CHAPTER V

OPINIONS OF KEY ALLIES REGARDING GERMAN UNIFICATION

German unification upset the political equilibrium in many of Western and Eastern European political establishments. An analysis of the attitudes to reunification by Germany’s neighbors and allies reveals that the opinions of each were colored by the histories of their individual relationships with Germany as well as by individual perceptions of what a united Germany would entail. Hence, the British, French and the Soviets were hardly enthralled by the prospects of German unification.

The French had been occupied by Germany as many as three times. Despite the close collaboration that existed between the two during the Cold War years, there remained an essential lack of warmth and natural empathy. This was due to the fact that the French never really got over their mistrust of the Germans. As unification became inevitable, French fears were not so much about a Fourth Reich assuming control of the world as they were about German economic superiority. That this superiority would be used to its advantage in the nascent democracies of Eastern Europe at the expense of France. Later, France supported German unification in the hope that a Franco-German entente would edge out the USA’s role in Europe.

The British too did not have very good memories of Germany. The British response was perhaps the most vociferous and suspicious. Not only did historical memories of the Third Reich contribute to this, but also Mrs. Thatcher’s personal feelings were responsible for the attitude. The British felt that they would be cut out of a leadership role in Europe if a United Germany came about. The Soviets did not support unification as they were still guided by the mentality of the Cold War. They
did not want to lose Germany entirely to the West. So they tried to tempt the Germans with ideas of a neutral Germany, which however fell through. As events gathered momentum, the Soviet President realized that the issue could fall a victim to popular passion. Following classic *realpolitik*, he gave in to the need of the hour and extracted economic aid from Kohl, in return for unification.

The Americans had not been as affected by the War as had been the Europeans. Their attitude towards Germany was not conditioned so much by visions of the Third Reich as by the need to take advantage of a developing situation. It goes to the credit of the USA that, they were perhaps the first to recognize the turn of events and support it, rather than go against the tide. This is display of diplomacy at its highest level. It is perhaps the interplay of the genuine desire to unify Germany with the desire to outdo the Soviet Union that made the USA behave the way it did. This is why Germany today is firmly anchored in the West. This chapter examines in detail the responses of the four allies to German unification and looks at the current state of the relations between Germany and the Four Allies.

**British views on German unification**

In Britain, the then Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher and her government harbored fears that German unification would accelerate European unification, quickening and deepening the gap between London and the continent. Nicholas Ridley, the Trade and Commerce Minister, in the Thatcher government, was forced to step down in the summer of 1990, in the wake of politically incorrect remarks he made about European Economic Union being a German design for the domination of Europe. In an interview to a British newspaper, *The Spectator*, Ridley spoke passionately against German hegemony in the EEC and the control it practiced over the European
economy. He called the French *poodles of the Germans*, and said that the British would never allow themselves to be bossed over by the Germans.\footnote{Evgenios Michail, *After the War and After the Wall, British Perceptions of Germany*, www.sussex.ac.uk/history/documents/3_michail_after_the_war_and_after_the_wall_pdf#, accessed on 23/9/06 at 1300hrs}

Thatcher, for her part, candidly asserted her disagreement and gave the impression of, as her critics called her, an *unreconstructed Germanophobe to the boot*.\footnote{Margaret Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years*, Harper Collins, London, 1995, p.769.} She disagrees with, “the tendency to regard the German Problem as something too delicate for well brought up politicians to discuss. The problem had several elements which could only be addressed if non Germans considered them openly and constructively.” She adds, “I do not believe in collective guilt: it is individuals who are morally accountable for their actions. But I do believe in national character, which is molded by a range of complex factors: the fact that national caricatures are often absurd and inaccurate does not detract from that”. Continuing to express her views on German unification, she also says, “Since unification came under Bismarck, Germany has veered unpredictably between aggression and self doubt. Germany’s immediate neighbors, such as the French and the Poles are more deeply aware of this than the British, let alone the Americans; though the same concern often leads Germany’s immediate neighbors to refrain from comments that may appear insensitive. The Russians are acutely conscious of all these too, though in their case the need for German credit and investment has so far had a quiescent effect. Perhaps the first people to recognize the German Problem are the modern Germans themselves, the vast majority of whom are determined that Germany should not be a great power able to exert itself at others’ expense. The true origin of the German *angst* is the agony of self knowledge.”\footnote{Ibid., p.791.}
She was skeptical as to whether Germany could be bridled by locking it up in a Federal Europe. In her opinion, Germany was more likely to dominate within that framework, as, “a reunited Germany is simply too big and powerful to be just another player in Europe.”

Thatcher gives the impression that Chancellor Kohl was an opportunist, “instead of reining back expectations, he was busy raising them”. (The comment was made in the wake of Kohl’s enthusiasm after fall of the Berlin Wall). She initially urged Chancellor Kohl’s government to be patient on unification; later she joined the United States in its pro-unity stance with reluctance.

Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher extended an invitation to six independent experts on Germany to offer their thoughts on Germany’s future. Four British scholars of varying ideological persuasions – Lord Dacre (Hugh Trevor-Roper), Norman Stone, George Urban and Timothy Garton Ash – were joined by two eminent American historians, Gordon Craig and Fritz Stern. The meeting, held at Chequers on March 24, 1990, was a free-for-all in which many things were said that were never meant for publication. Nevertheless, a document was leaked to ‘The Independent’ and published on July 15, 1990. Only the negative comments were circulated and one sentence attained special notoriety: “Some even less flattering attributes were also mentioned [at the meeting] as an abiding part of the German character: in alphabetical order, angst, aggressiveness, assertiveness, bullying, egotism, inferiority complex, sentimentality.”

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473 Ibid.
474 Ibid. p.793.
The British Prime Minister said: “Initially, it also seemed likely that the Soviets would be strongly opposed to the re-emergence of a powerful Germany, particularly one reunited on the West’s terms and accompanied by the downfall of the Soviet system, the loss of the role of superpower and the decay of communism.” Also, the Soviets “may have calculated that a reunited Germany would return a left of center government which would achieve their long term objective of neutralizing and denuclearizing West Germany.”

For Britain and for European politics, Mrs. Thatcher anticipated a new variant of the German problem: “I also saw at once that it had profound implications for the balance of power in Europe, where a unified Germany would be dominant. There was a new and different kind of ‘German Question’ which had to be addressed openly and formally – I did so.” Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher “preferred to call it the ‘four-plus-two’ that is the Berlin four powers and the two Germanies.” It appeared that the British Prime Minister was the sole other politician, besides the Bush/Kohl coalition, to offer a reasonable alternative concept for German unification and the embedding of the process into a European framework. Margaret Thatcher’s point of departure is identical with the American one: “There was some fear that Germany – first under the spell of Mr. Gorbachev and later with the lure of reunification – might have moved away from the Western alliance towards neutralism.” In contrast to the Americans, Mrs. Thatcher retained an ambiguous perception of the Germans…“Germany has veered unpredictably between aggression and self-

476 www.germanembassyottawa.org/gfp/index/html also, Thatcher, The Downing Street Years, p.792.
478 Albrecht Ulbricht, How the Four Powers Accomplished German Unification, An Assessment of Recent Findings, jbonline@topica.com, accessed on 12/10/06 at 2200hrs.
doubt…Germany is thus, by its very nature, a destabilizing rather than a stabilizing force in Europe."^479

In the early stages of the process, Thatcher favored the continued existence of two Germanies: “It seemed to me that a truly democratic East Germany would soon emerge and that the question of reunification was a separate one.”^480 She repeats this position in a message to President Bush before the 18th November 1989 EU summit…“that the priority should be to see genuine democracy established in East Germany and that German reunification was not something to be addressed at present.”^481 The then US President George Bush, refers to an incident where, Mrs. Thatcher pulled out a map out of her handbag and traced the old 1937 borders of Germany and territories now in Poland. She remarked,” Look at Germany! Reunification means Gorbachev is lost…a unified Germany would be a country of eighty million in the middle of Europe, one with a strong balance of trade. We can’t keep it from eventually happening if they want it. But for now concentrate on democracy. That will solve some of the basic problems and will not raise the fears later that will be aroused now.”^482

Bush assesses the British views on German unification as follows:

_Thatcher’s lack of sympathy for and even distrust of reunification was obvious…and was probably rooted deeply in Britain’s stormy past relationship with Germany. Britain had long attempted to play keeper of the continental balance of power, ensuring that no single state came to dominate Europe. It had fought Napoleonic France, Imperial Germany and the Third Reich for ever higher

^479 Ibid.
^480 Ulbricht Albrecht, op. cit.
^481 Ibid.
stakes, at ever higher costs and its economic and political influence had diminished as a result of the two world wars. Since 1945, Britain had approached the German Problem through developing close ties with West Germany and by depending on NATO and its special ties with the USA to balance any potential German threat. Reunification raised serious questions for the future. Was Germany reformed or would it seek to dominate Europe once again? West Germany was already the engine of the European Community. A united Germany would overshadow Europe, and accepting it meant conceding European preeminence to Bonn. Bush does not agree with Thatcher’s views on German unification, though he did share her worry over Gorbachev. Scowcroft on the other hand, sympathized with Thatcher.  

In January 1990, Bush met the British foreign Secretary, Douglas Hurd, who said that Thatcher was reluctant to endorse German unification. He calls her a reluctant reunifier. The British were not keen to see any new concentration of power on the European continent, whether from the USSR or Germany. In 1989, former British Prime Minister Edward Heath said “naturally, we expressed our support of German re-unification because we knew it would never happen.” In September 1989, Thatcher expressed her dismay to Gorbachev, stopping over at Moscow on the way from a visit to Japan. She had explained to him that although, NATO had traditionally made statements supporting Germany’s aspirations to be united, in practice it was apprehensive, to this Gorbachev had confirmed that, “the Soviet Union did want German unification either.” British Foreign Office paper of October 1989 noted that previous British governments tended to refer to the goal of self-determination rather than reunification. The paper doubted whether all obstacles to

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483 Ibid, pp.192, 193.
reunification could be overcome. Yet, they did not want to alienate the Germans; so “better stick to the careful phrasings of the past” was suggested.\textsuperscript{487} Thatcher also stated in November 1989 that the speed with which these changes were taking place ‘carries its own risks of instability.’\textsuperscript{488}

Thatcher, in contrast to the Bush/Kohl approach, viewed the problem from a pan-European perspective. “The wishes and interests of Germany’s neighbours and other powers must be fully taken into account.” Thatcher was especially afraid of a potential hegemonic role of a reunited Germany in Europe (“it is simply too big and powerful to be just another player within Europe”).\textsuperscript{489}

A Federal Europe, the ties of the Atlantic Alliance, appeared insufficient to Mrs. Thatcher to contain the new Germany. She mistrusted the ability of “a Federal Europe which would ‘bind in’ the new Germany to a new structure within which its preponderance would be checked.” Her solution was the classical British response – the construction of a new balance of power. The core idea of this new design: “Only the military and political engagement of the United States in Europe and close relations between the other strongest sovereign states in Europe – Britain and France – are sufficient to balance German power.”\textsuperscript{490}

This new formation – a power triangle between the U.S., Britain and France pitted against a reunited Germany – would have required far-reaching changes in the present set-up of European politics. It would have meant the end of the Franco-German special relationship, hitherto the cornerstone of the European Union. The EU would turn into “a looser, more open community.”

\textsuperscript{488} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 108.
\textsuperscript{489} Albrecht, \textit{Op.Cit.}.
\textsuperscript{490} \textit{Ibid.}also Thatcher, \textit{Op.Cit.}, p791.
In the field of security, Thatcher’s concept would have meant the re-introduction of an old Gaullist idea – NATO directorate of the three powers (this may have strengthened the Prime Minister’s conviction that her idea would be attractive to the French; she also noted that President Mitterrand was driven by a fear of the consequences of German domination). A nice side-effect of the concept would be that Britain would be brought more to the fore of European politics and that the Bush idea of Germany as the U.S.A’s main European “partner in leadership” would be twisted into a revival of the older Anglo-American special relationship. “A Britain with armed forces which had the skills and a government which had the resolve to fight alongside America seemed to be the real European ‘partner in leadership’.”

Margaret Thatcher convincingly calculated also that the Soviets would be more willing to follow her approach than the American alternative. “Nothing was more likely to stir up old fears in the Soviet Union – fears which the hardliners would be anxious to exploit – than the prospect of a reunited, powerful Germany, possibly with renewed ambitions on its Eastern flank.” Gorbachev, who indeed had to cope with “hardliners” during the summer of 1990, was more likely to concede unification according to the Thatcher scheme than to swallow the American concept.

Reunification was to have been organized in the Thatcher concept in a step-by-step modus via the CSCE, which “would provide a basis for restricting any unwelcome attempts to change borders in Eastern Europe as a whole but it would not stand in the way of German reunification.” “The CSCE framework…would not only help avoid Soviet isolation but would help balance German

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491 Albrecht, Ibid.
492 Ibid.
dominance in Europe.”493 The basic dividing line between the American and the British approach, thus, is whether one can trust the Germans. The optimistic answer corresponds to the Bush policy; the sceptical one to the Thatcher concept. One should not be too quick to denounce the British approach as old-fashioned. It reflects the core ideas of the Political Realism School to a greater extent than the American position.

Margaret Thatcher was not just playing with ideas. She attributed a different agenda to the process of political unification in the EU, a possible Franco-German axis. She says that, “behind it (EU and its political integration), lay a special Franco German agenda. The French wanted to curb the German power. For them, it was partly the price for quick reunification on their own terms with all the benefits that would accrue from a Community membership and partly a demonstration that the new Germany would not behave like the old one” under Bismarck and Hitler.494 The German interest in rapid reunification certainly was dominated by a high emotional content, without giving much regard to questions of future European politics. And it might be concluded that the intra-European consequences of the Bush/Kohl concepts also had not been high on the American agenda.

The concluding pages of the chapter on German reunification in Thatcher’s book are full of arguments that, in principle, her policy on German reunification had not been wrong. The consequences of unification reveal that. West Germany’s absorption of its next door relation has been economically disastrous, and that disaster has spread to the rest of the European Community via the Bundesbank’s high interest rates and the ERM. We have all paid the price in unemployment and recession. East German political immaturity has affected the whole country in the form of a

493 Ibid.
revived neo Nazi and xenophobic extremism. Internationally it has created a German state so large and dominant that it cannot easily fit into the new architecture of Europe.\textsuperscript{495}

Mrs. Thatcher even saw a future for her defeated concept (“It should not be beyond the capacity of a future British Prime Minister to rebuild an Anglo-French entente as a counter-balance to German influence”).\textsuperscript{496} In her memoirs, the Prime Minister refers repeatedly to statements by the French President that he was fully in line with her assessment, but in the end “he made the wrong decision for France” and did not break the intimate relationship with the Germans. In her own words “abandoning the Franco German Axis“, proved to be a difficult “wrench for him” (Mitterrand).\textsuperscript{497} Margaret Thatcher found: “The trouble was that in reality there was no force in Europe which could stop reunification happening. He agreed with my analysis of the problems but he said he was at a loss as to what we could do.”\textsuperscript{498}

United Germany has ushered in three unwelcome developments. Rush to European Federalism as a way to tie down Germany, maintenance of a Franco German bloc for the same purpose, gradual withdrawal of the USA on the assumption that a German led Federal Europe will be both stable and capable of looking after its own defense. She prophesized that, a Federal Europe would be both unstable internally and an obstacle to harmonious arrangements—in trade, politics and defense—with America externally; that a Franco German bloc meant essentially a German bloc with France

\textsuperscript{495} Thatcher, \textit{Op.Cit.}, p.814
\textsuperscript{496} \textit{Ibid}, p.815.
\textsuperscript{497} \textit{Ibid} p.791.
\textsuperscript{498} \textit{Ibid}.p.798.
as a junior partner, and, as a result, America would first bring its legions home and subsequently, find itself at odds with the new European player in world politics.499

Britain, like France, witnessed the disappearance of its empire in the post-war era, leading it to become a middle-level power alongside its special partner, the United States. While Britain was losing its empire, the Bundesrepublik was experiencing its Wirtschaftswunder (economic miracle), which placed it well ahead of Britain as an economic power by the late 1950s. Unification made it certain that it was only a matter of time until Germany superseded Britain as a political power as well.

The fear of Germany persists after unification. In 1995, Lord Tebbit, former chairman of the Conservative party, commented that “Great Britain does not want to be ruled by fax from Frankfurt.”500

The CSA survey published in the ‘New York Times’ on February 20, 1990 shows over 60% of British respondents favourably disposed toward German unity and 20% supporting it very strongly. What distinguished the British from the French case was the measured, decidedly positive tone of the British press toward unification. In stark contrast to the French, the British papers of record (The Times, The Independent and The Guardian) gave not only an immensely thorough account of events but ran balanced editorials that were anything but ‘Germanophobic’. There were some notable exceptions. Most significant was Cruise O’Brien’s piece “Beware, the Reich is reviving” published in ‘The Times’ on October 31, 1989. O’Brien paints a bellicose and expansionist German

500 Ibid.
monster which, as the Fourth Reich, will pick up where its ill-fated predecessor left off. This article met with severe criticism not only in letters to ‘The Times’ but in other newspapers as well.\footnote{Merkovits and Reich, \textit{Op.Cit.}, p. 132.}

Nicholas Ridley, minister of industry and commerce, accused the Germans of engaging in a racket which, among many devious things was primarily “designed to take over the whole of Europe.” Ridley was particularly bitter about Germany’s economic prowess, which, in his interpretation, used to bully others to accommodate Germany’s needs. Ridley also feared losing sovereignty to a new European bureaucracy, which would rule the British from Brussels. Such concerns, always pronounced in Britain, subsequently became general across Europe in the wake of the Maastricht Treaty concluded in December 1991. Fear of an all-powerful and unaccountable Europe has, perhaps not by chance, accompanied the growth of German power on the continent.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, p. 133.}

In ‘The Independent’, Edward Steen pondered whether “selfish and tedious consumerism” in Germany might some day “give way to a powerful new strain of German nationalism, for long suppressed by a war guilt now only felt, if at all, by old men.” Roger Berthoud, also in ‘The Independent’, provided a fascinating critique of Thatcher’s appeal to nationalism and anti-Europeanism, which he saw as not too distant from dangerous appeals to various forms of neo-nationalism in Eastern Europe and in Germany itself.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}}

In conclusion, the British reaction seemed similar to the French reaction. There were voices of genuine joy and positive reactions from a substantial segment of the British public as measured by opinion surveys. However, there also emerged fears and resentments, which can be attributed to the

\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}}
trauma of the once powerful: Britain had been a major imperial player and did not take kindly to losing its privileged status. It resented a former enemy and constant rival emerging as a more important actor on the European, perhaps even the global, scene.

Thatcher’s statement in February 1990 reveals clearly the British fears regarding the unification of Germany. “Germany would be the Japan of Europe but worse than Japan. Japan is an offshore power with an enormous trade surplus. Germany is in the heart of a continent of countries, most of which she has attacked and occupied. Germany has colossal wealth and surpluses. So we must include a bigger country in the political area...If we are not careful, the Germans will get in peace what Hitler couldn’t get in war...It is not enough to anchor Germany in the EC that would become Germany’s new empire: the future empires will be economic empires.”

“All my life, all our problems, our wars have come from mainland Europe. As opposed to America and Britain, Germany has a different view point, a different philosophy”.

Chancellor Helmut Kohl, in his memoirs says that,” Margaret Thatcher always gave me headaches. Above all, during the process of German unification in 1990, she played an unfriendly and dangerous game”

In another vein he remarks,” dealing with Mrs. Thatcher was like taking alternative hot and cold baths.” He feels that she was uneasy about unification and wanted status quo.

505 Margaret Thatcher, www.wsows.org accessed on 21/3/06 at 1400hrs
Current German British Relations.

The victory of the Red/Green coalition in the 1998 Federal elections created a sense of optimism for improved British-German relations. The electoral success of Labour and the SPD/Greens represented real change in the political landscape of Germany and the UK. Closer relations between the two states presented Germany with an opportunity to break out of the strategic straightjacket of the Franco-German tandem and raised the possibility of a more engaged British European policy. The buoyancy of this reinvigorated relationship was reinforced by the development in 1999 of the Third Way/Neue Mitte agenda masterminded by Peter Mandelson of the Labour Party and Bodo Hombach of the SPD. Whilst the Third Way presented a relatively acceptable narrative for New Labour, the Neue Mitte sparked heated discussion within the SPD and failed to have any significant impact. Improved British-German relations opened up the potential of a strategic triangle emerging between London, Berlin and Paris within the EU. 508

The period 1998-2002 witnessed relatively strong relations between Berlin and London. Good bilateral relations were reinforced by initial European and the American efforts to forge a common strategy to confront the rise of international terrorism after September 11, 2001. Germany's solidarity with the USA after the terrorist attacks on Washington and New York was most visibly demonstrated in its active military engagement in Afghanistan. This signaled a new German readiness to play its part in international crisis management which already began with the Red-Green government's decision to participate in the military operation in Kosovo in 1999. Germany also played a major role in getting the Common European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) off the ground. ESDP was a major pillar of Blair's determination for the UK to play a more influential

508 Missionner Alistair, www.deutcheaussenspolitik.de/digest/zeige_oped_php?was=24 10/11/05
role in the EU under the concept of 'step change' in British European policy. Germany's support for this initiative was vital for its success.509

By contrast to the rather promising developments during Schroeder's first term in office, his second term witnessed two main divergences, centered on foreign and economic policy: First, in terms of foreign policy London and Berlin have found themselves on opposite sides of the argument on a number of key foreign policy issues which have emerged since September 11, 2001. Of central importance has been the Iraq war of 2003. Schröder’s decision to make Iraq a central issue in his bid for re-election in 2002 greatly complicated German-American relations which in turn reverberated in relations between London and Berlin. On the positive side of the foreign policy agenda, Germany, the UK and France have demonstrated considerable cohesion in their dealings with Teheran over Iran's determination to develop nuclear weapons.510

Second, on social and economic issues there has been a noticeable chilling in British-German relations centering on British calls for a reform of EU economic and social policy. Following the failure to ratify the European Constitution in France and the Netherlands, the UK sought to pick up the baton in European policy and attempted to outline an agenda for EU reform. The UK's work program for its European Council Presidency in the second half of 2005 has focused on enhancing trade within the EU and with the developing world. In an article entitled 'EU money for jobs, not cows' in Bild on June 21, 2005, Blair sought to convince the German electorate of his strategy by stressing that the EU spends seven times more on agriculture than on the combined investment in research and development, science, technology, training and innovation. This elicited a frosty

509 Ibid.
510 Ibid.
response from Schröder the next day in the same newspaper which stressed the 'selfishness' of British policy.511

Schröder’s last battle cry against the so-called Anglo-Saxon economic model at the informal EU summit at Hampton Court in October 2005 was a clear sign of Schroeder's frustrations over Blair's reform agenda for the EU. Part of this frustration is the result of what Charlie Jeffery and Willie Paterson have dubbed the 'resource crunch' facing Germany. Due to high levels of unemployment and low rates of growth Germany has been left with less room for manoeuvre in finding agreement on the EU level with its major partners. Schroeder's presence at the Hampton Court conference also served as a snub to the designated Chancellor Angela Merkel and to Tony Blair who had hoped that Merkel's rise to power would signal a chance for improved relations between London and Berlin on economic issues. Recently, the main issue of contention in EU economic affairs has been the issue of the British EU rebate. Blair's offer to put the British rebate on the table as part of a wider renegotiation of the EU budget, particularly in the field of agricultural subsidies, further complicated relations between Schroeder and Blair, as Schroeder sided with Chirac in rejecting Blair's proposal.

**British reactions to the German Federal Elections in September 2005**

Germany's recent election results are interpreted harshly by the British: they see the standstill as a sign of Germany's fear of the future - especially of the ever-increasing globalization. Even left-liberal newspapers like the *Guardian* are appalled by the apparent inability of the Germans to reform their economy, which has steadily been approaching a crisis-point for years. "This election was marked by deep pessimism, profound disillusion with the big parties and volatile voters who recognized the need for change but feared the effects it may bring," commented the paper.

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Germans, the paper continued, essentially overlooked the dismal economic record of Gerhard Schröder's government. Schröder's stubborn legacy of near zero growth and 11 percent unemployment -- the highest since the disastrous 1930s -- is painful proof he did not move far or fast enough. This meant a ballooning budget deficit that made nonsense of attempts to maintain EU-wide fiscal discipline and hobbled the wider European economy, just when it needed to raise its game in the face of global competition.  

The British also feel that the election results confirm their suspicion that Angela Merkel is not, in fact, in the mould of Margaret Thatcher, with whom the conservative German candidate was often compared. (The Guardian and the Economist newspapers both came out in favour of Merkel in the run-off with Schroeder. Angela Merkel was characterized within the British media as the "new Thatcher" who would introduce a radical reform package to jolt Germany out of its economic malaise.) In addition, Merkel with her more pro-Atlanticist views and economic reform agenda was considered to be a potentially improved partner for Blair in Europe signaling a new period of German-British pragmatism. Much of what Merkel said during the election campaign on European issues sounded decidedly 'British' in tone (most notably in terms of reinforcing subsidiarity and pursuing economic reforms). This does not include, of course, the CDU/CSU’s opposition to Turkish EU membership which is strongly advocated by the Blair government.

According to the Times of London, Merkel "while losing voters in the former East Germany, was unable to counter the impression in the West that she, herself, was as a naïve East German.” At the

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512 Hüetlin Thomas From Export Leader To Angstweltmeister, www.spiegel.de/international/0,1518,37675,00html 20/9/05 accessed on 23/9/05 at 1500hrs . Also see, It's A Girl, Die Tage Zeitung quoted inwww.signandsight.com/intoday'sfeulletons/404.html 11/10/05 accessed on 12/10/05 at 1300hrs IST.On the Coalition government see Analysis Of German Power Struggle, www.news.bbc.co.uk/i/hi/world/europe/4252382stm Analysis Of German Coalition Deal, , www.news.bbc.co.uk/i/hi/world/europe/4438212stm
same time, the British press uniformly agrees that the Germans made a mistake in rejecting Merkel and her no-nonsense reform platform. "Her timing was off, but her intentions were spot-on." 513

Unsurprisingly, Schröder does not earn rave reviews in Britain: his policies are judged to be nostalgic and dispiriting, rather than representative of the future-oriented perspective needed for Germany, Europe's largest economy, to thrive in the modern, globalized world. The British perspective on the German election can be summed up by three short words in the "Daily Telegraph": "What a mess." Indeed, one gets the feeling that the British no longer believe that a normal doctor would be of any service to "the sick man of Europe." Rather, after sifting through the country's chaotic election results, the British are convinced that the Germans need to call a psychiatrist 514

Any expectations that a Merkel victory would usher in a government committed to radical reforms within Germany and the EU were dashed when the election results became clear.

Chancellor Merkel met the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, on 24 November 2005. Mr Blair assured Ms Merkel that “Britain would use its best endeavours to get a Budget deal at the December Council”. They discussed foreign policy issues such as Iran and Afghanistan, domestic economic reform programmes and certain EU directives, such as the REACH (Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals) Directive, the Services Directive and the Working Time Directive. Mr. Blair said he believed “that over the time to come we will have a very good and close working relationship, not just between our two countries but between ourselves”. 515

Chancellor Merkel emphasised that “the new German Federal Government, has a great interest in

513 Hüetlin, Ibid.
514 Ibid.
maintaining good friendly relations with France, but not just with France, but particularly also with the United Kingdom”. 516

She pledged that the new German Government would “do everything possible to make Europe capable of acting”. She thought that the British and German Governments had found common ground in their insistence on being both competitive and “socially strong”. In reply to a question about the German view of the British argument that any surrender on the UK rebate should be linked to reform of the Common Agriculture Policy, Chancellor Merkel said: “I want to have success and the situation of each country has to be taken into account. If anybody forgets one country's interests then you won't get any success”. 517

The British Prime Minister was asked whether he would now aim to change the nature of relationships within the EU, moving away from the Franco-German engine and towards a better cognizance of the UK and the new Eastern European States. Mr. Blair replied: Now, in respect of the relationships inside Europe. France and Germany have had, and always will have, a strong relationship, and that is in the interests of Europe. In a Europe of 25 of course, however, all countries will have different sets of relationships within the European Union. I have always expressed the view, and express it again now, that it is important for Britain and France to work closely together and of course our relationship with Germany is immensely important too. In the end the whole point about the European Union is that we benefit if we are working together. In these challenges of economic change, it is in Britain's interests that Europe meets them together because then the British economy is stronger and the standard of living of British people is higher. So over the years this has been a very familiar argument which is to push all countries into choices

516 Press conference Notice, 24/11/05, Ibid.
517 Ibid.
about who they have as partners and who they don't. But it genuinely should not be like that because Europe, especially at 25, will only work if the countries, and in particular the major countries within Europe work closely together and I think there is every chance that that will happen.518

Geoff Hoon, British Minister for Europe feels that there are three areas where the UK and Germany can work as partners successfully. The first is energy. Over 50% of the cheap and easily accessible oil and gas is now in the Middle East. And the EU, already importing over 50% of its energy needs it may go upto 70% by 2025. Hence, the EU needs to engage actively with those countries that will meet those future energy needs. It needs a direct dialogue with producers on energy. This needs to supplement the normal bilateral relationships that EU members have with suppliers, because it is obvious that an EU seen to be representing 460 million consumers will have more power in the market than if each member state acts independently. This can only be done by creating the right business environment within the EU. A second area where the UK and Germany share a common view is the current round of WTO trade negotiations – the Doha Development Agenda (DDA). The EU must continue to show the leadership it has done right from the beginning of the Round and help broker an early agreement. The third area is ESDP and defense. The relationship between Britain and Germany in matters of security has always been close. He pointed out that, both the countries share the view that key European priorities must involve internal and external security. EU must be ready to meet its obligations by delivering troops on the ground.519

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518 Ibid.
519 Hoon, Geoff, British Minister for Europe, Unite And Lead, UK-Germany Partners In Europe, www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=Openmarket/xcelerate/showpageJC=page&cid=1140606158923&a=KArticle7aid=1145897454933 17/5/06 accessed on 12/8/06 at 1600hrs.
Future of British German Relations:

Germany and Britain seem to have come to terms with each other. They are both being pragmatic, practical and persistent. They have identified common areas of interest and problems and are striving to work towards it. Given the fact that Germany has just handed over the EU presidency, this cordiality is essential to make the organization functional.

Soviet/Russian views:

In the former Soviet bloc, aside from the Soviet Union, Poland nurtured the greatest distrust and suspicion of developments in Germany. These anxieties accounted for the separate treaty signed between united Germany and Poland in November 1990. The treaty confirmed the border (stipulated in the Two Plus Four Talks) and also outlined principles for good neighborliness and cooperation between Bonn and Warsaw.

The British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher had seen the Soviet President in October 1989 and said “I explained to him that although NATO had traditionally supported Germany’s aspiration to be reunited, in practice, we were rather apprehensive… Mr. Gorbachev confirmed that the Soviet Union did not want German unification either.” Similarly, Soviet Foreign Minister, Shevardnadze, stated in Ottawa in February 1990 “that 90% of the Russian people would vote against the reunification of Germany if they could.”

The German Federal Government, personified by Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, formed the opposing pole. The latter stated repeatedly in 1990 that

\[520\] Albrecht, op. cit.
German unification for them was a highly emotional “affair of the heart” (*Herzenssache*). But all the commitment and diplomatic energy applied in Bonn will not suffice to explain why unification, against stubborn resistance on the part of important powers, became a speedy diplomatic success.\(^{521}\)

“Help me to avoid German unification; otherwise I am going to be replaced by a military figure. If you fail to do so, you will be held responsible for war” pressed Gorbachev in early December 1989 towards Mitterrand in Kiev.\(^{522}\)

A piece of semantics throws light on the highly divergent political positions at the beginning of the international negotiations on German reunification. In Germany these are called the “Two plus Four talks” as Hans-Dietrich Genscher explains in his memoirs: “I stressed that the Two German states, whose responsibility was state unification, would talk about the foreign policy aspects to the Four, and not vice versa. Any indication that the Four would negotiate about Germany ought to be avoided. This resulted in the sequence given in the title of the conference: ‘Two plus Four’ not ‘Four plus Two’.”\(^{523}\)

The then Foreign Minister Shevardnadze, however, returned without confirmation of this formula from the first ministerial meeting on German reunification in May 1990. The fact that the Soviet President did not support Margaret Thatcher’s approach appears to have been an especially disappointing experience for the British Prime Minister. She assumed that she had been defeated by German financial potency: “The Soviets were prepared to sell reunification for a modest financial boost from Germany to their crumbling economy.” This simplistic assessment is repeated in

\(^{521}\) *Ibid.*

\(^{522}\) *Ibid.*

Thatcher’s perception of the famed Gorbachev-Kohl meeting in July 1990 at which the Soviet President announced his government’s unconditional consent to unification (“In July at a meeting in Crimea, the West German Chancellor agreed to provide what must have seemed to the Soviets a huge sum, though they could in fact have extracted much more”).524 President Mitterrand was of the same opinion, commenting about Russian concessions in February 1990: “What did Kohl give for this? How many billions of Deutschmark?”525 Kohl himself speculated that convincing the Soviets about membership (in the NATO), might end up as a matter of cash. “They need money.”526

The Soviets assumed for long that they were holding the key to German reunification and that they even had a direct veto position. Kvitsinsky (Deputy Soviet Foreign Minister) described this self-perception (he speaks about a “surrealist mess of ideas”) in the leadership of the decaying Soviet Union: “The fact that our troops were still stationed in the GDR was linked in an odd manner with the view we could principally dictate conditions for reunification, the withdrawal of the Federal Republic from NATO and that we could carry through the creation of a confederation of the two states.” Gorbachev, himself, initially assumed that he was holding the cards in the veto coalition with the British and the French.

Gorbachev and his team, however, soon had to recognize that progress in the relationship with the opposing superpower was linked to concessions in the German question. More arms reductions and substantial American aid in the difficult perestroika could only be hoped for if the Soviet Union showed flexibility in the ‘Two plus Four’ talks. In adequate recognition of the true national priorities of the Soviet Union, Gorbachev conceded unification – the question whether, with the end

525 Albrecht, Ibid.
of the Warsaw Pact and the loosening of ties among former communist countries, there would be two German states in the future or just one had lost priority. As Zelikow/Rice demonstrate, the key compromises about the ‘Two plus Four’ accord were forged at summit meetings between Bush and Gorbachev (and not primarily by Kohl and Genscher, as these understandably prefer to portray the process for domestic consumption in Germany).

There is an additional feature, which helps to understand the defeat of the original Soviet position. The debilitated Soviet state became more and more unable to keep pace with the professional Western way of conducting diplomacy. Soviet negotiators at the political directors’ level in the ‘Two plus Four’ talks were occasionally to be found treading water, with no instructions from Moscow. Foreign Minister Shevardnadze showed up at the first three ministerial meetings, each time offering a differing concept on how to proceed. The complicated co-ordination machinery between the Soviet foreign ministry, as part of the formal government, and the international secretariat of the Party central committee broke down. Valentin Falin, the last head of the latter, wrote of his determination to apply the brakes to the unification process. Gorbachev “ends a long telephone conversation with me the night before his meeting with Helmut Kohl in the Caucasus in this way: ‘I am afraid that the train has already left the station’.”

Post INF (Intermediate range Nuclear Forces), the relations between Moscow and Bonn were cordial and there were several high level visits between the two. In his book ‘Perestroika (1987)’, Gorbachev said that he thought of German unification as a distant possibility. Vyacheslav Dashichev (expert at Soviet foreign policy) called for a confederation or even unification in the

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527 Ibid.
long run after East-West conflicts were resolved and both German states had withdrawn from their alliances.\textsuperscript{528}

During Kohl’s visit to Moscow in October 1988, Gorbachev repeated that history had divided Germany and that any attempt to change the situation with unrealistic policies would be unpredictable and even dangerous.\textsuperscript{529} On November 6, 1989, Gorbachev telephoned Ambassador Kochemasov in the then GDR and said “our people will never forgive us if we lose the GDR.”\textsuperscript{530}

After the Ten Point Program of unification, the USSR was clearly unhappy. Moscow was never clear as to what exactly it wanted in Germany. The signals that were sent across were confusing. The Soviets wanted a neutral Germany, which would neither be part of NATO nor the Warsaw Pact. The delay in external unification saw the Germans seriously considering this proposal. Both Bonn and Washington, after a lot of discussion, rejected the Soviet proposal. It was the decision to provide DM 5 billion initially and DM 12 billion later that swung the Soviet opinion the German way. Gorbachev wanted DM 16-18 Billion asserting that it was less to do with help for the Soviet Union than with the process of German unification.\textsuperscript{531} Igor Maxимychev stated that, the North Caucasian miracle recreated the common destiny of the Germans and the Russians.\textsuperscript{532} As late as 1990, Gorbachev’s advisor Vadim Zagladin told Rice: \textit{There used to be two Germanies – one was ours and one was yours. Now there will be one and you want it to be yours. That would be an unacceptable strategic shift in the balance of power.}\textsuperscript{533} The 1961 exodus had been ended by

\textsuperscript{528} Zelikow and Rice, \textit{Op.Cit.}, pp. 33-35.
\textsuperscript{529} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{530} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 98.
\textsuperscript{531} \textit{Ibid.}, p.352.
\textsuperscript{532} Maxимychev Igor (Minister Counselor with the Soviet Embassy in the former GDR later united Germany) \textit{What German Policy We Need}, International Affairs, Moscow, September 1991, p.63.
\textsuperscript{533} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 260.
building the wall, the 1989 by breaking it. In an interview to the Pravda, Vyacheslav Generalov (former Deputy Chief of the KGB’s ninth Directorate and former head of the security service of the USSR’s first President), said I believe Gorbachev’s approval of the German unification was a big mistake. Honecker wanted unification when the GDR’s standard of living was similar to the FRG. Unification would split the country between the rich and the poor.

Current German-Russian relations:

There are two main camps that have developed in this area. One led by the foreign minister Steinmeier, which is called the Ostpolitik Redux. This camp calls for an engagement of Russia in Europe similar to Brandt’s Ostpolitik. The other, led by the Chancellor Merkel, Western Emphasis, appreciates the importance of Russia to Europe and Germany. At the same time it gives preference to a closer EU-Us and German -US relationship. Hence the call for a TAFTA or a Transatlantic Free Trade Area between the EU and the USA over a free trade zone with Russia.

Germany understands that there can be no security in Europe without Russia. Russia feels that mutual trust is required to nurture German-Russian relations. People in Germany know that there would have been no reunification in 1990 without Mikhail Gorbachev and no withdrawal of Russian troops in 1994 without President Yeltsin. Securing a stable long-term partnership with Russia based on mutual trust remains one of the top priorities of Germany’s foreign policy. Seen in this context, the close co-operation between Russian and NATO troops (including a sizeable

535 The Unification Of Germany Led To The Collapse Of The Soviet Union, English.pravda.ru/Russia/history/83637-3/31/7/06, published on 31/7/06 accessed on 23/9/06 at 1200hrs.
contingent) in Bosnia has been an important and successful test case for what is to be achieved on a much larger scale – co-operative security and peacekeeping in the whole of Europe. In 1998, the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Co-operation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation has put this relationship on a new footing.\textsuperscript{537}

Intensifying the “transatlantic agenda” is of great political significance, an important objective being the creation of a transatlantic free-trade area, the TAFTA (Transatlantic Free Trade Association). Germany has a keen interest in integrating the Russian Federation into the European and global economy. Economically, Germany is the largest trading partner of Russia, and enjoys first place as a foreign investor, as of 2004.\textsuperscript{538} A memorandum of understanding was signed in Oct 2003 that allowed armed forces units belonging to the German contingent to travel through Russia on their way to Afghanistan.

A total of fifteen agreements on major projects were concluded in October 2003 with many of them in the energy sector, based on Russia’s vast wealth in raw materials. The financial volume of these projects is more than €1 billion. A memorandum of understanding was signed on the construction of a Baltic Sea pipeline for Russian gas. The German and Russian energy giants, Gasprom and Ruhrgas, respectively are to be involved in the deal. However, the first step will be to form a joint working group to carry out a feasibility study. During his visit to Germany (9\textsuperscript{th} Sept., 2005), Putin signed the agreement.\textsuperscript{539} This has led to criticisms in various sectors. ‘The Financial Times Deutschland’ called it more expensive than the over land route. In Poland, it has been criticised as the Schröder-Putin pact similar to the Hitler-Stalin pact. \textit{The Tagezeitung} called it an environmental

\textsuperscript{537} www.germanembassyottawa.org, \textit{op. cit.}, Section on Russia  
\textsuperscript{538} \textit{Ibid.}  
\textsuperscript{539} From Russia with Love, www.spiegel.de
hazard. ‘The Berliner Zeitung’ pointed out that the Chancellor had alienated President Bush over Iraq but sided with Putin calling the latter a flawless democrat when he has waged wars in his own nation. Fears of resurgence of a German-Russian entente are slowly emerging.540

In September 2004, Germany and Russia agreed to fight against international terrorism by

i. Jointly strengthening global efforts being undertaken in the fight against terrorism, particularly in the United Nations, the G8, the NATO-Russia Council, the OSCE and the Council of Europe.


iii. Co-operating more closely in an effort to prevent terrorist acts, to identify terrorists early on, to investigate against them and to prosecute them in court.

iv. Co-coordinating and strengthening efforts to prevent terrorists from acquiring or developing nuclear, chemical, radiological and biological weapons and delivery systems, as well as related materials, equipment and technologies.

v. Strengthening information exchange on terrorist threats and on assessments of the threat situation.

vi. Protecting the security of international transport and providing effective border checks.

vii. Co-operating in the fight against cyber terrorism and in preventing the use of electronic communications and the freedoms of cyberspace for the purpose of threatening public security.

540 Ibid.
viii. Co-operating closely in strengthening capability to prevent and reduce the effects of terrorist attacks, including against missions abroad.

ix. Working towards identifying and reducing factors that facilitate the recruitment of terrorists, particularly of suicide bombers.

x. Jointly providing support to countries that submit a request in the United Nations framework for assistance in the fight against international terrorism.\textsuperscript{541}

Moscow sees German-Russian cooperation as an engine for the eastward opening of Europe. In an interview, to Der Spiegel, Russia’s Deputy Foreign Minister Vladimir Titov said, \textit{just as German-French rapprochement played the role of a catalyst within the process of European integration, in the same manner, cooperation between Germany and Russia today can become the driving force behind integration all across Europe. Our two countries share a mutual aspiration toward this goal, and a number of common strategic plans. Just think of the unprecedented North European gas pipeline project, which opens up the broadest possibilities for a reliable energy supply in Europe.}\textsuperscript{542}

Both countries are united in their common pursuit of a just and transparent system of international cooperation and security. Among other things, the high-ranking permanent security task force, which is under the auspices and coordination of both the foreign ministries, serves this purpose. Concerning strategic stability, answers to global challenges, and the resolution of regional conflicts,

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{541} Joint Declaration by Chancellor Schröder and President Vladimir Putin, www.bundesre.de, 10\textsuperscript{th} Sept., 2004.
\textsuperscript{542} Klussmann Uwe and Schepp Martin, \textit{Moscow is being Demonised}, www.spiegel.de/international/0151844105,00html 11/10/06 accessed same date.
\end{footnotesize}
we do not merely share very similar positions; we also endeavor to act jointly in avoiding and solving international conflicts.\(^{543}\)

Harmonious relations do not have to be monotonous. That would already be impossible given the nuances of national interests and Germany's international commitments, for example in the context of the coordinated policies of the EU and NATO. There are often differences of opinion regarding tactics. The debate has now heated up about the resolution of Kosovo's international status.

Germany and Russia reconcile their foreign policies, through regular talks, including phone conversations. German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Russian President Vladimir Putin are already speaking of a "strategic partnership" between the two countries. By this they mean the global responsibility of both the countries for international stability, cooperation in several areas—from politics and the economy to culture and youth exchanges.\(^{544}\)

The Süddeutsche Zeitung welcomes the new chancellor's more reserved attitude towards the Russian president. The center-left daily criticizes former chancellor Gerhard Schröder's overly chummy relationship with Putin, calling it "his Putinophilia," and applauds Merkel for "bringing relations with Moscow back into balance." Dialogue with Russia remains indispensable, the paper says, because "Germany needs Russian energy [and] Russia needs German support in Europe," and also because "Germany is predestined, unlike any other state, to negotiate between Moscow and Washington." At the same time, the Süddeutsche writes, this dialogue has to be comprehensive:

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\(^{543}\) Ibid.

\(^{544}\) Ibid.
German-Russian relations should include "cooperation as well as criticism, dialogue as well as distance."\textsuperscript{545}

The Berliner Zeitung concurs with this analysis, and takes it one step further. "Why should German companies invest in Russia," the left-leaning paper asks, "if they can't count on the Russian rule of law, if they have to fear that problems and disputes will be resolved with bullets in the hallway or show trials?" The paper is referring to the assassination of the journalist Anna Politkovskaya, who was shot from behind in her home hallway on Saturday, and to the 2003 arrest and subsequent conviction of Russian oil magnate Mikhail Khodorkovsky on charges of fraud and tax evasion.\textsuperscript{546}

The right-wing Die Welt invokes a Russian president who is hell-bent on transforming his country back into a global player. "Nothing drives Russian President Vladimir Putin more than the desire for him and his country to once again play along in the concert of the big boys," according to the daily paper. This ambition, the paper writes, is the best bargaining chip available to the Germans, "and Angela Merkel knows it."\textsuperscript{547}

The Kremlin is clearly adopting a new tone in its dealings with its European neighbors, a tone that reflects a new self-confidence and to which Western states are unaccustomed. In the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union 15 years ago, the Germans have treated Russia at best as a promising market, a challenging but worthwhile investment opportunity and an obedient supplier of raw materials.

\textsuperscript{545} No More Coziness for Putin, (fish wrap), www.spiegel.de/international/01518,442008,00html 11/10/06, accessed same date at 2300hrs.
\textsuperscript{546} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{547} Ibid.
Putin’s State visit in 2006 focused on German-Russian trade relations. The Russia lobby within the German economy has quickly recognized the unexpected impact the shift is having on economic relations. "Russian companies will be looking increasingly at foreign investment opportunities," says Klaus Mangold, the chairman of the Eastern Europe Committee of the German Economy. "Without heavy investment abroad," he adds, the Russians would be unable to close the "competitive gap" between them and their Western competitors in key areas of the economy. Putin apparently has a similar understanding of these issues. Under his leadership, Russia's state-controlled corporations plan to buy their way into European industry on a grand scale. And for the Russians, money is no longer an obstacle.

Years of soaring prices in the oil and energy markets have filled the coffers of a country blessed with abundant reserves of key natural resources. A newly cash-rich Kremlin has joined forces with similar entrepreneurs from Moscow and St. Petersburg in scouting out lucrative investment opportunities in the Western European energy, chemical, aviation and heavy manufacturing sectors. The Russian government announced its intention to make the "jump into the global economy" at a cabinet meeting in July. Russian newspapers have taken to describing the government's buying spree in military terms. Gazprom, already the world's fourth-largest company based on market value, plans to acquire British energy utility Centrica. The state-controlled Vneshtorgbank recently shelled out almost €800 million for five percent of the European Aeronautic Defense and Space

548 For details see, Joint Press Conference With The Federal Chancellor Of Germany Angela Merkel, www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2006/10/10/2027_type.82914type82915112383.shtml 10/10/06 accessed on 13/10/06 at 1400hrs , Speech At The St.Petersburg Dialogue, www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2006/10/10/2138_type82914type847779_112411.shtml 10/10/06 accessed on 13/10/06 at 1500hrs .

549 Buying into the West, Russia seeks greater Economic Influence in Europe, www.spiegel.de/international/1518441051.00html 9/10/06, accessed on 11/10/06. On the Energy Issue see, federal Minister Steinmeier On The Dispute Over Oil Transit, www.aus-amt.de, 9/1/07, Merkel, EU’s Barroso Condemn Russian Pipeline Shut Off, www.spiegel.de/international/01518,458573,00 9/1/07, accessed on 11/1/07 at 642 hrs .
Company (EADS), the parent company of Airbus. Severstal, a steel company headed by Alexei Mordashov, has bought out its Italian competitor Lucchini.\textsuperscript{550}

Putin’s plan would ultimately result in the Russian and European Union economies forming a giant market encompassing at least 600 million people, a loosely knit entity capable of keeping pace in the global market with rising economic powers China and India. But what the Kremlin sees as a strategy for dealing with global markets in the twenty-first century has been met with mixed emotions in Berlin. Like his former mentor, ex-Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier wants to see Germany welcoming the Russians with open arms. The members of his planning staff are already ecstatic over the fact that both countries are lowering barriers to entry in strategically important sectors and promoting an approach they call "rapprochement through integration." Steinmeier himself has said that he wants to see Europe "irreversibly tied to Russia," a strategy that would include the establishment of a European-Russian free trade zone.\textsuperscript{551}

The sixth Petersburg Dialogue conference between Germany and Russia was held in Dresden.\textsuperscript{552} Chancellor Angela Merkel had a separate meeting with President Vladimir Putin. After their meeting, in which they discussed German-Russian relations, the two leaders gave a joint press conference. Germany has taken over from Russia the rotating G8 presidency. Merkel stated that

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{550} Ibid \textsuperscript{551} Ibid. \textsuperscript{552} The Petersburg Dialogue was created at the initiative of former Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and President Vladimir Putin. The objective is to provide continuous new impetus in an ongoing dialogue between the civil societies of the two countries. The heads of government serve as figureheads for this process. The discussion forums are made up of members of civil society, including prominent representatives of government, industry, the media, as well as the cultural and academic communities. Invitations are extended by the Steering Committee, which also organizes the discussion forums. It is chaired by Lothar de Maizière for the German side and by Mikhail Gorbachev for the Russian side. The subjects of 2006’s dialogue included relations between the EU and Russia, freedom of the press, and energy policy.}
Germany is one of Russia's most important trading partners and that trade between the two countries is expanding, adding that efforts are also being made to strengthen cooperation in science and education. She said it is important that economic relations be of benefit to both sides and that they be based on reliable rules. Trade between Germany and Russia is booming. The volume of commercial exchange grew by 25 percent last year, to a total of 39 billion euros. Economic forecasters are predicting a further increase in 2006-2007 by a similar amount.\textsuperscript{553}

The signing of a number of agreements was on the agenda. They included an agreement between Dresdner Bank and Vnesheconombank (VEB) on the handling of commercial transactions; an agreement on fighting infectious diseases, signed in the framework of the Koch-Mechnikov Forum; and an agreement between the cities of St. Petersburg and Freiberg, Saxony on cooperation in the area of mining.

At 40 billion cubic meters per year, Germany is the biggest customer for Russian natural gas. Putin called Germany an important partner in creating energy security, saying that the planned Baltic Sea pipeline will add considerable potential for increasing the volume of future gas imports. Merkel renewed her assurances that the Baltic Sea pipeline is not directed against anyone. Both leaders condemned the nuclear tests carried out by North Korea.\textsuperscript{554}

Economic cooperation is definitely at the heart of German-Russian cooperation even now. At the government level consultations in Wiesbaden, in 2007, (Seventh St Petersburg Dialogue), several cooperation agreements worth billions of euros were signed. Speaking after the minister-level

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talks, Merkel and Putin agreed that the importance of the rapprochement of the two countries goes well beyond the economic sphere. "We must put our work on a broad footing," said the Chancellor, "when two peoples know one another there are fewer grounds for fear and prejudice." The structure of economic cooperation too is changing. To date business links have been dominated by energy supply projects focusing on gas and oil. Now closer cooperation is emerging in the automobile branch, and in the aeronautics industry. President Putin emphasized the fact that his country is not in the business of producing cheap articles. This year, Russia was the official partner country of the world's largest computer exhibition, the CeBIT in Hannover. The German energy group E.ON has acquired a stake worth €4.1 billion in the Russian power station operator OGK-4. The Russian and German ministers of research agreed to cooperate on the development and application of accelerator-based photon sources. The two governments will also be collaborating on the construction of a European X-ray free electron laser (XFEL) and on the Facility for Antiproton and Ion Research (FAIR).

But the chancellor sees the process in a significantly more skeptical light, despite the fact that she too has become visibly more open to Russian advances since she took office. For Merkel, integration with Russia would only be an option if Germany's alliance with the Americans was at risk, and when she hears the phrase "free trade zone" she is more likely to think of the United States than Moscow. Both Steinmeier and Merkel are well aware of the many questions the prospect of closer economic ties with Russia raises. Will Germany become even more dependent on Russian

555 St. Petersburg Dialogues, Frank And Controversial Discussions, 14/10/07, also see Common Values, Common Interests, 15/10/07 in www.auswaertiges-amt.de accessed on 20/10/07 at 2400hrs.
energy sources if Moscow gains a voice in the boardrooms of German power companies? And, most important, wouldn't an alliance with Moscow inevitably alienate the United States?\textsuperscript{556}

One of the greatest concerns for diplomats in Berlin is that Russian corporations are falling increasingly under the control of the state. As Russian companies invest in Germany, the Kremlin's influence in German boardrooms will also grow -- as will the risk that Russia will use its economic clout as a tool to further its political goals. Schröder enjoyed a close relationship with Putin, and Russians loved the flowery superlatives the German used to describe bilateral relations, which were in "first-class condition," according to Schröder, "breathtaking," and "hardly in need of improvement." Merkel, on the other hand, met prominently with some of Putin's critics during her first official visit to Moscow. She'd already said that Germany did not share as many values with Russia as it did with America, and the comment, wrote the pro-Kremlin tabloid \textit{Komsomolskaya Pravda}, "was a blow to Putin."\textsuperscript{557}

One reason has to do with the cooling of relations between Russian and the United States. Almost twenty years after the end of the Cold War, the two powers are once again butting heads, this time in Central Asia, the Caucasus and Eastern Europe. The main area is over the proposed missile shield over Eastern Europe.\textsuperscript{558}

\textsuperscript{556} \textit{Ibid}.

\textsuperscript{557} \textit{Merkel in Russia, Open Words in Tomsk}, www.spiegel.de/international/spiegel/1518,441467,00html 24/4/06 accessed on 11/10/06 also see, \textit{Russian German Intergovernmental Consultations in Tomsk} www.kremlin.ru/eng/events/details/2006/04/26_104955.shtml 26/4/06 accessed on 23/7/06 at 120hrs , Hoagland Jim, \textit{Germany's Comeback}, www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article2006/10/06/AR2006100601399.html 6/10/06 accessed on 12/10/06 at 1300hrs .

\textsuperscript{558} \textit{Russia Threatens To Leave Nuclear Missile Treaty} www.dw-world.de/dw/article/02822900,00html?maca=en-bulletin-433-html 13/10/07,also see Poland says Missile Shield deal possible by year’s End, www.dw-world.de/article/02144,2773209,00html,7/9/07 Russian bear Aiming To Recover Former Military roar, www.dw-world.de/dw/article/ 0,2144, 2617600,00html 21/6/07 accessed on 14/10/07 at 1200hrs
The Russians don't like the way Washington has latched on to the oil wells of Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, or the ambitions of Georgia and Ukraine to join NATO. All four nations once belonged to the Russian empire and then to the Soviet Union.

The admission of the Baltic States into the Western defense alliance had also been traumatic for Moscow. After last week's presidential election in Estonia, all three countries are now being run by presidents who lived in North American exile during the Soviet era. But the worst setback for Putin came in July, when the Americans blocked Russian membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO), which until then had been considered an easy play.

The relations between Moscow and Berlin are thus once again conditioned by the relations between the USA and Moscow. As of date there are three major areas of difference between the Germans and the Russians. First, Moscow supports Belarus dictator Lukashenko while Berlin favours the opposition leader, Milinkevich. Second, Russia recognizes the Hamas as the legitimate elicited government of the Palestinians, while Germany sees Israel’s security as its top priority. Third, Berlin wants to increase pressure on Teheran to abandon its nuclear program while, Moscow wants to complete the construction of the Bushehr nuclear facility in Iran. Foreign Minister Steinmeier, a member of the Social Democratic Party (SPD), calls for an updated version of an old SPD strategy that envisioned "change through rapprochement." In an internal foreign ministry strategy document, Steinmeier likens the economic transformation he believes greater economic cooperation will bring to Russia to how former chancellor Willy Brandt's policies toward Eastern Europe, known as Ostpolitik, paved the way for democratic revolutions in the Soviet-bloc countries.

Chancellor Merkel has taken a two-sided approach to dealing with the Russian challenge. On the one hand, she hopes to accommodate the cash-rich Russians with the prospect of stronger German-Russian trade relations. On the other hand, her administration is doing its best to prevent the Kremlin from gaining access to many strategic industrial corporations.

**Future of Russian German Relations:**

The present Chancellor has veered away from intimate ties with Russia. She does not want to jeopardize ties with the USA. Unlike her predecessor, she plans to maintain continuity in her foreign policy from all aspects. In other words, a Civilian Policy firmly anchored in strong Trans Atlantic ties. The possibilities of a Russian German Axis seem far fetched. Germans do not want Russian dominance in their affairs, both external and internal. They also do not want to be caught in the crossfire between the USA and Russia. To deal with the situation therefore, it is expected that both will maintain cordial ties and take advantage of each other economically.

**US opinions on unification of Germany:**

From the point of view of the USA, after offering Germany support for unification. President Bush (Senior) promptly sought to reshape the German-US alliance from a relationship in which West Germany had served as the junior partner to a more equal status in which Germany would become a partner in leadership. Germany’s changing relationship with the USA was already evident. For example, it was without prior consultation with Washington that Chancellor Kohl and the Soviet President Gorbachev had reached their agreement on the limit of 370,000 troops for Germany’s armed forces, (West Germany had roughly 495,000 troops under arms in 1990 and the GDR, 170,000) and the exclusion of NATO troops from the territory of East Germany.
Robert D. Blackwill recalls that at first: “Moscow and Paris preferred Four plus Zero and London was on a similar track.” This seemingly insignificant detail and the naming of the negotiations were also directly related with the agenda setting of the ensuing negotiations. Bonn learned in this exchange that German positions could be successfully asserted. If this was so, then the British, the French and the Soviets might also be prepared to give in on more substantive issues.\textsuperscript{560}

The most decisive contribution to the squaring of the circle came from Washington. The team around President Bush took an early decision to accept Kohl’s drive for rapid unification, not because of a special relationship with the Germans. The American concept was to chase the Russians and deny them the breathing space, which Margaret Thatcher had envisioned. The Russians were not to have any pause for thought – otherwise, they might arrive at the idea of dropping non-defendable positions (such as their principle no to reunification) at an early date in return for very substantial concessions like consent to unification in exchange for German neutralization.

In the American view, this would have meant the end of NATO and an enormous loss of position for the US in European affairs. America would then have found herself in a much more peripheral situation, unable to bring much influence to bear on the crucial questions of the post-communist era, the transformation of the former state socialist economies into market economies and the restructuring of the European security regime after the demise of the Warsaw Pact. Neutralization of Germany also would have meant the loss of control over this country. In contrast, continued

\textsuperscript{560} Albrecht, \textit{Op. Cit.}
leadership in a NATO that included Germany would assure the US a key role in masterminding the predictable changes and in gearing them into line with US interests.

Blackwill summarizes this situation: “Moscow might indeed have refused to quit Four Power rights if NATO had insisted on full membership of a reunited Germany. They also might have refused to withdraw their 380,000 troops from East Germany or they could have tabled the condition of simultaneous pull-out of Western forces. They might have inferred that Gorbachev’s efforts for new Soviet thinking about European security might be frustrated if one insisted upon NATO membership of the unified Germany.” Yuli A. Kvitsinsky, Soviet deputy foreign minister, confirmed in a 1993 publication, these American speculations: “I believe until this day that Germany would have left NATO or at least its military organization if the German people had been confronted decidedly enough with the choice – national unity or NATO.” Kvitsinsky frankly admits the uphill struggle against time in Moscow: “Even in May 1990 there was no such plan (for reunification) ready in Moscow. Instead, people conducted all sorts of debates.” Both authors appear to be correct: if the Soviet leadership in early summer 1990 had turned with an energetic appeal to the Germans – national unity or NATO membership of a part of Germany – there can be little doubt that the overwhelming response would have been to choose the first option. For the average German, the alliance meant much less than what it meant for Western political elites. In the first half of the year 1990, the Soviets were not in a position to make such bold moves. The American calculus worked. Zelikow/Rice find in conclusion: “The United States did offer leadership, deciding early that it was committed to German Chancellor to follow his instincts, assured of the backing of Germany’s most powerful ally. Whenever Kohl wanted to push harder or faster, he turned to George Bush for support. He found that the American believed in the promise
the West had made to Adenauer: the Federal Republic was an incubator for German democracy until the day the German people could be joined together in one state. In 1989, Bush told Kohl unambiguously that he was ready to deliver on that bargain. Timing was of the essence for Bush, too.”

The British and the French tried to buy time, as Blackwill reports: “If Great Britain and France had a choice between the option of bringing about rapid German unification in the interest of German membership in the Atlantic Alliance and the option of executing their Four Power rights in such a way that the two German states would be united only in a long-term evolutionary process, they certainly would have opted for the second, postponing re-unification. Mitterrand especially viewed Gorbachev as a bulwark against rapid reunification. As late as the end of May 1990, the Two plus Four negotiations were in full swing – on a flight to Moscow Mitterrand reflects: Gorbachev will press me to resist German reunification. I would love to do this, if I could believe that he will stand firmly. But why should I quarrel with Kohl if Gorbachev drops me three days later? There had been repeated anger in Paris about Russian “unreliability”.

The actual date of British and French resignation to the American concept, according to Blackwill, is to be found in the second half of April 1990 – “The President met Prime Minister Thatcher on the Bermudas on 13 April and President Mitterrand at Key Largo on 19 April…After these intensive deliberations by the President, the British and French governments finally abandoned their hesitant attitude and, for the first time, declared their readiness to end their Four Power rights with unification”.  

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561 Ibid.  
562 Ibid.
Findings generally confirm the pragmatism, thoughtfulness and intelligence of American public opinion regarding the complex issues associated with the German Question. US public opinion characteristically abstains from extremes of all kinds and commits itself to a safe (if boring) and moderate centrism. The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations calls this phenomenon “pragmatic internationalism.” At the same time, however, one can frequently detect an emphatically moralizing tendency in US public opinion, which Europeans often dismiss as naïveté. This mixture of pragmatism and moral mission characterizes the American public as predictable and balanced but devoted to absolute moral values. Abstract knowledge, however, differs from concrete experience, particularly with such an emotionally charged topic as the unification of the two Germanies. The realism and pragmatic optimism demonstrated by American public opinion, combined with its sense of justice, confirm the persistence of democratic culture and the high degree of public tolerance in this country.

Since German unity became an issue in the fall of 1989, an overwhelming majority of Americans has consistently favored the unification of the two states. The ratio of those who supported unification vis-à-vis those who rejected it never fell below 3.5 to 1, while values of 7 to 1, even 8 to 1, depending on the formulation of the relevant questions, have not been unusual.\textsuperscript{563}

The number of Americans who suspected that a unified Germany would be an aggressor was not quite half the number of those who perceived no such danger. Reflecting the mood of the times, 51% of those who saw a potential aggressor in a united Germany envisioned aggression in the realm of the economy; only 33% feared military aggressiveness. Fifty-six percent of Americans

\textsuperscript{563} Merkovits and Reich, \textit{Op.Cit.}, p. 60.
agreed with the statement of a CBS/New York Times survey of October 1990 describing “Germany as a peace-loving nation, willing to fight only if it thinks it has to defend itself,” and only 26% concurred with the second part of the statement that depicted Germany as “an aggressive nation that would start a war to get something it wants.” Thirty-three percent of respondents to an NBS/Wall Street Journal survey conducted in March 1994 believed that relations between the United States and Germany had improved “since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War”; 52% thought they remained about the same as before November 9, 1989 and only 5% thought they had gotten worse. As to Americans’ trust in Germany, here too the tally is largely positive. In a CBS/New York Times poll of March 1994, 13% of respondents indicated they had a lot of trust in Germany; 51% had some; 23% not much and 9% none at all.564

The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations also measures how Americans feel about an array of nations and their leaders. The results are different from, yet fundamentally complementary with, the data just mentioned. On the council’s “feeling thermometer” from 1991, which ranged from zero to 100 degrees, Germany’s 62 scored a distant third to Canada’s 76 and Great Britain’s 74 but was well ahead of Italy (59), France (56), Israel (54), Japan (52) and twenty-three others. On the thermometer that measured the American public’s feeling about world leaders, Helmut Kohl shared a position in the middle with Nelson Mandela (both at 53), ahead of Francois Mitterrand (50), Jacques Delors (47), Toshiki Kaifu (46) and Yitzhak Shamir (44) but well behind the leader Pope John Paul II (67), runner-up Margaret Thatcher (66) and third-place finisher Mikhail Gorbachev (64).565

564 Ibid.
The 1995 thermometer was consistent with the 1991 findings. Americans’ feelings toward Germany had slipped to a 57 rating, which tied Germany in fourth place with Mexico. Italy had edged ahead of Germany into third place with a 58 rating. Canada maintained its lead with 73, followed by Britain with 69, confirming their hold over the hearts of the American public.

Americans do not love the Germans as they do the British. Rather, they respect and trust them, not as friends, but as equal partners who can occasionally also are rivals. That Americans respect Germans but do not love them is nicely supported by time series data compiled by the Gallup Organization. Repeatedly, Gallup questioned the American public about which adjectives best characterize a people’s qualities. In the case of the Germans, “hard working” ranked consistently in the first place (around 70% of respondents), followed by “intelligent” (about 50%), “progressive” (approximately 35%), “practical” (around 25%), “honest” and “brave” (both 20%). Negative impressions, such as quick-tempered, war-like and arrogant followed, averaging slightly less than 20%. An ABC News survey conducted on March 13, 1990 confirmed these Gallup findings.\(^{566}\)

American leaders want Germany to play a more active military role in the world. They perceive Germany as more central to American interests than does the public and American leaders perceive them as vital to the interests of the United States. The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations found in 1986 that 77% of the American public but a whopping 98% of the elite viewed West Germany as vital to American interests. The leadership figure tied for first place with Japan and was 2 points ahead of Mexico and Canada (both at 96) and 4 points ahead of Britain (at 94). In 1990, Germany and Japan remained in first place in the leaders’ assessment, but the score had slipped slightly to 95%, leaving Mexico at 94, the Soviet Union at 93 and Canada at 90. Britain had slipped to only 566 Ibid., p. 66.
86%. A comparable, slight decrease also occurred in the popular perception of Germany to 73%. The 1995 rankings show an interesting shift in the perception of American leaders. Germany, still boasting 91%, had slipped to seventh place behind countries such as Russia and Mexico (tied at 98%), Saudi Arabia (94%) and Canada (93%). In the perception of the public, Germany had slipped to tenth place with a 66% ranking; Japan was number one for the first time, with an 85% score. One thing is obvious from an epoch-making decade in global politics – alongside Britain, Germany is perceived, by far, the most important European country to America’s vital interests.\textsuperscript{567}

It is striking that the American image of Germany more or less corresponds to that held by Germany’s European neighbors. Just as in Europe, a significant majority of the American population favoured the unification of the two Germanies. Similarly, in every country, only a minority is negatively disposed toward the Germans. But also clear is the immense tenacity of Auschwitz in the collective memory of Americans. One detects ambivalence about things German. On the one hand is the good and clean and democratic Germany, America’s ally and partner. On the other hand is a continued dread of National Socialism as evil incarnate, an evil so immense that it often seems to exist apart from history, devoid of social content, only tangentially linked to today’s Germany.

One cannot speak of simplistic, widely held anti-German prejudices among the American public. Of course, there are reservations and one can identify a variety of fears. The American image of Germany thus follows a fairly pluralistic, balanced, mature pattern, which we will find throughout the Western democracies.\textsuperscript{568}

\textsuperscript{567} Ibid., p. 70.
\textsuperscript{568} Ibid., p. 73.
The German question was really three questions:

i. Do we trust the Germans enough to let them become unified again?

ii. Do we trust the Germans enough to let them freely determine their own political and military alignment?

iii. Do we trust the Germans enough to feel confident that their national aspiration will not threaten peace?  

Wolfram Hanrieder said US policy during cold war is one of double containment – of the USSR at arms length, of West Germany with an embrace. The changes of 1989 and 1990 were expected to affect German-American relations. The German problem evoked historic apprehension and suspicion among the neighbours of both Germanies. After World War II, the basic principles of US foreign policy were a combination of containment, deterrence and economic diplomacy. The Bush administration publicly supported German unification but privately shared the fears of the other powers. Ultimately, it supported Germany on its own terms.

The interesting thing to be analysed is: why did the USA steadfastly support the unification of Germany in the face of stiff opposition from its allies? The reasons are several. First of all as George Bush says, USA had fought Hitler, but had not experienced the devastation inflicted by its armies. It had long regarded the division of Germany largely from the pragmatic perspective of the Cold War rather than through a prism of fear. Hence when the Cold War was on its way out, the prospects for German unification began to take shape.

569 Zelikow and Rice, op. cit., p. 47.
571 Phillips, Ann R. The German Democratic Republic and the new European Political Order, Ibid.
Second, USA supported an inevitable event. In the light of reforms introduced in the USSR, the topic of German unification was again taking shape. There is no doubt that the topic was coming back. The real question is whether Gorbachev will grab it first.\textsuperscript{573} James Baker III (the then Secretary of State) adds, “I knew George Bush’s competitiveness from our days as doubles partners in Houston and as his campaign manager I had learned that it was always useful to engage his competitive instincts when you wanted him to move on an issue.”\textsuperscript{574} Had the USA not supported Germany, the USSR would have and reaped the advantages.

Finally, if there were changes in Europe and the Soviet Union, it would give the USA a chance to cut back its defense spending.\textsuperscript{575}

\textbf{Current State of US German Relations}

The USA is Germany’s closest ally and partner outside the European Union. Germany is working with the USA on a comprehensive concept for reorganizing the Euro-Atlantic partnership for the twenty-first century in order to meet the global political and economic challenges arising after the turn of the millennium.

Political relations between Germany and the US have traditionally been close and trust-based. The political, military and human solidarity displayed by Germany and the meetings between Federal Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and President George W. Bush following the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington on 11 September 2001 confirmed this.

\textsuperscript{574} Ibid.
Since the attacks of 11 September, the joint fight against international terrorism has been far up the bilateral agenda. Traditionally, the exchange of views has focused on areas touching upon the security interests of both partners. The relationship between the two can be understood at two levels – economic and political.

USA is Germany’s principal trading partner outside EU. However, in the last three years, the volume of bilateral trade has declined due to large increases in the euro against the dollar.

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<td>German exports to US</td>
<td>100.8</td>
<td>61.8</td>
<td>67.8</td>
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<td>61.7</td>
<td>64.3</td>
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<td>German imports from US</td>
<td>71.2</td>
<td>47.1</td>
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<td>40.4</td>
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<td>40.7</td>
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Source: Federal Foreign Office

**Table 2: US – German Trade**

The US is Germany’s principal trading partner outside the EU. 2006 saw once again an increase in the volume of bilateral trade in goods (on a euro basis). German exports to the US grew by 12.6% and German imports from the US by as much as 16.1% compared with 2005. China is, however, about to overtake the US as a supplier of goods to Germany (in 2005, imports from China were worth EUR 39.9 billion). The two countries are important to each other as locations for investment: the US is the main investment destination for German companies and the largest foreign investor in Germany. According to the latest figures available from the German Federal Bank, American direct investment in Germany was worth approx. € 74 billion at the end of 2005, a slight decrease
compared with the previous year (approx. € 86 billion). On the other hand, German direct investment in the US amounted to around € 155 billion at the end of 2005, a marked increase over the previous year (approx. EUR 135 billion). According to figures issued by the US Bureau of Economic Analysis, in 2005 Germany ranked third among foreign direct investors in the US, after the United Kingdom and Japan. By contrast, Germany ranks only sixth as a destination for American direct investment, after the United Kingdom, Canada, the Netherlands, Australia and Bermuda.

The US is the largest investor in Germany with total investments amounting to around € 50 billion, of which about 10% are in the new Federal Länder (making the US the largest foreign investor there). Nearly half a million workers in Germany earn their pay at US Companies.576

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<tr>
<td><strong>German direct investment in US</strong></td>
<td>159</td>
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<td>135</td>
<td>155</td>
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<td><strong>US direct investment in Germany</strong></td>
<td>75</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>86</td>
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Source : German Federal Bank

**Table 3 : US – German Direct Investments**

US Government relations were at an all time nadir following the US policy on Iraq. Donald Rumsfeld lambasted France and Germany and their allies over their refusal to back the US led intervention in Iraq.577 Karsten D. Voigt, coordinator of German American Cooperation clearly stated that no state can be forced to enter into new international obligations against its will and given Germany’s history and the decades long post war influences, respect for the principles of

576 www.auswaertiges-amt.de section on German US relations, accessed on 23/8/07 1300 hrs.
577 Old Europe’s New Alliance, www.dw-world.de, 14-9-2004.accessed on 12/7/05 at 1400hrs
international law is a legal political and moral percept for the German politicians regardless of which political party they represent. He also stressed on multilateralism being an essential foreign policy principle given the country’s history, geo-strategic location and interests.\textsuperscript{578}

The problems in US German relations began in August September 2002, when then Chancellor Schröder stated that it was a mistake to intervene militarily in Iraq and that German soldiers will not participate thereof. The core of the strained relations can be attributed to two events, First, Schröder’s rejection of any US led attack on Iraq calling it a military adventure. Second, the alleged comments by his minister for Justice—Herta Däbler Gmelin that Bush was using Iraq to camouflage political problems at home and called it similar to a tactic used by Hitler.\textsuperscript{579} Schröder’s criticism of President Bush, his foreign policy in general and his policy towards Iraq in particular, proved to be a major contributing factor towards his electoral success of 2002. This is a common belief in the USA. However, this author does not accept this in its totality. (This has been analyzed in Chapter 4).

America and Europe can master the challenges of the twenty-first century, but only if they act together. Certain fundamental principles are common to both. The two agree that Saddam Hussein is a dictator whose rule has inflicted enormous suffering on the people of Iraq. He has flouted UN Security Council resolutions and is striving for weapons of mass destruction. They accept that he would not shy away from threatening to use them and that he has been aggressive in the past and could be aggressive again in the future. Weapons inspectors should return to Iraq as soon as


\textsuperscript{579} Linstead, Mike, \textit{Can German Us Relations Recover?} news.bbc.co.uk/2/europe2278349,stm, 24/9/02, accessed on 03/05/03 at 10.00hrs.
possible and should have full and unrestricted access to all possible weapons sites – as Baghdad has promised. Finally, they agree that all relevant Security Council Resolutions should be implemented in their entirety and without delay. However, regarding a military strike against Iraq, Germany has been asking a number of questions and it is felt strongly that they need to be addressed. What consequences would an attack on Iraq look like, how can one minimize the risk of disintegration? Is the German society prepared to bring a long-term engagement in Iraq? The relationship between the two would have improved during that period, if the Bush administration had given greater credence to the German – and by extension European – demand for multilateralism. This is not to suggest that the U.S. adopt a policy of “multilateralism for multilateralism’s sake”. Rather, the US should continue to pursue its national interests vigorously, in particular where the security of American citizens at home and abroad is concerned, but always in close consultation with allies. For the war on terrorism, it means NATO and, to a lesser extent, the United Nations should be consulted.

1. Germans and Europeans should acknowledge the degree to which American’s perception of the world has changed owing to 9/11.

2. The German and European preference for multilateralism cannot be allowed to manifest itself largely in elliptical processes that perpetuate inaction or irresolution.

3. Germans and Europeans should realize that if and when they criticize the American approach as unidimensional, stressing only military solutions to the problem of Al Qaeda and related terrorist organizations, their points ring hollow if they are not accompanied by concrete proposals for alternative and effective, non-military responses.

4. Alliance partnerships presume not only a convergence of interests, but also a basic equality in capabilities. For Americans, Germans, and other Europeans, these means steering clear of
any notion of a strict division of labour in the war on terrorism, in which the U.S. fights the
wars and the Europeans clean up the mess, keep the peace, and build the nation.\textsuperscript{580}

The U.S. President is determined to look ahead to the future and to leave behind differences of
opinion over the war in Iraq. Addressing an audience at the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations,
Chancellor Gerhard Schröder said that the rapid stabilization and democratization of Iraq is an
objective shared by both countries. He reiterated that he will not send German troops to Iraq even
in the context of a NATO mission, but underscored that Germany will not stand in the way of an
involvement there by the North Atlantic Alliance.\textsuperscript{581} The present Chancellor has however pledged
to make US EU relations a priority and rebuild the Atlantic bridge. She is also keen to create a free
trade area between EU and the USA.\textsuperscript{582} It is expected that German US relations will follow suit and
the ties will be closer.

John Negroponte, Deputy Secretary of State, on the occasion of German Unity Day (2007) summed
up US-German relations succinctly. \textit{Today Germany and the United States work together to solve
common problems, or as Chancellor Merkel described it, we take up “our joint responsibility in
order to master the major challenges facing our world.”} Germany and the United States work
closely to support peace in troubled regions of the world, to combat terrorism, to eliminate human

\textsuperscript{580} Jackson James and Geffrey Anderson, Germany and the United States; Considerations for the Schröder Government
and the Bush Administration, www.aicgs.org accessed on 10/12/05 at 2100hrs .
\textsuperscript{581} Schröder, \textit{Stabilization of Iraq, A shared objective}, Chicago, 26-02-2004, www.bundesre.de. For the debate on Iraq
between Germany and USA, see a) Karsten D. Voigt, \textit{Crisis or Co-operation? The Trans-Atlantic relations at a
American relations in a global age}, www.aicgs.org f) Vote for better US-German relations, www.DW-world.de, 2-11-
\textsuperscript{582} Schmitz George Peter, \textit{Hello America, Ready to Work
together?}www.spiegel.de/international/01518,457784,00html,4/1/07. Mascolo George \textit{hand in hand In The Crisis
Zone}, www.spiegel.de/international/01518,458025,00html, 5/1/07, \textit{Merkel In Washington
www.spiegel.de/international/01518,45983,00html, 4/1/07 etc.}
trafficking and other international crimes, and to continue the work of a Europe whole, free, and at peace. Together, we are also working diligently to control environmental pollution, to reduce energy consumption, and to address climate change.

Both of our countries cherish the hard-won values of democracy and freedom. And the United States looks forward to continued partnership with Germany to expand these values around the world and assist others who strive for them.

We also cooperate to ensure our mutual benefit and prosperity. Our commercial cooperation remains considerable. The United States is the largest single foreign investor in the east of Germany. The more than 15 billion Euros that our companies are investing is helping to provide over 35,000 jobs. Over 200 companies in the east of Germany are either wholly U.S. owned or joint ventures with U.S. participation.583

**Opinion of France**

Although French public opinion had tended to support German unification, the French leaders feared that a resurgent, united Germany would dominate Europe and usurp their ambitions to play a leading role in the continent. The then President François Mitterrand’s trip to the former GDR in December 1989, when he cautioned the East Germans against unification, illustrated this sentiment. Mitterrand, for his part, was initially confident of Soviet resistance to German unification. One month before the fall of the Berlin Wall, on 2nd October 1989, Mitterrand declared (on his way to the golf course): “Those speaking about German reunification do not understand anything. The Soviet Union will never accept this. This would be the death of the Warsaw Pact.”584

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583 Negroponte D.John, Deputy Secretary of State, Washington, D.C. Remarks At The German Unity Day Reception, 3/10/07 in www.state.gov accessed on 5/10/07 at 2300hrs
The President called for a special meeting of community heads in Paris in November 1989 to consider what was happening in Germany. In Strasbourg, (December, 1989) Thatcher and Mitterrand had two private meetings to discuss the German problem. Thatcher points out that, in these meetings, Mitterrand’s fears about Germany came through clearly. “He was very critical of Chancellor Kohl’s Ten Point programme, He observed that in history, the Germans were a people in constant movement and flux.”585 She notes that the French President remarked about how in moments of crisis, France and Britain had established special relations and that the time had come to do it again. Thatcher felt that, together they could check the German Juggernaut. She also records that, in another meeting between them, in the Elysee Palace, Mitterrand was clearly irked by German attitudes and behaviour. “He accepted that, the Germans had the right to self determination but did not have the right to upset the political realities of Europe and could he accept that German Reunification should take priority over everything else. He complained that Germans treated any talk of caution as criticism of themselves. Unless you are wholeheartedly for unification, you were described as an enemy of Germany.”586 He also said that he agreed with her analysis but he was at a loss as to what they could do. Thatcher does not agree, but she also rather bitterly refers to a trip to Germany made by Mitterrand in December 1989, just before her meeting with him at the Elysee. In that he had stated that, “He was not one of those putting on the brakes” on German unification.587

George Bush writes that, since World War II France and West Germany had overcome the hostility of the past and had become partners in Europe. Mitterrand and Kohl were great friends.

586 Ibid. p.797.
587 Ibid.
Nevertheless, German reunification raised complicated questions about the future for the French, ones with uncertain and uneasy answers. France and Germany had been the chief rivals for the domination of continental European affairs since the first unification of Germany in 1871, forged in the aftermath of the French defeat in the Franco-Prussian War. Since then Germany had invaded twice more and had occupied much of France from 1940-1944. A divided Germany was not unwelcome. Paris had worked hard to manage West Germany through close economic and political ties (France had become West Germany’s principal trading partner) and partnership in NATO. He adds that the principal questions that France was raising at this juncture were, *what effect would a united Germany have on Europe and what did that mean for France? Could it control such a state as it had its western counterpart*? 

He also refers to a meeting with Mitterrand in December 1989, where he found the French President resigned to eventual German Unity. He quotes him, (Mitterrand) “we should show understanding over what the Germans wish. There is not much we can do because we are not going to war against Germany. “But he (Mitterrand) also cautioned against events in Germany moving too fast, fearing it would cause a crisis at a time when the West was winning hands down. Instead,” we had to address arms control EC integration, European Monetary Union, and US-EC cooperation all at the same time to create a new Europe. Otherwise, we will be back in 1913 and we could lose everything. We are friends of Germany. They cannot take our advice amiss.

German unification certainly struck a deep chord in the French psyche, provoking intense public debate. Questioned in November 1989, 80% of the French voted in favour of unification, 9%

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against and 10% had no reply. The number of those in favour slipped by the spring of 1990 – 66% of the French then replied that they were in favor, 15% were against and 19% had no reply. By a very small margin, the public also said that unification would be, on the whole, a positive development for France. In the spring of 1991, 7% of the French said that unification made them personally feel very hopeful about the future of France, 39% were rather hopeful, 37% (the highest percentage in any EC country) were rather fearful, and 5% were very fearful, while 12% did not know.\footnote{Merkovits and Reich, Op.Cit.}

The elite level featured different views on the German Question, depending on political persuasion. On the far Right, Jean-Marie Le Pen supported “historic” Germany, which he suggested must get back the power and sovereignty that it justly deserved. Le Pen also called for the dissolution of NATO and the Warsaw Pact. In their stead, he advocated a close pact between Germany and France, which other European countries would be welcome to join. On the Left, George Marchais and the French Communists reacted in the most nationalistic of tones on the German matter. Also, the French Communist party published a declaration that millions of Frenchmen fear Greater Germany and that the tragic past “is deeply inscribed in the conscience of the people…that Greater Germany is full of dangers for our country…[and that] France must reconquer her rightful place which she should not have lost in Europe and in the world”.\footnote{Ibid.}

Bush also discussed the French President’s views with Mrs. Thatcher in a telephonic conversation prior to his meeting with Kohl in Camp David in February 1990. I asked Margaret what Mitterrand thought. “We talked” she said. “Privately he is as fearful as we are. If we are not careful, Germans...
will get in peace what Hitler couldn’t get in war. He is adamant on the Oder-Neisse line…The French fear the domination of Germany. They fear the speed with which the FRG is pushing towards unification and not addressing other questions first…there is great uncertainty as people try to understand that there is this great landlocked power that has quarreled with most people. It is not enough to anchor Germany is the EC-that might become Germany’s new empire: the future empires will be economic empires.”

After the meeting with Kohl, Bush called Mitterrand and Thatcher. The former said, “On the border issue, I believe Kohl’s silence is a mistake. Helmut Kohl must be responsible for his actions and he should use diplomacy. He must recognize the Oder-Niesse line…It is a fact of life that the Europeans will always be suspicious of Germany because of the war…” In April 1990, Bush and Mitterrand met at Key Largo, where the latter agreed on the complementarities among NATO, the CSCE and the EC. At the same time, he was clear that the role of NATO would be restricted to its traditional one-defense against a massive attack from the USSR.

Based on the available information, the French attitude to unification seems to have been guided by certain factors. During the Cold War, when the need for US forces to deal with the Soviet threat existed, the French supported the US involvement in Europe. However, their withdrawal from the integrated command structure of NATO under de Gaulle in the sixties made their resentment obvious. Unification of Germany was the opportunity the French were looking for. As German unification became inevitable and the Soviet threat less likely, the role of USA in Europe could also be curtailed. German unification would provide the opportunity for a Franco-German entente,

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where France would be the dominating partner. This could be used by France, in turn, to dominate Europe.

An interesting analogy was drawn in ‘Le Monde’, which saw parallels between resurgent anti-Germanism and the traditional anti-Americanism of the post-1945 period. Both “antis” tried to protect the French from being colonized; in the case of the United States, the fear was of a colonization of mind, whereas in the case of Germany, the apprehension was more political and economic. Both fears were linked to desire for the status quo, or as the French say, “give the times a little time.” On the other hand, the French bemoaned the fact that history accelerates while France waits. “This damned fatalism,” wrote ‘Le Monde’ on February 28, 1990 stating “…beneath the surface tensions are growing. There is a fear of social explosion, conflict of generations, crisis of National Identity – all of which encourage nationalist populism represented by Le Pen and Pasqua (later French interior minister).”

France, so Vauzelle suggests, simply had no choice but to learn to live with a unified Germany. Alone, France could never compete with the United States and Japan. Only a united Europe could. Andre Giraud, former French defence minister, had the same sentiment in different words: “Should we support [German] unification? Not to do so will destroy European integration…we must show our solidarity with Germany.” Such commentary sounded forced, defensive and resigned.

595 Merkovits and Reich, Ibid.
596 Ibid., p. 128. also see, Martens Stephan, What role Of Germany, mondediplo.com/1999/10/06germany?yar_recherche=Germany%20Unification 6/10/99 accessed on 2/7/00 at 0430hrs , Gerlach, Christian Long Shadow Of The Nazi past, mondediplo.com/1999/10/7germany 7/10/99 accessed on 2/7/00 at 0600hrs .
The discomfort was unmistakable. Some people on the Quai d’Orsay said, “We should not even talk about it [German unification]; it’s a catastrophe!” And at the Elysée, there was much attention given to the consternation among the British and the Dutch.” To make matters worse, France appeared to be trapped. There was no alternative, no exit, no substitutes for the Franco-German axis. Margaret Thatcher was good only as an anti-German cheerleader, but she offered no alternative to France’s ties with Germany. The Mediterranean countries were much too weak to offer a viable option. France, for better or worse, was stuck with Germany as an equal, perhaps even superior, partner.

Such fears brought nostalgia for the good old days when Germany was safely divided. It also led to a surge of self-recrimination: “We are always afraid of something – pacifism, Americans, German competition…Are we really so weak? What about our economic strength, our power?” So François Mitterrand, in his televised appearance on March 25, 1990, appealed to have confidence in the Germans. Furthermore, the uncertainties explain the French attraction to a strong, prosperous and unified Europe that would allow France a modest but respectable place in the world.597

In brief, the French were confused. Like everyone else, they had precious little time to prepare for the new Europe. When they realized that the changes were real and lasting, they seemed paralyzed by uncertainty and insecurity coupled with resentment. Added to this was a sense of being trapped. Germany, over the years, had developed into France’s most important trading partner and France had built its future on an integrated Europe. But, before November 1989, Europe clearly saw France assuming the political role of primus inter pares; now the option of political grandeur became increasingly remote. Germany seemed to have stolen Europe, but France simply could not

597 Ibid. also see, Backround Note Germany, www.state.gov/r/pa/ej/bgm/3997:htm accessed on 13/2/04 at 2100hrs .
do without either Germany or Europe. At the end of the day, German unification catapulted the French into serious self-doubt. The Germans may continue to have problems with their identity, but unification caused the French difficulties in a new European order where France is no longer la grade nation.598

The French remain profoundly ambivalent about the Germans as the 1990s progress. On the one hand, they are immensely proud that they, with Germany, from Europe’s core. It flatters them to occupy a position of such importance. At the same time, however, this position creates obligations. Above all, it forces the French to keep up with the Germans, which in turn nourishes French anxiety about France’s perceived inferiority. It grates that Germany, now Europe’s unquestioned power, has accorded the French the privilege of helping decide Europe’s future.

France has certainly paid a heavy price for becoming Germany’s partner. Germany’s demand that France reduce its budget deficit by US $ 59.3 billion in 1995 led to massive strikes in December, which paralyzed the country and forced President Jacques Chirac to desist from harsh reductions in France’s generous social benefit system. Strikers succeeded in saving the core of the system, but cuts will nevertheless occur. More important, the Chirac government resorted to a hitherto unimaginable reduction in France’s most cherished symbol of national power – the armed forces. Hitching France’s fate to Germany has made it an integral part of France’s political life.

Nowhere was this change more evident than in France’s referendum ratifying the Maastricht Treaty in autumn of 1992. Both sides, those in favor of ratification and those opposed, argued their case with reference to Germany. The pro-Maastricht forces, exhorting France to join Germany to build a more prosperous France, presented partnership with Germany as a boon to France. Anti-Maastricht voices, almost half of those participating, saw this partnership as detrimental to France. The Right feared Germany’s political might.\textsuperscript{599}

**Current ties between Germany and France**

Germany’s integration in Europe means a close partnership with France. The ties between Germany and France are particularly important. In recent years, attention has been focused on issues pertaining to the process of European unification. Since the signing of the Elysée Treaty on January 23, 1963, the countries hold biannual meetings alternatively in Germany and France at the inter-governmental level. The relations between France and Germany took on a new dimension in the light of differences between the USA and Germany.

Just when German-American relations looked bleakest, the French stepped in and inadvertently created some policy space into which Americans and Germans could tentatively tiptoe, in a bid to begin patching up their own fractured bilateral relationship. The process would take some time, but by the late spring of 2003, reconciliation was under way and the better relations between Americans and Germans became, the more the former were willing to extend the latter the benefit of a doubt that continued to be denied to France.

Real differences of interest continue to divide the two countries – differences that had been foretold by a disturbing rise in Franco-German tension at the time of the EU’s Nice summit in late 2000, but that would be eclipsed by the events of 2002 and 2003. Those Franco-German tensions were related to internal European development and included a tussle over the redistribution of voting clout in European institutions and an ongoing agreement to disagree on what exactly was to be Europe’s final structure – a Federalist construction, as the Germans professed to wish, or a confederal structure reliant upon “reinforced” interstate co-operation as the French wanted. The two countries’ differences also have pan-European and transatlantic dimensions; the latter coming down to how each state regards America and its power.

Because the Germans remain more committed than the French to Atlanticism, they insist that America continue to play an indispensable role in transatlantic security. France, no matter the temporary solidarity displayed with Germany over Iraq, takes a much different position, at least in its declaratory policy. Germany wants a better America; France wants a balanced America, which has to mean a weaker America. For the Germans, multilateralism is the objective. For the French, it is “multipolarity.”

Germany is Europe’s largest economy; France it’s second largest. Both are struggling not to exceed the three percent deficit limit agreed among Euro-zone countries. Schröder noted that there is full agreement between the French President and himself on European issues. The French for their part,

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600 Haglund, David G. Has France Finally Said Aufwiedersehen To Its German Problem?, Orbis, Summer 2004, Foreign Policy Research Institute, Philadelphia, USA, pp. 392, 393.
underscored the unity of views taken by the two governments on the EU constitution, EU budget policy as well as the situation in Afghanistan and in Iraq.\textsuperscript{601}

France is Germany's closest and most important partner in Europe. With no other country does it coordinate all its policies more extensively or regularly. The reconciliation efforts of the post-war decades have spawned unusually diverse and intensive forms of cooperation. Paramount today is our common policy on Europe and our joint stance on international security issues. In a further gesture of reconciliation and friendship with Germany, reminiscent of the historic handshake between President Mitterrand and Chancellor Kohl at the Verdun cemetery in 1984, Federal Chancellor Schröder was the first German head of government to attend the celebrations commemorating the 60th anniversary of the allied landing in Normandy. This also impressed on younger generations the historical import of the special relationship between France and Germany against the backdrop of European convergence Speaking at a Franco-German Ceremony Commemorating the 60\textsuperscript{th} Anniversary of D-Day in Caen on 6\textsuperscript{th} June 2004, Chancellor Schröder remarked that France and Germany were closer allies than ever before that the helping hand that France extended to Germany helped complete the path to unification and that trust and dependability were the hallmarks of that relationship.\textsuperscript{602}

German-French relations are becoming increasingly close and successful at the inter-governmental, European and international levels. The objective is to bring the people of the two countries closer together on the basis of mutual recognition, the analysis of common history and the promotion of language teaching. The two countries plan the publication of a German-French history textbook

\textsuperscript{602} Speech by Schröder at the Franco-German ceremony commemorating 60\textsuperscript{th} anniversary of D-Day in Caen, 06/06/04, \textit{Ibid.}
that will provide the basis for teaching history from the same perspective in France and Germany. Reference must be made to further instances of successful Franco-German cooperation, such as the Franco-German Brigade, which is working as part of a peacekeeping mission in Afghanistan.

In connection with the 40th anniversary of the Elysée Treaty it was agreed in a joint declaration issued in Paris on January 22, 2003 to hold consultations from then on in the form of Franco-German ministerial councils. The close cooperation agreed on this basis goes beyond consultations at the level of heads of government and foreign ministers and provides for direct co-operation between cabinet ministers in the implementation of specific programs. These joint ministerial councils, held at six-month intervals like the Franco-German summits before them, provide progress reports on implementation. On 19 October 2004, the repatriation of this archive material from the War years is further testimony to the close co-operation between the two neighboring countries on matters of cultural property repatriation. Since German reunification in 1990, both sides have agreed and implemented a whole series of repatriations, including most recently the return to France of fragments of a medieval cloister in September 2003.

The intense intergovernmental cooperation between Germany and France is unique in international relations. Thanks to close conferral, policy in the two countries has increasingly converged in major regional and sectoral issues. This holds for the whole gamut of international policy, but also for key areas of European affairs. The marked revival of Franco-German cooperation (Franco-German motor) goes hand in hand with the close integration of other European partners. Even in an enlarged

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603 Germany and France strengthen co-operation, Ibid., 28-10-2004, also see 40th Anniversary Of The Elysee Treaty, ambafrance-us.org/news/statements/2003/elysee.asp. 22/1/03 accessed on 24/1/03 at 1200hrs.
Europe with 25 member states, significant progress can only be achieved if Germany and France pull together.

The resolutions and institutional changes made to mark the 40th anniversary of the Elysée Treaty on 22 January 2003 in Paris have turned a new page in the annals of Franco-German cooperation. Bilateral consultation has been stepped up. All German ministries work directly with their French counterparts and implement the goals and projects defined in joint programmes of action under their own purview. Each side has appointed a Commissioner for Franco-German Cooperation: on the German side the Minister of State for Europe at the Federal Foreign Office, Günter Gloser, and the Minister for Europe Catherine Colonna in France.

Since the 40th anniversary of the signing of the Elysée Treaty, the semi-annual intergovernmental consultations (summits) are held in joint Ministerial Councils, where the two cabinets meet and the line ministers in charge discuss the entire range of political issues.

The topics discussed at the last meeting of the Franco-German Ministerial Council on 14 March 2006 in Berlin were:

- Coordinating European policy in the run-up to the European Council meeting on energy policy and European security and defence policy (23/24 March)
- Cooperation in research and innovation: joint calls for research project proposals; cooperation between the Fraunhofer Society and nine French Carnot Institutes; joint innovation projects on magnetic resonance imaging (combating cancer and Alzheimer’s disease), biophotonics (important for disease diagnosis) and the setting up of the Internet search engine Quaero
• Integration of foreigners and equal opportunities for young people from migrant families; reaching agreement on projects on the exchange of experiences

• Signing of the treaty on the construction of a new railway bridge over the Rhine at Kehl linking south-west Germany to France’s high-speed rail network, which will cut by half the journey time from Paris to Stuttgart from 2010 onwards

• Swift implementation of the framework agreement on cross-border cooperation in the health sector, which will give people living in the border regions easier access to the other country’s health and emergency services.\(^{605}\)

(On account of the French presidential and parliamentary elections, there was no Ministerial Council meeting in the first half of 2007. The next Ministerial Council meeting will take place in Berlin on 12 November 2007.)

Here are some examples of just how close cooperation is:

• Exchange of personnel between the two foreign ministries and other departments. The Commissioners for Franco-German Cooperation are, for example, supported by a diplomat from the partner country; a German diplomat is a member of staff at the Office of the French Foreign Minister.

• Close collaboration between French and German embassies in other countries, in consular work or cultural relations, for example

• Close and trustful cooperation between the armed forces (Franco-German Brigade)

\(^{605}\) www.auswaertiges-amt.de section on German French Relations, accessed on 23/10/07 at 1800hrs.
Interparliamentary cooperation

The joint assembly of the French and German parliaments to mark the fortieth anniversary of the signing of the Elysée Treaty underlined and cemented the close inter-parliamentary cooperation. This includes:

- Joint sessions of the Foreign Affairs Committees of the Bundestag and the Assemblée Nationale and of the European Affairs Committees of both the Bundestag and the Assemblée Nationale and the Bundesrat and the Senate
- An annual parliamentarians’ colloquium Paris-Berlin, held regularly
- Regular exchange of views between German and French parties
- Annual meetings of the two parliamentary speakers
- Friendship groups in the two houses of both countries
- Exchange programme for parliamentary assistants
- Short visits by parliamentarians of both countries to observe the work of their counterparts
- Endowment of a parliamentary prize for scientific work in bilateral relations, first awarded on 2 February 2005

Cooperation between German Federal States and French regions

Measures are ongoing to implement the decision taken at a meeting attended by Federal Chancellor Schröder, a number of heads of government from the Federal States, the French Prime Minister Raffarin and the regional presidents in Poitiers on 27 and 28 October 2003 for more in-depth cooperation at regional and Federal State level. These include promoting knowledge of the other’s language and culture, increasing the mobility and networking of companies, universities and

606 Ibid.
research institutes. The French Prime Minister Villepin called for French Union with Germany in select areas, that do not fall within the authority of German Federal States or EU, reminding one of Napoleon’s Rheinbund.\textsuperscript{607}

**Economic relations**

Germany continues to be France’s most important trading partner by far. There is a daily exchange of goods worth some EUR 500 million. Last year, Germany accounted for just under 17\% of French imports and was the destination for over 14\% of French exports. According to French figures, in June 2007 France recorded a deficit in its bilateral trade with Germany, with exports to Germany worth € 4.96 billion and imports from Germany € 6.39 million, but the deficit remains at approximately the same level. The growth rate was especially strong for French exports of metals, metal goods, chemical products and equipment as well as in the aircraft and mechanical engineering industries. By contrast, there was a sharp decline in French automobile exports to Germany, while German manufacturers succeeded in increasing their market share in this sector. In the new Federal States, France is the second-largest direct investor after the US.

Owing to the close interlinkage between the two economies, which also account for more than 50\% of economic turnover in the euro zone, there is a strong convergence in economic, monetary and social policy. There is close, ongoing cooperation and consultation (regular bilateral meetings of the economics and finance ministers, frequent interchange amongst entrepreneurs). Cooperation also focuses on space research and technology (ESA) and other high-tech sectors.\textsuperscript{608}

\textsuperscript{607} Friendly Takeover Of Europe, Dominique Villepin And the Secrets Of Europe, www.signandsight.com/features/209html, quoting the Suddeutsche Zeitung (15/6/05), translated by Gustav Srebt put on the website on 10/7/05 accessed on 12/07/05 at 2100hrs

\textsuperscript{608} Ibid.
Social and cultural relations

Since the 1950s and particularly since the conclusion of the Elysée Treaty (22 January 1963), Germany and France probably maintain the closest-knit social relations of any two countries. Of prime importance is the youth exchange coordinated by the Franco-German Youth Office (up to 200,000 participants annually in about 7,000 programmes - some seven million having taken part since 1963) and the twinning partnerships between towns and regions (2,200 in all) and schools (some 4,300).

Particular emphasis is placed on cooperation in culture and education. As responsibility for cultural affairs in Germany lies with the 16 Federal States, one Minister-President always acts for all states during the summits as authorized representative with a four-year term of office. Since 1 January 2007, Mayor Klaus Wowereit (Berlin) has held the office of authorized representative. On the French side, these tasks have been performed, since 18 May 2007, by the National Education Minister, Xavier Darcos, the Higher Education and Research Minister, Valérie Pécresse, and the Minister of Culture and Communication, Christine Albanel.

Active since 1998, the Franco-German Cultural Council, which has ten German and ten French members – all prominent figures from cultural life, is working to give new momentum to cooperation in culture and the arts. It advises the governments of both countries and implements its own projects. It proposes and supports Franco-German initiatives. The Cultural Council maintains a

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609 www.auswaertiges-amt.de, section on bilateral relations, France, accessed on 23/10/07 at 1800hrs
German and a French Secretariat-General in Saarbrücken and Paris, respectively. Its current fifth mandate runs until 2008.\textsuperscript{610}

A Franco-German University based in Saarbrücken was established in 1999. As a network which links German and French universities (without actually conducting its own teaching and research), it coordinates Franco-German courses of study leading to a joint diploma. On the initiative of the University, the Franco-German Forum, an exchange for studies and jobs, has been held annually in Strasbourg since 1999.

Numerous projects in secondary, higher and vocational and technical education advised by Franco-German expert commissions aim to facilitate greater cross-border mobility for young working people.

Germany and France are both determined to foster the other partner’s language at home. As early as the beginning of 2004, the Goethe Institute launched in France a campaign to promote the German language with the motto “On a tout à faire ensemble”. Joint information campaigns, including the selective distribution of the information brochures “L’allemand, passeport pour l’Europe” in France and “Französisch schlägt Brücken in die Zukunft” in Germany to mark Franco-German Day (22 January), round off the efforts to support targeted structural measures in the two countries. The implementation of the joint strategy paper presented at the meeting of the Franco-German Council of Ministers on 26 October 2004 has begun to bear fruit. In France, there has been a revival of interest in German among students choosing a foreign language. Germany, too, has seen an increase in the number of those learning French.\textsuperscript{611}

\textsuperscript{610} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{611} www.auswaertiges-amt.de, section on bilateral relations, France, accessed on 23/10/06 at 1800hrs
Since as early as 2001, so-called DeutschMobiles and FranceMobiles since the summer of 2002 have been touring the two countries to encourage pupils in as many schools and educational institutions as possible to learn the partner language. Initial successes have already been recorded in France where in some cases there has been a distinct rise in enrolments for German lessons in the schools visited by the DeutschMobiles. The Franco-German Internet language portal FplusD (www.fplusd.org) seeks to bring together all the information on the partner languages German and French and their use in education, working life and youth exchange that was previously unavailable in this form or had to be gleaned from a wide variety of sources.

The atmosphere in the bilateral relations between the German government and the new French President remain cloudy even after Sarkozy met Chancellor Merkel in Meseberg near Berlin at the beginning of this week. This is despite the fact that, on the same day he was inaugurated, France’s President Nicolas Sarkozy visited Berlin to meet with Federal Chancellor Merkel – sending an important signal for continuous close Franco-German coordination. In July and September 2007, so-called Blaesheim meetings took place between the French President and the German Chancellor, accompanied by their respective Foreign Ministers.

On top of the agenda, (in the October 2007 meeting) were economic issues, especially the regulation of international finance markets and the necessity of improved transparency. While both leaders agreed on this matter, the positions on a common European energy policy were still divided. Sarkozy believes that nuclear energy is the solution for the future and would like to see Germany rethinking its current policy of phasing out nuclear energy.
Superficially the meetings showed no signs of tensions, but behind the scenes problems persist. It is reported that Sarkozy is still angered by German Finance Minister Steinbrück's criticism of his budget policy at an EU meeting in July.

United Germany, a state with 80 million inhabitants and an area bordering nine countries in Central Europe, was confronted by a daunting array of responsibilities and expectations with regard to its international role in the early 1990s. Following unification, its government adopted a policy aimed at fully integrating the newly enlarged Federal Republic into the instruments of international cooperation: EC, NATO, the WEU and the CSCE. In a deliberate effort to further assuage the concerns of its neighbors about German dominance over the continent, Bonn worked assiduously to bolster its multilateral image.

President Von Weizaecker, Chancellor Kohl and the then Minister for Foreign Affairs, Genscher, went to great lengths to renounce the power politics of the past in favor of a policy of responsibility. In the German view this meant, on the one hand, a continuation of the former West German foreign policy based on the use of non-military instruments. On the other hand, it meant a higher international profile in economic, human rights and environmental issues. With the end of the Cold War, economic power, in the view of many experts, had superseded military power in terms of political influence. Germans, above all, believed it seriously (hence a Civilian Foreign Policy).

At times, however, German Foreign policy was self-centered. Squabbling over German interest rates (both in Europe and in the USA) in the autumn of 1992 underscored what many perceived as a new tilt toward German self-absorption and unilateralism that had been established in 1991,
through Germany’s policy towards the Balkans. Until the summer of 1991, Germany’s policy towards the former Yugoslavia had mirrored the thinking in the Western world i.e. Yugoslav unity must be preserved. Later, Bonn began to shift away from this stance, towards the recognition of Croatia and Slovenia in December 1991.

Commentators in Germany and elsewhere feel that the new government’s foreign policy has made a good start and got its priorities right. Several scholars like Hans Maull warn of premature optimism. He is of the opinion that limited domestic economic resources of foreign policy making and the eroding pillars of Germany’s Civilian Power orientation will pose challenges to the new government. Gisela Müller-Brandeck-Bocquet points out that Germany and France are no longer the models of economic dynamism. At the same time, she sees a positive angle to the bilateral ties. Ton Nijhuis, does not see any major changes in Germany’s policy towards the EU. Alister Miskimmon hopes for closer ties between the UK and Germany while Daniel Hamilton is of the opinion that Germany will be the continental anchor of the Atlantic. Finally, Franz-Josef Meiers expects that Germany’s security policy to take on new dimensions. This is particularly with reference to reforming the army from training to a deployment army.612

Germany will continue to adhere to its Civilian foreign policy bearing in mind its international responsibilities and commitments. Its economic woes and its culture of restraint will prevent it from going for anything else. The ups and downs it underwent with the Four Allies is something that any country will undergo in the exercise of its foreign policy. The new government seems well poised

612 Analysis: Foreign Policy Of The Grand Coalition In Germany-Base Line And First Assessment At The Beginning Of Merkel’s Term, (abridged from the editorial by Marco Overhaus introducing the Chapters to of the edition of Foreign Policy In Dialogue), www.euractiv.com/en/security/analysis-foreign-policy-grand-coalition-germany 7/9/06 accessed on 23/9/06 at 1900hrs.
to conduct a successful foreign policy. In international politics, nothing is predictable, yet Germany will continue to remain a benign power is obvious.