but later they rallied around Kohl, subordinating personal and partisan interests to the national cause. They followed Kohl's lead, deferred to him, and always backed him at crucial junctures. For example, although the FDP hesitated at first with its decision to support unification based on article 23 of the West German Constitution, it eventually endorsed what Kohl called "the royal path to unity."[64] The spirit of cooperation also fostered unusual organizational behavior, i.e., experts from the foreign ministry and their colleagues from the defense ministry worked in close cooperation on foreign policy and security issues. Although the tensions between Genscher and Teltschik remained a familiar feature of political life, they were not allowed to jeopardize progress on unification, although Teltschik exercised even more influence than before. As a member of the inner circle, he helped work out foreign policy initiatives such as the Ten-Point Plan, and was valued by Kohl as "a man one can rely on."[65] But the mood in the FDP was that the historic challenge of unification was not the right moment to

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[64]Union in Deutschland, 9/1990, p. 3.

[65]"Das Duo," Das Capital, 27 April 1990, p. 113.

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assert partisan interests and to insist on coalition autonomy. It was a very different policy environment in Bonn.

Other Ministries

Genscher's role pointed to a new relationship between Kohl and his ministers. After he made the big decisions, the various departments were expected to support them and work out the details. They had little input in initial policy formulation and were mainly executing strategy. Only later, during the negotiations for the unity treaty, those ministries with domestic tasks played a larger role in the decision-making process.[66] Kohl and the chancellery office also kept a tighter reign on the ministries. To maximize organizational resources and control over the unification process, Kohl formed the cabinet committee for "German Unity." This committee was comprised of the most important departments, including the ministers of economics, finance, interior, justice, social affairs/labor, and foreign affairs. Each was to address those aspects of unification that affected them most, i.e., the economics minister was to develop concrete

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[66]Lehmbruch, "Die deutsche Vereinigung...," p. 587.

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plans on how to restructure the GDR economy, while the finance minister was to come up with ideas on how to pay for it. Chancellery Minister Seiters chaired the committee and constantly monitored and supervised the work of the ministers. There were regularly scheduled meetings, and each minister had to give a periodic progress report. By joining the most critical departments into the Unity Committee, Kohl kept up the pressure on his ministers and synchronized their programs with his preferences. It was an effective way to supervise policy development and to ensure that everyone supported his strategy.

To expedite unification, Kohl also bypassed some ministers and directly intervened in departmental affairs. For example, Kohl interfered in the decision authority of the defense ministry. To make it easier for the Soviets to accept German NATO membership, Kohl made the decision to shorten mandatory military service to twelve months--a move opposed by Defense Minister Stoltenberg. Later, without consultation, Kohl gave Gorbachev binding assurances in the Caucasus that the future all-German army would be limited to 370,000. Kohl's decision to offer the Soviets a nonaggression pact and a general treaty was also not coordinated with the defense minister. Kohl considered Stoltenberg too

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hesitant and unable to grasp the historic opportunity
presented to the Germans. Therefore, he was bypassed.
Kohl's attitude was, "I am not even going to ask anyone
anymore."[67]

Kohl also made fiscal decisions. Shortly before his
upcoming trip to Moscow in July 1990, where the alliance
issue was to be addressed, he determined that an
immediate five billion DM would be granted to the Soviets
as a good-will gesture[68]--a move that affected the
authority of the finance minister. Waigel was then called
to the chancellery office. Reportedly, it took less than
half an hour before he agreed with Kohl that "we have to
do something for the Russians."[69]

Chancellor Kohl could make these decisions because
he enjoyed broad support for unification and the
ministers deferred to him. In the Cabinet he was the
boss.[70] His initiatives enjoyed almost automatic
approval. Without debate or real input, the Cabinet
ratified executive decisions. For example, the
controversial plan of economic and currency union,

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[67]"Die Hoffnung...," Der Spiegel, 23 July 1990, p 17.

[68]Bertram, "Ein Weltrekord...," Die Zeit, 14
September 1990, p. 4.

[69]"Ein Land...," Der Spiegel, 25 June 1990, p. 16.

[70]Pucher, p. 277.

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affecting the interests of almost all departments, was approved by the Cabinet unanimously. So was the unity treaty. Schaeuble and Krause, the chief negotiators, signed the document at 2:08 a.m., on 31 August 1990. Then, at nine o'clock the next morning, the Cabinet approved it.[71] The Cabinet as a formal decision-making body lost even more influence during the crisis.

The Koalitionsrunde

Important issues were decided in the Koalitionsrunde. For example, the thorny subject of exchange rates was addressed in numerous coalition talks frequently held on sunday night in the chancellor bungalow. The primary participants in the roundtable discussions were CSU Finance Minister Waigel, FDP Chairman Lambsdorff, the Director of the Bundesbank, Poehl, and Hans Tietmeyer, a member of the Bundesbank directorate. In addition, Interior Minister Schaeuble was invited "as someone Kohl liked to have present when economic and financial matters were discussed in the coalition."[72] During the crisis, the coalition roundtables were kept deliberately small, limited to the

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[71]Schaeuble, Der Vertrag, p. 309.

[72]Ibid., p. 97.

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most important participants to reduce friction and to facilitate more vigorous decision-making. They were often scheduled on an ad hoc, short-term basis to resolve urgent problems or to clarify a particular position on an important issue. Overall, there was less consultation in the coalition because of time constraints and broad support for unification. Kohl knew he could count on FDP-Chairman Lambsdorff, and Waigel emphasized that he could rely on the CSU. The leaders of the CDU/CSU and FDP factions in parliament, Dregger and Mischnik, also backed the chancellor. Therefore, legislative strategy and political feasibility did not have to be as extensively pre-negotiated as before the crisis. The result was that decision-making in the Koalitionsrunde was an effective way to increase cohesion in the coalition and to maximize efficiency.

The Bureaucracy

The crisis also affected the role of the bureaucracy. On this level, extensive centralization in the implementation of basic decisions could be observed.[73] The real work of unifying the two Germanies was done by bureaucrats, much of it in special

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[73]Lehmbruch, "Die deutsche Vereinigung...," p. 587.

commissions. For example, in preparation of economic and

currency union, the commission for "German Social Union,"

chaired by Ulf Fink, was set up in early March 1990.[74] It

addressed many different questions posed by the planned

merger of the two states, such as health, social

services, women's and family issues.[75] Experts then

prepared the first draft of a treaty. While these

domestic aspects were addressed, other bureaucrats worked

simultaneously on external matters. For example, policy

experts in the working groups for "security and foreign

policy" developed concepts on how to integrate a unified

Germany into a new security structure. Their preliminary

work was crucial and prepared Genscher for the 2+4

meetings where these issues were formally discussed.[76]

The crucial role of the bureaucracy was especially

illustrated in the preparation of the unity treaty. It

was the domain of joint commissions, various ministries,

and of the states.[77] An army of bureaucrats compared one

legal norm after another, and then either scrapped

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[74]CDU/CSU Fraktion im Deutschen Bundestag--
Pressedienst, 19 April 1990.

[75]Pressemitteilung der CDU, 13 March 1990.

[76]"Es kann auch anders kommen," Der Spiegel, 5 March
1990, p. 29.

[77]Gunter Hofmann, "Durchs Chaos zur Einheit," Die
Zeit, 31 August 1990, p. 6.

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thousands of provisions or harmonized and changed others, each with tremendous implications for the ordinary citizen.[78] During this process the West German bureaucracy exercised disproportionate weight, bringing to bear its superiority in resources and negotiating experience.[79] The real bargaining occurred between ministry officials and their colleagues in the same department, who also functioned as official advisors to the various ministries in the GDR, or between bureaucrats at the federal level working with those at the state.[80] These proceedings as an inter-administrative negotiating process were highly atypical.[81]

The West German bureaucracy also laid the groundwork for unification in the GDR. Officials from Bonn swarmed into East Berlin almost immediately after the fall of the Berlin Wall. A shuttle service was set up to accommodate the cross-border traffic.[82] As they increasingly filled

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[78]Robert Leicht, "Wenn's mit der Einheit ins Detail geht," Die Zeit, 14 September 1990, p. 3.

[79]Lehmbruch, "Die deutsche Vereinigung...," pp. 587-588.

[80]Hofmann, "Durchs Chaos...," Die Zeit, 31 August 1990, p. 6.

[81]Lehmbruch, "Die deutsche Vereinigung...," p. 588.

[82]"Wir brauchen Leuchttuerme," Der Spiegel, 8 October 1990, p. 19.

crucial positions in government and management, their
task was to reduce the bloated GDR bureaucracy, renew the
personnel structure, and build an administrative system
tailored to the executive in Bonn.[83] The Kohl government
wanted to replace as quickly as possible the old SED-PDS
guard, who still dominated crucial decision-making
positions in the economy and in the legal system.[84] This
had top priority and was considered essential to the
success of reform in the GDR. The West German
bureaucrats, "challenged far beyond their normal bounds,"
put forth a tremendous effort to prepare a smooth
administrative transition.[85] In effect, Bonn started to
govern in the GDR well before official unification.[86]

During the crisis, bureaucratic politics was
subordinated. Everyone worked to implement the response
strategy with unusual discipline and cooperation. There
was great enthusiasm about unification and the motto was,
"historic times require quick, unbureaucratic action."[87]
The nature of some crucial agreements was so broad that

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[83]Ibid., p. 19.

[84]Deutschland Union Dienst, 8 May 1990.

[85]Union in Deutschland, 27/1990, p. 4.

[86]"Wir brauchen Leuchttuerme," Der Spiegel, 8 October
1990, p. 19.

[87]Deutschland Union Dienst, 4 May 1990.

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their preparation often required input from several departments. For example, the 2+4 treaty was coupled with a number of other accords, primarily bilateral agreements between Bonn and Moscow, involving hefty financial and economic concessions.[88] To work out the entire package required input from the departments of foreign affairs, defense, finance and economics. Without unprecedented integration of subunits, unification could not have been implemented on time. The result was effective translation of basic decisions and more policy control for Kohl.

The Party

The crisis affected the role of the party. As Kohl tackled unification, the CDU was increasingly overshadowed by him and reduced to ratifying decisions. The party played a minor role in the policy process, because it was largely reactive in the early phase of the crisis and slow to develop its own initiatives. The only exceptions were some state party organizations taking bold steps immediately after the fall of the Berlin Wall, which raised the tempo of unification. For example, the chairman of the CDU in Hesse established ties to his East-German counterpart in Thuringa. He was encouraged by

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[88]Bertram, "Ein Weltrekord...," <u>Die Zeit</u>, 14 September 1990, p. 4.

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reformers in the East-CDU who had drafted the Weimar Declaration calling for a renewal of the party and cautiously endorsing free elections in the GDR. In mid-November, a delegation of the CDU of Lower Saxony was the first to make an official visit to the GDR where it met with representatives of the Protestant Church and political opposition groups. It also established official contacts with the East-CDU in the partner state of Saxony-Anhalt. At first, the federal party in Bonn was skeptical about the state party initiatives. The West-CDU hesitated to establish official contacts with the East-CDU because the party was still in the Modrow government. Although the federal party eventually followed the state party level, it took until February 1990 before the West-CDU accepted the East-CDU as an official counterpart. Failure to react more quickly translated into a loss of profile for the federal party, affecting its ability to influence the crisis strategy.

This was evident in the Praesidium. Now, the big decisions were made by Kohl, not in the party's highest policy council. The chancellor mainly used the regularly scheduled meetings to update Praesidium members on ongoing negotiations and on the general progress toward unification. The purpose of the sessions was primarily informative. For example, in early August, the Praesidium

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discussed the election treaty, the status of

consultations concerning the unity treaty, and the

current situation in Germany.[89] The influence of the

Praesidium as a formal decision-making organ was reduced

by the crisis.

However, Kohl could count on the support of the CDU.

He controlled the party from the chancellery office and

had it firmly in his grip. He was the undisputed boss.[90]

"Neither in the Praesidium nor in the Vorstand (Executive

Council) was he seriously contradicted"--no one dared to

challenge him.[91] Those times were clearly over when

Kohl's rivals would show themselves openly.[92] The party

let Kohl take care of everything, and its program was

fully identical with him.[93] During the crisis, the CDU

was reduced to what it was under Adenauer, a

"Kanzlerwahlverein" or club to reelect the chancellor.[94]

That the party was in the shadow of the government

[89]Deutschland Union Dienst, 8 August 1990.

[90]"Macht und Moral," Der Spiegel, 7 May 1990, p. 42.

[91]Nina Grunenberg, "Das starke Stueck der Union," Die Zeit, 12 October 1990, p. 4.

[92]Filmer and Schwan, p. 358.

[93]"Politische Fuehrung uebernehmen," Der Spiegel, 5 November 1990, pp. 30-31.

[94]"Das hat mir...," Der Spiegel, 19 November 1990, p. 31.

was illustrated by CDU Secretary-General Volker Ruehe. He owed his office to Kohl and did not assert party interests or make his own demands during unification. He always followed Kohl and carried out executive decisions. As one of the key architects of the coalition of conservative GDR parties, "Alliance for Germany," Ruehe was most instrumental in engineering Kohl's spectacular victory in the GDR March elections. According to Ruehe, the CDU party headquarters in Bonn considered itself a service-provider organization for the Alliance. Therefore, during the campaign he provided this electoral formation with massive, direct support, including technical and organizational assistance. For example, Ruehe and the Adenauer House helped establish central election headquarters in all 15 GDR districts, assigning a full-time representative of the West-CDU, supported by other party personnel in Bonn, to each district to provide advice and logistical support.[95] Ruehe's role during unification confirmed his image as Kohl's faithful assistant.

This earned him criticism, especially after unification. Some complained that Ruehe was a slave to the chancellor, that he lacked a sense for programmatic

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[95]Pressemitteilung der CDU, 9 February 1990.

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aspects, which ruined the party, and that he degraded the self-assured, independent-minded, party headquarters under its former boss Geissler, thereby causing it to function merely as the government's "handyman." Some referred to Ruehe jokingly as the second government spokesman.[96] He rejected this criticism, arguing that "the year 1990, because of the unification of both German states, ...demanded special discipline from the party in its relations with the government."[97]

The Parliament

Decision-making in a routine policy environment was always characterized by the extensive involvement of parliament. On the level of the Fraktion, rules and procedures guaranteed that the CDU/CSU deputies could thoroughly study and debate issues before they were decided. Bargaining between the chancellery office and the Fraktion was usually the norm.

This was in sharp contrast to the crisis phase. Questions of great magnitude now won almost automatic Fraktions approval without much review or debate. The crisis tightened Fraktions discipline, so that Kohl could

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[96]"Eigene Wege," Der Spiegel, 26 August 1991, pp. 24-25.

[97]Ibid., p. 24.

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feel safe from shifting majorities. The CDU/CSU Fraktion presented a united legislative front, joined by the common desire to get Kohl's proposals through parliament as quickly as possible. Unanimous approval of the chancellor's initiatives was now expected and almost the norm.

The role of the Fraktion already pointed to the minor role of parliament during the crisis. The normal process of parliamentary input and public political debate fell short, and many critical issues were not decided in parliament at all.[98] Those proposals requiring legislative approval were quickly hurried through the chamber without thorough analysis. Often, special sessions were called to approve legislation in record time. Possible alternatives, as well as short and long-term consequences, were not considered because there was so much pressure to act and not enough time.[99] Determined to avoid complications and delay, Bonn subordinated parliamentary involvement to the need to organize unification domestically and to cover the necessary

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[98]Robert Leicht, "Was zur Einheit nun noch fehlt," Die Zeit, 13 July 1990, p. 1.

[99]Lehmbruch, "Die deutsche Vereinigung...," p. 588.

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foreign policy aspects.[100] As a result, parliament
seemed sidelined and sometimes even superfluous.[101]

Several examples illustrate the bystander role of
parliament. The treaty for economic and currency union
was worked out by policy experts in Bonn, before it was
finalized in direct bilateral negotiations between the
governments of West and East Germany.[102] After it was
signed on 18 May 1990, a special session of parliament
was hastily called to give the deputies an opportunity to
debate it. With a first reading in the Bundestag on 23
May 1990, the treaty was already well on its way to
becoming law. A month later it was approved by
parliamentary in its original form with only minor
changes, and even the SPD voted for it.

Parliament was also sidelined during preparation of
the unity treaty. Although democratic participation was
broadened by including "Laender" representatives in the
negotiations, the most critical issues were not decided
by parliament, but by joint commissions and bureaucrats.
The various players bargained mainly among each other,

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[100]"Alle Faeden in der Hand," Der Spiegel, 1 October
1990, p. 22.

[101]Gunter Hofmann, "Nachruf auf einen Anfang," Die
Zeit, 4 May 1990, p. 6.

[102]Leicht, "Was zur Einheit...," Die Zeit, 13 July
1990, p. 1.

which gave the whole process a quality of confidential deal-making behind the scene.[103] Parliament was also kept out of the financing of unification. The fund for "German Unity," which was negotiated by the federal and state governments to pay for reconstruction in the East, was not part of the regular budget. A shadow account was set up, removing legislative control over how much credit the fund was taking on.[104]

There were several efforts to get parliament more involved. Early in the crisis, SPD Party and Fraktions Chairman Hans-Jochen Vogel demanded a more open process and proposed the formation of a joint parliamentary committee between Bundestag and Bundesrat. Although the panel was not to have decision authority, it was to pre-debate and pre-negotiate upcoming issues.[105] This proposal was ignored by the Kohl government. Later, another attempt was made by Rita Suessmuth, CDU deputy and President of the Bundestag, and by Sabine Bergmann-Pohl, President of the GDR-Volkskammer. They formed a joint parliamentary committee in late April with the

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[103]Hofmann, "Durchs Chaos...," Die Zeit, 31 August 1990, p. 6.

[104]Nikolaus Piper, "Schulden fuer Deutschland," Die Zeit, 1 June 1990, p. 7.

[105]dpa, 6 February 1990.

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blessing of a very reluctant Kohl. However, the panel had such limited function--mainly keeping parliament informed about the ongoing unification process--that it could not influence strategy development.

Efforts to involve parliament failed because Kohl wanted to keep the number of actors deliberately low to minimize complication and delay. The intense time pressure left no room for lengthy parliamentary deliberations and extensive modifications to fine-tune a bill. "The unification process was not conducted very democratically, for that there was simply not enough time."[106] The nature of the questions--complex socio-economic issues--which had to be addressed before the two states could merge were completely unsuited for party politics.[107] The sheer number of issues also made it impossible to decide all of them in parliament.[108]

Only later was the democratic base of unification broadened. After Kohl lost the Bundesrat majority, he had to increase involvement of the opposition SPD in governing responsibility, if the constitutional changes

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[106]Gunter Hofmann, "Ein Abschied und ein Neuanfang," Die Zeit, 5 October 1990, p. 1.

[107]Robert Leicht, "Mit Ach und Krach," Die Zeit, 7 September 1990, p. 1.

[108]Leicht, "Wenn's mit der Einheit...," Die Zeit, 14 September 1990, p. 3.

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contained in the unity treaty were to pass the upper
chamber with the required two-third majority. Passing
this treaty became critical in late summer 1990 because
of the chaotic situation in the GDR. Kohl realized that
he needed cooperation, if the crisis was not to get out
of hand.[109] Given the magnitude of the problems, Kohl's
attempt to handle everything alone also seemed
strategically and tactically flawed. Why undertake the
risky historic, economic, domestic, and foreign policy
venture of German unification without securing the help
of all well-meaning forces in society? And why should a
shrewd politician like Kohl release his competitors from
shared responsibility so that they were free to criticize
him, without having to agree on a convincing strategy of
their own?[110] Such considerations probably prompted Kohl
to broaden democratic participation. Unification was no
longer solely conducted by the chancellor according to
his orders.[111]

External Actors
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[109]Hofmann, "Durchs Chaos...," Die Zeit, 31 August
1990, p. 6.

[110]Robert Leicht, "Einheit ohne Einigung," Die Zeit,
25 May 1992, p. 1.

[111]Hofmann, "Durchs Chaos...," Die Zeit, 31 August
1990, p. 6.

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Beyond domestic actors, the crisis also affected the role of external players. Early on, Bonn promised that the two Germanies would not conduct unification behind the backs of the Western powers, and that everything would take place in close coordination with them.[112] According to Genscher, "we will not confront anyone with a fait accompli."[113] But as events in the GDR unfolded, Kohl made some of the most far-reaching decisions affecting alliance interests without consulting the Western partners. For example, the Ten-Point Plan was drafted in secret by Kohl and his inner circle. When the chancellor unveiled it in a Bundestags speech on 28 November 1989, it caught everyone at home and abroad by complete surprise. Afterwards, Kohl's foreign policy advisor, Teltschik, distributed the text to the ambassadors, Vernon Walters (U.S.A), Serge Boidevaix (France), and Iulii Kviziuskii (Soviet Union). The next day, Kohl phoned President Bush to explain the plan. Foreign minister Genscher was then sent off to London to discuss it with his colleague Douglas Hurd and with Prime Minister Thatcher. From London, Genscher travelled to

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[112]Paul Lewis, "Accord in Ottowa," New York Times, 14 February 1990, p. 10.

[113]Flora Lewis, "No Time for Politics," New York Times, 10 March 1990, p 25.

Paris and Moscow. Though useful, the after-the-fact

diplomatic offensive for one of the most important

chancellor speeches could not offset the considerable

irritation abroad.[114]

Political coordination suffered on other occasions

as well. On his own, without consulting with the future

partners of a European Currency Union, Kohl offered the

GDR a currency union.[115] Not even France, despite the

much proclaimed special relationship, was informed of his

plan to conduct all-German elections as soon as

possible.[116] Kohl also settled the alliance issue

without the Western partners. In the intimate atmosphere

of Gorbachev's hunting lodge and a barbecue, he and the

Soviet leader worked out Germany's future security

status. Only the Germans and Soviets were present,

including Kohl, Genscher, and Waigel, and on the Soviet

side, Gorbachev, Shevardnadze, and the Vice Premier for

finances, Stepan Sitarjan.[117] Afterwards in a press

conference, Kohl said that the practical problems of

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[114]Tagesschau, 29 November 1989.

[115]Roger de Weck, "Mit Faustkeil oder Fingerspitze," Die Zeit, 9 March 1990, p. 1.

[116]"Sie haben es zu eilig," Der Spiegel, 4 June 1990, p. 170.

[117]"Die Hoffnung...," Der Spiegel, 23 July 1990, p. 19.

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German unity were now solved.[118] The agreement rendered

the 2+4 talks moot, the official framework for giving the

Western partners a role in unification. Henry Kissinger

commented that 2+4 was reduced to a forum that could do

little more but ratify positions which had been

previously negotiated by the Germans and the Soviets.[119]

Comparisons to Rapallo were immediately made. Unification

was ultimately decided by the Germans and the Soviets

before 2+4 actually got under way, through a bilateral

arrangement between the loser of World War II and the

loser of the Cold War. Although the allies tried to put

the best face on the matter, it caused considerable

unease in the West.[120]

Yet despite his dominance, Kohl demonstrated skill

in taking charge of external aspects without really

offending the Western partners.[121] Any immediate danger

of debilitating factionalism was diminished by Kohl's

close relationship with President Bush. As a result,

there was harmony on most issues, a collaboration rooted

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[118]Bulletin, 18 July 1990.

[119]Henry Kissinger, "Beginn des Niedergangs der westlichen Allianz," Welt am Sonntag, 22 July 1990.

[120]"Die Hoffnung...," Der Spiegel, 23 July 1990, p. 21.

[121]Gerhard Spoerl, "Die Last mit...," Die Zeit, 13 April 1990, p. 2.

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in the President's prompt decision to support German unification.[122] Kohl also used a series of summit meetings, i.e., the European Community meeting in Dublin, the NATO summit in London, and the economic summit in Houston, to meet with world leaders and to broaden Western backing for unification. There were also many high-level bilateral consultations, i.e, the French-German summit in September 1990 in Munich. In addition, Genscher conducted tireless shuttle diplomacy and was in constant contact with his Western counterparts. All these efforts were to give the partners a feeling that they played a role in unification. In the end, Kohl managed to complete it without serious damage to Western relations.

Leadership Image and Decision Style

The crisis transformed Kohl's leadership image. What distinguished him most was his instinct for the historic opportunity and the popular mood after the fall of the Berlin Wall.[123] He was quick to claim unification his own, and always reminded the Germans that they had been offered a unique chance, stating that, "we must take

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[122]R.W. Apple, Jr., "A New Balance of Power," New York Times, 15 July 1990, p. 1.

[123]Schmemann, "Bowing to...," New York Times, 18 July 1990, p. 6.

advantage of history's favor."[124] Kohl also seemed to do

just the right thing at the right moment and avoided

serious mistakes in handling the crisis.[125] When, early

on, he appeared at a rally in Dresden for the first time,

he had the chance to do everything wrong. He could have

aroused the East Germans to bloody revolt or could have

disappointed them by inaction. Kohl found another way. He

succeeded in calming the demonstrators, despite being

widely regarded as a less than gifted speaker. At the

same time his determination was strengthened to increase

the tempo of unification.[126] He then made a total

personal commitment to the national cause and pursued it

with unbelievable persistence and determination. When

problems threatened to bog down the process, he found a

way out. Kohl was always the optimist and full of

enthusiasm for unity. Dismissing skeptics, he insisted

that, "in three to four years we will succeed in

transforming the present GDR into a flourishing region

right in the middle of Europe."[127] To the surprise of

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[124]Nina Grunenberg, "Ohne Euphorie und Ueberschwang," Die Zeit, 27 July 1990, p. 3.

[125]"Hausbacken...," Der Spiegel, 19 November 1990, p. 23.

[126]Ibid., p. 25.

[127]Ibid., pp. 28-29.

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his critics, Kohl outlined a strategic vision that fit

all elements into a coherent approach.

This approach shattered his image of an indecisive,

risk-averse leader content with the status quo. Kohl took

enormous political risk to reach the national goal. He

chose the most brutal, yet fastest way to adapt the GDR

to the conditions of a market economy. Over night the

East was exposed to West German and international

competition--a daring move with uncertain

consequences.[128] It proved that Kohl could make bold

decisions after all and did not shy away from

controversy. Before the crisis, Kohl was widely

considered a man of the status quo,

> ...a power politician for whom reality was
> always more important than distant utopia; a
> realist for whom reunification was a dream he
> did not expect to see fulfilled in his
> lifetime. It was a paradox of history that the
> most fundamental transformation taking place in
> Germany after World War II was achieved by a
> man who never claimed to be a reformer.[129]

Kohl's handling of the crisis enjoyed almost

universal praise. Dregger said in a Fraktions meeting,

"this chancellor is strong. With him we will continue our

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[128]Peter Christ, "Rosskur ohne Medizin," Die Zeit, 17 August 1990, p. 8.

[129]Nina Grunenberg, "Der richtige Riecher," Die Zeit, 5 October 1990, p. 3.

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policies and win the national election."[130] Waigel from

the CSU praised Kohl's "strong will, political tenacity,

his ability to balance intra-party interests, and his

keen sense for political developments."[131] According to

Seiters, "without his strong leadership, persistence and

vision this great development in Germany would not have

been possible."[132] Many at home now considered him "the

most significant chancellor after Adenauer."[133] Kohl

also enjoyed increased international stature. He was

becoming the dominant leader of the twelve-member

European Community.[134] At the London and Houston summits

he emerged as the central figure. Other world leaders

showed him great respect and rallied around him,

especially the French.[135]

Even rivals conceded that the chancellor's policies

were correct and praised his achievements. Geissler, who

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[130]CDU/CSU, Fraktion im Deutschen Bundestag--
Pressedienst, 14 November 1989.

[131]Union in Deutschland, 12/1990, p. 6.

[132]Krauel, "Herr des...," Rheinischer Merkur, 28
September 1990, p. 1.

[133]CDU/CSU Fraktion im Deutschen Bundestag--
Pressedienst, 16 January 1990.

[134]Craig Whitney, "Kohl Emerging as Europe's Top
Leader," New York Times, 31 March 1990, p. 6.

[135]Apple, Jr., "A New Balance...," New York Times, 15
July 1990, p. 1.

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had cautioned the CDU early in the crisis not to overemphasize the national theme at the expense of economic, social, and environmental consequences, later acknowledged that "without unification we would already have an economic and social disaster in the GDR."[136] However, Kohl did not have to worry about Geissler. Since his ouster as CDU Secretary-General, he was politically isolated and all his loyal supporters were purged. Those days were over when Geissler was able to polarize and provoke the political establishment. Try as he may, he did not succeed. His ideas and proposals got no reaction in Bonn.[137] Lothar Spaeth, the governor of Baden-Wuerttemberg, who together with Geissler had tried to oust Kohl for weak leadership in 1989, also showed respect for his accomplishments. According to Spaeth, "Kohl prevailed unconditionally during the last year--he now has a free hand."[138] Acknowledging Kohl's dominant position, Spaeth conceded, "at this time we have no say in anything. Other than Helmut, no one does."[139]

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[136]"Politische Fuehrung uebernehmen," Der Spiegel, 5 November 1990, p. 30.

[137]"Macht und Moral," Der Spiegel, 7 May 1990, p. 44.

[138]"Hausbacken...," Der Spiegel, 19 November 1990, p. 22.

[139]"Macht und Moral," Der Spiegel, 7 May 1990, p. 42,

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Biedenkopf, who angered the chancellor by insisting on tax increases to finance reconstruction in the East, later termed Kohl's performance "outstanding."[140] However, Biedenkopf was less of a threat because he was dispatched to Saxony where he was elected regional governor. Far away from Bonn, the long-time chancellor rival was less effective. Another Kohl critic was Federal President von Weizaecker, who always urged the chancellor to exercise more caution in preparing German unity. "What belongs together will grow together, but it must grow together--there should be no effort to push it" together.[141] But later, von Weizaecker praised Kohl. He was totally overshadowed by the chancellor during the crisis, a role he did not appreciate. Now it was Kohl, the weak leader with his rhetorical modesty and lack of fresh ideas, who had stolen the limelight from the status-conscious von Weizaecker.[142] Even Friedrich Zimmermann, the former CSU Interior Minister who used to denounce Kohl for weak leadership, now said that he had already recognized in the 1970s that Kohl had the stuff

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[140]"Hausbacken...," Der Spiegel, 19 November 1990, p. 22.

[141]Schmemann, "Unification...," New York Times, 14 December 1989, p. 22.

[142]"Hausbacken...," Der Spiegel, 19 November 1990, p. 27.

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to be chancellor. Impressed by his resolve and

perseverance, Zimmermann noted enthusiastically, "when he

has his back to the wall... he develops a kind of staying

power... I have never experienced in anyone else involved

in German politics."[143] Kohl noted with satisfaction

that even his worst rivals praised him. He knew all of

them "and enjoyed their manifestations of respect not

without cynicism."[144] All of them had seriously

underestimated him.

With unification completed, Kohl was at the zenith

of his power. His claim to authority was fully asserted,

and alternatives to him were no longer considered. In the

party and the government he was unchallenged, and

everyone listened to him. At the Hamburg party congress

in the fall of 1990, he was triumphantly reelected CDU

chairman with an unprecedented 98.5% of the vote.[145] No

one doubted that he would be the first chancellor of a

unified Germany. Opinion polls documented that fully 60%

of all Germans considered Kohl capable of engineering an

economic upswing in the East without jeopardizing

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[143]Ibid., p. 22.

[144]Grunenberg, "Der richtige Riecher," Die Zeit, 5
October 1990, p. 3.

[145]"Wir brauchen Leuchttuerme," Der Spiegel, 8
October 1990, p. 18.

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prosperity in the West.[146] This was a spectacular

comeback for a man who only a year and a half before was

highly controversial and not much appreciated by the

German electorate.[147] Kohl went into the national

election in December 1990 full of self-confidence, a

successful leader who brought prosperity and a booming

economy to the Western part of the nation, and then

crowned this achievement with the historic accomplishment

of reunification.[148] He was unbeatable, and the election

was more of a routine exercise. All that remained to be

decided was whether he could get an absolute

majority.[149]

Conclusion

The crisis changed the decision-making process and

structure in the Kohl government. It increased

centralization of authority--the chancellor made all the

important decisions consulting with only a small group of

trusted advisors. Directives were then handed down from

the chancellery office to the various departments

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[146]"Hausbacken...," _Der Spiegel_, 19 November 1990, p. 23.

[147]Ibid., p. 22.

[148]Ibid., p. 22.

[149]Ibid., p. 22.

assigned the task of working out the details. Determined
to minimize complications and delay, familiar
consultation routines and negotiating mechanisms were
deliberately circumvented. Actors with a strong policy
role before the crisis were confronted with a fait
accompli and lost influence.[150]

To implement unification in a short time required a
strategic pattern, characterized to an unusual degree by
the need to simplify and to improvise.[151] Consequences
were not considered, and there was no comprehensive
planning because it would have bogged down the process.
The strategy was mainly oriented on short-term success
criteria--steps that brought Bonn closer to the national
goal.[152]

Although unification was not conducted very
democratically, Kohl was widely praised. The crisis
strengthened him and transformed his leadership image.
He was now undisputed in his party and the government.

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[150]Lehmbruch, "Die deutsche Vereinigung...," p. 587.

[151]Ibid., p. 588.

[152]Ibid., p. 588.

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Chapter 16: Range of Action in West German Foreign Policy

Introduction

Chancellor Kohl always stressed that the situation in the GDR, not Bonn, generated the strong pressure for quick unification. However, he was not completely at the mercy of events, but could shape developments. The crisis provided a setting that allowed him to manipulate domestic and external constraints. As a result, they were much less effective, and Bonn enjoyed more flexibility to promote a favored policy and to exploit the opportunities created by the crisis.

The following chapter first examines the crisis impact on three domestic constraints: coalition politics, the role of the opposition SPD, and domestic resource limits. Second, it explores how external constraints--political and military factors stemming from allied prerogatives--were transformed. Third, the chapter analyzes policy results and the overall character of West German foreign policy. The purpose is to explain why the crisis created an environment for manipulation, and the strategies that allowed policy-makers to transform domestic and external constraints.

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<u>The Transformation of Domestic Constraints</u>

    <u>Coalition Politics</u>

During the crisis, coalition politics was no longer a serious domestic constraint. Chancellor Kohl could afford to pay much less attention to the FDP. Historic times, such as unification, were particularly difficult for the small party. Attention was concentrated even more on the center of decision-making, the chancellory office, where all important matters were decided. Because of the crisis, Kohl was regarded as an admired leader who enjoyed overwhelming public support.[1] At the same time, it marginalized his critics, and those who highlighted his shortcomings experienced growing political isolation. There was an atmosphere in Bonn where criticizing the chancellor at a time when the German nation faced its most fateful challenge since the collapse of the Third Reich, quickly came to be seen as unpatriotic.[2]

This political environment allowed Kohl to treat unification much like his own business. He knew that the Liberals were unlikely to leave the coalition. Genscher, as coordinator for external aspects, was firmly tied to

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[1]Gerhard Spoerl, "Die Butter vom Brot," <u>Die Zeit</u>, 19 January 1990, p. 5.

[2]Serge Schmemann, "Unity Issue Eclipses Bonn's Far Right," <u>New York Times</u>, 30 March 1990, p. 8.

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unification, and his party hoped to take credit for it at the polls. In the absence of an alternative partner that could put together a parliamentary majority, the FDP had to remain on Kohl's side, if it wanted to share governmental responsibility in Bonn.[3] The fate of the party was now even more tied to the chancellor, which affected coalition politics. Though sometimes unhappy with him and making occasional efforts to reign him in, the FDP let Kohl do pretty much as he pleased.[4] Genscher never criticized him in public. When FDP Economics Minister Haussmann grumbled that the foreign minister was too much overshadowed by Kohl, Party Chairman Lambsdorff replied "that it was not appropriate to poke around in real or imagined weaknesses so shortly before the election."[5] As long as the chancellor was trying to put together unification, he could feel secure from any criticism from within the ranks.[6]

Kohl also did not have to worry about the CSU. Like the FDP, the crisis weakened the party, and it

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[3]"Ihr werdet Euch...," Der Spiegel, 22 October 1990, p. 20.

[4]Gunter Hofmann, "Lauter Versuche...," Die Zeit, 23 March 1990, p. 2.

[5]"Immer nur weisse Salbe," Der Spiegel, 17 September 1990, p. 23.

[6]"Macht und Moral," Der Spiegel, 7 May 1990, p. 42.

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experienced a relative loss of influence in Bonn.
Attempts to strengthen the CSU by extending it beyond
Bavaria into the former GDR were successfully blocked by
Kohl.[7] But the CSU was unlikely to complicate Kohl's
agenda because Party Chairman Waigel was too closely
identified with unification. For example, in his capacity
as finance minister, he was also the chief West German
negotiator for economic and currency union. By involving
Waigel in so much political responsibility, Kohl
effectively blunted criticism from the CSU about his
handling of unification.

Kohl was identified with a very popular issue that
translated into great election prospects for the Union.
Therefore, the CSU was in high spirits and rallied around
him, which was evident at the 1989 party conference.
Never before did Kohl receive so much applause. The CSU
and the heretofore only moderately loved chancellor were
now closer than ever, thanks to the great mood generated
by the prospect of unification.[8]

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[7]"Ihr werdet Euch...," Der Spiegel, 22 October 1990,
p. 20.

[8]"Stehende Ovationen fuer Helmut Kohl auf dem CSU-
Parteitag," Stuttgarter Zeitung, 20 November 1989.

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The Opposition SPD

The crisis also minimized the effectiveness of the opposition. While Kohl quickly claimed unification his own, the SPD could not come up with a consistent position, being "deeply divided in terms of personnel and policy content."[9] Party Chairman Vogel and Willi Brandt, the former chancellor, supported unification and warned that opposing it was politically risky. But because of election tactics, Oskar Lafontaine, the SPD chancellor-candidate, felt obliged to distance the party from Kohl's platform by emphasizing the complicated side of merging the two nations.[10] The result was intra-party feuding, indicating that the opposition was badly split on unification. Torn between resisting it and accommodating Kohl, the SPD was perceived as vacillating on the national issue.

Administration officials wasted no time painting the SPD as an enemy of unification. Exploiting Lafontaine's call to pull up the welcome mat for GDR immigrants and to deny them social benefits, the SPD was accused of an on-going campaign against the refugees. According to Johannes Gerster, domestic policy spokesman of the

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[9]Union in Deutschland, 1/1990, p. 29.

[10]Seibel, "Necessary Illusions...," p. 118.

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CDU/CSU Fraktion, "no foreign asylum seeker receives such shabby treatment as our countrymen."[11] Lafontaine's call for more gradual economic transition in the GDR allowed the CDU to link him to huge tax increases. This strategy, according to Matthias Wissmann, economic spokesman for the Fraktion, "would result in billions of permanent subsidies for rotten state enterprises... which was unacceptable to the German taxpayers."[12] Exploiting the SPD's ambivalent position on the national question, the administration successfully discredited the opposition.

Meanwhile, Kohl presented himself as a patriot, capitalizing on the national mood overwhelmingly in favor of unification. Full of enthusiasm, he set himself apart from the opposition, who predicted dire consequences if the country was unified. The SPD's ineffectiveness weakened the party and undermined its ability to effectively exercise a parliamentary control function. As a result, the opposition lost the chance to influence the unification process.[13] Kohl enjoyed more room to maneuver and could afford to ignore the SPD, particularly early in the crisis.

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[11]Deutschland Union Dienst, 16 February 1990.

[12]Matthias Wissmann, CDU/CSU Fraktion in Deutschen Bundestag--Pressedienst, 21 May 1990.

[13]Seibel, "Necessary Illusions...," p. 118.

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Later, the situation in the GDR forced Lafontaine to
endorse unification. Over the summer the fabric of East
German society quickly unraveled, threatening an orderly
transition. In an election year, no one could politically
afford to oppose unification any longer.[14] Therefore, it
was unlikely that the SPD-controlled Bundesrat would bloc
unification at the last moment. When the unity treaty
came before it in September 1990, it won unanimous
approval. The Bundesrat had no other choice, if it did
not want to be accused of trying to delay or even prevent
unification.[15] The vote was a reflection of the general
policy environment in Bonn where everyone was afraid of
being held responsible for squandering the historic
chance to unite the nation. As the situation in the GDR
deteriorated, the pressure of not having an alternative
became greater and brought everyone in line.[16]

Domestic Resource Constraints

The crisis also affected domestic resource
constraints. In the euphoria created by the prospect of

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[14]"Alles bricht zusammen," Der Spiegel, 6 August
1990, p. 18.

[15]Leicht, "Was zur Einheit...," Die Zeit, 13 July
1990, p. 1.

[16]Deutschlandnachrichten, 19 Maerz 1993, p. 3.

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unification, administration officials were confident that they had the means to manage the crisis and that everything was under control. As Bonn stressed, the GDR was merely the size of a large West German state, and the problems should therefore be seen in perspective. Administration officials also exploited control over information. In an election year, they down-played the enormity of the challenge and withheld the true costs from the West German public. Finance Minister Waigel declared, "Financially, we are superbly prepared for unity"[17] and additional taxes are not necessary. When critics demanded concrete cost estimates, Kohl's economic spokesman replied that "the task of reconstruction is too urgent to await budgetary estimates."[18] By fudging the costs of unification, resource constraints were not a serious factor in Bonn's unification policy.

The Transformation of External Constraints

The crisis also changed external constraints by creating an environment that allowed Bonn to manipulate the Western powers to agree to unification. Military and political limits stemming from post-war allied

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[17]Union in Deutschland, 31/1990, p. 49.

[18]Ferdinand Protzman, "As Marriage Nears...," New York Times, 24 September 1990, p. 6.

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prerogatives were less effective, increasing policy-
makers' overall room to maneuver. As a result, the Bonn
government could make use of all options to gain foreign
policy support for the preferred strategy."[19]

The Kohl government also capitalized on the
ambivalence of the Western powers over the imminent
transformations in Germany[20] as they underestimated the
momentum for unification. Mitterrand, commenting on the
fall of the Berlin Wall, said in November 1989,
"Unification? No one will talk about it in a few
weeks."[21] Many in the West also believed that the Soviets
would never allow it.[22] Although early on, the allies
criticized the tempo of unification, they had no
realistic alternative. This gave Bonn officials, who came
armed with concrete ideas, a decisive advantage in
addressing the crisis.

With the West on the sidelines, the Kohl government

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[19]Wolfgang Bergsdorf, "West Germany's Political
System under Stress: Decision-Making Processes in Bonn
1990," in German Unification The Unexpected Challenge,
ed. Dieter Grosser (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1992), p.
92.

[20]Gert-Joachim Glaessner, Der schwierige Weg zur
Demokratie (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1991), p. 177.

[21]"Psychologische Narben," Der Spiegel, 9 April 1990,
p. 158.

[22]Ibid., p. 158.

moved quickly to set the agenda for reunification. In early February 1990, Kohl established the cabinet committee for "German Unity," enlisting the most important ministries in the huge task. Kohl also announced a plan for immediate economic and currency union with the GDR. He followed the advice of Interior Minister Schaeuble, who first proposed the idea in mid-December 1989 in a meeting of the inner circle. Although many were skeptical at that point,[23] by the time Kohl made the official announcement, the plan had already gained great political thrust and wide support. Administration officials then made a total commitment of organizational resources to implement it. With these key decisions, the process of unification gained unstoppable momentum both domestically and on the governmental level.[24]

Bonn exploited its control over agenda setting and organizational resources to make the unification process irreversible. It was part of a deliberate effort to step up the tempo of unification and to preempt other options. The time factor was crucial. Because more waiting could raise international opposition, Bonn had to act before

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[23]Schaeuble, Der Vertrag, p. 21.

[24]Ibid., p. 53.

the favorable international conditions were transformed.
Therefore, "domestic policy issues dominated" as internal
unification began to take a more concrete shape.[25]

Domestic policies were aimed at influencing
international positions.[26] By accelerating internal
developments, Bonn tried to preempt outside opposition.
Before the allies could really become involved in the
process, the Kohl government had almost completed
domestic unification. As Bonn's time table indicated, the
West and East German delegations reached agreement on 1
May 1990 on all central issues of an economic and
currency union--a plan that transferred East German
monetary sovereignty to the West. Therefore, de facto
unification was already negotiated before the first 2+4
meeting got under way in Bonn on 5 May 1990. Domestic
developments put pressure on the allies to endorse
unification, and made it less likely that they could
block it.

Kohl always stressed that quick action was
necessary, "but that he could not be the one who was
pushing, the people in the GDR must be the ones who were

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[25]Bergsdorff, p. 99.

[26]Moravcsik, p. 17.

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doing the pushing, he could only flank the process...[27]
However, Bonn's handling of the refugee wave illustrated
that domestic policies were targeted to influence
international opinion. Many warned that the thousands of
East Germans crossing into the FRG could set off a social
crisis in the West. But shrewd tacticians in Bonn saw in
the high numbers "a strong driving force for the quick
conclusion of German unity."[28] According to Schaeuble,
they provided the most powerful argument for convincing
the four powers that unification was not engineered by an
arrogant FRG, but by the people in the GDR, and that no
one could stop it.[29] Therefore, the administration
stubbornly refused to change the open resettlement policy
for the East Germans. When opposition mounted, Schaeuble
finally agreed to suspend it on 1 July 1990, the target
date for economic and currency union. By then, however,
de facto unification was already completed and full
political union not far away. This suggests that Bonn
took advantage of the refugee crisis to affect the
perception of the allies and to bolster the case for
early unification.

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[27]Schaeuble, <u>Der Vertrag</u>, pp. 20-21.

[28]Ibid., p. 69.

[29]Ibid., p. 70.

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To promote its favored policy, the administration used a process of persuasion which argued that the strategic interest of the superpowers was best served by agreeing to unification.[30] To the Soviets, Bonn stressed the declining value of NATO as a military alliance, and the constructive role of a unified Germany in rebuilding their economy. To the U.S. and European audience, Bonn emphasized that unification strengthened the overall position of the West. The administration then gave the allies what they wanted: German NATO-membership, which calmed their fear about a resurgent Germany; and, assurances for even closer European union to address French concerns that a unified Germany might drift off to the East. In the end, Bonn convinced the allies and the Soviets that a united Germany with its formidable economic power was on their side and that they had something to gain from the merger. With this approach, the administration successfully exploited the general constellation of superpower interests to achieve a desired policy outcome.[31]

The events in the GDR also gave Bonn a decisive

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[30]E. Gonzales, "Finland and the Soviet Union: The Art of Leveraging the Hegemony," in Managing Asymmetrical Crises, Mimeo (Los Angeles: UCLA Department of Political Science, 1988), p. 218.

[31]Ibid., p. 218.

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advantage. The more the situation deteriorated, the more
the call for unification intensified. Policy-makers could
exploit the uncertainty for strategic purposes[32] and
present unification as the only way out. Because this was
the best way to end the crisis, Bonn urged everyone to
support it. Kohl also raised the cost of no agreement.
"What could disrupt the process of ending division are
not reforms, but their rejection. Freedom does not lead
to instability, but its suppression."[33] He knew that the
allies were not interested in crisis escalation and
turmoil in Europe, and would therefore support
unification.

To promote the strategy and to delegitimize
opposition, the administration successfully mobilized
international institutions.[34] Even before the fall of the
Berlin Wall, Bonn began issuing subtle reminders that the
three Western powers had committed themselves to German
reunification. In addressing the obligations of the
signatories of the 1954 Deutschlandvertrag, Michaela
Geiger, foreign policy speaker of the CDU/CSU Fraktion,

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[32]Moravcsik, p. 28.

[33]Helmut Kohl, "Zehn-Punkte-Programm zur Ueberwindung
der Teilung Deutschlands und Europas," Texte, III/7,
1989, p. 432.

[34]Snyder and Diesing, p. 204.

stressed, "Our allies must recognize that the obligations

stemming from this treaty were not merely a historically

normative goal, but that they now have become the basis

of concrete action."[35] According to Kohl, "as far as a

solution to the German question is concerned, this not

only challenges the Germans. In this matter we trust the

special responsibility of the three Western powers."[36]

Bonn was holding the allies to their pledge.

Administration officials calculated that after forty

years of ritually supporting unification, they could not

suddenly oppose it.

As unification gathered more speed, Kohl reminded

critics that the "question of German unity is a question

of the right to self-determination, and all peoples of

this earth" are entitled to this right.[37] Resolving

important aspects of unification, such as alliance

membership, was therefore in accordance with the Helsinki

Final Act, and for the Germans to decide.[38]

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[35]Deutschland Union Dienst, 24 November 1989.

[36]Helmut Kohl, "Erklaerung zum wachsenden...," Texte, III/7, 1989, p. 225.

[37]Robert Leicht, "Bush and Kohl Try to Allay Fears of a Reunified Germany's Power," New York Times, 26 February 1990, p. 8.

[38]R.W. Apple, Jr., "Summit Talks End with Warmth But Fail to Resolve Key Issues," New York Times, 4 June 1990, p. 11.

This appeal to accepted international norms made it more difficult for the allies to oppose unification.

Another tactic was to invoke Thomas Mann's vision of a "European Germany." This deliberate calming strategy, as old as the fears it tried to address, was to ease concerns in the West.[39] Kohl assured the U.S. and the Europeans that a united Germany would remain firmly committed to NATO and dedicated to the concept of Europe.[40] He stressed that he was not trying to resurrect a traditional 19th century German nation state, but build a larger Europe, and that it was his goal "that this old continent regain its youthfulness and dynamism."[41] According to Bonn, German unification was a vital precondition for a new European order, and allowed the continent to end its own division. Kohl tried to convince his neighbors that German unity was not a narrow national concern, but opened up great opportunities for the continent as a whole. This strategy allowed him to rationalize the urgency of unification and convinced neighbors to support it. It now paid off that the Germans

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[39]Glaessner, p. 203.

[40]Flora Lewis, "European Watershed," New York Times, 26 June 1990, p. 23.

[41]"Das hat mir...," Der Spiegel, 19 November 1990, p. 34.

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had spent billions to crank up the lame European policy in an effort to clear the way for the completion of the internal market by 1992.[42] This strategy, together with Germany's high-profile role in the EC and its identification with NATO and the Western cultural community, would have made it seem like an injustice if the allies had blocked unification.[43]

Bonn's agenda also prevailed because of superior negotiating skill. This was illustrated by 2+4, which established a process for addressing unification. After the elections in the GDR on March 18, 1990, the two German governments were to begin talks on the internal aspects of unification. Subsequently, they were to meet with the four powers having postwar rights over Germany-- the U.S., the Soviet Union, France and Britain--to work out security issues. The 2+4 framework was a victory for the Kohl government. Genscher wanted nothing to do with a "2+15" arrangement, the two Germanies and the 15 members of NATO deciding the German future, or involving the 35 member Conference on Security and Cooperation.[44] Because

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[42]"Hausbacken...," Der Spiegel, 19 November 1990, pp. 25-26.

[43]Stern and Sundelius, pp. 228.

[44]Thomas L. Friedman and Michael R. Gordon, "Steps to German Unity: Bonn as a Power," New York Times, 16 February 1990, p. 9.

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a large number of participants would invite complications and delay, Bonn wanted to limit external participation as much as possible. Neither would Genscher accept 4+2 nor 4+0. He insisted on 2+4 to make sure that the two Germanies would first determine the nature of their unification on their own, and then deal with the four powers on external security issues later.[45] In fact, 2+4 was really 1+4 since the East German side was severely weakened by the crisis. This enabled the Kohl government to speak for all Germans, and one Germany was already accepted as a political reality by the four victors even before unification took effect.

The administration also gained an advantage over the allies because of asymmetrical attention paid to the problem and greater resolve.[46] Unification was the top priority issue in the Kohl government, and had the full attention of the foreign policy elite. Everyone was convinced that the country faced a situation of extreme opportunity, so unique that it would never present itself again. Such high stakes led to unprecedented cooperation and a total effort. This more focused foreign policy

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[45]Ibid., p. 8.

[46]Stern and Sundelius, p. 229.

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agenda created an advantage[47] and made it more difficult for external powers, such as the U.S., to influence unification. Because Bonn had more at stake, it devoted full attention and energy to the problem. Meanwhile, Washington had to deal with other pressing international issues, such as Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in early August 1990. The wider range of interests and engagements of the U.S. resulted in other urgent problems competing for the attention of U.S. decision-makers.[48] While Washington prepared to respond to Iraq's aggression, Bonn put the finishing touches on unification.

With these strategies, Bonn successfully transformed external constraints and reduced the leverage of Western powers. Administration officials calculated that "any attempt to overplay Four Power rights would not only be ineffectual, but potentially counterproductive."[49] Further, allies or neighbors who tried to slow or halt the unification process ran the serious risk of worsening the situation in the GDR and "jeopardizing the political capital and goodwill they had built up over the past

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[47]Habeeb, p. 132.

[48]Ibid., pp. 132-133.

[49]Ronald D. Asmus, "A United Germany," Foreign Affairs, Spring 1990, p. 69.

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decades in Bonn."[50] Allied rights and responsibilities formulated after the second world war reflected a world very different from the political realities that existed at the time of unification.[51] Administration officials believed that they had latitude to act and that they did not face serious external obstacles.

Policy Results: Assertiveness, Nationalism and German Interests

Fewer constraints translated into a more assertive foreign policy. To promote its agenda, Bonn stressed German interests and threw overboard the cautious, low-profile approach to world politics. Determined to exploit the crisis, the Kohl government assumed an active international leadership role and showed its muscle. Little remained of the reactive, status quo-oriented policy concerned with accommodation and adjustment. Bonn no longer behaved like a political dwarf, but like an actor willing and able to assert the national interest.

During the crisis, Bonn took sovereign rights that had not been formally granted yet.[52] In the first flush

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[50]Ibid., p. 70.

[51]Ibid., p. 69.

[52]"Kein Bismarck, kein Ribbentrop," Der Spiegel, 23 July 1990, p. 18.

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of euphoria after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Kohl

government simply disregarded the former occupation

powers. Openly infringing on allied prerogatives, the

Mayors of East and West Berlin, Krack and Momper, met and

negotiated.[53] Plans for joint projects were later

announced and national airlines established new routes--

all this in apparent utter indifference to the

prerogatives of the four allied powers, who still

technically occupied the divided city and Germany.[54] The

clearest sign of disquiet came from the Soviets, who

called for a meeting with the three Western allies to

signal to Bonn that the World War II victors were not to

be neglected.[55] However, this did not have much effect.

In late May 1990, representatives of the CDU/CSU Fraktion

in the West German Bundestag held the first joint session

with members of the CDU/DA Fraktion of the GDR

Volkskammer in the Berlin Reichstag, the past and

designated future seat of German parliament. Issues

related to unification were on the agenda, and both

delegations agreed to intensive future cooperation in the

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[53]Schmemann, "Unification...," New York Times, 14 December 1989, p. 22.

[54]Ibid., p. 22.

[55]Ibid., p. 22.

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form of regular meetings and close interaction.[56] Bonn already viewed Berlin as an integral part of the future Germany and conducted foreign policy like a sovereign state.

Nor would the Kohl government tolerate any last minute delay in implementing unification. One day before the scheduled signing of the 2+4 treaty, the British Foreign Minister, Douglas Hurd, threatened not to show up because he was unhappy about some treaty provisions. To end the impasse, Genscher turned to the U.S. for help. He called his counterpart, James Baker, in the middle of the night and demanded to speak to him. When he was told that Baker was asleep and could not be disturbed, Genscher threatened to come over and wake him himself. A meeting was finally arranged at 1:30 a.m., where the U.S. promised to intervene on behalf of the Germans. The next day Hurd signed the 2+4 accord.[57]

Another new element of German foreign policy was its nationalistic tone. In preparation for the upcoming general election in December 1990, Kohl underscored the

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[56]Union in Deutschland, 19/1990, p. 5.

[57]Klaus Gennrich, "Mitten in der Nacht laesst Genscher Baker wecken," Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 14 September 1990, p. 3.

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patriotic side of politics.[58] He painted an enthusiastic

picture of a united Germany: a nation that, next to the

U.S. and Japan, was already the number one economic

superpower, the country with the most patents, and with a

gross national product admired around the world.

According to Kohl, "with now eighty million people, one

would have a terrific unique chance."[59] Kohl also

appealed to the pride of the Germans and praised "German

intelligence and German industriousness" and "the

treasure of our country--and that is the people who live

here."[60] Although this rhetoric was mostly election

tactic, it struck a very different chord.

According to Kohl, now that the Germans and the

Europeans had a historic chance, it was even more

important for the FRG to stay predictable.[61]

Berechenbarkeit was still important and explained in part

why Bonn insisted on NATO membership. Kohl could not

afford to alienate the Western partners, as allied

signatures were required for the 2+4 treaty to take

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[58]Gunter Hofmann, "Der Kanzler und der Kandidat," Die
Zeit, 9 February 1990. p. 3.

[59]"Das hat mir...," Der Spiegel, 19 November 1990, p.
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[60]Ibid., p. 34.

[61]Union in Deutschland, 40/1989, p. 14.

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effect.[62] Careful not to generate renewed distrust, Bonn did not let the GDR accede to the FRG before 12 September 1990, the date of the final 2+4 round. According to the administration, for reasons of international credibility, it was compelling that the two Germanies merge after 2+4 was completed, and after the treaty was formally presented to the 35 member CSCE foreign minister's conference in early October 1990.

But Berechenbarkeit, though important, now had a lower priority. Unification took center stage and was no longer subordinated to the desire to conform. Bonn was confident about its growing international stature and sensed a subtle shift in the balance of power. The U.S. and the Soviets were military superpowers, but were they still political ones? The U.S. was the most indebted state, while Gorbachev's empire was crumbling. Neither seemed to speak for the rest of the world. Europe was much stronger now, and the superpowers were unable to determine the future of the continent as in Yalta, without Europe.[63] Diminished superpower clout gave Bonn much more room to maneuver and was reflected in unification and a confident display of German strength.

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[62]Asmus, p. 69.

[63]"Sie haben es zu eilig," Der Spiegel, 4 June 1990, p. 173.

Even the FRG thought of itself as a major European power. As Kohl's security advisor Teltschik explained, "in the past nothing in the EC went against us... in the future everything can be accomplished with us, not against us."[64] With unification, Germany expected to become the preeminent European power.

Conclusion

The crisis increased policy-makers range of action to plan and implement foreign policy. It provided a setting that allowed them to manipulate domestic and external constraints. Coalition politics, the opposition SPD, and domestic resource factors were less serious limits because Bonn could formulate strategies to offset them. For example, Chancellor Kohl was able to coopt potential critics and make them partners in unification. He could also use the power of his office to control information, to act autonomously, and to deny the opposition the opportunity to participate in the process.

The crisis also allowed Bonn to reshape external constraints--political and military factors stemming from allied prerogatives. The administration exploited control over agenda setting, organizational resources, and the

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[64]"Alle Faeden...," _Der Spiegel_, 1 October 1990, p. 18.

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time factor. It used domestic politics to influence international opinion, and political leverage to persuade external powers to make concessions. Bonn mobilized international institutions in support of unification, and took advantage of events. Negotiating skill, attention and resolve also gave Bonn an advantage and reduced the leverage of external powers. As a result, political and military factors were no longer serious constraints on Bonn's flexibility.

Fewer constraints changed the character of German foreign policy. The administration never wavered from its ambitious agenda and stressed German interests. The way unification was conducted reflected a more self-confident, nationalistic, and assertive face of German foreign policy.

Chapter 17: Conclusions and Implications

Introduction

This study examined the impact of a crisis in the GDR on the content, process, and structure of West German foreign policy, and why it allowed Bonn to achieve reunification. To capture these effects, five dependent variables were chosen: perception of the intra-German and external context, policy objectives, degree of consensus, level of centralization, and range of action to develop and implement foreign policy. This chapter first summarizes the findings in the order of the variables given and develops some general insights that may be relevant for other cases. Second, it identifies factors that help policy-makers confronted by a crisis to make more effective decisions and to achieve a preferred outcome. And third, it explores the implications of the findings for theories of West German foreign policy and crisis. However, the following propositions, based on a single case, are tentative and need to be confirmed through more empirical tests.

The Impact of Crisis on Content, Process, and Structure of Foreign Policy

To gauge the effect of crisis on the content, process, and structure of foreign policy, the first

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variable examined was policy-makers' perception of the intra-German and external environment. The case study suggests that a crisis transforms their view of the decision context. As administration officials in Bonn monitored the intra-German and international setting, they saw opportunities for innovative action that did not exist before. For the first time in post-war history, a West German government had the chance to solve the national question, and to construct a new European status quo centered on a unified Germany. The perception of opportunity dominated Bonn's strategy and outweighed danger and threat.

Subsequent policy was situation-driven. As the crisis unfolded, decision-makers searched the internal and external environment for cues about what was possible and would receive support.[1] When they were convinced that the timing was right,[2] they took decisive steps to exploit the perceived opportunity. This was illustrated by Deutschlandpolitik, where the Kohl government quickly ended cooperation with the old East German leadership, and focused on strategic moves to implement national union without delay. Bonn's pre-crisis, status-quo

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[1]Margaret Hermann, "Leaders and Foreign Policy Decision-Making," p. 90.

[2]Ibid., p. 91.

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oriented Westpolitik was also transformed and centered on convincing the allies that unification was in their interest and deserved their support. The case suggests that a crisis changes the content of foreign policy, as decision-makers adjust their strategy to make it more consistent with the new situation.

A number of characteristics were associated with the opportunity situation. Policy-makers perceived a unique, historic chance to unite the nation that could quickly be lost and might never present itself again. With such high stakes involved, they felt compelled to take fast, decisive action. Perceived opportunity created a great sense of urgency, shortened available decision time, and exerted enormous pressure to act.

Decisive action was also necessary, because policy-makers were convinced that they could achieve great personal and collective benefits, if they managed the crisis correctly. For example, solving the national question virtually assured an election victory for the incumbent administration and could make Kohl the "unity chancellor." This suggests that policy-makers evaluated the crisis in terms of how it served their immediate interests which heightened pressure to make decisive moves.

A crisis affects national goals. As the study

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suggests, it alters and clarifies objectives, and consequently, the content of foreign policy. For example, in Deutschlandpolitik, the events in the GDR changed the main objective from easing the consequences of division to reunification. In Westpolitik, the national question took precedence over security. The crisis also clarified when and how national union would be achieved. Thus, in both policy areas, long-standing priorities were transformed and made more specific by the crisis, changing the content of West German foreign policy.

The transformation of policy objectives suggests that decision-makers in a crisis reassess their goals and priorities. Those considered fundamental are reaffirmed, while others are subordinated.[3] In this process some will be abandoned, as the policy organization focuses on attaining the higher, more important ends.[4] One effect of a crisis is that it reinforces those values considered most fundamental, bringing them into much sharper focus.[5]

The third dimension of theoretical interest was the impact of crisis on consensus. Before the events, broad agreement among the policy elite was rare in Bonn.

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[3]Oneal, p. 307.

[4]Ibid., p. 309.

[5]Ibid., pp. 306-307.

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Pragmatists and conservatives in the administration were divided on many foreign policy issues which burdened the climate in the coalition. However, the crisis united the disparate factions in the Kohl government. In Deutschlandpolitik, both groups agreed on policy objectives, operational aspects, and on the border issue. In Westpolitik, their position also overlapped with everyone agreeing on the overall direction of German foreign policy. The crisis had a unifying effect fostering broad consensus in the policy organization.

Agreement seems to be more likely in an opportunity situation. Because an opportunity is something inherently positive, generating visions of potential benefits and success,[6] policy-makers are motivated to cooperate with one another to achieve the expected gains. The stronger the likelihood of perceived success, the greater the motivation to be associated with the policies that are responsible for achieving it.[7] This explains the unprecedented cohesion in the Kohl government, and why everyone supported the national goal.

Significant opportunity also generates strong pressure to conform. If decisions have favorable

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[6]Jackson and Dutton, pp. 375, 386.

[7]t'Hart, p. 202.

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political and strategic implications,[8] and the window of opportunity is perceived to be small, then rapid consensus becomes a strategic and tactical necessity. Because prompt agreement produces the expected benefits faster, there is considerable pressure for non-conformists to fall in line. Those in Bonn reluctant to support unification were quickly labeled unpatriotic and would be held responsible for missing the historic chance. Because no one could afford that in an election year, even the opposition SPD eventually endorsed unification.

A crisis affects the process and structure of policy-making. When Bonn officials perceived a chance to complete unification, extensive centralization of authority ensued, changing the normal pattern of institutional differentiation that characterized West German foreign policy before the crisis. In this case, contraction of authority followed from perceived opportunity. Because it was of limited duration and made salient the possibility of substantial loss, pressure increased to make faster and more effective decisions.[9] To improve organizational control, the highest echelons

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[8]Ibid., p. 125.

[9]Staw, Sandelands, Dutton, p. 514.

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of the administration became directly involved. The case illustrates that as the importance of decisions increases in the context of an opportunity situation, authority will be shifted upward, and decisions will be made at the top of the organizational hierarchy.[10]

A crisis strengthens the role of the leader. Given the magnitude of the decisions and the urgency of the situation, administration officials readily ceded control to a central decision-maker, who established shorter lines of communication with more direct authority. He harmonized the programs of the various departments to achieve his objective, and ensured that organizational members cooperated with one another to address the crisis.[11] Procedures were established to facilitate coordination of organizational action and prompt implementation. As shown, Chancellor Kohl extended his control over every aspect of the policy process. This changed patterns of interaction, resulting in a hierarchical role structure and greater reliance on the leader.

The case suggests that decision-making in an opportunity situation is dominated by efficiency

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[10]Ibid., p. 513.

[11]Ibid., pp. 508-509, 513.

concerns. When Bonn perceived a chance to complete unification, the entire policy unit was streamlined to improve the speed and productivity of operation. Efficiency concerns dictated that actors who potentially complicated and slowed down the process were excluded, in an attempt to keep the decision unit deliberately small. Domestic and external actors, who were routinely consulted before the crisis, were now given little opportunity to influence initial decision-making. As a result, accepted practices and routines were circumvented, and political deliberation fell short.[12] In this case, overwhelming concern for fast and efficient decisions invited considerable simplification and improvisation.

A crisis affects choice of alternatives and consideration of costs and risks. Unification was pursued as the only solution to the crisis, and other options were not seriously considered. Policy-makers embarked on this course of action without thorough examination of resulting problems, or short and long-term consequences.[13] Unification was an intuitive, emotional choice shaped by the perception of a historic opportunity

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[12]Lehmbruch, "Die deutsche Vereinigung...," p. 587.

[13]Ibid., p. 588.

that could quickly be lost. This invited extraordinary
risk-taking. For example, Kohl's proposal to introduce a
free market system in the GDR overnight illustrated "that
conventional notions of economic rationality were
deliberately set aside."[14] However, he was so determined
to seize the historic opportunity, that "vigorous
decision-making replaced more cautious methods of problem
solving."[15] In this case, perceived opportunity
encouraged more intuitive policy-making and risk-taking.

A crisis minimizes bureaucratic politics by
promoting interagency cooperation. "The extraordinary
challenge constituted by the opportunity to achieve
German unity led to a huge, concerted effort on the part
of the government and the party system."[16] The prospect
of unification raised motivation levels and served as a
spur to action. As a result, all agencies worked in
collaboration to implement the strategy. Such
unprecedented cooperation and professionalism supports
the view that perceived opportunity in a crisis helps
overcome the debilitating effects of bureaucratic
politics.

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[14]Lehmbruch, "The Process of Regime Change...," p. 27.

[15]Seibel, "Necessary Illusions..." p. 118.

[16]Bergsdorff, p. 106.

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A crisis affects policy-makers' range of action to plan and implement foreign policy. It creates a setting that allows them to use political leverage to manipulate domestic and external constraints. In such an environment, Chancellor Kohl and his supporters could offset the impact of coalition politics, the role of the opposition, and the effect of domestic resource limits as serious internal constraints. Government officials could also manipulate external constraints by employing various administrative and political techniques to persuade outside powers to support unification. In effect, policy-makers used systemic and contextual factors to their utmost advantage, which translated into more room to maneuver.[17] As the case suggests, a crisis creates an environment that allows astute actors to promote their favored strategy and to exploit the situation for their own political ends.

Fewer constraints change the character of foreign policy. In this case, it translated into a more assertive, self-assured approach with the Kohl government stressing German national interest. Bonn's handling of the crisis bolstered confidence levels and feelings of control. Administration officials were increasingly

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[17]Habeeb, p. 141.

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certain that they would prevail and that they had the
necessary resources to handle the situation.[18] Chancellor
Kohl personified this sentiment. With each success, he
took bolder and more determined steps to promote the
national objective. Increasingly confident, he took the
lead on unification and pretty much took it for granted
that the U.S. and the Europeans would approve what he
decided.[19] The crisis transformed the pattern of
interactions between Bonn and the allies with the Germans
playing a much more assertive role.

Factors Promoting More Effective Crisis Decision-Making and a Preferred Outcome

The case study identifies factors that facilitate a
more effective crisis response and help policy-makers
achieve a desired outcome. One of the lessons it revealed
is that the policy establishment must make a correct
assessment of the decision context. This is crucial
because it structures the subsequent response. Policy-
makers need to be sensitive to developments in their
domestic and external environment, recognize factors that
favor them, and carefully monitor events. Because this is

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[18]Jackson and Dutton, pp. 375-376.

[19]de Weck, "Mit Faustkeil...," Die Zeit, 9 March
1990, p. 1.

an ongoing process, they will likely have to adjust their initial assessment. After an opportunity is confirmed, subsequent policy should be promptly revised in accordance with the new situation.

To achieve a desired outcome, policy-makers need sharply focused objectives. They must establish the goals of the nation and ensure that they are clearly communicated to organizational subunits.[20] This is important for the development of the response strategy and facilitates more concerted action. The significance of clear objectives was illustrated by the case study. That unification could be achieved so quickly was above all due to the overriding theme of German unification.[21] Decision-makers established a clear goal that focused the attention of the entire policy unit. They then adjusted their strategy to make maximum progress towards the objective. This sharply focused approach allowed the Kohl government to deal with existing opportunities more effectively.

Another factor facilitating more productive decision-making in a crisis is prompt consensus. Government officials must put controversies and personal

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[20]Oneal, p. 321.

[21]Bergsdorff, p. 105.

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agendas aside and reach broad agreement on controversial issues. This requires a willingness to compromise and to put common goals ahead of individual interests. As the case illustrated, the crisis in the GDR generated a level of conformity in West German foreign policy unprecedented in recent historical memory. Everyone in the organization reinforced the preference for unification and expressed disagreements only informally and indirectly.[22] Level of agreement has implications for the policy process and determines the rapidity with which the organization can make decisions.[23] Prompt consensus permits powerful, unified action that quickly applies maximum energy toward a common goal. This maximizes policy-makers' ability to exploit existing opportunities, and suggests that productive decision-making needs to have integrative features.

The urgency of a crisis calls for an effective coping strategy requiring considerable change in the decision-making process and structure. In this case, strong central control and close supervision of the policy organization facilitated a more effective crisis response. Other factors included simplification and

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[22]Gaenslein, p. 177.

[23]Ibid., p. 178.

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improvisation which helped decision-makers exploit the
window of opportunity created by the crisis. As a result,
officials in Bonn chose the most accessible strategies
and focused only on essential aspects. Their approach was
oriented entirely on short-term success criteria[24]--on
whatever brought them closer to national union.

The role of the leader is of special importance. As
the study suggests, certain leadership qualities help the
policy organization cope with a crisis. The leader must
be sensitive to the environment and recognize an
opportunity when it presents itself. He must be prepared
to take risk and act decisively amidst great uncertainty.
A hesitant leader who plays it safe is probably more
likely to miss an opportunity.

At the same time, he must be sensitive to the risks
involved to the interests of the nation, which extend
beyond the immediate crisis situation. The desirability
of pressing an advantage must be carefully weighed
against the prospects of damaging mutually beneficial
relations with other nations, perhaps for many years.[25]
Therefore, to capitalize on a crisis, the leader must
strike a balance between the interests of his nation and

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[24]Lehmbruch, "Die deutsche Vereinigung...," p. 588.

[25]Oneal, p. 326.

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those of other international actors. Chancellor Kohl

accomplished this, which contributed significantly

towards unification. He was quick to recognize the

opportunity, and knew how to exploit it.[26]

A preferred crisis outcome also depends on policy-

makers' skills to manipulate domestic and international

constraints. In this case, domestic limitations were

minimized by coopting potential critics, by reducing the

role of the opposition in the decision-process, and by

controlling information. Overall, the administration

gained an advantage because of a general domestic

environment overwhelmingly in favor of unification.

Policy-makers in Bonn also effectively minimized

external constraints in a number of ways. One was the use

of domestic politics to manipulate the position of

outside powers. For example, officials exploited control

over agenda-setting and organizational resources[27] to

accelerate the momentum for unification. Their goal was

to make the process irreversible. It was a calculated

strategy to exploit the time factor and to take decisive

action before external opposition could become

sufficiently organized. As a result, the Western allies

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[26]Bergsdorff, p. 105.

[27]Moravcsik, p. 15.

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and the international community had little choice but to accept the realities in Germany.

The case highlights other techniques to offset external constraints. Officials manipulated the perception of external powers, with respect to the crisis, by biasing the definition of the problem in a manner that best served their own understanding of the national interest, and which could be reconciled with their institutional preferences.[28] They used events to their utmost advantage, exploiting the general uncertainty created by the crisis for strategic purposes.[29] Positive inducements, i.e., NATO membership and financial concessions to the Soviets, were an attempt to affect the cost-benefit analyses of external powers.[30] Government officials also successfully mobilized international institutions in support of their position, which made it more difficult for the international community to oppose unification.[31] In the end, the Kohl government prevailed because it successfully reshaped external constraints.

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[28]Vertzberger, p. 259.

[29]Moravcsik, p. 28.

[30]Oneal, p. 322.

[31]Snyder and Diesing, p. 204.

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Implications for Theories of German Foreign Policy and Crisis

The case study shows that decision-makers in Bonn did what is often suggested: they thought of the crisis as an opportunity. The power of this advice, derived from visions of benefits and gain it elicited, affected subsequent strategy.[32] For the administration, the crisis was a positive event facilitating progress on the national goal. As a result, officials moved quickly to capitalize on the situation. Within a few short months, the Kohl government had completed unification.

This challenges accepted theories of German foreign policy. In the past, Bonn was often portrayed as a constrained actor who could not pursue its national interest and "depended on the ideas, initiatives, and commitments" of external powers.[33] Foreign policy was a reaction to international forces, beyond the control of domestic policy-makers. However, the case study demonstrates the limited influence of external powers on the evolution of unification.[34] The strategy was formulated and carried out in Bonn, while outside actors

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[32]Jackson and Dutton, p. 386.

[33]Bertram, "The German Question," p. 61.

[34]Ibid., p. 58.

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had little input. During the unification process, domestic political issues dominated,[35] i.e., the circumstances of the domestic electoral situation,[36] and internal unification consistently outpaced efforts to coordinate with external powers. Bonn could regulate opportunity by taking decisive action early on, and by formulating a clear agenda while international opposition was weak. How the Kohl government capitalized on the crisis challenges the constrained actor model and suggests that Bonn can pursue its national interest.

The crisis was a watershed event in German foreign policy with lasting implications. Beyond ending national division, it offered an opportunity to accomplish other things. It allowed Bonn to achieve political and economic objectives by transferring democracy to the East and by replacing a dysfunctional economic system with the efficiency of a social-market democracy. Unification strengthened Germany internally and positioned the country as the dominant player in Europe. The crisis also restructured the superpower arrangement and removed the country from the dividing line of the cold war. With unification completed, Germany emerged as a stronger

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[35]Bergsdorff, p. 99.

[36]Volgy and Schwarz, p. 638.

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global actor with more international flexibility.

The case study has implications for crisis theory. Most consider crisis a dangerous, negative force with the potential to inflict serious harm that constrains policy-makers. This explains the prevailing focus on threat. However, a crisis also presents opportunities for innovative action that astute managers can turn to their advantage.[37] In fact, threat and opportunity coexist in a crisis, challenging policy-makers to neutralize the danger to more fully exploit existing opportunities. As the case shows, they are not completely at the mercy of events, but can shape developments. A competent manager can manipulate a crisis to achieve certain goals that are unattainable in a normal policy environment. The implication is that crises do not simply constrain statesmen, but also create new possibilities for creative statecraft.[38]

A post-cold war international environment should offer more opportunities to exploit crises. The dissolution of the Soviet Union and the end of the superpower standoff means that the structure of world politics changed. Crises take place in a new context

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[37]Oneal, p. 310.

[38]Moravcsik, p. 16.

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where the sense of threat is lower, and states have less
need for military security. As a result, the influence of
major military powers is reduced,[39] while other states
enjoy more room to maneuver. They can now employ their
own sources of national power, i.e., economic strength,
to shape the crisis outcome.[40] The Kohl government
completed unification so quickly because the end of the
cold war enhanced the status of Germany as a major
economic power in Europe, while that of the Four Powers
became much more circumscribed."[41] As a result, Bonn was
in a position to use a crisis as an opportunity to be
exploited.

This occurred in the context of large-scale systemic
change that reduced the global web of constraints.[42]
However, beyond a favorable international environment,
other factors helped Bonn achieve a preferred crisis
outcome, which points to the limitations of the case
study. The Kohl government could capitalize on this
crisis because it enjoyed strong domestic and
international support, also having the economic tools to

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[39]Bertam, "The German Question," p. 58.

[40]Ibid., p. 58.

[41]Ibid., p. 59.

[42]Volgy and Schwarz, p. 639.

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shape the terms of the settlement. A government with a more tenuous domestic position and less economic clout, could probably not exploit a crisis as effectively, especially when there is also strong international opposition and resolve to block it.

As the first post-cold war crisis, the events in the GDR illustrated that in a new international environment, the perception of threat is reduced. Although this does not obviate the need to study future crises, the opportunity dimension should be recognized more fully. As the present case suggests, a crisis exploited as an opportunity can dramatically affect foreign policy and transform national and international relationships.

APPENDIX

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

9-10-1989
The Hungarian government opens the border to Austria allowing thousands of GDR residents in the country to go to the West.

9-13-1989
Formation of the opposition group "New Forum" in the GDR.

9-19-1989
The German embassy in Warsaw, overcrowded with East German refugees, is closed.

9-30-1989
Foreign Minister Genscher and Chancellery Minister Seiters successfully negotiate an agreement with East German officials that allows 6000 GDR residents in the West German embassy in Prague free passage to the West.

10-7-1989
The GDR celebrates its 40th anniversary. In his speech during the festivities, Gorbachev stresses the need for fundamental reform.

10-9-1989
Mass protest in Leipzig starting the tradition of the large Monday march. Each week thousands take to the streets on that day to demand democratic rights in the GDR.

10-18-1989
Erich Honecker is ousted and replaced by Egon Krenz.

11-4-1989
Huge mass demonstration in East-Berlin.

11-6-1989
Mass demonstration in Leipzig and many other East German cities.

11-9-1989
The Berlin Wall and the inner-German border are opened.

11-28-1989
Chancellor Kohl introduces the Ten-Point Plan in the Bundestag.

12-3-1989
After less than a month in office, the newly elected
Politburo resigns. Egon Krenz is stripped of all party
positions.

12-6-1989
Egon Krenz formally resigns and is replaced by Hans
Modrow.

12-9-1989
European Community Summit convenes in Strassbourg. The
member delegations affirm the right to self-
determination, but remain skeptical of German
unification.

12-11-1989
During the weekly Monday demonstration in Leipzig
thousands demand reunification.

19-12-1989
Chancellor Kohl visits the GDR and speaks in front of the
"Frauenkirche" in Dresden. Hundreds of thousands come to
see the Chancellor. The call for reunification
intensifies.

12-22-1989
Chancellor Kohl and Hans Modrow open the Brandenburg
Gate.

1-14-1990
Mass demonstrations in several GDR cities against the
ruling SED.

1-20-1990
The SED changes its name to PDS (party of democratic
socialism).

1-28-1990
Modrow and opposition groups agree on holding democratic
elections in the GDR on 18 March 1990.

2-1-1990
US Secretary of State James Baker names four principles
for conducting unification. Modrow declares his support
for a German confederation that is to be neutral.

2-5-1990
An agreement to form the "Alliance for Germany" is
announced. This electoral formation is comprised of

conservative East German parties including the East-CDU, the DSU, and the DA.

2-7-1990
The Kohl government forms the cabinet committee "German Unity" and offers the GDR immediate negotiations for economic and currency union.

2-10-1990
Chancellor Kohl makes an official visit to Moscow. Gorbachev declares it is up to the Germans to solve the national question.

2-13-1990
Foreign minister conference in Ottawa. The US, the Soviet Union, France, Britain, the FRG, and the GDR reach agreement on 2+4, a framework for addressing the external aspects of German unification. Modrow visits Bonn and makes an emergency request for 15 billion Marks which is denied.

2-20-1990
An all-German commission begins deliberations on how to prepare economic and currency union.

2-21-1990
Interior Minister Schaeuble visits Washington and discusses administration plans to pursue full political union based on Article 23 of the West German constitution.

3-1-1990
Interior Minister Schaeuble introduces a discussion paper on how to implement full political union.

3-5-1990
The working group "State Structures and Public Order" in the interior ministry tasked to work out political union gives its first progress report. The expert commission preparing economic and currency union meets for the second time.

3-13-1990
Third meeting of the expert commission for economic and currency union.

3-18-1990
Free elections in the GDR. The Bonn-sponsored conservative "Alliance for Germany" scores a spectacular

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victory.

3-20-1990
The Kohl government formally announces that economic,
currency, and social union with the GDR is to be
completed by summer 1990.

4-12-1990
Lothar de Maziere is elected minister-president in the
GDR.

4-19-1990
De Maziere declares his support for pursuing unity based
on article 23 of the West German constitution, but
demands that the GDR must be treated as an equal partner.

4-21-1990
Start of the EC foreign minister conference in Dublin.
The member nations endorse German unification and call
it a positive factor for Europe.

4-24-1990
De Maziere visits Bonn. He and Chancellor Kohl agree on
July 1, 1990 as the official target date for economic and
currency union.
4-27-1990
First round of official negotiations between Bonn and
East Berlin to work out a state treaty for economic and
currency union.

4-29-1990
Second official negotiating session for economic and
currency union.

5-4-1990
Washington announces the suspension of plans to modernize
short-range nuclear missiles in Europe.

5-5-1990
First 2+4 meeting in Bonn. Shevardnadze proposes to
decouple the internal and external aspects of
unification.

5-15-1990
Chancellor Kohl announces that his government plans to
hold all-German elections in December 1990 or January
1991.

5-16-1990
The Kohl government and the states reach agreement on a financing formula for unification--the fund "German Unity."

5-18-1990
The treaty for economic and currency union is signed by representatives from Bonn and East Berlin.

5-23-1990
First reading of the treaty in the Bundestag. The West German parliament also passes a motion to give Berlin deputies full voting power. They can now be directly elected to the Bundestag.

5-28-1990
The CDU/CSU Bundestagsfraktion and the CDU/DA Fraktion of the East German Volkskammer meet in the Berlin Reichstag for a first joint session.

6-13-1990
The East-CDU, the DA, the DSU, and the Liberals in the GDR Volkskammer declare their support for all-German elections in December 1990.

6-17-1990
The DSU faction of the East German Volkskammer makes a motion for the immediate accession of the GDR to the FRG.

6-21-1990
Bundestag and Volkskammer issue a joint declaration confirming the Oder-Neisse border. The Bundestag ratifies the treaty for economic and currency union.

6-22-1990
Second 2+4 meeting in East Berlin. Shevardnadze proposes dual membership of Germany in NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Bonn grants a 5 billion DM credit to the Soviet Union.

7-1-1990
Economic and currency union goes into effect.

7-5-1990
NATO summit in London. Delegates agree on significant changes in the alliance, i.e., the political component is to receive greater weight, forward defense will be revised, etc.

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7-6-1990
First round of formal negotiations between the two German states for drafting the unity treaty.

7-9-1990
Summit of the seven leading industrial nations in Houston.

7-16-1990
Chancellor Kohl and Gorbachev reach agreement that the unified Germany can be a member of NATO.

7-17-1990
Third 2+4 meeting in Paris.

7-26-1990
The Kohl government reaches agreement that the first all-German election will be held on 2 December 1990.

7-30-1990
Second round of negotiations for the unity treaty.

7-31-1990
Chancellor Kohl and de Maziere meet in Kohl's vacation residence in Austria.

8-3-1990
Minister President de Maziere suggests that the GDR accede to the FRG on 14 October 1990 and that all-German elections be held on the same day.

8-6-1990
The first draft of the unity treaty is finalized.

8-15-1990
Farmers in the GDR stage a huge mass demonstration protesting the agricultural policies of the de Maziere government.

8-19-1990
The SPD leaves the coalition in the GDR.

8-20-1990
Third round of negotiations for the unity treaty.

8-23-1990
Volkskammer votes to accede to the FRG on 3 October 1990 based on article 23 of the West German constitution.

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8-30-1990
Fourth and final negotiating session for the unity
treaty.

8-31-1990
Unity treaty is signed.

9-5-1990
First reading of the unity treaty in the Bundestag.

9-12-1990
Last 2+4 meeting in Moscow. The participants conclude the
external aspects of unification and sign the 2+4 treaty.

9-18-1990
The German constitutional court in Karlsruhe rejects a
suit by eight conservative members of the CDU/CSU
Fraktion against the unity treaty.

9-20-1990
Bundestag and Volkskammer pass the unity treaty.

9-21-1990
The Bundesrat passes the unity treaty.

10-1-1990
West- and East CDU formally merge at the Hamburg party
congress. Kohl is reelected party chairman, de Maziere is
his deputy. CSCE foreign minister conference in New York.

10-3-1990
West and East Germany are formally unified.

10-12-1990
Assassination attempt on Interior Minister Schaeuble. He
survives, but is paralyzed from the waist down and
permanently confined to a wheel chair.

10-14-1990
State elections in the five new German Laender.

12-2-1990
First all-German Bundestag election.

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