

# **THE FRENCH RESPONSE TO GERMAN UNIFICATION**

Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the award of the Degree of  
**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

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1992



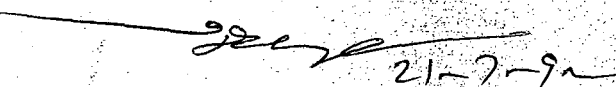
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C E R T I F I C A T E

This Dissertation entitled "THE FRENCH RESPONSE TO GERMAN UNIFICATION" submitted by Mr. PRASENJIT KHATI for the Degree of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY is an original work and has not been previously submitted for any other Degree of this or any other University.

We recommend that this Dissertation may be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

  
21-7-92  
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A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T

I cannot help acknowledging my profound gratitude:

To my Supervisor, Prof. H. S. Chopra, whose constant involvement at all stages in the preparation of this work has been invaluable.

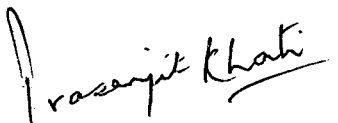
To Prahlad, Joel, Navin and Tiken for their belief and support.

I'm more than ordinarily grateful to my friends Arul, Neel, Jyoti, Pankaj, Shamboo, Bhardwaj, Pradip, Mohan, Sridhar, Jaya, Richa and Nirupama who buoyed me upto make this work a success.

To Bhaṣkaran and Sreenivas who put me back on the track whenever it seemed that I was about to be engulfed by the pressure and complexity of the task before me.

To my parents and brother who have always remained the source of my strength.

21 July 1992

  
(Prasenjit Khati)

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## PREFACE

More than seven decades of tension, ideological antagonism and spiralling arms race that had threatened the existence of human life was given a respite with the two adversarial superpowers ending their cold war, and joining together in expressing their belief in common human values which unite rather than divide the human kind. This revolutionary change became possible with the advent to power of Mikhail S. Gorbachev in 1985 in the USSR and his initiation of de-ideologization of international politics, which climaxed in the breakdown of the communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe. The latter have opted for political democracy and free market economy. The prime beneficiary of this cataclysmic change has turned out to be Germany which became united as a result of merger of the GDR with the FRG through article 23 of the Basic Law on 3 October 1990 less than one year after the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989.

France, the worst sufferer of Germany's Militarism for the past three quarters of a century had been watching these developments with considerable interest and anxiety. A United Germany could be source of threat to its security. The sudden systemic changes

taking place in Europe made France confront a difficult objective reality in that while Europe witnessed the ending of the cold war, it found to its chagrin that in the changed environment, the old forms of conflict (based upon race, religion and degenerate forms of nationalism) seemed to be re-emerging, which could once again destabilize political balance in the old continent to the disadvantage of France. After all, one thing that was becoming increasingly apparent in bold terms was that the gravitational centre of European politics was slowly shifting from Paris/Brussels to Bonn/Berlin . With the growing at fast pace influence of Germany in the former Soviet bloc, and also its increasing weight with the addition of GDR in its configuration, and prospective entry of Austria into E.C., German weight is likely to be heavier, in a way, not bearing soothing effect for France.

Being conscious of the negative effects of the latest developments in European politics, France has evinced greater interest than ever before in ensuring that Germany is well knit up in the new fabric of European Union, and also the Franco-German framework. The on-going transformation of the E.C. into European Union by 1992, and the new blueprint emerging in the form of the Maastricht Treaty bears

testimony to the contributions made by the German Chancellor, Helmut Kohl and the French President, Francois Mitterrand. In the security field, the bilateral agreements on the Franco-German armed corps and the Franco-German Defence Council symbolize joint endeavours on the part of both the states to work together with a view to reshaping the new European peace order. But then, human psychology does not change at one's asking.

Francois Mauriac had remarked in 1959 that with divided Germany, France sleep with one eye open, and with re-united Germany, they will have to sleep with both eyes open. Since then, much water has flowed through the Seine and the Rhine, and relations between the two states in various strategically important areas have since then deepened. Yet the French President expressed his reservations on the eve of German unification. However, finally he acquiesced into the Four-plus-Two formula and gave his approval to the German unification. But one thing the French would do well to remember that Germans integrated into the European fabric would hopefully make a positive contribution to European peace and development. And, under no circumstances,

should they have the feeling of being alienated. That is how unified Germany's continual membership of NATO was acquiesced into by the USSR and other concerned European powers. In brief, such is the chequered story of the post war Franco-German relations that the present study intends to probe into in a modest way.

Chapter I <sup>d</sup> deals with the complexities involved in the post-war European politics. The balance of power had shifted either to the periphery of Europe (the USSR) or to outside of it, (the USA). In the Yalta and Potsdam Conference the big Three Allied Powers, the US, USSR and UK, decided without however any conscious among them about the fate of the post-war European settlements. France was not invited to participate in these conferences, which remained a perennial grievance of the former French President General de Gaulle and which was reflected in his policies towards Britain and the US whether in regard to the German question, European security, or even Britain's entry into the EC.

In the second chapter, an attempt is made to



analyse the French approach to post-war developments in European politics . And one of the most historic initiative that it took related to the initiation of the movement for European Unity, the prime purpose of which was to knit up Germany into the continental political and economic fabric. It is only this way that the threat of German revival of Militarism could be offset. Apropos, the Franco-German Cooperation Treaty of 1963 forged deep cooperation in various field of critical importance between the two adversaries so as to turn them into mutually helpful neighbours. To a large extent, the objective has been attained. After de Gaulle, Willy Brandt, and then Helmut Schmidt carried forward de Gaulle's Mission of furthering normalized state of relationship between the two rival halves of Europe through the processes of inter-bloc dialogue as well as detente.

Chapter III looks into the systemic changes brought about by Gorbachev in the USSR and Eastern Europe as a consequence of which German unification took place. Vociferous debate that followed on the

status of unified Germany related to whether it has to be neutral, as the Soviet Union wanted or get anchored into NATO as the Western powers willed. Finally , through mutual agreements between Helmut Kohl and Gorbachev, it was agreed that in the larger interest of European political security and stability, unified Germany has to remain integrated in the NATO.

Chapter IV deals with the understandable French wavering attitude towards German unification, particularly when it was being actualized. Eventually, however, France along with the other allied powers formally acquiesced into it.

In the final chapter, an attempt is made to analyse the factors that led to German unification and the ~~role~~ that France played to further the European integration process so as to absorb Germany into it, in the belief that the Franco-German relationship has to be central to the larger European security and economic interests, which are in any case indivisible.

## CHAPTER 1

### THE GERMAN QUESTION : HISTORICAL SETTING

No issue in post war European politics has sparked as much emotion and controversy as the German issue. Historically, the 'German Question' has been a central problem of European politics for several centuries. In the last two hundred years there has been no period when Germany has not played an important role in shaping the course of European history, even when it stood fragmented politically in numerous principalities, bishoprics and republics.

Yet the idea of German national unity, either as part of 'Greater Germany' of liberal ideals or Bismarck's Prussia dominated 'Little Germany' could not become operationalized for long. Fear of German expansion and domination was a central feature of European politics throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.<sup>1</sup>

Bismarck, a shrewd diplomat that he was had the astute skill to dilute this fear by series of complex alliances in which Germany was the cornerstone, as well as by ensuring that any change in the status quo did not upset the basic balance of power in Central Europe. It must be noted however that his successors had neither his diplomatic skill nor his clear sense of limits.<sup>2</sup> Their

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1. See Roland D. Asums, "Is there a Peace Movement in the GDR?" Orbis, Summer 1983, p. 301-41.

2. Stephen Larabee, ed., Two German States and European Security, (London, 1989), p. 1 and 2.

efforts to expand German power led to the two world wars and finally to the country's partition in 1945.

In the post war period the German question again became a burning issue as a result of partition of the country at the end of the second world war and failure of the occupying powers to agree upon a final peace treaty determining Germany's political status and territorial boundaries. As a result, two separate German states, viz., the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic, integrated in two ideologically opposing military alliances made appearance and the line of frontier demarcation between the two German states also became the dividing line between the two adversary blocs.

Over the following four decades, the status quo hardened<sup>3</sup> until Gorbachev's assumption of power in 1985, and the sweeping changes he brought about which led to the historic systemic transformation in Europe. Of this ideological metamorphosis Germany turned out to be the prime beneficiary; for, the fall of the Berlin wall in November 1989 resulted in less than a year in the actualization of German unification on 3 October 1990.

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3. Roland D. Asmus, "Bonnand East Berlin: The New German Question?", The Washington Quarterly Vol. 9, no.1, p. 56.

The Yalta Potsdam Conferences : Exclusion of France

The end of second world war saw a lot of important changes in the international scenario. The multipolar system of Balance of Power in Europe inherited from the Treaty of Viena and underlined in 1918, disappeared in 1945. For the first time European nations ceased to hold centre-stage in the global structures of power. The balance of power shifted to extra European powers. Their better technology, sound economy and powerful military fashioned a new hierarchy of states.

France, a country who had been playing a leading role for centuries together in shaping the course of European history suddenly found itself, after the second world war, in the back seat of European affairs. Though it had some reservation with regard to the future allied strategy on European security. But this was regarded as relatively unimportant matter since the strongest powers were deeply involved in the defeat of the common enemy.<sup>4</sup>

A country which had been thrashed by the Germans, whose economy was in a shambles and politically unstable did not have the proper pre-requisites of a nation which could steer the future course of Europe and consequently of the world. Hence, a country which is

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4. Langsan & Mitchell, The world Since 1919 (London. 1971), p. 365.

basically weak could not be called upon to perform this role as the victorious countries thought that it was their prerogative to decide the future of post war developments.

General Charles de Gaulle who was the Head of the French Provisional Republic was particularly disliked by Roosevelt and Stalin for his stance, which did not appreciate the extra-European power's role in the deliberations in Europe. The General said, "I was aware that it was President Roosevelt who refused to allow France to participate."<sup>5</sup>

Another important reason for French exclusion was that USSR believed, (despite the Franco-Soviet Pact concluded in 1944) that France had succumbed before the Nazis too easily. Therefore, it did not deserve to be in the Allied Big Power Conferences. Stalin felt that participation should be on the basis of how much one had contributed in the war. He argued that France had "opened the gates to the enemy in 1940"<sup>6</sup> and its subsequent contribution to the victory had been insignificant.<sup>7</sup> Further, he added that if France would be included in the meeting, then Poland must also be invited. In short, he equated France with Poland.

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5. Quoted from de-Gaulles' Memoires, in Guy de-Carmey tr. Elaine P. Halpenin, The Foreign Policies of France: 1944-1968 (London, 1970), p.18.

6. Alfred Grosser tr. Paul Stevenson, Germany of our time (London, 1971), p. 25.

7. Ibid, p. 26.

The long history of the negotiations of the German problem goes back to the middle period of the war. At the Casablanca Conference of 1943 President Roosevelt and Churchill issued a declaration announcing that the objective of the war was the "unconditional surrender" of the Axis Powers. The future of Germany was again discussed in the Tehran Conference, but no conclusions were formulated.<sup>8</sup>

The London meet of 12 September 1944 provided for the division of Germany into three zones, comprising the national territory within the frontiers as it existed on 31 December 1937; i.e. including Saar<sup>9</sup> but excluding all territories seized by Hitler. The zonal boundaries were defined, with the eastern zone allotted to the Soviet Union; it had not yet determined which powers should occupy the northwest and southwest zones. The meeting on the 14 November filled the picture by assigning the Northwest to the British and the Southwestern to the America. Both these documents were ratified on 6 February two days before the Big Three Conference which was to be held in Yalta.<sup>10</sup> France was not invited but it occupied a large part of the discussion as to whether it should be allotted a zone as one of the occupying powers? Should it be a fourth member

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8. Ibid, n.4, p. 370.

9. It was returned to Germany after referendum held in 1935 in accordance with the Treaty of Versailles.

10. Ibid, n. 6, p. 27.

of the Control Commission and thus participate in the administration of Germany as a whole? Churchill and Stalin argued the case in front of Roosevelt, who at first was inclined to Stalin's view but later came to Churchill's side. Churchill pleaded at length for French participation emphasizing that Britain could not bear the whole brunt of containing Germany in the West.<sup>11</sup>

Allied policy was further discussed in the Potsdam Conference of 19 July 1945, among other things, it was determined that in the first stages of occupation the administration of Germany would be directed towards the decentralization of political structure and the development of local responsibility. Detailed political and economic principles were chalked out and it was decided to fix the boundaries of Germany to pre Reich days.<sup>12</sup>

However, there was no attempt to draw up a peace treaty with Germany. Moreover as negotiations showed the allies themselves were divided on the terms of such a treaty.

The failure of the allied powers to reach an agreement on German treaty led to separate action by the western powers and the USSR. Economic hardships led to

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11. Lord Moran, Winston Churchill: The Struggle for Survival 1940-1965, (London, 1966), p. 218.

12. Teheran, Yalta & Potsdam Conferences Documents (Moscow, 1969), p. 50.



economic integration of British, American and French zones.<sup>13</sup> Differences between U. S. S. R. and the western powers started to take shape.

At the peace negotiations in Yalta and Potsdam it was decided that transition of power in East European nations would be done by holding elections but this was subverted by the Soviet Union which instead installed Communist regimes, much to the disappointment of the western powers.

Soviet Union, in July 1947 was excluded from the Marshall Plan. Its Foreign Minister Molotov walked out of the meeting as he refused to accept the conditionalities imposed by the west. The Soviets called the Marshall Plan as an "American implicit plot to subjugate West Europe"<sup>14</sup> and formed "Cominform" to counter Marshall Plan.

As a result of these important differences the two camps led in 1948 to complete breakdown of four power machinery for the control of Germany. They became cut off from each others' zones and preparation was underway for the creation of independent German Governments. The result was the formation of the Federal Republic of Germany in western Germany with

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13. Ibid, n. 4, p. 382.

14. W. Averell Harriman, America and Russia in the Changing World (London, 1971), p. 46.

its seat at Bonn, and in the east, German Democratic Republic, set up in October 1949 with its capital in the Russian sector of Berlin.

Germany was in effect partitioned but neither was a sovereign state, the occupying powers reserved control particularly over military and foreign relations.<sup>15</sup>

The outcome of the foregoing peace deliberations among the Allied Powers, and then commence of cold war with USSR post Second World War Germany emerged much more territorially fragmented than after the First World War. The FRG and the GDR comprised 58.0 percent and 21.8 percent of the population, and 52.6 percent and 22.9 percent of the territory respectively of the Third Reich as on 31 December 1937. Nearly one fourth of Germany's eastern territory was passed over to Poland and the USSR.<sup>16</sup>

#### Allied Decision on the Post War European Territorial Settlements

A significant aspect of the Second World War was the manner in which major decisions were reached pertaining to boundaries of various countries at the high level conferences, as those of Casablanca, Quebec, Moscow, Teheran, Yalta, and Potsdam.

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15. New York Times, 15 September 1987.

16. H. S. Chopra, "German Unification and European Security" Paper Presented at the J.N.U.:FES: ICRIER International Seminar held in September 1990.

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Italy was deprived of all the conquest of Mussolini's regime and was bound to recognize and respect the sovereignty and independence of Albania and Abyssinia.<sup>17</sup> Her European frontiers were defined as those of January 1938, except for certain modifications in favour of France and Yugoslavia and the cessation of the Dodecanese Islands of Greece. Trieste and the surrounding territory, which had been the bone of contention between Italy and Yugoslavia since 1917, formed the independent 'free territory of Trieste.'<sup>18</sup>

Regarding Austria it was decided that it would be liberated from German domination and the three Allied powers wished "to see reestablishment of free and independent Austria". After several Allied meetings (comprising representative of the four Allied powers and other concerned states) took place. And it was only in 1955, that a final treaty was concluded guaranteeing its neutrality.

Poland was the only country whose frontier had been radically changed. After much negotiations it agreed upon 'Curzon Line' of 1919 with some modifications in its favour, as its eastern frontier, receiving in compensation territory in North and West of Germany.<sup>19</sup>

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17. Ibid, n. 12, p. 51.

18. This territory was to be administered by a Governor appointed by the Security Council of the U.N.

19. Ibid, n. 12, p. 51.

Rumania lost and gained territories. It had to abandon Bessarabia and Bukovina to Russia, and South Dabrudja to Bulgaria. It regained Transylvania from Hungary, and thus in quarter the pre-Nazi frontier was restored.

Bulgaria was given South Dabrudja . It retained the territory long in dispute.<sup>20</sup>

Hungary went back to its frontiers of January 1938, except for the Bratislava bridge-head which it ceded to Czechoslovakia.

In Finland Soviets took lease of an area south-west of Helsinki for a naval base and took possession of the territory of Petsamo in the far north, thus cutting to the Arctic Ocean and giving a common frontier to U. S. S. R. with Norway.

#### Allied Occupation Zones

The outcome of the decision reached at the Yalta and Potsdam conferences in 1945 was the division of Germany into four zones of occupation. These zones were assigned to four allied powers, the U. S., U.K., U. S. S. R. and France.

Germany was the only truly vanquished nation after the Second world War. But the important question

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20. This territory was occupied by Rumania after the Balkan War and held under its control until 1940.

was - did Germany existed at all in 1945?<sup>21</sup> Almost one quarter of the territory had already been settled out and incorporated into the USSR, such as half of East Russia. The other three quarters came under the administrative system that the European Consultative Committee had decided at London in 1944. Through the control Commission, made up of the Commander-in-Chiefs and with its seat in Berlin, the Victorious Powers would jointly exercise the authority. The former capital would be occupied by all four allied powers, each of the four sectors would be administered by one power.

The military occupation which was expected to be temporary turned out to be the basis for the division of Germany and consequently of Europe. The ideology and administrative custom put stamp on all public life. Stalin said in 1945, "... the conqueror of a region imposes his own social system on it".<sup>22</sup>

The Soviet policy seemed to be to extract as much as possible, to meet the desperate material needs of the USSR exhausted in war. In addition to a license for unlimited confiscation in their own zone of occupation, they received industrial equipments

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21. John Luckus, "The Coming of the Second World War", Foreign Affairs, (New York), Vol. 68, no.3, 1989, p. 165.

22. Stalin quoted in Roland N., Stomberg, Europe in the Twentieth Century (New Jersey, 1988), p. 165.

and manufactured goods from the American, British and French zones. Ten percent of the industrial plant was dismantled and shifted to USSR. So much so that those machinery which was not applicable in USSR was still brought to U. S. S. R. and kept useless. They rationalized their action by saying that they were teaching the Germans a lesson.

The Americans did not lack for behind the Soviets. The Charter of the, JCS 1067 of American Joint Chief of Staff, was a harsh document which was quite reminiscent of the terrible "Morgenthau Plan".<sup>23</sup> It had been alleged that Americans in their zone of occupation often lacked discipline. The real power laid in the hands of the military commanders which they exercised as the absolute rulers of their zone. But later on such absurdities waned away and it is said that the American soldiers and the people of their zone developed a very cordial relationship.

As already mentioned there was a lot of reluctance in giving France a zone. Since French relation was not in a very high note with U. S., it did not endorse the idea of giving France a zone. Stalin did not favour the idea either. He felt that France had easily collapsed before the Nazi aggression. It was

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23. Secretary of Treasure Henry Morgenthau had wished to, "wreck every mine, every Mill and every factory in the land that had produced Hitler.

only due to Churchill's persistent argumentation with Roosevelt and Stalin the Britain needed a powerful ally across the channel to help ensure European security, particularly against any future revival of German militarism, that France eventually got a zone out of the zones of the U.S. and the U.K. Stalin did not agree to cede away any part from its own zone in favour of France.

The four occupying powers were supposed to formulate policies for the whole of Germany through a Central Control Commission. Meeting in Berlin consisting of the four Commanders in Chiefs. But this whole exercised was futile, the French proved even greater obstacle than the Soviets. Whereas, the three major allies had not accepted the goal of a partitioned Germany, the French believed in it fervently.<sup>24</sup> For France the best possible security for itself would be to see a weak and divided Germany. Thus giving the French an occupation zone, which the British insisted upon and which Stalin opposed, thus played some part in the ultimate partition of Germany.<sup>25</sup>

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24. Ibid, n. 22, p. 180.

25. Herbert Tint, The French Policy since Second World War, (London 1972), p. 66.

Inception of FRG: French Reaction

At the end of the war, it was assumed by the western powers that the military occupation of Germany was a temporary arrangement. They expected that Berlin would eventually become the capital city of a democratically self-governed Germany. But the Soviets though had agreed to four power control of Berlin, later declared that since Soviet zone surrounded the city, the latter rightfully was part of their zone. Because of this and basically the differences between Soviet Union and western powers on various other issues during this period ultimately culminated to the Soviet blocking the ground access to Berlin. It was quite apparent that the Soviets wanted to take control of West Berlin and simultaneously prevent the projected economic integration of new German state into Western Europe.

It may be recalled that the western Allies took measures to unify their zones. In December 1946, an agreement was reached between the U. S. and Britain providing that two zones should be treated in economic matters as "Bizonia". France and U. S. S. R. were invited to join the project but both declined. The U. S. and Britain were eager to integrate Germany in the European Recovery Programme.<sup>26</sup> The French feared

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26. Ibid, n. 14, p. 52.



that German economic recovery might again jeopardize French security.<sup>27</sup>

However, in 1948 it was decided to merge the French zone with Bizona and create an economic Trizone. The Allies went ahead with their plans to establish a German Democratic government in Trizona. By September 1949 the Federal Republic of Germany was established in West Germany, with the local civilian authorities given the basic responsibilities for running the domestic affairs of their country. The Soviet countermove to this western action was creation of the German Democratic Republic in their own zone in October 1949.

Since Germany was a pivot of power in the continent each side wished to shape the future of Germany to coincide with its own end.

The French policy towards Germany was holding German resurgence. In order to do this she had concluded a treaty with the Soviet Union. Charles de Gaulle gave two reasons for this decision: "Franco-Russian solidarity ... was in harmony with natural order of things in view of the German threat and the Anglo-Saxon attempts at hegemony".<sup>28</sup>

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27. Stanley Hoffman, "The European Community", Foreign Affairs, (New York), Vol. 68, no.4, 1989, p. 27.

28. Ibid, n. 5, p. 19.

Secondly, France wanted to pursue the policy adopted by Richelieu in Westphalia peace process, it wanted to fragment Germany into small parts, and finally annex territories bordering France. But the French Missed out on all three points. The Franco-Russian treaty became moribund in the mid 1950s:<sup>29</sup> fragmentation could never be pursued because of the other three allies opposition and out of the projected annexation of the Ruhr and Saar came nothing but a special status.<sup>30</sup>

With the onset of the Cold War, realignments swept all over Europe. France had to decide as to with whom would it be aligned: West Germany or the Soviet Union, in the changed scenario? France could not repeat the mistake it had committed of fighting against the wrong enemy, as it had in the nineteenth century when it fought against the Habsburgs instead of the Hohenzollerns. France was also aware of the fact that the mistakes of the Versailles Treaty and its dramatic consequences should not be repeated: German national feelings should not be repressed for the fear of promoting a new wave of German nationalism.

Thus, by 1949, French safeguards against renewed German aggression depended on the Anglo-American

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29. Gerhard L. Weinberg, "The Soviet-Nazi Pact", Foreign Affairs, (New York), Vol. 68, no. 4, 1989, p. 175.

30. Ibid, n. 2, p. 247.

guarantees and the integration of West Germany within a wider western economic and military complex. The hope of containing the former enemy by force had gone except among those for whom the world had stood still since 1944.<sup>31</sup>

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31. Ibid, n. 25, p. 72.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE FRENCH INITIATED MOVE FOR EUROPEAN UNITY

Sir Winston Churchill's speech delivered at Zurich university on 19 September 1946 bears historic significance in that it urged upon the Europeans to set aside their traditional animosities and fears, and unite together to face the multi-faceted challenge caused by the on-set of the Soviet led ideological iron-curtain through the heart of Europe:

'Gazing upon a "vast quivering mass of tormented, hungry, careworn and bewildered human beings", listening to a "babel of voices" among the victors, and beholding "the sullen silence of despair among the defeated to create the European family and to build a kind of United States of Europe" '.<sup>1</sup>

As such, several leading Europeanists, such as Jean Monnet, Robert Schuman, and others felt impelled to initiate on a grand scale the movement for European unification. But, then, here it may be impertinent to point out that the need for European unity was no less acutely felt soon after the First World War. Indeed, the first official initiative came in 1925: the French Prime Minister Edouard Herriot then spoke of "United States of Europe" before the French, Chamber of Deputies.<sup>2</sup> Subsequently,

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1. Hans A., Schmitt, European Union, (New York, 1969), p. 9.

2. H. S. Chopra, De-Gaulle and European Unity, (New Delhi, 1974), p. 2.

the French Foreign Minister, Arstide Braid further encouraged the same concept under the auspices of the League of Nations.

After the Second World War, the Europeanists realized in no unmistakable terms that the nation-state and its concomitant attribute of "nationalism" (that had degenerated into fascism) had wrought unprecedented havoc to Europe. Therefore, while it could not be done away with, certainly there was the grave need to go beyond it, and perhaps device supranational regional mechanism to ensure in future optimum level of security to Europe, and also to accelerate its economic development. It is in this context that the new unprecedented momentum that the movement for Europe unity had gained in the late 1940s and early 1950s may be read.

A nation which had suffered humiliating defeats at the hands of Bismarck's unified Germany and then its soil was trampled over twice in less than four decades in this century was bound to turn paranoiac in relation to its neighbours.

The devastating effects of the Second World War left Germany in a very different situation from that of the previous seventy years, but much of the French effort since 1945 has gone into trying to create

international structures capable of containing future bursts of German militarism. At least, for the first time four years after the war, French governments tended to deal with the problem of Germany in terms of traditional reflexes rather than pragmatically.<sup>3</sup> Their refusal to treat Germany as a single unit, in accordance with the Potsdam decisions, was, as has been seen, not their first sign of their atavistic urge to see the country of the defeated enemy divided.

French argument against the re-emergence of the Centralized Reich was three-fold: First, they thought that Germany in the past had remained peaceful only when it was politically decentralized or fragmented. Secondly, there was the material argument that a united Germany would once again become industrially powerful and be a threat both through its industrial and consequently military power. In addition there was the apprehension that the centralized Reich may seek to perpetuate the German boundaries which the French badly wanted to change.<sup>4</sup> But this attitude of containing the former

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3. H. Tint, French Foreign Policy since the Second World War (London 1972), p. 77.

4. Ibid.

enemy by force slowly waned mainly because of the Anglo-American pressure on France at the London Conference, where it had to accept the fusion of three Western zones. The only alternative left for France to keep Germany on a lease and to counter the growing influence of extra-European powers was through some kind of a union.

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The Schuman declaration of 9 May 1950 marked an official initiative to integrate the French and German resources of coal and steel, and to administer them together through a Common Authority under a supranational organisation. This led to the creation of European Coal and Steel community which composed of six European nations.<sup>5</sup> The objective was to make an excellent beginning towards the European integration movement so as to overcome the Franco-German traditional hostility. Raymond Aron, a renowned French political thinker opined that:

" Neither the Schuman Plan was directed against USSR, nor was it an instrument of 'Cold War'. On the other hand, the 'European Pool' would be strong enough to gain some independence from the United States, thereby promoting peaceful co-existence between the two Power blocs".<sup>6</sup>

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5. France, Federal Republic of Germany, Italy and Benelux countries.

6. H. S. Chopra, Ibid., n. 2, p. 29.

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But the realities were different in the international scene the cold war had reached its pinnacle with the Berlin Blockade and Korean War. Moreover, France had to depend on United States for both security and also economic aid through Marshall Plan. De Gaulle had also been quite critical about the formation of European Coal and Steel community. There were some section of the people who believed that this meant a loss of sovereignty for France while Germany had nothing to lose.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, the popularity as it managed to achieve was largely based on the idealistic desire for some kind of United Europe which in the absence of Britain was optimistically to be built on the foundation of Franco-German reconciliation.

The acceptance of the Monnet-Schuman formula of European integration coupled with the sudden rise of international tension following the outbreak of Korean War led to a new initiative in the Military domain.

Here again Germany remained the primary source of concern. The United States heavily committed

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7. Paul Guinn, "On Throwing Ballast In Foreign Policy; The Entente and Ruhr Occupation", European History Quarterly, (London), vol.18, no.4, October 1988, p. 207.



in the war wanted relief from its military obligations in Europe. Hence, organising a German army would offer substantial addition to the Western allied forces. The Western governments had been most reticent to express any opinion in this regard for the fear of adverse French reaction. In the NATO Ministerial Council meeting held in New York, where the matter was discussed everyone's view was critical of French objection to German re-armament. The French however got a respite for the final communique suggested that the implications of German participation in European defence were to be further examined. In West Germany itself there was notable reluctance to rearm. The German socialists and conservatives refused to become the "European mercenaries".<sup>8</sup>

At this stage, on 28 October 1950, French Prime Minister Rene Pleven put forward an alternative plan. The reason for this approach could probably be the US badly wanted German rearmament and the American and to France meant U. S. having its say. The French were also then heavily engaged in restoring their imperial domination in Indo-China.

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8. Ibid, n. 1, p. 42.

The Plan initially tried to extend the ethos of ECSC into the military sphere as well. Rene Pleven said, while presenting the plan before the Parliament:

"The French government had hoped the implimentation of the Coal and Steel plan would accustom people to the idea of a European community before the most delicate question of common defence system was raised. World events allow no such respite.... the nations of Europe need to know that their collective security is assured, the French government proposes to solve this question in the European spirit".<sup>9</sup>

Since the first mootng of the plan (in 1950? and then its consideration by the French Parliament, (in 1954), much water had already flown through the Seine river, and the internal and external objective reality had undergone a sea change. With the death of Stalin, in 1953 there was a new mood of detente prevailing all over Europe. And, then, since early 1950s, the protagonists of European unity had preceded into the background, and the deeply committed nationalists, such as Gaullists had entered into coalition with the French radicals under the leadership of Pierie Mendes-France. Therefore, earlier French zeal for

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9. Ibid, n. 3, p. 89.

European unity had since waned, and the French were no longer interested in submerging their national identity into amorphous European defence arrangement. Therefore, the French Chamber of Deputies rejected the Pleven Plan establishing European Defence Community in 1954. Besides, a public opinion poll conducted seemed to have confirmed the country's opposition to the rearming of the Federal Republic. Just over fifty percent opposed German participation in the European Defence Community. Only 29 percent supported and 21 percent abstained from expressing their opinion in this regard.<sup>10</sup>

After the defeat of the Pleven Plan relative to the European Defence Community, Foreign Ministers of the six members states of the European Coal and Steel community held a conference at Messina in which a recommendation for a European organisation for the peaceful development of nuclear resources, and establishment of a common market free from all quota and tariff restrictions, and also free from restrictions on movement of capital, goods and labour was made. Several international happenings gave a new impetus to this plan. The closing of the Suez Canal in 1956 by Egypt and its adverse effects on

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10. Ibid.

European economy made the European nations think seriously about their future, political and economic situation. Hence when the new treaty was ready for signature at Rome in March 1957, none of the six governments withheld its approval.

Since the Germans were reluctant to treat the Euroatom project for atomic cooperation as a separate problem, it was decided to propose EEC and Euroatom simultaneously to the six governments of the ECSC.<sup>11</sup> This provided a second chance after the debacle of the E.D.C. No one could tell how rapidly the thaw following Stalin's death would melt Western solidarity. One could not be sure how long the Suez crisis could be remembered. In Germany, Konard Adenauer had to retire someday. Ludwig Erhard was known to be a lukewarm supporter of the European unity. The French objections had to be taken into account. The partners of France agreed to open all markets to French agricultural products. EEC would provide financial support and also extend association to the former French African colonies and other overseas territories. French "Community" ties were to be nurtured and respected. The eventual common external tariff would be aligned with high tariff

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11. Hans A. Schmitt, The Path to European Union: From Marshall Plan to Common Market, (New York, 1962), p. 37.

areas such as those of France, rather than with low tariff areas like those of Netherlands. As a result of this moderation, the treaty signed on 25 March 1957 was ratified within eight months.<sup>12</sup> Ever since the European Economic Community came into being, it has continued to develop on schedule despite the unending debate on European political unification.

Franco-German Treaty of Friendship  
And Cooperation (1963)

Robert Schuman's proposal in 1950 for a European Coal and Steel Community (the final concrete step of reconciliation with Germany) did not encounter any opposition in France. De Gaulle's criticism of the ECSC was not aimed at opposing reconciliation with the Germans, but at raising a supranational power structure in which the French identity may become less conspicuous.

The move for Common European Defence in 1954 revived old fears. Those who opposed the ratification were inspired by de Gaulle's protest against the dilution of the French army in a cosmopolitan European Army. As stated earlier, the treaty for E. D. C. was rejected by the French Chamber of Deputies but the move towards cooperation with Germany was resumed through the Treaty of Rome. The new French

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12. Ibid.

attitude was also indicated by the approval of the reunification of Saar with West Germany.

A question that may legitimately be asked is as why did the French approve of closer ties with the former enemy? There could be several historical reasons for this change. German occupation of France was mild compared with the atrocities committed in Eastern Europe and Russia and even with the repression in Norway or Holland. The Nazi period did not plant seeds of implacable hatred or resentment. Germany took over the role of a hereditary enemy only since 1871. England had been a bitter enemy for centuries, hence it was not an impossible proposition for the French to forget the resentment accumulated over a period of seventy five years. The French owed their national beginnings to the Germanic period of their history; it is not without cause that their name was derived from that of the Franko.<sup>13</sup> The two World Wars ended in a fiasco for both the centuries. Both realised that there was no point repeating the mistake of being at each other, which had started in 1870.<sup>14</sup>

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13. De Gaulle preferred to call Frenchmen Gauls to stress the ancient background of his people.

14. Ibid, n. 3, p. 101.

De Gaulle's return to power in France was greeted in Germany with serious mis-givings. However, the fears that he would break the ties between the two nations dissipated when the two statesmen, de Gaulle and Adenauer met. Thus began the honeymoon between Germany and France.

What could France offer to Germany? First, the French market in itself bore attraction for the German industries within the EEC framework. Secondly, the French held on to a firm position regarding the status quo in West Berlin and also nonrecognition of German Democratic Republic. De Gaulle promised, that:

"We would not allow West Berlin to be given up to the regime of Pankow. Furthermore, we are not prepared to recognize this regime as a sovereign and independent state".<sup>15</sup>

France was one of the nations which had a veto power regarding both these problems. The Germans knew that as long as de Gaulle was their friend, they could count on his will to resist any pressure and stiffen the American and British attitudes regarding West Berlin and Eastern Germany.

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15. Kulski, De Gaulle and the World, (New York, 1966), p. 87.

The zenith of this new found friendship reached in September 1962. The French President made a triumph at tour of West Germany, greeted everywhere with an enthusiasm rarely equalled in France. He himself was carried away with this emotion and went as far as to appeal to the former German Military glories in his speech in Hamburg at the German War College.<sup>16</sup>

De Gaulle and Adenauer crowned their friendship with the signing of the bi-lateral treaty of mutual Franco-German cooperation in 1963. At that time plans for European political union of the six had been shelved. The two statesmen thought that they had a substitute in the treaty which could, in due course of time, be extended to the reluctant Four. The treaty contained de Gaulle's cherished concept: a regular cooperation between the governments without any trace of supranationality. It proposed to have frequent meetings of the Heads of State/Government of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and National Defence as well as other Ministers whose jurisdiction would encompass the German-French cooperation. Military cooperation which was conceived in 1960, was to continue. It

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16. Ibid.



would not only include France's offer of storage depots for German armaments, training grounds for the German army, and two French airfields for German Air-Force use, but also cooperation in production of armaments and in military research. The French government did not mention anything about nuclear cooperation; the French national nuclear force was to remain exclusively French.

Cooperation was to extend in the field of cultural sphere also and the two governments were to work together within the framework of Common Market.

The treaty was concluded for an indefinite period of time without any clause allowing for unilateral denunciation.

Prior to the signing of the treaty de-Gaulle was rather confident of the French - German friendship. On 14 January 1963 in the event of his opposition to the British entry into the Common Market and his refusal to join the United States and Britain in Nassau Agreement, he declared:

"Among the new elements that are in the process of shaping the world at present, I believe that there is none more striking and more fruitful than the French-German pact. Two great peoples, which have for as long and as terribly opposed and fought each other, are now turning toward each other with the same impulse of

sympathy and understanding. It is not only a question of reconciliation demanded by circumstances. What is happening in reality is a kind of mutual discovery of two neighbours, each noticing the extent to which the other is valid, worthy and attractive. It is from this then that springs the desire for a rapprochement manifest everywhere in the two countries which conforms with reality and which commands politics, because, for the first time many generations, the Germans and the Gauls realize their solidarity".<sup>17</sup>

His euphoria was not to last long. He mistook his confident relations with Adenauer for an identity of views between the two governments. A French publication was more realistic in observing "After all, it was a de Gaulle-Adenauer understanding rather than a French-German one that was taking shape. If the old Chancellor were to disappear what would remain of this understanding?"<sup>18</sup>

Ostpolitik Under Willy Brandt:  
French Reaction

The pact concluded through Bonn-Moscow treaty of August 1970, Bonn-Warshaw treaty of December 1970, and the Berlin settlement heralded a new conciliatory phase between West Germany and Eastern Europe. This policy launched by Willy Brandt came to be known as Ostpolitik.

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17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

Historically, the Ostpolitik had three phases.<sup>19</sup> In the first phase, 1949-1959, the important development was establishment of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and the latter's ending of hostility with West Germany. But during this period West Germany was backed up by the powerful West and therefore, its policy was slightly biased towards the West while dealing with the East.

The second phase was in the period between 1959 to 1966. Its principle feature was the ending of United States supremacy in nuclear capability, and substitution of the strategy of "massive relation" by "flexible response".

The final stage and rather the most important phase was from 1966 onwards. The main spirit behind this period Ostpolitik was Willy Brandt, first as a Foreign Minister under Keisinger's government and then as a Chancellor of West Germany.

Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik was firmly anchored into his "Westpolitik". He kept the West in good books. He maintained a steady relation with France, and even made a friendly gesture by revaluing the

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19. H. S. Chopra, "Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik and its impact on Franco-German Relations", India Quarterly, (New Delhi) July-September 1972, p. 16.

Mark when France was facing economic hardship during the Fourth Republic.<sup>20</sup> But at the same time he made sure that he remained the initiator of West Germany's policy towards the East without offending the susceptibilities of the Western allies.

Basically Ostpolitik was a policy "to normalize" West Germany's relations with Eastern Europe. The attempt of Brandt to give a new orientation to West Germany's image sprouted from the situation it found itself from its past policy. Both Germans on either side of the Elbe were regarded as setellits because they were kept divided and no scope for any understanding between them was kept by the super powers, rather they were kept in a state of continuous confrontation. As a result of this West Germany had come up with its policy, like Hallstein Doctrine.<sup>21</sup> Brandt realised that unification of Germany could not come about in a tension ridden atmosphere. Therefore, in order to win over the faith of the East he gave up this doctrine. He further imposed the faith by signing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

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20. A. Buchon, Europes Future, Europes Choices, (New York, 1969), p. 200.

21. Recognition of GDR by any country would be declared as an unfriendly act by West Germany.

Germany being a nation with a proud past and having emerged as a biggest economic power in Europe did not like the role of being a stooge of U. S. national interest.

In pursuance of its national interest West Germany had to look towards the East which had a huge deposit of resources and of course, East Europe and Soviet Union were potentially a big market for German products.

"Ostpolitik was inspired by the prime objective of carving out a place of honour for West Germany, commensurate with its economic and industrial strength within Europe".<sup>21</sup>

Initially the French did not have to say much about West Germany's eastern policy because the French felt that the German Chancellor was only following in the footsteps of the French eastern policy. But there was some areas where their interest came into conflict. First, West Germany's Ostpolitik would undermine the Western solidarity as symbolised by NATO and European community. One must not forget the basic objective of French policy of checking German resurgence with such

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22. Ibid, n. 19, p. 15.

arrangements. Secondly, with the policy launched by Willy Brandt, West Germany, by then had become a strong economic power would be a major trading rival in Eastern Europe. But this was not a big problem in French mind because the figures of that period spoke that Soviet Union represented only 2 percent of French trade.<sup>23</sup>

The main worry for France by the policy of West Germany was its position in Europe. West Germany's economy and its peace motivation in both sides of Europe was going to reverberate in international arena.

France realized, during this period that West Germany's influence could be properly countered through a cooperation and proper agreement with small powers of European Community. It knew for sure that Britain would prefer to form an alliance with West Germany to limit French influence. This was the rationale behind France to have tried for Spanish membership of E. C. so as to have on its side added influence of the Latin grouping of nations.<sup>24</sup>

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23. Ibid.

24. Notzold Rummel, "On Way to a New European order, Aussen Politik (Hamburg), Vol. 41, no. 3, 1990, p. 69.

In the 1970's France gradually started to develop its relation with Soviet Union. Giscard D'Estaing hastily arranged meeting with Brezhnev and his attempt at mediation between the East and West was highly criticised in France. Likewise French participation in the Moscow Olympics, where the U. S. and West Germany had boycotted was not appreciated in German circles; and even visit to Moscow and his meeting with Jaruzeloki were in the same way meant to counterbalance the Federal Republic's growing influence in the East. The first ever official visit of Eric Honecker Secretary General of the SED to Paris took place from 7 January to 9 January 1988. While the West German circles were warned that his visit might evidence a double game, President Mitterrand stressed the necessity to develop understanding and reconciliation between France and all the Germans.<sup>25</sup>

The Ostpolitik of the 1970's and insistence of the Kohl government later on the primacy of freedom made the two German states gain a considerable measure of political space.<sup>26</sup> They began to seek more influence if not independence from the respective

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25. David S. Yast, 'Franco-German Defense Cooperation', The Washington Quarterly, Vol. 11, no.2, Spring, 1988, p.

26. Jochen Thies, "Germany, what now?", The World Today, Vol. 41, no.1, January 1990, p. 2.

super powers. Both sides did not go in for anything drastic but engaged in "good neighbourly" relations. It was after all, perfectly normal for neighbouring states and their citizens to trade, deal and visit each other. And this did not reflect a resurgence of Germany as some people felt. Rather it brought normalcy and most Germans were quite satisfied with this development.



### CHAPTER 3

#### SYSTEMIC CHANGE IN USSR AND EASTERN EUROPE : UNIFICATION OF GERMANY

Mikhail Gorbachev's assumption of power in 1985 changed the political complexion of Europe. The systemic change put an end to the totalitarian regimes in U. S. S. R. and Eastern Europe and paved the way for political democracy not only in the successor states of the U. S. S. R., but also in Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and to a certain degree in Romania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. One of the most important consequences of the dramatic transformation was bringing down of the Berlin Wall which symbolized not only the partition of Germany, but also showed the intensity of the inter-bloc cold war.

The great October Revolution (accomplished more than seventy years ago) in Russia dramatically changed the life of the country and produced a noticeable impact on the subsequent developments of international community. Since then Soviet Union emerged, in a rather short period of time, with its Communist ideology deeply embedded in its system as a super power which posed a serious challenge to the security of the liberal democratic Western Europe.

However, in 1985, with Mikhail Gorbachev's advent to power the USSR, which was the leading actor in the Cold War against the West, experienced another

ideological earthquake, and showed determination to give up the totalitarian ideology and opt for liberal democratic pluralistic order.

When Gorbachev succeeded Andropov in 1985 he understood the heavy cost at which the USSR had to maintain its super power status. The Soviet people were getting disenchanted with the illusions perpetuated by the ideology for more than seven decades, and could not therefore continue to approve of the policy priorities, which were based on irrationality, but then attached out of proportion importance to arms build up at heavy cost to their social and economic existence. As such, Gorbachev, with a view to revamp the system, sought to break new grounds in the Soviet Union through Glasnost, Perestroika and democratization.

In conformity with his initiative at systemic change, he also made a marked departure from his predecessors in the field of foreign policy. He realized that international problems could not be solved through a confrontational approach. He viewed the systemic problem in a more realistic and humanistic way. He was not very appreciative of the way Afganistan was handled by the earlier Soviet leadership. Therefore, he announced withdrawal of the troops from the Afgan

soil. He assured independence and freedom of political choice to be exercised by the countries then under communist domination. He also made sincere effort at arms reduction which culminated in the signing of the INF treaty. In order to steer through his new policies he removed Foreign Minister Gromyko from his post and did general restructuring of the Foreign Ministry and the International Department of the Central Committee<sup>1</sup> which enabled him to gain full control of the foreign policy apparatus and put his view in place.

Taking advantage of Gorbachev's reforms, the Central and East European allies of the Soviet Union decided to shed away the totalitarian system and opted in favour of democratic pluralism and free market economy. One may also bear in mind that a tumultuous change took place within the USSR itself as well. Its Republics also showed restlessness in the early phase, and subsequently they also indicated firmly their will to gain independence, and get out of the ideological imperialistic cauldron imposed on them by the USSR. Their intent, though not clearly expressed, was to regain their natural identity.

In any case, the Central and East European countries, which had, since the end of the Second

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1. Gorbachev made these changes in the 27th Party Congress in February 1986.

World War, had stood by the USSR against the so-called Western imperialism, decided to break away from the communist bloc, and return to the liberal European democratic political order. As a result, the map of Europe changed completely in a span of less than a year.

Understandably, the collapse of the ideological bloc system was mainly due to the hardships caused by the social and economic realities, and then, of course political freedom of the people could not be suppressed for too long. From a number of interviews conducted<sup>2</sup> during those days one can see that the motive for the systemic change came more for the desire of the general populace, rather than the power elite, to escape the constant interference, the aprong strings and the control of the totalitarian state and to achieve individual freedom for themselves and the coming generation. The other reason could be that in the Soviet Union Communist Party, was really the repository of power, and had attained it through its own revolutionary zeal contrarily, communism had been imposed upon the East European countries, after the Second World War. As such, the USSR could not have the perception of a regime imposed from outside. Without doubt, the

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2. Micael Lucas, "Germany after the Wall" World Policy Journal (New York), Winter 1990, p. 204.

CPSU had ruled over the country for more than seventy years, during which period it had shaped the social patterns and behaviour in such a way which made the sudden change almost overnight unlikely as was seen in some of its neighbouring countries. In the East European countries they lacked a large resourceful group such as the Soviets had, close to a loosely referred to as 'bureaucracy'<sup>3</sup> which had its own interest in perpetuation of a system by controlling the economic and political decisions. Therefore, East Europeans were easily amenable to the Western influence, as compared to the Soviet Union, rich in natural resources and vastness of the land. Though the comparison with Soviet Union may appear to be non-substantial at present but its bearing on the reforms, when they were initially introduced.

Political changes in Central and Eastern Europe, as they took place, at neck break speed : indeed, it became difficult for any political commentator to keep track of the historic developments then taking place; the political regimes, which hitherto had appeared to be sound and strong, fell like the house of cards. The dictatorial chieftains fled their respective countries and took refuge elsewhere. Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia were among the first

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3. J.M. Rollo & Others, The New Eastern Europe: Western Responses, (London, 1990), p. 83.

group of East European countries to have perceived the way new political wind seemed to be blowing. They were also the quickest to respond positively and move along with rather than against it. This phenomenon which spread like a wild fire in the erstwhile communist bloc was bound to have its effect upon the German Democratic Republic, which had been the victim of alien rule, and separated from the FRG. The GDR had a rigid and corrupt regime which could not live up to the expectations of its citizens to realize their legitimate aspirations for socio-economic development.<sup>4</sup> The story on the other side of the Wall was entirely different. Here people lived in a democratic set up where they could express their free will. The people had a very high standard of living because the economic development had hit top gear. They had become an economic giant and earned a lot of respect in the international arena. Whereas, East Germany was drab and docile, really the object of much interest except for its achievements in the Olympic Games. The GDR people started to think why could not they also achieve the same success in the economic domain as their clans did next door. They developed the system in which they lived. They considered forty years of the communist rule in their country and not only as meaningless, but wasteful in so far as utilization of their national

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4. Wolfgang, "German Question Between the East and West", *Aussen Politik* (Hamburg), Vol. 35, no. 3, 1989, p. 58.

resources is concerned. It definitely did no good to them : They were deprived of a share in the "economic miracle", which only the West Germans under free democratic regime could experience.

Popular frustration, compounded by the realization that the Soviets would not save Erich Honecker's regime from its own intransigence became sharpened into a rather volatile mood and needed cutting of some Hungarian barbed wires to ignite.<sup>5</sup> When Hungary opened its border to the West, hundreds and thousands of refugees poured in from the East. This was one of the very important aspects in which GDR differed from the other East European countries in that its entire population had the possibility of migrating to the West.<sup>6</sup> As long as migration was effectively prevented East Germany could maintain its communist system. But it became impossible after the opening of the border by Hungary in August 1989. By September 1989, 100,000 people mainly young and skilled workers migrated to West Germany causing its profound effect on the economy which acted as a main destabilizing factor in East Germany. The exodus by raising the specter of social and economic collapse, brought out those who stayed behind to march in the streets for reform and to their astonishment and victory, they received concessions

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5. Ibid, n. 2, p. 189.

6. Ibid, n. 3, p. 11.

after concessions from the once formidable regime; lifting the restrictions on travel, abolition of the Stasi (secret police), promises of free election, resignation of the entire Politburo of the ruling Socialist Unity Party (SED) and the arrest of many of the party's highest leaders for corruption and abuse of power.

As the SED regime fell before the wrath of the people, scenes of rapturous reunion between East and West Germans through the newly opened Berlin Wall were broadcast around the world. Reunification, a prospect once so far away to which West Germany's allies had pretended<sup>7</sup> to favour it rose to the top of the agenda.

The division of Germany was actually the anchor holding the entire European status quo in order. With the echo of German unification, Europe's future seemed to suddenly cut loose from its past, all the post war structures of power turned out to be only temporary platforms.<sup>8</sup> The reunion of the people belonging to the both sides was such that one thought that the Cold War's antagonistic era had come to an end. With NATO and the Warsaw Pact rapidly losing their military significance, even policy makers like U. S. Secretary of State James Baker began calling for transformation of these alliances,

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7. Jochen Thies, 'Germany, What Now?'; World Today (London), Vol. 41, no. 1, January 1990, p. 1.

8. Chaika Grossman, "German Unification; A Personal View", New Outlook (Northampton), Vol. 33, no. 7, July 1990, p. 109.



into political organisations. The twelve nations of the European Community was forced to reconsider the scope of European Union as West Germany's gaze turned eastwards and East European countries came knocking at the door of the European Community.<sup>9</sup>

Designing a new structure for post Cold War Europe which a few years earlier was considered exclusively scholarly premise suddenly became an urgent necessity.

The euphoria over German Unification was short lived. Soon it gave rise to anxiety. The haste with which Helmut Kohl launched his ten-point plan for German unification made the neighbours uneasy, particularly the Poles and French. Mitterrand was upset for not having been consulted. The U. S. support for Kohl's plan had a condition attached to it, the unified Germany would have to be a member of NATO. The Soviets felt that unification could be possible only if the military bloc ceased to exist.

Meanwhile the Europeans feared that GDR could spiral into chaos, possibly breeding right wing nationalism in the process because the collapse of SED had left a power vacuum. If the reforms could not improve the economic situation, East Germans

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9. It must be kept in mind that the Common European Home which Gorbachev had proposed was no longer dismissed by Westerners as farfetched or Utopian.

would lose the little confidence they had and they may have to resort to mass exodus. With the sense of urgency mounting the leaders of Communist and opposition parties agreed upon free elections to be held in May. The SED tried desperately to reorganize itself along democratic socialist lines. In an ironic twist of history, the widespread fear of anarchy and chaos made Western countries suddenly solicitous of the GDR's stability, and produced such odd scenes as that of new SED leader Gregor Gysi requesting U. S. help in maintaining the GDR as a separate state.<sup>10</sup>

Amid all the turbulence that had set in motion, the citizens of GDR were being deprived of what they had sought in the first place - the right to determine their own future. To build a new kind of socialism or adopt a free market economy; to remain a separate state or merge with FRG.

It should be noted that no separate East German strategy for the external aspects of unification emerged. The initiative rested with the Bonn government as old forces in East Germany lost power in a disorderly retreat. After March 1990 elections the parties that came to power in the East were essentially extension of West Germany's political system. Although, the ideas of those who had engineered the

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10. Ibid, n. 2, p. 200.

revolution were represented in the government, most energies in East Germany turned towards democratic transition and the internal aspects of unification. Consequently, the pacifistic and anti-alliance orientation of East Germany's political activists soon ceased to interfere with Bonn's strategy.<sup>11</sup>

The U. S. role in helping Germany develop its unity needs special mention. It played an important role in cushioning the historical animosity of France and Britain. For Britain and France unified Germany was emerging as a new big power, which would certainly dwarf their influence in Europe. To the United States, the political change in Germany meant proven validity of its values in Europe, and triumph over communism. America's own interest would also be served best for it would mean doing increased business with Europe's most powerful country,<sup>12</sup> and also a future partner in the emerging global order.

As such, the US had a calculated interest in ensuring restoration of German sovereignty which was reflected in its attempts at orientating the Four-plus-Two negotiations so as to formalize unhindered unification of the two German states. But, Britain,

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11. Karl Kaiser, "Germany's Unification," Foreign Affairs (New York), Vol. 70, no. 1, 1991, p. 265.

12. Ibid.

France and the USSR had their own reservations in this regard. Therefore, they were initially opposed to the two German states being included in the discussions in the first phase; their intention was first to arrive at an understanding about it among themselves, and then enter into deliberations with the two German states. The US President George Bush had therefore to personally intervene and hold bilateral discussions with the French President Francois Mitterrand and British Prime Minister Margret Thatcher and then there followed intensive negotiations between the U. S. Secretary of State James Baker on the one hand, and the Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shervardnadze and his other counterparts at the CSCE's "Open Skies" meeting held at Ottawa in February 1990.<sup>13</sup>

Strongly supported by Bonn, an agreement on the mode of German unification was reached without much difficulty. The two German states worked jointly to evolve their consensus on the external aspect of unification, and then communicate with the Four Allied powers. This ensured Germany's right of self determination as well as established relationship of cooperation with the West. The aforesaid formula, moreover, implied that German unification was to be achieved not as a result of a peace Conference but in the form of

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13. Ibid.

what would become the Treaty or Final Settlement, signed by the six parties.<sup>14</sup>

As the Two-plus-Four talks proceeded, the US President, Bush continued to influence the related developments. He reassured Gorbachev at 31 May.- 1 June 1990 Summit meeting on a number of points<sup>15</sup>, such as reforms of NATO strategy, German Commitment on its future non-nuclear status and transitional arrangement for Soviet troops in East Germany. Gorbachev responded quite positively that Soviet Union's approval of unification under the CSCE auspicious in fact meant that Germany was free to choose its alliance. The final quid-pro-quo thus offered was western pledge to revise and refurbish security environment in Europe in return for Soviet acquiescence to Germany staying on in the NATO. The US leadership had then sensed that its role in the context of the on-going changes in the USSR and Eastern Europe had to be somewhat discreet, for by then already there had appeared symptoms of disaffection among the components of the USSR.<sup>16</sup>

The process of German unification moved in somewhat smooth fashion. This question however, came up at the top of the super power agenda, particularly when the political crisis became exacerbated in Eastern Europe.

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15. He had already previously consulted with the German Chancellor.

16. Ibid., n. 9, p. 280.

Here let us not forget that in February 1990 East-West Conference held in Ottawa, it was the US which made the Four-Plus-Two formula work, despite the initial opposition of the other Three allied powers.<sup>17</sup> In the super power discussions which took place in Moscow in September 1990, two main obstacles were removed. The first related to United Germany's reaffirming its recognition of its Eastern border with Poland on Oder Neisse line, and the second on its exercise of freedom to stay in the NATO. With the settlement of these two critical issues, the four Allied power responsibility on the German question also came to an end.

Following the first ever free elections held on 18 March 1990 a coalition government of non-communist parties was formed in East Germany which held a meeting with the West German government in which the legal, political and monetary aspects of the unification were discussed: the liquidation of the large monopoly enterprises, dismantling of cooperatives in the agricultural sector, abolition of GDR's Ostmark, setting up of stock markets and denationalization of the credit banking system.<sup>18</sup>

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17. M. A. Islam, "German Unification and New Europe", BIIS Journal, Vol. 11, no. 3, 1990, p. 368.

18. Frederick F. Clairmonte, "German Finance Capital & Reunification: Uncompleted Annexation", Economic & Political Weekly, Vol. XXV, no. 10, 10 March 1990, pp. 491.

Yet, the merging of the of the two economies did make many West Germans quiver despite the known might of their economy. Political leaders like Theo Waigel, the pro-unification FRG Finance Minister had to admit that Germany was embarking on an "economic adventure".<sup>19</sup>

However, the kind of skepticism, that experienced in various circles in the FRG, did not come in the way of unification. Elections for the Lander or state governments in East Germany were held setting up a legal structure for political unification on a federal basis.

The two German states together decided to fix 3 October 1990 as the National unification day. This day was of historic significance in East Germany, for it was on this day, a year earlier, that the East Germans en masse had risen in rebellion against the erstwhile communist regime, and brought the question of German unification in the forefront.

"A day of joy for all Germans - but also a day of gratitude."<sup>20</sup> This comment by Chancellor Helmut Kohls sums up the feelings of the Germans.

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19. Bangkok Post, 1 July 1990.

20. Quoted in Hindustan Times, (New Delhi), 4 October, 1990.

The unification had been achieved not by way of merger but by GDR acceding to FRG in everyway, including accepting its Western style democracy and free market economy. The FRG with addition of five East German Lander comprised of a total of sixteen Landers. German deputies were included in the Bundestag, the Lower House, and the Lander representatives found their place in the Bundesrat, the Upper House.

Debate on Unified Germany's Status:  
Neutral Or in NATO?

The remarkable development in Europe since the late 1989 which resulted in the unification of Germany brought back once again the problem of how to find a legitimate security order in which the basic dilemma of two equally legitimate but possibly contradictory goals could be solved. Germany's strive for unity and "full sovereignty" on the one hand, and the security concerns of its neighbours.<sup>21</sup>

Knowing fully well that a unified Germany would be a power to reckon with and the German psyche in the two World Wars, the two super powers and Germany's neighbours were locked up in a debate, whether the unified Germany should be made neutral or be allowed to become a member of the NATO?

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21. Ingo Peters, "United Germany in NATO : Genscher's Plan for German Unification and European Security", Paper presented to the J.N.U.:FES:ICRIER, International Seminar. New Delhi, September 1990, p.2.



For the West the membership of Germany in NATO was the cornerstone of the new security order to be constructed along with its unification. The Soviet Union in whatever form it existed would remain a formidable conventional and nuclear power. If, the USSR reversed its new policies of systemic change, the Atlantic alliance and the United States commitment to Europe would remain indispensable.<sup>22</sup> It was also agreed that after the Cold War the alliance would remain necessary to prevent a renationalization of defence policies, it would provide the framework within which a United Germany could be integrated.<sup>23</sup>

In late January 1990 the West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher came up with a proposal which later on came to be known as Genscher Plan. It stated that United Germany should be a member of NATO. The geographical area covered by NATO should not be extended to the former territory of GDR, i.e. upto the Oder Neisse line. No troops assigned to NATO or subject to a German national command should be stationed on East German territory.

However, the Genscher Plan, though for a short time was opposed by the West German Defence Minister

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22. Ibid, n. 9, p. 281.

23. Ibid.

Gerhard Stoltenberg. His argument was that the whole territory of United Germany should be a part of NATO area and that the status of the troops stationed in the GDR would have to be clarified. This controversy led Helmut Kohl to back Genscher's ideas which thus became the West German government's position,<sup>24</sup> and gained a strong support from public opinion. But after the Social Democrats (SPD) decided to support Genscher's NATO option it became the core around which the overall West German stance on this major question was formulated.<sup>25</sup>

East Germany's Prime Minister, Lottar de-Maiziere argued that his government favoured the military alliance to be merged into a new security system based on the CSCE. This position reflected the neutralist undercurrent and skepticism in the GDR towards NATO,<sup>26</sup> which was on the one hand due to forty years of anti Western propoganda and, on the other hand reflected that the GDR was still a member of the Warsaw pact, and thus in the interest of safeguarding the unification process, it had to take into account what was perceived as Soviet security interest.<sup>27</sup>

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24. Roland D. Asmus, "A United Germany", Foreign Affairs (New York), Vol. 68, no. 4, Spring 1990, p. 39.

25. Ibid, n.21, p. 4.

26. Ibid, n.24, p. 69.

27. Ibid, n.21, p. 5.

As the West pressed more and more for Germany's inclusion in NATO the Soviets became more adamant to keep Germany as a neutral state. The reluctant Soviet position of German membership of the NATO was predominantly shaped by historical experiences, i.e. the deeply rooted anxiety in the Soviet mind about Germany's aggressive foreign policy which had twice brought devastating world wars.<sup>28</sup> This factor had to be taken into account by any Soviet government in order to legitimize Soviet foreign policy on Germany; the dissolution of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation depriving it of the security glacis to the West formerly viewed to be indispensable in terms of Soviet security interests; the envisaged progress in disarmament negotiations in Vienna where a "balance of power" could no longer be counted according to the former "blocs", the WTO and NATO, but where the Soviet capabilities stood alone.<sup>29</sup>

The foregoing Soviet position could be viewed in another perspective as well. For the Soviet Union acceptance of a unified Germany's membership in NATO was inherently difficult. It not only represented the ultimate and most dramatic consequence of Gorbachev's

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28. W. Weidfeld, "Tricky Part of 1992" European Affairs (Amsterdam), Vol. 4, no. 1, Spring 1990, p. 44.

29. Ibid, n. 21, p. 7.

retreat from unsustainable Soviet position but implied the advance of Western values and structures into a region held at a great cost throughout the post war period. This may have led to the internal opposition to Gorbachev's new policies.<sup>30</sup>

The former socialist countries but which were still members of the Warsaw Pact, Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia dismissed German neutrality as being detrimental to their security interests and favoured unified Germany to stay on in the NATO.<sup>31</sup> The Poles were more particularly nervous than any body else of a unified Germany with neutral status. The Polish Foreign Minister proposed that Germany should remain in NATO so that it could not become an independent "super power" on the European stage.<sup>32</sup> It was argued that a neutral unified Germany might defend itself by acquiring nuclear weapon. Therefore, NATO alone could provide an insurance against any future German misconduct.

After a prolonged debate on the status of Germany the final solution was found by a bilateral deal between Bonn and Moscow which was struck during Helmut Kohl's visit to Moscow in July 1990. It was

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30. Ibid, n. 11, p. 267.

31. As discussed in Ottawa.

32. Economist (London), 27 January, 1990, p. 15.

decided that NATO troops would not be stationed on what was then the East German soil; that the Red Army troops would have up to four years to withdraw; the United Germany would have to reduce its troops' strength to 370,000.<sup>33</sup> It would renounce production of ABC weapons and would continue its adhesion to the NPT.

All these negotiations finally ended in decisions clearly and smoothly having been worked out. Both sides were determined to ensure that Europeans did not fall back in a situation that had prevailed before the First and the Second World War, i.e. into a system of nation states competing with each other.

In such a system, conditioned by the balance of power, states were able to attain political stability in the short run by joining together in various more often than not uneasy coalitions and or alliances, which, however, owing to the competing interests of the components, could not last long. As a result, political equilibrium broke down, and the alliances fell apart. It is this variety of disequilibrium that was widely rife at the turn of this century and again during the inter-war period, which had led to the two cataclysmic world wars that the world had ever witnessed.

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33. New Strait Times, (Kuala Lumpur), 13 September 1990.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE FRENCH RESPONSE

The systemic revolution in East Europe and subsequently the implication of Germany were perceived in a different way both in Germany and France. For Germany it meant reunion of the two peoples, forcibly separated from each other by an external factor, which they had cherished for so long. France, on the other hand, was caught between "elation and foreboding".<sup>1</sup> The news emanating from the East was good but was it good for France? During the process of German unification some critical questions stood before France : would unity mean more power to Germany? What would be its role in the new European peace-order?

#### The First Hesitant Approach

A portrayal of France as an inward looking country whose people saw only threat in Germany's good fortune is a clear exaggeration.<sup>2</sup> The French response at the opening of the Berlin Wall was real and sincere at the outset. But this was followed by a process of a degree of ambivalence. According to Dominique Mosi, public opinion at large held a much more positive view of German unification.

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1. Dominique Mosi, "The French Answer to the German Question", European Affairs (Amsterdam), Vol. 4, no. 1, Spring 1990, p. 30.

2. Ibid, p. 31.

His survey showed that 82 percent of the French thought that bringing the Wall down was an important event of 1989: 60 percent or nearly two-third of the people surveyed, in all the polls taken, supported unification even if they were aware of some of the negative consequences a United Germany may have on the stability of the old order.<sup>3</sup> But, then possibly, opinion polls may have shown most people in favour of German unification on the surface. In casual conversation with the French people, concern about what a unified Germany would mean for their future had come through repeatedly.<sup>4</sup> The French ambivalence which springs from their traditional, psychological set up, as it had developed over several decades has affected to a certain extent their confidence to contain and balance a United Germany.

However, there is no gain saying the fact that France formerly respected and endorsed Germany's right to unify. The general character of official French pronouncement was more forthcoming and markedly different from long row of skeptical remarks of Mrs. Thatcher, who saw outright dangers of unification.<sup>5</sup>

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3. Ibid, p. 32.

4. International Herald Tribune (Paris), 21 February 1990.

5. Karl Kaiser, "German Unification", Foreign Affairs (New York), Vol. 70, no.1, 1990, p. 262.

In November 1989, French President Mitterrand said;

"I am not afraid of German unification, if the Germans want to be a single nation in a single state, this must be founded on the will of the German nation, and no body can oppose it. What counts is what the Germans want".<sup>6</sup>

In expressing himself he must have had two goals in mind. He wanted to make German unification as an important means to strengthen the process of European Union. In his New Year Message to the French people, President Mitterrand launched the notion of a transcontinental confederation which would allow Europe to recover its history and its geography by associating every state on the continent in a joint and permanent organisation for exchanges, peace and security.<sup>7</sup> Secondly Mitterrand wanted to keep himself abreast with the rapidly moving historical developments. To have remained silent or have adopted a different course would have been counter productive.<sup>8</sup>

The unification process was taking place at such a swift pace that the French response thereto turned out to be somewhat confused. President Mitterrand's visit to East Germany in December 1989 and again his visit to Kiev where he spoke about his reservations

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6. Meimeth, "France and European security", Aussen Politik (Hamburg), Vol. 42, February 1991, p. 36.

7. Jolyon Howorth, "France since the Berlin Wall; Defence and Diplomacy", World Today (London), Vol. 46 no. 7, July 1990, p. 126.

8. Ibid, n. 1, pp. 32-33.



on German unification with Gorbachev was badly received in Bonn.

France accepted the overall arrangement which included a United Germany in the NATO. But it had a kind of reservation against the new proposition that NATO should become a building block of the post cold war order and take on a more political character. Traditionally, French policy had always resisted such arrangements.

Both France and Britain initially even played with the idea of retaining elements of the Four Power rights. But once the Two-plus-Four formula was established in Ottawa, they unequivocally supported the concept of a fully sovereign Germany and constructively contributed to that outcome.

Initial French hesitation did not have any negative effect on their relationship. This may be because of the kind of relationship the two countries built, in the post war period. It may also be partly due to the fact that many Germans themselves were initially skeptical, or even opposed to unity.<sup>9</sup>

#### The Two-Plus-Four Formula

The remarkable developments in Europe since 1989 put French security policies in unresolved

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9. Ibid, n. 5, p. 267.

dilemmas and underlying anxieties. Understandably, the French security since the sixties, had been based on a number of premises: a) A large U. S. nuclear and conventional force presence in West Germany, as part of an extensive integrated alliance structure, providing a de-facto protection to France. b) A West Germany anchored in NATO, dependent on allied security commitments and particularly interested in obtaining French cooperation regarding West European economic integration, and within and outside other multilateral, political, economic and military institutions, c) a stable and predictable of East-West relations in which France could maintain a special status with respect to NATO's integrated military structure, emphasizing its independence, autonomy and freedom of action.<sup>10</sup>

Given the new scenario of a diminished U. S. military and nuclear presence in Western Europe, a less predictable and unstable political situation prevailing throughout the East Europe and in the now defunct Soviet Union and uncertainty concerning the internal political dynamics and policies of a Unified Germany, a number of other factors supporting France's unique security position began

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10. David S. Yost, "France in the New Europe", Foreign Affairs(New York), Vol. 69, no. 5, winter, 1990-1991, p. 107.

to look vulnerable.<sup>11</sup> As French Defence Minister Jean Pierre Chevenement put it in June 1990,

".... the decolonization of the last empire that of Soviet Union represents a leap into the unknown for all Europeans, who have to organize their security relations on a radically new basis".<sup>12</sup>

When it became visibly clear to the French that German unification was inevitable several past questions came into the fore. Especially apprehension of a powerful Germany in the heart of Europe made everyone think about new security arrangement. In the West, while it was generally believed that European security would be best served if United Germany became a member of NATO, the Soviets felt that Germany should become a neutral state. This debate continued for quite sometime until the major actors in Europe or for that matter the four allied powers agreed on a "Two-plus-Four formula. The Western powers clearly stated their intention to the "Two-plus-Four" negotiations to abandon the Four Power rights and solve the historical border issues, and to give full sovereignty to a United Germany.<sup>13</sup>

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12. Speech at the Royal United Institute, London, 7 June 1990, in *Foreign Affairs*(New York), Winter 1990-91, p. 110.

13. Ingo Peters, "United Germany in NATO: Genscher' Plan for German Unification and European Security, Paper presented at the JNU:FES:ICRIER International Seminar, New Delhi, September 1990, p. 2.

The victors of the Second World War met at East-West Conference in Ottawa in February 1990 and announced a blueprint for German unification in two stages. First, negotiations between East and West Germany would begin soon after the East Germany had held their elections in March 1990. In the second stage, Foreign Ministers of the Four Powers would meet to discuss the external aspects of the establishment of German unification, including the issues of security of the neighbouring states. France began compiling lists of conditions that would make the fact acceptable : the process of unification would have to be "democratic and peaceful" : Germany would have to be committed to NATO and further EC economic and political integration; it would have to renounce permanently nuclear, chemical and biological weapons; and it would have to make clear its permanent acceptance of existing frontiers, including the Oder-Neisse line.

French officials usually described their aims at Europe's future political and security order in tactful abstract formulations. The French Foreign Minister, Roland Dumas suggested that it was imperative

".... to organize Europe so that it escapes the two perils of hegemony or explosion... a better assured security, a will to solidarity".

In institutional terms he added that the movement of the EC towards political union should include a "European identity in the domain of security" but within the Atlantic alliance.<sup>14</sup>

In Paris a debate cropped up as to how to check a powerful Germany and whether it would kill E.C.<sup>15</sup> The French also feared that their dream of a French controlled European federation would be put to back seat.

Pierre Lellouch, diplomatic adviser to Jacques Chirac said that

".... after 45 years the problem has returned to haunt us, disrupting in the process the structures that were precisely to contain it: the alliances and E.C. The future shape and weight of Germany will directly influence prosperity, stability and peace of the whole continent".<sup>16</sup>

Initially the British, French and the Soviets refused on Two-plus-Four formula and preferred "Four-plus-Zero"<sup>17</sup> meaning that the four powers would decide among themselves about the future of Germany. But this failed primarily because the four were not in agreement on the status of Germany. The three Western powers supported Germany's membership in NATO and the Soviet

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14. Ibid, n. 10, p. 116.

15. Ibid, n. 4, 10 March 1990.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.

Union wanted it to stay as a neutral power. They did not want to repeat the tragic mistake of Versailles Treaty particularly after Germany had forty-five years of impeccable democratic credentials, hence it would be unjust to try and impose things on Germany

"This approach obviously satisfies the demand for full sovereignty but for others Two-plus-Four carries many uncertainties. It will turn the four meeting into a formality, creating the perception that great powers are no longer that, and new and single most important actor in Europe is again Germany".<sup>18</sup>

Such apprehensions in due course of time gave way to more pragmatic thinking and after deliberations spread over seven months the Four Powers which had defeated Germany and partitioned it gave blessing to German unification, in a treaty which would recognize the two Germanies as a single sovereign states.

The Two-plus-Four treaty which was signed in Moscow on 13 September 1990 by the Foreign Ministers of U. S., Soviet Union, Britain, France and the two Germanies contains a preamble and ten clauses.

The treaty fixes borders at their present position, limits the size of the German army to 370,000 within three or four years and renounces the "manufacture, possession of and control over nuclear, biological

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18. Ibid.

or chemical weapons". It also provides for allied troops to remain in Berlin until complete withdrawal of Soviet troops from what was East Germany before 1990.<sup>19</sup>

### The Paris Conference

After forty years of tension, ideological hatred and frantic arms race that threatened the very existence of life, the cold war was formally put to rest in Paris. The leaders of every country in Europe, except Albania together with United States and Canada joined in a pledge never to attack one another with military force. The twenty-two members of NATO and the Warsaw Pact signed the most far reaching conventional arms control agreement in history. The pact did away hundreds and thousands of tanks, artillery pieces and military aircraft. All the thirty four nations subscribed to the new Charter based on democracy, human rights, the rule of law and free market economy.<sup>20</sup>

If anything the political commitment made in Paris was far reaching. In a single nineteen page document the communist powers of eastern Europe

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19. Times (London), 13 September 1990.

20. New Strait Times (Kuala Lumpur), 11 December 1990.

disavowed their entire system, from public ownership of the means of production to the dictatorship of the proletariat.<sup>21</sup> The West which until a few years earlier, used to look at the Soviet Union as its number one enemy, recognized convergence of interests and value of all the nations of Europe and of North America in as much as agreements were concluded without any difficulty on setting up new institutions, such as a "free election centres" through which the Western democracies would offer advice to the nations which had newly adopted democratic form of government.<sup>22</sup>

Nothing could be guaranteed in the initial place, for Eastern Europe had made little progress in the first two years of the switching over to free market economy. Human rights were being violated in Romania and other countries. Ethnic hostilities were breaking out in Yugoslavia and Soviet Union. Indeed the existing borders of some of the signatory states of the CSCE were at risk.<sup>23</sup> However, officials from Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, which had proclaimed independence were present at the conference as observers.

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21. Newsweek(New-York ), 26th November 1990, p. 72

22. Ibid, p. 74.

23. J.M.C. Rollo & Others, The Eastern Europe: Western Responses(London, 1990), p. 35.



What this agreement tried to do was to create a framework within which armed conflict could be formally prohibited by the entire transatlantic community.

Before the start of the Paris meeting U. S. refused to attend unless there was a conventional forces reductions (CFE) treaty signed France and number of NATO countries wanted to go ahead with it. In early October 1990, the U. S. Secretary of State James Baker and Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze had reduced their differences to minimum on the outstanding issues.<sup>24</sup> A two hundred page treaty translated in all six CSCE languages was drawn up seventy two hours before it was due to be signed in Paris.

The issue on top of the agenda in the Paris Summit was Europe. All the nuts and bolts of a peaceful Europe of the future were discussed. German unification also became a reality as the signatories of the Paris meeting joined with the rest of the world in acquiescing into a fait accompli.

The Paris summit marked a turning point in modern history. Just seventy-one years ago a similar

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24. Bangkok Post, 30 November 1990.

conference in Versailles came up with a treaty that was supposed to ensure world peace. It failed, badly, which was the reason that Versailles was not chosen for the meeting. "The symbolism was not quite right", said one French diplomat. But the challenge was the same as it was in 1919, to put a control on national ambitions in the name of peace. The spectacular collapse of communism rendered the atmosphere of Paris more clement than that of Versailles. A failure in the era of new weaponry would be even more catastrophic than the last time.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

France, which, for several centuries had held centre-stage in European politics, had a glorious history. Its political norms and traditions had transcended its borders, and had been emulated adopted and assimilated not only within Europe, but also outside it as well. Its military strength and effectiveness had gained high reputation all over Europe. But then, decline began with Napoleonic defeats in the early part of the nineteenth century and its apogee was reached after its defeat by Bismarck in 1870, which then led to the unification of Germany, principally under the leadership of Prussia. Its one major consequence was the shifting of the gravitational centre of European politics from Paris or Vienna to Berlin. Germany, then, considered its legitimate role to deter its principal adversary France from regaining strength to avenge its defeat. France, on the other hand, felt humiliated, and wanted its national prestige to be restored, and also its lost territories, Alsace and Lorraine to be returned to it.

Understandably, the security interests of France and Germany were in a state of collision. World outlook of the two neighbouring state was also different. They were, therefore, bound to get embroiled in a conflictual situation out of which it was difficult for either of them to emerge unbruised. But then in most of the

conflicts since the last quarter of the nineteenth century, France had suffered defeats, which then was product of a particular French psychological complex about the German military powers.

However, the end of the second world war brought about drastic changes in Europe. The multipolar system which had existed since the treat of Vienna in 1815 gave way to a bipolar world led by two ideologically opposing military blocs. For the first time in the history of Europe, extra European powers began to influence the course of history in Europe. As a result, Germany was divided (as per the decisions taken at Yalta and Potsdam Conferences of 1945) into four occupation zones, and assigned to the four allied powers, U. S. , U. S. S. R. , U. K. , and France. In 1949, three occupation zones under Western powers were merged to form the Federal Republic of Germany and the Soviet Zone became the German Democratic Republic.

Even though Germany after its partition became weakened, the French fared not much better in the sense that the gravitational centre of European politics was no longer Europe. Europe was partitioned into two blocs : the Soviet bloc, and the other U. S. - U. K. dominated bloc, creating an identity crisis for

Europe. In any case, in the early 1960s, the French President Charles de Gaulle, realized that for France to regain its status as a world power, it would have to pursue the policy of Intransigence towards the super powers. This method helped France in recovering some ground it had lost as a result of its defeat in the Second World War.

Yet, France believed that it was its prime function to ensure that German militarism does not recur. With this objective in mind, the French initiated vigorously the movement for European unity; its major manifestation came through the Schuman plan, originally conceived by Jean Monnet which led to the establishment of the ECSC in 1951. This was the critical approach on the part of the French to conflict management. Soon thereafter, with the conclusion of the Treaty of Rome in 1957, the two of the European Communities was completed. But then, the French concept of L Europe Des Patries could not fructify. De Gaulle then persevered his approach to the German question, and as a result the Franco-German Cooperation Treaty was concluded in 1963, which opened up new vistas of cooperation between the two erstwhile adversaries : Perhaps its moral was and is that when the two neighbouring states feel insecure from each other, they should enter into a common security wedlock.

After de Gaulle's disappearance from the European scene, the onus of European peace and security fell on the Federal Chancellor Willy Brandt, who through his Ostpolitik was able to normalize Germany's relations with the U. S. S. R. and the other East European countries. One of the important steps in this regard was the abandonment of the Hallstein Doctrine. This enabled the two German states to look at each other more realistically than ever before. Here, it has to be borne in mind that the aforesaid process had been rendered a workable shape in the background of an intense cold war rivalry between the two super powers of which one of the major consequence was the deployment of strategic weapons of mass destruction in Europe.

The deployment of nuclear weapons had a different kind of fallout, it gave birth to peace movements in Western Europe which denounced the policy of confrontation among the super powers and their blocs and stationing of nuclear weapons on the European soil.

In the mid-1980's, a change of leadership took place in the Soviet Union : Mikhail Gorbachev's advent to power in the USSR provided the much needed stimulus to the peace movements in Europe. And his phenomenal three-pronged strategy of Glasnost, Perestroika and Democratization paved the way for the systemic change

in the Soviet bloc, thereby ending the much accused cold war between the two adversarial blocs. This revolutionary change in the USSR and Eastern Europe became the prime factor contributing in the first instance to the fall of Berlin Wall, and then to German unification.

The unification of Germany without doubt was the most historic event since the end of the Second World War. This event raised both hopes and fears, speculations and forebodings about the role of a United Germany in Europe. Fears of an aggressive and bloated Germany resulting from unification brought back memories of the past, especially the gruesome Nazi era. Illustrations of Bismarck's and Hitler's periods were being projected by Germany's Western neighbours, in particular as evidence of in born aggressive traits in German character.

France, which had suffered three humiliating defeats, and occupation by Germany since the last quarter of the nineteenth century, could not feel comfortable at the prospects of German unification. One is reminded of what Francois Mauriac had said in 1959 that with Germany divided, France sleep with one eye open, and with Germany united they will have to sleep with both eyes open. Since then, however, more than three decades have passed. And collaboration

between France and Germany in several fields of human activity has gone on increasing as time has lapsed. That explains the reason that in the opinion polls, the French have supported German unification. One also needs to recall that in 1964, General de Gaulle had described German unification as the natural destiny of the Germans, yet, there is a difference between a wish expressed in a casual way, and a wish fulfilled in reality. For, when the latter becomes a reality as it happened in the case of Germany, the French realized how France is likely to be eclipsed by its neighbour across the Rhine with unpredictable adverse effects for its economy, and may be even for its security. That is how soon after the Berlin Wall fell, the French Foreign Minister, Roland Dumas and the Defence Minister, Pierre Chevenement expressed their reservations and insisted that German unity was not a "current issue".

Furthermore, it is generally felt in the French political circles that France through its own endeavours had succeeded in raising its status in European politics, so that the whole gamut of European unity came to be influenced by the orientation provided by it. Understandably, with national unification accomplished Germany is expected to become a pre-dominant factor in European politics as well as economics. In other words Germany would no longer be a political dwarf.



and economic giant. With its position elevated, France fears that it would be reduced to a secondary role in European sub-system.

As stated earlier, France joined with the rest of the Europeans in acquiescing into a fait accompli. But French public opinion as well as government thinking revealed a certain degree of confusion. In the public opinion polls held in France, the survey showed that nearly sixty percent of the people in general held a more or less positive view of the unification. However, elitists - politicians, businessmen and intellectuals had some reservation against unification.

Since unification was inevitable France made sure that German unity would be instrumental or anchored into European integration. It committed Helmut Kohl to declare that German unity was complementary to European union. France with the rest of the German neighbours were particularly interested in ensuring success of democracy in Germany. The absence and weakness of democracy and the resultant emergence of Nazism in Germany had in the past posed a grave security problem to its neighbours. Demographically united Germany next only to Russia, is already a heavy weight in Europe. With its industrial dynamism, it arouses fear of its emerging as an economic hegemon.

Having made a modest analysis of the implications arising out of the German resurgence, one is only inclined to say that the present day world is vastly different from that of the inter-war period, in its economic and political parameters as well as balance of power. The point of special relevance in the context of German unification is far different from that of the Versailles Treaty that bred revivalism and revanchism in Germany. The unification of Germany has been brought about not only in exercise of self determination by the concerned two German states but also the will, consent and the active support of the four allied powers; that way the present mode of German unification is immensely different from the post First World War settlement by the Versailles Treaty, which treated Germany in a harsh manner and punished it as the victorious powers willed it.

The Europe of today is witnessing conflicting drives towards unification and fragmentation. Mature democracies in Western Europe are coming together and are transforming the E. C. into European Union. In contradiction thereto, many multi-national and multi-ethnic countries of Southern Europe and also the super power Soviet Union itself have contradiction thereto, many multi-national and multi-ethnic countries of Southern Europe and also the super power Soviet

Union itself have disintegrated. Even after disintegration, some Republics like Russian Federation, Moldavia, etc. are experiencing further powerful separatist tendencies. This is the spectacle that presents the travesty of the much lauded European Common Home.

It would thus seem that while the cold war partition has ended, but the behavioural patterns in the two parts are altogether different. Systemic break down in the USSR and Central-East Europe seems to have caused tremendous confusion in the region. They have given up the planned economy, and knew little about the free enterprise. As a result, the transitional phase appears to be the most painful experience for them. Western Europe on the other hand has a certain sense of satisfaction. It is very much in there within this spirit, that Maastricht Summit held in December 1991 provided the much needed political impetus to the phase wise accomplishment of European Union. It brought to the fore that atleast in a part of Europe the concept of national sovereignty was losing its force. Of course, there have been some set-backs to this historic agreement. First, the British were not willing to forego the national sovereignty as was envisaged in the Treaty. Then came the shocking result of the referendum held

in Denmark. By a slender majority, the vote disapproved the Maastricht Treaty. (50.7% voted against and 49.3% for the Treaty), soon thereafter, however, the Irish referendum endorsed the Treaty by a two thirds majority. The French referendum is scheduled to take place on the 20 September 1992. Even though the Danish "No" has encouraged the Euro-skeptics, yet the general mood is in favour of European integration. The Euro-Parliament has already voted overwhelmingly 238 to 55 with ten abstentions in favour of a resolution supporting the ratification by the member states of the Maastricht Treaty. It also expressed the Euro-Parliament's determination to continue with the move towards European Union, and warned against any attempt to reopen negotiations on the Maastricht Treaty.

The foregoing development are very much in conformity with the Franco-German resolve to intensify European integration, so that nationalistic forces do not re-emerge to be spoil the European unity process. It is in line with this approach that France and Germany have decided to set up a Franco-German Defence Council as well as a combined armed corps. These two measures have yet to take shape. Nonetheless, their symbolic value is immense : Both seem to have resolved to bury the past, and make their future as one of productive peaceful co-existence.

Yet, there continues to exist "if and buts" which may determine the future pattern of relationship between the two. However, with unification Germany has achieved the same thing it wanted since the end of World War II, but it then turned out to be far more economically and psychologically cumbersome business than it was expected to be. The French, on the other hand, seem to have lost their principal trump card which they had since after the Second World War, "of keeping Germany under check and control". There is a remarkable understanding between the two that their future destiny would be best shaped only by their combined endeavours within the European Unity framework.

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