Tim Geiger

Controversies Over the Double Zero Option

The Kohl–Genscher Government and the INF Treaty

With the benefit of hindsight, Chancellor Helmut Kohl (CDU) claimed that NATO's "Dual-Track Decision was the most important decision [made] on the way to German unification." Kohl counted its implementation, against the protests of the peace movement and all the diplomatic pressure from the East, amongst his greatest political successes.[1]

One might assume that the prospect of the destruction and removal of hundreds of deadly nuclear weapons by a superpower agreement like the INF Treaty of December 6, 1987 would cause enthusiasm in a divided country that had the highest proportion of weapons of mass destruction worldwide on its soil. However, the opposite happened. The looming of an INF Treaty caused a serious rift in West Germany's government and threatened to tear its Christian-Liberal coalition apart. This chapter tries to explain this paradox. It also shows that some patterns and practices in the struggle for the INF Treaty were repeated in 1989/90 during the course of German unification.

The article starts with a policy analysis, looking at the attitudes of the various West German parties towards nuclear rearmament (*Nachrüstung*) up to 1986, and how they regarded the zero option. In a second step, it scrutinizes the controversy about the double zero option of spring 1987. The third part deals with the debate that followed in the summer of 1987 concerning the proposed inclusion of the 72 German Pershing IA missiles in an INF agreement.

1. West German Parties, the Zero Option and Rearmament, 1977–1986

The Kohl-Genscher government (1982–1992) owed its life to controversy about the implementation of NATO's Dual-Track Decision, though it was Chancellor Helmut Kohl's predecessor, Helmut Schmidt from the rival SPD, who had been one of the driving forces for that decision in the first place.[2] As early as 1977, in his

1 Helmut Kohl, Erinnerungen 1930–1982, Munich 2004, p. 557; Helmut Kohl, Mauerfall und Wiedervereinigung, in: Die Politische Meinung 54/479 (2009), pp. 5–12, here p. 9.

2 Tim Geiger, Die Regierung Schmidt–Genscher und der NATO-Doppelbeschluss, in: Philipp Gassert, Tim Geiger, and Hermann Wentker (eds.), Zweiter Kalter Krieg und Friedensbewegung. Der NATO-Doppelbeschluss in deutsch-deutscher und internationaler Perspektive, Munich 2011, pp. 95–122; Tim Geiger, The NATO Double-Track Decision: Genesis and

famous speech at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), Schmidt had warned that, with an imminent SALT II agreement coming up, NATO's spiral of escalation was at risk, due to a strong Soviet arms buildup with intermediate nuclear weapons. The infamous SS-20 missiles were a particular menace, as they threatened most Western European countries, but not NATO's leading member, the United States. Doubts about the reliability of the United States' extended deterrence were therefore growing and also strong awareness of the danger of a "decoupling" of the American nuclear umbrella for its European allies.

NATO's Dual-Track Decision of December 12, 1979 announced that this danger could be countered by the deployment of 108 American Pershing II missiles (replacing the same number of the older Pershing IAs) and 464 ground-launched Cruise Missiles (GLCM) in Western Europe at the end of 1983, should disarmament talks between the U.S. and the USSR fail.

In West Germany (where all the Pershing IIs and a share of 64 GLCMs were to be deployed), the CDU and CSU opposition parties wholeheartedly supported this modernization of NATO's nuclear arsenal. These parties believed, even more strongly than the SPD/FDP government of Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, that the Pershing II especially—a ballistic missile with a range of 1,800 km and a short flight-time of only 15 to 20 minutes—would improve deterrence. For the first time ever, the Soviet Union itself was directly threatened by these nuclear missiles, which would be fired from West German territory in case of a Warsaw Pact attack. Thus, in a future war the USSR would no longer remain a "sanctuary" but would become a nuclear battlefield right from the beginning—just as Germany was. According to the logics of deterrence it was this abhorrent danger that reduced the risk of any war and kept the fragile peace alive.

Within the SPD/FDP coalition government, NATO's Dual-Track Decision was much more controversial. Especially in the SPD there was resentment against Schmidt's course, because détente had been central to the party's identity ever since Willy Brandt's *Ostpolitik*. Many Social Democrats feared a new Cold War and a deadly arms race.[3] The struggle over implementing NATO's Dual-Track

Implementation, in: Christoph Becker-Schaum, Philipp Gassert, Martin Klimke, Wilfried Mausbach, and Marianne Zepp (eds.), The Nuclear Crisis. The Arms Race, Cold War Anxiety, and the German Peace Movement of the 1980s. New York/Oxford 2016, pp. 52–69; Klaus Wiegrefe, Das Zerwürfnis. Helmut Schmidt, Jimmy Carter und die Krise der deutsch-amerikanischen Beziehungen, Berlin 2005; Kristina Spohr, NATO's Nuclear Politics and the Schmidt-Carter Rift, in: Leopoldo Nuti, Frédéric Bozo, Marie-Pierre Rey, and Bernd Rother (eds.), The Euromissile Crisis and the End of the Cold War, Stanford 2015, pp. 139–157.

3 Jan Hansen, Abschied vom Kalten Krieg? Die Sozialdemokraten und der Nachrüstungsstreit (1977–1987), Munich 2016; Tim Geiger and Jan Hansen, Did Protest Matter? The Influence of the Peace Movement on the West German Government and the Social Democratic Party, 1977–1983, in: Eckart Conze, Martin Klimke, and Jeremy Varon (eds.), Nuclear Threats, Nuclear Fear, and the Cold War of the 1980s, Cambridge 2017, pp. 290–315; Anton Notz, Die SPD und der NATO-Doppelbeschluß. Abkehr von einer Sicherheitspolitik der Vernunft, Baden-Baden 1990.

Decision eroded the domestic base of the Schmidt–Genscher government. The peace movement became a mass phenomenon in West Germany from late 1980. Its adherents tried hard to prevent the deployment of new American missiles in Western Europe by mass demonstrations and spectacular actions of civil disobedience. It was a movement that reached far into the ranks of both the SPD and the FDP. Schmidt and Genscher tried to counter this challenge with a carrot-and-stick policy. On the one hand, they hoped to exercise discipline over their parties by threatening to resign; on the other, they tried to take the wind out of the peace protesters' sails by pushing for a "zero option" as the Western negotiation target in the superpowers' INF disarmament talks, scheduled for autumn 1981 in Geneva. By the terms of such a "zero option," if the USSR would remove all of its (existing and future) SS-20s and other ground-launched INF forces, NATO, in return, would refrain from deploying any new Pershing IIs or GLCMs.[4]

The Schmidt-Genscher government lobbied for this approach right through 1981. It lobbied the new Reagan Administration,[5] its rather hesitant European NATO partners,[6] and the Soviet leadership as well. During Leonid Brezhnev's last visit to Bonn in November 1981, just a week before the opening of the Geneva talks on November 30, it urged the Soviet side to take the zero option seriously, especially as, on November 18, President Ronald Reagan had publicly endorsed it as the official American negotiating position.[7] To the public, the Schmidt–Genscher government presented itself as one of the driving forces of this proposal.[8]

However, Moscow resolutely rejected the zero option. It would not only mean an end to further SS-20 deployment but also the radical elimination of the vast Soviet nuclear superiority in the medium-range scale—and all this merely in exchange for the elimination of far fewer American INF missiles. These proposed missiles did indeed worry the USSR a lot, but they had not even been deployed in Western Europe yet, and Moscow hoped that the ever-rising resistance from peace movements all across Western Europe would prevent them from ever arriving.

4 Marilena Gala, The Euromissile Crisis and the Centrality of the 'Zero Option', in: Nuti et al. (eds.), Euromissile Crisis, pp. 158–175.

5 Conversation Genscher with U. S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig, September 14, 1981, in: Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (AAPD) 1981, ed. by Daniela Taschler, Matthias Peter, and Judith Michel, Munich 2011, Doc. 356, p. 1368.

6 Conversation between Genscher and his British and French colleagues Lord Carrington and Cheysson in Chevening, July 5, 1981, in: AAPD 1981, Doc. 205, p. 1111; conversation Genscher with Italian Foreign Minister Colombo, July 17, 1981, in: ibid., Doc. 211, p. 1149. For the British skeptical approach see the essay by Oliver Barton in this volume.

7 For the conversations of Schmidt-Brezhnev and Genscher-Gromyko on November 23/24, 1981 see AAPD 1981, Docs. 334–341; Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Erinnerungen, Berlin 1995, p. 424.

8 In German Television's Late Night News on November 17, 1981, Schmidt claimed that the zero option was "a chance for negotiations that the Americans adopted after long talks with us." See Memorandum Paschke, February 11, 1983, in: Political Archive of the Foreign Office (Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts: PA/AA), Berlin, B 9/178493.

Within the German peace movement, many people also rejected a zero solution.[9] They judged that it would be absolutely unacceptable to the Soviet Union, and therefore feared that such an approach would immediately cause a deadlock in the Geneva disarmament talks. Proponents of arms control within the State Department had the same worries, too. By contrast, the anti-Soviet "hawks" of the Reagan Administration, gathered around Pentagon chief Caspar Weinberger and Richard Perle, *supported* a zero option for exactly the same reason.[10] In the end, in 1981, it was a weird coalition of the social-liberal Federal Government and arms control opponents in the Reagan Administration that helped to enforce the zero option as the significant formula that became central to the INF Treaty of 1987.

Initially, the German opposition parties—the CDU and the CSU—were clearly against the zero option. Manfred Wörner, the defense expert in the CDU/CSU parliamentary grouping, and Franz Josef Strauß, Chairman of the CSU and Minister President of Bavaria (who as Defense Minister from 1956 to 1961 had pushed for nuclear armament of the *Bundeswehr* and who had been the Union's Chancellor-candidate in the Federal elections of 1980) attacked the zero option as a chimera. They regarded it as the wishful thinking of those in the SPD/FDP government who were trying to duck away from the necessity of modernizing the West's nuclear arsenal (which NATO had been urging since the mid-1970s, irrespectively of the Soviet SS-20 threat). However, once Reagan had endorsed the zero option, the CDU/CSU soon changed their tune. Following the American lead, Helmut Kohl, Chairman of the CDU and of the CDU/CSU grouping in the Bundestag, officially embraced the zero option and argued for the party's slogan "Make peace with fewer weapons."[11]

In autumn 1982 the social-liberal government broke down—in part because an ever-growing number of people within the SPD were resisting Schmidt's allegiance to the Dual-Track Decision and opted to support the peace movement. Unshaken by all public protests, the newly-formed Christian–Liberal coalition under Kohl's Chancellorship promised to stick to West Germany's obligation to accept NATO's Dual-Track. Kohl left no doubt whatsoever that he would give the highest priority to solidarity within the Western Alliance, and that he was determined to act in close collaboration with the United States. On his first visit to Washington as Chancellor, Kohl even overturned one of the key planks of Bonn's foreign policy—the axiom of German "non-singularization" concerning re-armament.[12] In his talks with Reagan and Secretary of State George P. Shultz, Kohl reaffirmed that his government would stick to the promised deployment

9 Memorandum of Ambassador Ruth about meeting with Erhard Eppler, the exponent of the peace movement within the SPD, August 18, 1981, in: AAPD 1981, Doc. 235, p. 1240.

10 See the essay by Ronald Granieri in this volume.

11 Thomas Risse-Kappen, Null-Lösung. Entscheidungsprozesse zu den Mittelstreckenwaffen 1970–1987, Frankfurt a. M./New York 1988, pp. 103 f.

12 Geiger, Regierung Schmidt-Genscher, pp. 102, 112.

of American INFs even in a worst-case scenario in which all other Europeans "would quit."[13] That concession took even long-experienced staff members of the Federal Chancellery by surprise.[14]

Neglecting all strong anti-nuclear protests, Kohl stood firm to his NATO allegiance and took responsibility for the deployment of the Euromissiles in 1983. This earned him an impeccable reputation as a trustworthy ally whom Washington could unconditionally rely on—a reputation that remained for years to come.[15]

A central episode that helped build this rapport was one that took place in June 1983, at the climax of anti-nuclear peace protests in West Germany. In that month, Kohl and U. S. Vice President George H. W. Bush met in Krefeld to celebrate the tercentenary of "the first German immigrants in the U. S. A.," who had come from this town in the lower Rhineland. Krefeld was also the place where, three years previously on November 15/16, 1980, the *Krefelder Appell* had been adopted. This manifesto demanded that the Federal Government should withdraw its pledge to deploy American INF missiles and henceforward should pursue a policy that no longer risked paving the way to a nuclear arms race—which would endanger Europeans first and foremost. Although the manifesto somewhat lopsidedly blamed the West and was obviously inspired by communists, it was (initially) endorsed by prominent figures like Petra Kelly and the former *Bundeswehr* General Gert Bastian, two prominent figures in the burgeoning Green Party. By 1983, more than four million Germans had signed the *Krefelder Appell*, which thus became one of the most influential *pronunciamentos* of the peace movement.[16]

Not surprisingly, peace activists took a meeting of two such staunch proponents of rearmament in this very town as a provocation. On June 25, 1983, the occasion at the Krefeld venue was massively disrupted. During the ceremonial act, the lights went off when protesters cut off the electricity; afterwards Bush and Kohl were trapped for several minutes in an underground garage; and in the

13 Telegram No. 4933 of Ambassador Hermes, Washington, November 15, 1982, in: AAPD 1982, ed. by Michael Ploetz, Tim Szatkowski, and Judith Michel, Munich 2013, Doc. 306, p. 1599; Telegram No. 3061 of Political Director Pfeffer November 16, 1982 in: ibid., Doc. 309, p. 1611.

14 Ulrich Weisser, Strategie als Berufung. Gedanken und Erinnerungen zwischen Militär und Politik, Bonn 2011, p. 85. Weisser was head of the Bureau for Security Policy in the Federal Chancellery under Schmidt and Kohl.

15 Andreas Rödder, Bündnissolidarität und Rüstungskontrollpolitik. Die Regierung Kohl-Genscher, der NATO-Doppelbeschluss und die Innenseite der Außenpolitik, in: Gassert, Geiger, and Wentker (eds.): Zweiter Kalter Krieg, pp. 123–136.

16 Erklärung des Krefelder Forums vom 15./16. November 1980, in: 100(0) Schlüsseldokumente zur deutschen Geschichte im 20. Jahrhundert, http://www.1000dokumente.de/index.html?c=dokument_de&dokument=0023_kre&object=translation&l=de; Rudolf van Hüllen, Der 'Krefelder Appell', in: Jürgen Maruhn and Manfred Wilke (eds.), Raketenpoker um Europa. Das sowjetische SS 20-Abenteuer und die Friedensbewegung, Munich 2011, pp. 216–253; Becker-Schaum et. al (eds.), Nuclear Crisis, p. 19 f., 190 f.

streets their motorcade was violently attacked. Bush played it cool and quipped, "It's like in Chicago. Some cheer us, some throw stones—here and there." But Kohl was upset about the Public Relations disaster and blamed the SPD government of North Rhine-Westphalia who had been in charge of the police, accusing them of mishandling the affair.[17]

In the long run, however, the Krefeld incident proved to be a milestone in building trust between Bush and Kohl. Their close relationship turned out to be of enormous importance—especially in 1989/90. Despite massive international reservations about German unification, Bush and his Administration trusted Kohl and his pledge to keep a united Germany firmly within the West. In the short run, Krefeld underpinned the American perception that the German Chancellor was absolutely loyal, but domestically bitterly embattled. As Bush signaled to Reagan: "While keeping absolutely firm on our schedule, we must be sympathetic to Kohl's problems and do all we can to ease his way through them."[18]

Part of that strategy emerged at the Geneva talks. There, in March, September, and November 1983, the U.S. offered different kinds of "interim solutions". This move ensured that the zero option was not killed off, but signaled to the global public that Washington was ready to compromise. In order to achieve some success in pursuing disarmament, it would not stick to a take-it-or-leave-it position. This was of enormous importance to West European governments, who were fighting for their publics' hearts and minds against the persuasions of the peace protesters. For exactly this reason the Kohl-Genscher government had been lobbying in Washington for just such an interim solution.[19]

On November 22, 1983 there was a heated 23-hour debate in the Bundestag. With its parliamentary majority the CDU/CSU and FDP coalition reaffirmed the need to deploy Pershing IIs and GLCMs. These new American missiles were required, it was claimed, because the Geneva disarmament talks had not delivered any viable results. Only a few hours later, the first Pershing IIs were brought in; and the next day the Soviets left the Geneva talks.[20] After that, the bitter domestic debate about rearmament gradually ebbed away, although the actual deployment went on for at least two further years.[21]

17 Wie in Chicago, in: Der Spiegel Nr. 27, July 4, 1983, p. 32; conversation of Kohl with Bush in Krefeld, June 25, 1983, in: AAPD 1983, ed. by Tim Geiger, Matthias Peter, and Mechthild Lindemann, Munich 2014, Doc. 189, pp. 983–987; Kohl, Erinnerungen 1982–1990, pp. 192–194.

18 Letter Bush to Reagan, June 27, 1983, in: George H. W. Bush, All the Best, George Bush. My Life in Letters and other Writings, New York 2013, p. 328.

19 Conversation Genscher with Bush, January 31, 1983, in: AAPD 1983, Doc. 27; Telegram No. 1729 of Ambassador Ruth to Genscher, March 23, in: ibid., Doc. 75; Letters of Kohl to Reagan, September 15, November 3; AAPD 1983, Doc. 267 and 326, pp. 1338–1340 and 1623 f.

20 Raymond L. Garthoff, The Great Transition. American–Soviet Relations and the End of the Cold War, Washington D. C. 1994, p. 566.

21 At the end of 1984, there were still 54 out of 108 Pershing IIs deployed in West Germany. After an incident with a Pershing II in Heilbronn in January 1985, deployment was disrupted for some months, Memorandum of Political Director Pfeffer, May, 6, 1985, in: AAPD 1985,

By that time significant changes within the Christian-Liberal coalition had taken place. Up to 1982, within the (former) coalition with the détente orientated SPD the tiny Liberal Party had made its name by advocating close transatlantic relations and the strengthening of NATO. But that approach became much more difficult to uphold after 1982, because of the ostentatious closeness of Chancellor Kohl to the U.S. Administration and the almost unconditional pro-American bias of the CDU/CSU generally. Hence, with its front-runner Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the FDP started to distinguish itself in the coalition by demonstratively upholding *Ostpolitik* and détente, and by paying special deference to the USSR and its satellites. So Genscher (who was personally not at all close to the new American Secretary of State George Shultz and had to make a great effort to achieve a working relationship with him)[22] remained very skeptical towards Reagan's SDI project. The German Foreign Minister did not believe that any Strategic Defense Initiative was realistic, but did believe that the project could endanger the fragile balance of power between East and West.[23] To the American Ambassador in Bonn, Richard Burt, and to many others in Washington "tricky Genscher" (who always had a loophole at hand) was primarily a "slippery man" whom one couldn't rely on: "Genscherism" became a pejorative term in Washington.[24]

Nevertheless, the political situation in West Germany seemed quite stable up to the mid-1980s. In many ways, the party lines resembled those of the 1950s. As in the past, the CDU and CSU presented themselves as staunch defenders of close ties with the West and as close friends with the U.S.A. They got on well with France, too, because in January 1983, just weeks before the snap elections in the FRG, President François Mitterrand, a Socialist, had ardently endorsed the deployment of Euromissiles in the Bundestag—thus backing Kohl against the SPD.[25] And, as before, the Union attacked the opposition parties—the SPD

ed. by Michael Ploetz, Mechthild Lindemann, and Christoph Johannes Franzen, Berlin 2016, Doc. 116, pp. 583 f. In the fall of 1986 the deployment of all Pershing IIs was completed, the finalization of GLCMs' deployment in Wüschheim was scheduled for December, Memo of VLR Bertram, September 19, 1986, in: PA/AA, B 150/651.

22 Dietrich von Kyaw, Auf der Suche nach Deutschland. Erlebnisse und Begegnungen eines deutschen Diplomaten und Europäers, Berlin 2012, p. 213. In November 1984, Genscher sent Shultz a personal note to protest against the German Foreign Office being too often sidelined by the Reagan Administration, Telegram No. 4879 of Ambassador van Well, in: AAPD 1984, ed. by Tim Szatkowski and Daniela Taschler, Munich 2015, Doc. 303, p. 1412.

23 Andreas Wirsching, Abschied vom Provisorium. Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1982–1990, Munich 2006, pp. 501 f.; Stefan Fröhlich, "Auf den Kanzler kommt es an": Helmut Kohl und die deutsche Außenpolitik. Persönliches Regiment und Regierungshandeln vom Amtsantritt bis zur Wiedervereinigung, Paderborn/Munich/Vienna 2001, pp. 151–153.

24 When Burt's "slippery man" quote was published (SDI: Beinbruch mit Kukident, in: Spiegel Nr. 3, January 13, 1986), the Ambassador disclaimed it in a letter to Genscher, January 14, 1986, PA/AA, B 1/178925.

25 Georges-Henri Soutou, Mitläufer der Allianz? Frankreich und der NATO-Doppelbeschluss, in: Gassert, Geiger, and Wentker (eds.): Zweiter Kalter Krieg, pp. 373 f. See also Christian Wenkel's essay in this volume.

and even more the new Green Party—for being soft on Communism and naïvely leaning towards neutralism.

The situation became blurred when the Geneva talks between the superpowers were resumed in March 1985. The delegates were now discussing three interconnected but segregated tables: on strategic weapons (START), on INF, and on Defense and Space Weapons. Moreover, the new strong man of the USSR, General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev, had started flooding the West with disarmament proposals.

Soon, one of the crucial points became the question of how profound and serious the change in Soviet policy really was. For the German Federal Government, that question was especially tricky because, even under Gorbachev, Moscow was still pursuing its course of "punishment" against Bonn. After the deployment of Pershing IIs, the USSR ostentatiously sidelined West Germany and courted other powers in Western Europe, especially Mitterrand's France and Thatcher's Great Britain. Bonn was ignored.[26] This did not stop Moscow having contacts with the SPD opposition, however. Its Chairman, Brandt, was received in the Kremlin only two months after Gorbachev had seized power.[27] And the stand-off only affected the Liberal Foreign Minister to a degree: Genscher kept on meeting with his Soviet counterpart, Andrei Gromyko. Both men were the longest-serving Foreign Ministers around, and they had become used to each other.[28] Later on, Genscher also met with Eduard Shevardnadze, and, on July 21, 1986, he was received by Gorbachev himself.[29] Meanwhile, Chancellor Kohl was constantly vilified as Reagan's poodle—just as he had been at his first, very confrontative meeting with Gorbachev on March 14, 1985 at the funeral of Konstantin Chernenko in Moscow.[30] The Soviet leadership demonstratively ignored Kohl and snubbed his repeated invitations to them to visit West Germany.[31]

26 Memo of Political Director von Braunmühl, March 6, 1985, in: AAPD 1985, Doc. 55; Hans-Peter Schwarz, Helmut Kohl. Eine politische Biographie, Munich 2012, pp. 451–457.

27 Conversation of Gorbachev with Brandt, May 27, 1985, in: Willy Brandt, Berliner Ausgabe, Vol. 10: Gemeinsame Sicherheit. Internationale Beziehungen und die deutsche Frage 1982–1992, Bonn 2009, Doc. 20, pp. 219–229. SPD Foreign and Security expert Egon Bahr also kept on meeting with his Soviet partners.

28 Gromyko had been in office since 1963, Genscher since 1974. In a last-minute bid for a breakthrough in the ailing Geneva disarmament talks, just five weeks before the arrival of new American INF in Europe, Genscher and Gromyko had met on October 15/16, 1983 in Vienna for talks that lasted over 11 hours. AAPD 1983, Docs. 303–306, 310, Genscher, Erinnerungen, pp. 431–433.

29 Telegram No. 3 of von Braunmühl from Moscow, July 22, 1986 concerning conversation between Gorbachev and Genscher on July 21, in: AAPD 1986, ed. by Matthias Peter and Daniela Taschler, Berlin 2017, Doc. 209; Genscher, Erinnerungen, pp. 490–508; Julij A. Kwizinskij, Vor dem Sturm. Erinnerungen eines Diplomaten, Berlin 1993, pp. 408–412.

30 Telegram No. 813 of Ambassador Kastl, Moscow, to AA, March 15, 1985, in: AAPD 1985, Doc. 68. Staatssekretär Meyer-Landrut characterized the meeting as "unusually sharp" and "no fun", ibid., Fn. 24, p. 381. See also Michail Gorbatschow, Erinnerungen, Berlin 1992, p. 702.

31 Letter Kohl to Gorbachev, August 30, 1985, in: AAPD 1985. Neither Gorbachev nor Shevardnadze were ready to receive this letter that had to be handed over to the Deputy Foreign

Kohl's frustration may have played a role when, only two weeks after the spectacular summit of Gorbachev and Reagan in Reykjavik on October 11/12, 1986, with its near breakthrough to total nuclear disarmament,[32] the Chancellor gave his infamous *Newsweek* interview. Asked how he would judge Gorbachev and his intentions, Kohl replied: "I'm not a fool: I don't consider him to be a liberal. He is a modern communist leader who understands public relations. Goebbels, one of those responsible for the crimes of the Hitler era, was an expert in public relations, too."[33] This clumsy comparison of the Soviet leader with the Nazi Minister of Propaganda brought bilateral relations to a freeze. For most of the West German media, the blunder was perfectly in line with the image they almost uniformly projected onto Kohl already—the "bumpkin" politician.

It was Foreign Minister Genscher and his Liberal party that profited. In the Federal elections in January 1987, the Christian-Liberal coalition was re-elected, but the FDP gained in strength while the CDU and CSU lost votes. Genscher made the best use of the momentum. In a bold speech at the World Economic Forum in Davos, he passionately asked the West "to take Gorbachev at his word." According to Genscher, it was obvious that real change was taking place within the USSR. The West should no longer sit and wait wondering what this might mean for East–West relations. Rather, it should cooperate, and thereby force Gorbachev to prove that he meant business with his new cooperative style.[34] With this appeal, the Foreign Minister was striking out on a notably different line from the Chancellor and his coalition partner;[35] indeed, he was going further than any other Western politician. International reception of Genscher's trail-blazing speech was quite mixed: in Moscow, it augmented his credibility; in the West, it stirred further reservations about "Genscherism."[36]

Minister, ibid., Doc. 246. Gorbachev's reply in October completely ignored the invitation, ibid., Doc. 300. Thus, Kohl repeated it in his next letter of January 30, 1986, AAPD 1986, Doc. 27.

32 National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 203, The Reykjavik File. Previously Secret Documents from U.S. and Soviet Archives on the 1986 Reagan-Gorbachev Summit, https://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB203/index.htm.

33 Kohl to Reagan: 'Ron, Be Patient', in: Newsweek No. 43, October 27, 1986, p. 20.

34 Genscher's speech of February 1, 1987, in: Bulletin der Bundesregierung, ed. by the Presse- and Informationsamt, Bonn 1987, pp. 93–97.

35 A week after Genscher's Davos speech, CSU Chairman Strauß reiterated doubts about Gorbachev's trustworthiness in an article for the CSU's Party paper. A real litmus test for Soviet sincerity would be a withdrawal from Afghanistan. See Franz Josef Strauß, Auftrag für die Zukunft. Beiträge zur deutschen und internationalen Politik 1985–1987, Munich 1987, pp. 489–496.

36 Telegram No. 1793 of Ambassador Günter van Well, Washington, April 15, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, ed. by Tim Szatkowski, Tim Geiger, and Jens Jost Hofmann, Berlin 2018, Doc. 114, p. 572. Konrad Seitz, head of the AA's planning department and ghost-writer of the Davos speech, recalls that in NATO's "Atlantic Policy Advisory Group", Genscher was criticized for going too far; see Matthias Peter, Geplante Außenpolitik? Der Planungsstab des Auswärtigen Amts, in: Elke Seefried and Dierk Hoffmann (eds.), Plan und Planung. Deutsch-deutsche Vorgriffe auf die Zukunft, Berlin/Boston 2018, p. 176. Conservative French Foreign Minister

2. The Controversy Over the Double Zero Solution, November 1986–June 1987

When a real prospect of an INF Treaty being agreed emerged in spring 1987, there was bound to be trouble within West Germany's government. On February 28, Gorbachev announced that Moscow would finally accept a decoupling of the INF talks from the still controversial START and SDI issues in Geneva.[37]

Since Reykjavik, the main features of such an INF agreement that the superpowers consented to were that all (ground-launched) long-range INF (LRINF) in Europe with ranges between 1,000 and 5,500 km should be completely abolished, but that both superpowers could keep an equal maximum of 100 nuclear warheads in their own territory. In practice, then, the USSR could keep 33 SS-20s (with three warheads on one carrier) in its Asian part east of the Urals, and the U.S. 100 GLCMs (with one nuclear warhead per carrier) in Alaska.[38] So this was not yet a real global LRINF zero solution but a purely *European* zero; and it meant that West Germany (like most of Western Europe) was still within reach of the remaining, very mobile Soviet LRINF missiles,[39] even though these might be principally intended as weapons against China. It is worth keeping in mind that it was not until July 21, 1987 that Gorbachev changed tack by completely abolishing this remaining stock of 100 permitted warheads. It was at this moment that he agreed to a real *global* zero.

The debate that flared up in West Germany revealed the fundamental inconsistencies and paradoxes of Bonn's security policy. Up to this time, the Germans had been worried because of the arms race: they feared the nuclear buildup and thought that the superpowers had not talked enough or been sufficiently effective in dealings with each other. But now, with a Soviet–U.S. rapprochement and the looming chance of real disarmament, the Germans were no less concerned. After some serious trouble within the coalition and contingency meetings with Genscher, Kohl announced the government's position on November 6, 1986 in the Bundestag. The government, he said, would support any LRINF zero option (preferably a global one, but a European one could be accepted); it would also support compulsory concurrent constraints on shorter-range INF (SRINF), with ranges between 500 und 1,000 km, which should in time be cut down to a lower equal level on both sides, but not to zero.[40] This announcement did not pacify the situation.

Jean-Bernard Raimond claimed France would check Gorbachev's policy with "double alertness": on the one hand, thoroughly registering any improvements, on the other, not giving concessions for mere non-committal promises. See conversation of Genscher and Raimond in Paris, February 6, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 25, p. 118.

37 Telegram No. 625 of Gesandter Arnot, Moskow, March 1, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 60.

38 Memo of Ambassador Ruth, October 14, 1986, in: AAPD 1986, Doc. 284.

39 Memo of Political Director von Richthofen, May 19, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 142.

40 Wirsching, Abschied, p. 567.

It was largely the prospect of the Soviet proposal thought likely to follow—a demand for a second zero option for SRINF—that stoked the debate to red heat. And this was well before Moscow proposed exactly that to Secretary Shultz during his visit on April 13–15, 1987. As the NATO Secretary General, Lord Carrington, detected during a visit to Bonn, a double zero option was an absolute dogma for Foreign Minister Genscher, while Chancellor Kohl showed sympathy for a solution leaving a remnant of SRINF but with a lowered ceiling, as was also favored by the influential U.S. Senator Sam Nunn.[41] If we remember the differing involvements both German politicians had had with the genesis of the zero idea in 1981, that fact is hardly surprising. For the Christian-Liberal coalition government, however, it created an explosive situation because, just like the opposition parties, Genscher and the FDP demanded a double zero solution. They pointed out that the Soviets had a vast superiority in the SRINF area and therefore would have to destroy many more nukes than NATO. Moreover, even though NATO had only demanded a *LRINF zero* and concurrent constraints for SRINF missiles,[42] they argued that an unrestricted zero option was what the West had been demanding for years; so it seemed a mere matter of trustworthiness to remove as many nukes as possible in the present (a sentiment that was popular amongst the public, too). Last but not least, a double zero option was clearly the approach that the Reagan Administration favored.

At the debriefing of his Moscow talks at NATO's Ministerial Council, Shultz made it clear that the only alternative to the rejection of a global SRINF zero solution would be a modernization of NATO's SRINF arsenal.[43] It remained unclear how this could happen militarily. The most likely option was to convert the Pershing II into a new "Pershing IB" missile by eliminating the second propulsion stage and thus transforming it from an LRINF into a SRINF system. But that would be highly problematic politically: it would not really remove the controversial Pershing II from German soil but leave it in place, merely downgraded technically. Moreover, such a conversion would completely contradict all former promises of the Federal Government. In the past, both the Eastern bloc and the peace movement had attacked the fast-flying Pershing IIs as dangerous "decapitation weapons" against the Soviet leadership, and the Federal Government had always repudiated this allegation by pointing to their limited range of just 1,800 to 2,000 km: they could never reach the Soviet capital.[44] If it

41 Conversation of Kohl with Lord Carrington in Bonn, March 26, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 83, p. 400.

42 Memo of AA's Head of Disarmament Unit, Holik, March 31, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 90; Genscher, Erinnerungen, pp. 559–563.

43 Telegram No. 521–523 of Ambassador Hansen, NATO, April 16, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 115.

44 That was constantly repeated in all official information booklets, e.g. Auswärtiges Amt (ed.), Es geht um unsere Sicherheit. Bündnis, Verteidigung, Rüstungskontrolle, Bonn 1980; Aspekte der Friedenspolitik: Argumente zum Doppelbeschluß des Nordatlantischen Bündnisses, ed. by the Federal Government, Bonn 1981.

was now declared possible to simply downgrade the missiles' range, that would confirm the argument of the other side that an upgrade could be done just as easily. The Federal Government therefore rejected, point-blank, any plans for a Pershing II conversion.[45] By pointing to the alternative prospect of an inevitable SRINF modernization, Shultz greatly increased the pressure on Europeans, and especially Bonn, to accept an INF double zero solution.

In a strange reversal of the previous political frontlines, it was now the CDU and CSU who were in disagreement with the United States. Attacking Genscher's embrace of the double zero solution, Alfred Dregger, Chairman of the CDU/CSU parliamentary group, complained that the Foreign Minister should be pursuing German, not American, interests.[46] Dregger belonged to the so-called "steel helmet faction" within the Union—a small, but rather vociferous group of right-wing traditionalist politicians like Strauß, Dregger and the CDU defense expert Jürgen Todenhöfer, staunch anti-Communists who often criticized the continuity of the Kohl-Genscher government's *Ost-* and *Deutschlandpolitik* with its social-liberal predecessor. But it was not just this group who rejected the double zero solution. Opposition from within the Union also came from well known centrists and convinced "Atlanticists" like Defense Minister Manfred Wörner (who at the end of 1987 was elected to be the next Secretary General of NATO) and the CDU foreign policy spokesman Volker Rühe.[47] Of course, the rejection of a double zero option by the Union soon created an uncomfortable political situation. The vast majority of Germany's population, the media and all the other parties in the Bundestag favored a radical reduction of nuclear weapons in Europe to be made as soon as possible,[48] and the hesitant CDU and CSU looked like reactionary warmongers addicted to nukes. No one seemed to listen any more to their solid argument (valid for the last decade) that for the "escalation continuum" of NATO's "flexible response" the Alliance needed at least some INF that could reach directly into the USSR. Mysteriously, with the prospect of the evaporation of a whole category of nuclear weapons, the danger of "decoupling" seemed to vanish into thin air. In a conversation with Belgian Prime Minister Winfried Martens, Chancellor Kohl bitterly lamented that the U.S. was now repeating the same old argument as the peace movement, claiming that America's strategic forces alone would be enough to counter any Soviet threat.[49]

45 Conversation Ruth with Nitze in Bonn, February 8, 1986, in: AAPD 1986, Doc. 33. Kohl underscored this in a letter to Reagan, February 14, 1986, ibid., Fn. 22, p. 204.

46 Nichts gelernt, Der Spiegel Nr. 21, May 18, 1987, p. 20.

47 Tim Matthias Weber, Zwischen Nachrüstung und Abrüstung. Die Nuklearwaffenpolitik der Christlich-Demokratischen Union Deutschlands zwischen 1977 und 1989, Baden-Baden 1994, pp. 306–317.

48 See the contribution of Philipp Gassert in this volume.

49 See conversation of Kohl with Martens, May 6, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 125, p. 634. Shultz had claimed just that at a press conference on April, 23 in order to disperse critics of U.S. conservatives like Nixon or Kissinger and of Europeans allies.

In a meeting held on March 31, Kohl, Defense Minister Wörner, and Foreign Minister Genscher officially reconfirmed the compromise of the fall of 1986 that the Christian-Liberal coalition would support any LRINF zero and a reduction of SRINF to a reduced and equally balanced level (but not to zero).[50] Despite this, the agile press department of Genscher's Ministry pushed for more—in an underhand way, as Wörner complained in a "strictly personal" letter to the Chancellor. Summing up the arguments against a second zero option, the Defense Minister warned that an INF double zero solution could endanger American commitment to European defense. It could also exacerbate the military balance, because the conventional superiority of the Warsaw Pact would gain even more weight. In case of a double zero, NATO's military experts like SACEUR Bernard Rogers[51] or the Military Committee would doubt if a "flexible response" could be viable in the future. By eliminating systems that could reach Soviet territory deterrence would crumble. Worse, only the short-range nuclear weapons (SNF, with ranges below 500 km) would be kept in place. These SNF would destroy only German territory (both east and west of the Iron Curtain). Some Allies, like Margaret Thatcher, would already argue for SNF modernization (and buildup) in order to have a "firebreak" against a "third zero option," which, it was thought, would probably be the next Soviet gambit in its sinister conspiracy to denuclearize Western Europe. Such an SNF modernization would trigger off a new "rearmament" debate which would be worse than the one over the Dual-Track Decision because, this time, Germany, as the only country concerned, would stand all alone.[52]

With the catch-phrase "*je kürzer die Reichweiten, desto toter die Deutschen*" ("the shorter the nukes' range, the deadlier for the Germans"), the foreign and defense experts of the Union fought acrimoniously against this trend; they warned that such a development would necessarily endanger close ties with the West and feed into a dangerous trend towards nationalism and "neutralism" in Germany.

That argument was something that hit a nerve abroad. In the context of the Euromissiles debate of the 1980s, the "German problem"—the question of German unity—had returned to the international agenda. Faced with Allied troops and nukes on German ground, proponents of the peace movement were raising questions about the limits of the country's autonomy of decision, and of its sovereignty.[53] The Allies were puzzled by the German peace movement, with its claims of equidistance from both superpowers, and calls for demilitarized

50 This compromise proposal exactly was transmitted in a letter from Kohl to Reagan, April 7, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 100.

51 For Rogers' critique of a double zero solution, 'What's wrong with Zero.' NATO's boss speaks out, in: Newsweek, April 27, 1987, pp. 9 f.

52 Letter from Wörner to Kohl, April 19, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 116, pp. 581–584.

53 Philipp Gassert, Viel Lärm um Nichts? Der NATO-Doppelbeschluss als Katalysator gesellschaftlicher Selbstverständigung in der Bundesrepublik, in: Gassert, Geiger, and Wentker (eds.), Zweiter Kalter Krieg, p. 194 f.

zones in Central Europe,[54] and even of quitting NATO.[55] Its demands fanned fears about the stability of the FRG and its anchorage in the West; also about a new German national neutralism.[56] Old fears in the West about a new kind of German–Soviet "Rapallo Deal" came to the fore. These fears were exacerbated by rampant debates among intellectuals in Germany and in the Middle-Eastern European states about a possible re-emergence of *Mitteleuropa* after the mid-1980s.[57] Already in 1984, the Italian Foreign Minister, Giulio Andreotti, had warned of "Pan-Germanism" and had publicly commended the fact that there were two separate German states.[58] Only some months before, a French socialist had allegedly proclaimed that the deployment of Pershing IIs was excellent at least in one way: it would prevent German unification for at least another 20 years.[59] So what would become of the "*incertitudes allemandes*" when the missiles were dismantled?

Since the Reykjavik Summit, some maverick CDU back-benchers like Bernhard Friedmann had been urging the government to insist on a package deal between disarmament and progress toward German unification. This was a fallback to positions of the 1950s, and so completely out of touch with reality that no one took the idea seriously, although it was reiterated before President Richard von Weizsäcker met with Gorbachev in Moscow in July 1987.[60]

In June 1987, an unexpected incident in the GDR underscored the subcutaneous presence of the "German question." As part of the festivities celebrating the 750th anniversary of Berlin, a big rock concert took place in West Berlin in front of the Reichstag, which was just next to the Wall. In East Berlin, young people trying to listen to the rock music were driven off by the police, and this led to the biggest unauthorized demonstration in the GDR for years. The stand-off

54 In 1985 and 1987, together with the ČSSR, the GDR proposed initiatives for a zone free of chemical weapons and nuclear weapons in Central Europe. The idea of a chemical weapons free zone was based on a joint paper that the West German SPD and the GDR's State Party, the SED, had adopted some months earlier, Memorandum of Ruth, July 26, 1985, in: AAPD 1985, Doc. 205.

55 Oskar Lafontaine, Minister President of Saarland since 1985, had demanded this in 1983, see Wirsching, Abschied vom Provisorium, p. 88.

56 In regard to the INF Treaty, French Defense Minister Giraud complained about a German "growing irrational pacifism (fired by the Greens), the 'Fata Morgana' (*le mirage*) of reunification and the German desire for close economic relations with the East". Telegram No. 2331 of Military Attaché Fraidel, Paris, October 15, 1987, PA/AA, B 14/143334.

57 Memorandum head of planning department, Seitz, April 3, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 95, pp. 480–488.

58 Telegram Head of Italian Bureau, Kuhna, to Rome embassy, September 14, 1986, and Memorandum of MDg Hans Schauer, September 28, 1986, in: AAPD 1984, Docs. 236 and 255.

59 Wo ist der Deutschen Vaterland?, in: Der Spiegel Nr. 48, November 28, 1983, p. 21; Willy Brandt, Erinnerungen, Berlin 1997 (paperback edition), p. 321; Egon Bahr, Zu meiner Zeit, Munich 1998, p. 512.

60 Karl-Rudolf Korte, Deutschlandpolitik in Helmut Kohls Kanzlerschaft. Regierungsstil und Entscheidungen 1982–1989, Stuttgart 1998, pp. 309–311; AAPD 1987, Doc. 212, Fn. 19–21.

escalated, and the protesters began to chant both "We want Gorbachev" and "*Die Mauer muss weg*" ("The Wall must go").[61] A couple of days later, in front of the Brandenburg Gate, this request was memorably repeated by U.S. President Ronald Reagan as he demanded that General Secretary Gorbachev should "tear down this Wall."[62]

In the run-up to von Weizsäcker's visit to Moscow rumors spread that Gorbachev might try to tease the Germans with a new kind of "Stalin Note."[63] In 1952, the USSR had proposed a model of a reunified, but neutral Germany that would not be part of NATO. Gorbachev did not do anything of that kind. When Weizsäcker—more for the record than through real conviction—brought up the wish of the German people for reunification, Gorbachev repeated the Soviet argument that two Germanies were the verdict of history that had to be accepted. However, he also said that no one could know what things would be like in a hundred years' time.[64] That a Soviet General Secretary should indicate that there might be change in Germany's divided condition (albeit in a faraway future) was indeed a new development and impressed his visitors.

In a nutshell: due to the INF debate, the "German problem" had returned to international politics. It is striking that this development was better perceived abroad than it was within Germany. This does not mean, however, that there was a teleological path up to German unification, which came three years later. Most contemporaries felt quite the contrary. In September 1987, the leader of the GDR, SED General Secretary Erich Honecker, made an official visit to the Federal Republic. This was rightly perceived, all over the world, as the final recognition of the GDR as a second German state by its long-term rival. Indeed, Honecker's visit was the climax of *Zweistaatlichkeit* (the two-state solution).[65]

In April 1987, both German unification and an end to the Cold War seemed highly unlikely. For delegates of the Union, the USSR was still a dangerous adversary and definitively not to be trusted. If taken in the narrow perspective of the German national interest and from a purely military point of view, some of the CDU/CSU arguments against the second zero solution even made sense.

61 DDR-Sicherheitskräfte behindern westdeutsche Journalisten, in: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ), June 10, 1987, pp. 1 f.

62 For Reagan's speech on June 12, 1987, see Public Papers, Reagan 1987, p. 635. Confidentially, at the margins of a Warsaw Pact meeting in East Berlin on May 28/29, 1987, Gorbachev and the Soviet Foreign Minister had indeed proposed exactly that to Honecker who rejected any removal of the Wall. See Vladislav Zubok, With his back against the Wall: Gorbachev, Soviet demise, and German reunification, in: Cold War History 14/4 (2014), pp. 621 f. In the official records of the meeting, however, there are no hints of this episode.

63 Memorandum of Political Director, von Richthofen, July 15, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 212, p. 1059.

64 Conversation Gorbachev with Weizsäcker, July 7, 1987, German Memcon in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 206; Soviet Memcon in: Aleksandr Galkin and Anatolij Tschernajejew (eds.), Michail Gorbatschow und die deutsche Frage. Sowjetische Dokumente 1986–1991, Munich 2011, Doc. 16.

65 See the contribution by Hermann Wentker to this volume.

NATO's Nuclear Planning Group had passed new "General Political Guidelines (GPG) for the Employment of Nuclear Weapons in Defense of NATO" at its Ministerial meeting in Gleneagles on October 21/22, 1986 (only a week after the Reagan–Gorbachev Summit in Reykjavik). For West Germany, the crucial merit of these GPG was that they finally shifted the Alliance's strategy away from the military–operational use of tactical nuclear weapons to appreciating the political function of a nuclear strike. The latter was defined as the ultimate signal to the enemy to stop its aggression at once—and such nuclear strikes were to be made directly and immediately against Soviet territory itself. Almost since it first entered the Alliance in 1955, West Germany had hoped that this calculus would become NATO's strategic approach. If a double zero solution for INF were adopted, it seemed that the tools to implement this philosophy would immediately be put at risk: With the remaining U.S. strategic nuclear weapons (as well as those of France and Britain) the old problem of "decoupling" arose again: would the Allies really go nuclear for the FRG and thus risk the destruction of their own countries? Moreover, with the (outdated and outnumbered) SNF that remained, there was no threat to the territory of a Soviet aggressor (nor, indeed, to any Anglo-Saxon Ally): all the destruction would be wreaked on German territory alone!

This complex military calculus was the reason why CDU/CSU politicians clung to retaining at least some SRINF. Additionally, they demanded that any nuclear agreement of the superpowers should be accompanied by a total ban on chemical weapons and by a swift beginning to disarmament talks in Vienna between NATO and the Warsaw Pact about conventional forces in Europe (CFE). Chemical weapons and conventional forces were less in the focus of public interest (even though the East had an enormous quantitative superiority) but were also a lethal threat to the West, and especially to its front-line state, West Germany.

However, the proponents of the CDU/CSU philosophy were faced with a phalanx of overpowering adversaries. Firstly, public opinion in Germany was predominantly anti-nuclear.[66] A majority of West Germans had grudgingly accepted Euromissiles as an unwanted but necessary reaction to a dangerous Soviet armaments buildup; and when the Soviets said they wanted to get rid of as many nukes as possible, most people euphorically agreed. They did not bother to go into the complicated logic of nuclear deterrence. On a psychological level, the peace movement had prevailed: disarmament had become an end in itself. It was in vain that Chancellor Kohl reiterated that disarmament was only sensible when it led to more, not less security.

Secondly, the Union was totally isolated in West Germany's political system. Its Liberal coalition partner insisted on a double zero solution just as firmly as the opposition parties, the SPD and the Greens. The split within government was brutally exposed in the Bundestag on May 7,[67] but already, on April 27, Genscher

66 See the contribution by Philipp Gassert to this volume.

67 Verhandlungen des Deutschen Bundestages, Stenographische Berichte, 11th Legislation Period, 10th Session, pp. 524–565; http://dipbt.bundestag.de/doc/btp/11/11010.pdf.

had been saying that the government was in the "most difficult situation since the coalition's formation in 1982"[68]—thus premonitorily recalling that the FDP had swapped its coalition partner in a controversy over INF missiles once before.

Thirdly, the United States, which had been the CDU/CSU's mightiest international ally in the past, was now taking a stand on the opposite side. During a visit to Washington on May 11, Genscher had talks in the State Department, the Pentagon and the NSC. He was also briefly received by President Reagan—a demonstrative protocolic signal to Bonn.[69]

Nevertheless, CDU/CSU politicians hoped to find support against the double zero solution from European Allies. It almost looked like a flashback to the 1960s with a return to a kind of German "Gaullism" within the two parties. Just as they had some decades ago, politicians like Strauß, Dregger, and Todenhöfer expressed fears that the United States would be prepared to sacrifice the national interests of Germany and Europe in favor of an agreement between the superpowers alone. In their view, this was just what the U. S. had done at Yalta and Potsdam in 1945. Out of distrust towards America, these politicians dreamed of creating a "European Security Union," especially by closing ranks with France, which was a nuclear power.[70] However, just as in the 1960s, France had absolutely no intention of sharing its *Force de Frappe* with Germany. Nor did CDU centrists like Kohl and Rühe have interest or illusions about the scheme.

To complicate things, for the first time ever in the Fifth Republic, France had a *cohabitation* government (1986–1988). The Socialist President, Mitterrand, was having to make do with a Conservative government. Prime Minister Jacques Chirac, Foreign Minister Jean-Bernard Raimond, and Defense Minister André Giraud made no secret of their resentment at the prospect of a double zero option.[71] Mitterrand, by contrast, indicated to Kohl, early on, that he would not be averse to it.[72] In public, Mitterrand kept silent for a long time in order to save Kohl's domestic position. This silence fostered illusions. On May 13/14, the Bundestag leader Alfred Dregger visited Paris hoping to forge a continental

68 Genscher spricht von der schwierigsten Situation der Regierung seit 1982, in: FAZ, April 28, 1987, p. 1.

69 Genscher, Erinnerungen, p. 567; Nichts gelernt, in: Der Spiegel Nr. 21, May, 18, 1987, p. 19; conversation Genscher with Weinberger, May 11, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 128.

70 Dregger für eine Neuorientierung der deutschen Sicherheitspolitik, in: FAZ, June 19, 1987, p. 2. For German Gaullism in the 1960s see Tim Geiger, Atlantiker gegen Gaullisten. Außenpolitischer Konflikt und innenpolitischer Machtkampf in der CDU/CSU 1958–1969, Munich 2008.

71 Telegram No. 970 Ambassador Schoeller, Paris, April 30, 1987 on Conversation of Chirac with Thatcher in Chequers, in: PA/AA, B 43/130134; Memo von Ploetz, May 8, 1987, about Kohl's Strasbourg meeting with Chirac on May 3, see PA/AA, B 150/666.

72 Conversation of Kohl with Mitterrand at Chambord Castle, March 28, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 89; Jacques Attali, Verbatim, Tom 2: Chronique des années 1986–1988, Paris 1995, pp. 287–291; Kohl, Erinnerungen 1982–1990, pp. 584 f.; see also the essay by Christian Wenkel in this volume.

alliance of resistance against the U. S.—and against Bonn's Foreign Office—with the conservative French government.

CDU foreign policy expert Rühe tried the same in Britain.[73] Thatcher, too, was highly critical of any zero option.[74] However, at the ministerial meeting of the Nuclear Planning Group in Stavanger, British Defence Minister George Younger made it public that Britain would endorse a double zero option for LRINF *and* SRINF if NATO's deterrence could be kept viable by other nuclear systems and if the disarmament of chemical and conventional weapons proceeded. This left the FRG standing all alone as the main obstacle preventing a common NATO view on banning SRINF being reached.[75] Thatcher's surprising U-turn was primarily due to the fact that she faced general elections in June. An even worse stab in the back for Kohl and his fellow party members, however, was the massive pressure the British were exerting for a "firebreak" in further disarmament talks—employing a term (*Brandschneise*) that even linguistically went down badly with Germans. Through a "firebreak", the "Iron Lady" wanted to stop the headlong rush to disarmament.[76] Instead of cutting down, or even abolishing, the short-range nuclear forces (SNF) which would "only" do damage in the immediate theater of war (obviously Germany), she insisted on a modernization and buildup of these SNF. This was because, in that category of weapons, just 88 Lance systems deployed by NATO faced a sixteen-fold numeric superiority of systems from the Warsaw Pact. From the German perspective, that meant ending up in the worst of all nuclear worlds.

In a conversation with a high-ranking politician from Hungary on May 15, Kohl protested that, of course, he was interested in real disarmament. On the other hand, he could not let Germany be sold down the river—either by the Soviets or by his American friends.[77] Under pressure from all sides, both domestically and internationally, Kohl made a desperate dart forward, that same

73 Telegram No. 867 of Ambassador von Wechmar, London, May 15, 1987, in: PA/AA, B 43/144772.

74 See Oliver Barton's essay in this volume. On March 23, 1987 in Bonn, Thatcher told Kohl that Britain would support a LRINF zero, whatever the cost, because the West had to stick by its word; but she would not accept a SRINF zero. See Memo of Political Director von Richthofen, March 24, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 79.

75 Wörner fand kaum Verbündete, in: Frankfurter Rundschau, May, 15, 1987, p. 1; Nichts gelernt, Der Spiegel Nr. 21, May 18, 1987, p. 20.

76 Telegram No. 1020 from Gesandter von Stein, London, June 5, 1987, in: PA/AA, B 150/668. At the G7 summit in Venice on June 8, Thatcher vehemently attacked Kohl, whom she suspected to be angling for a third (SNF) zero. Her behavior shocked even Mitterrand, and Reagan tried to calm her down, The National Archives, Kew, PREM19/2090 f135, Charles Powell's record of conversation of G7 leaders at dinner, (online https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/211271); Margaret Thatcher, Downing Street Years, London 1993, p. 587; The Reagan Diaries, ed. by Douglas Brinkley, New York 2007, p. 505; conversation of Kohl with Mitterrand in Venice, June 9, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 166.

77 Conversation of Kohl with Hungarian member of Politbureau Havasi, May 15, 1987, in: PA/AA, B 150/667.

day. Without any consultation with Genscher's Foreign Office or with the Allies, the Federal Chancellery put out a declaration, announced by the government's spokesman, that a SRINF zero solution would ignore the very weapons that were the most dangerous to the Federal Republic, and that therefore, weapons of *all* ranges between 0 and 1,000 km should be included in the Geneva talks. The declaration added that attention also had to be paid to the clear conventional and chemical superiority of the Warsaw Pact.[78]

Kohl's initiative exacerbated an already chaotic situation by puzzling everyone. This became obvious the next day when contradictory headlines appeared in the papers. Some papers ran the headline "Kohl against zero option"; others ran "Kohl in favor of total zero."[79] The Disarmament Unit of the Foreign Office took stock in an extremely negative way, since Kohl's amateurish initiative did not differentiate between nuclear, chemical and conventional weapons, the latter two never part of the Geneva talks. Even if the Chancellor's unfortunate choice of words were taken to mean nuclear weapons only, his proposal could bring back dual-capable artillery or air-launched nukes, when, for years, the West had fought hard (and successfully) to reduce the Geneva talks to ground-launched missiles alone.[80]

Most observers judged Kohl's attempt to jump ahead as primarily a domestic maneuver, because two days later there were to be elections in Rhineland-Palatinate and in Hamburg.[81] If so, that calculation failed: in Mainz, the CDU lost its absolute majority, and in Hamburg, the SPD retained the majority it already had. It is generally agreed that the Union's quarrels over disarmament had a decisive share in this election outcome.[82]

In the CDU executive committee, the next day, Kohl admitted this; but he defiantly insisted that without the politics of the Union there would never have been any disarmament agreement at all. He recalled that the implementation of NATO's Dual-Track Decision had been the precondition for any zero option—and without the Union the tiny FDP could never have secured its implementation. Kohl accordingly demanded that the unfair "worksharing" within the coalition, where some profiled themselves as (the only) friends of disarmament at the expense of the others, should henceforth come to an end.[83] Germany's biggest tabloid, *Bild*, had already made the Chancellor's thoughts public in a well-informed article which also addressed the deep and enduring rift the debate over

78 Bulletin der Bundesregierung 1987, pp. 413 f.

79 Archiv der Gegenwart 57 (1987), p. 31071. Wolfgang Schäuble, Minister of the Federal Chancellery, had to explain Kohl's initiative to American Ambassador Burt, May 18, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 138.

80 Memo of Referat 220, in: PA/AA, B 43/130126.

81 Telegram No. 2228 of Ambassador van Well, Washington, May 18, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 141.

82 Kohl, Erinnerungen 1982–1990, p. 527.

83 Helmut Kohl, Berichte zur Lage 1982–1989. Der Kanzler und Parteivorsitzende im Bundesvorstand der CDU Deutschlands, Düsseldorf 2014, pp. 533–536 (May 18, 1987).

the zero option had caused in the once close personal relationship between Kohl and Genscher.[84]

In the whole controversy, Kohl cut an unfortunate figure. He had been away from Bonn at a health spa when the controversy within the coalition escalated in April, stayed there too long, and appeared indecisive and weak in leadership when he returned. It was not so much Party Chairman Kohl who now brought his estranged coalition government together, but the CDU's ambitious Secretary General Heiner Geißler. As a skilled strategic thinker, Geißler ruthlessly overrode intra-party resistance to the double zero option by insisting that the Christian Democrats must not longer appear to the public as Cold Warmongers addicted to nukes and hostile to détente and disarmament.[85] In this way, Geißler, who preened himself on being "Executive Party Chairman," overcame the political deadlock and saved the government. However, applauded by the liberal-progressive press, he became overambitious. Thus began an internal rivalry with Kohl, which finally ended in Geißler's failed revolt against the Chancellor in summer 1989.

In spring 1987, Geißler was successful because, within days, it became evident that any hope of finding European Allies against a double zero option had gone altogether. Once the British government had endorsed the double zero option, Italy followed suit.[86] At the Franco-German summit in Paris on May 21/22, Mitterrand made it crystal clear that he, as President, not the Conservative government, was in charge of Foreign Affairs, and that France would not oppose double zero.[87]

In fact, contrary to the lofty hopes of some CDU/CSU politicians, Bonn and Paris were at odds over many defense issues, not just the double zero option. Talks in the (UN-based) Conference on Disarmament (CD), also in Geneva, had been concentrating particularly on chemical weapons and had reached a stalemate because the French insisted on keeping a "security stock" of these. The French had also blocked a proposed mandate for new talks in Vienna over "Conventional Armed Forces in Europe" (CFE)—which it was hoped would replace the ailing "Mutual and Balanced Forces Reductions" (MBFR) discussions as from spring

84 Raketen: So leidet die Freundschaft Kohl/Genscher, in: Bild am Sonntag, May 17, 1987. Genscher reacted the same day with a handwritten letter that reaffirmed his allegiance to Kohl, AAPD 1987, Doc. 139.

85 Strauß: 'Geißlers Politik führt zur Katastrophe', in: Der Spiegel Nr. 22, May 25, 1987, pp. 17–19.

86 Although, on April 27, 1987, the Italian representative in NATO's Special Consultative Group (SCG) made a case for a SRINF base level solution (Telegram No. 553 of Holik, Brussels, April 28, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 119), Foreign Minister Andreotti indicated in a telephone conversation with Genscher, on May 14, 1987, that there would be Italian support for double zero, PA/AA, B 1/178903. Andreotti made this public on May 19. Prime Minister Amintore Fanfani confirmed it the following day in talks with Kohl in Bonn, Archiv der Gegenwart 57 (1987), p. 31071.

87 Kohl, Erinnerungen 1982–1990, p. 585; Genscher, Erinnerungen, p. 568, conversation of Kohl, Mitterrand and Chirac in Paris, May 22, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 147.

1989. France wanted to include the neutral and non-aligned countries, but the U.S. would not accept this. Germany, however, was desperate that the talks should go ahead.

Despite this friction, the uncertainties caused by the INF Treaty within the Western Alliance did lead to an intensification of Franco-German security cooperation. After Reykjavik and in the wake of the INF Treaty, Kohl and Mitterrand activated parts of the Elysée Treaty of 1963 that covered defense and that had not yet been implemented.[88] In November 1987, a month before the signing of the INF Treaty and two months after a spectacular first joint Franco-German army maneuver ("*Kecker Spatz/Moineau hardi*"), a Franco-German summit was held in Karlsruhe. Here the highly symbolic decision was made to set up a joint Franco-German Brigade and a common Council of Foreign and Defense Ministers as well as a common Council of Economic and Financial Ministers.[89] As a quid pro quo for intensified military collaboration, Paris demanded closer economic and monetary cooperation from Bonn. The French wanted to get control over West Germany's dominant economy and its currency, the D-Mark, which Mitterrand's Diplomatic Advisor, Jacques Attali, went as far as calling "the German Nuclear bomb."[90] This started to pave the way for the new European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) which took shape in 1988 with the "Delors package" and the European Council of Hannover.[91] So, in a way, even some of the origins of the Euro go back to the debate surrounding the INF Treaty.

On June 1, 1987, West Germany's Christian-Liberal government finally settled for an acceptance of the double zero solution:[92] Genscher's line had prevailed. In the CDU/CSU parliamentary group this caused outrage; but that did not change anything.[93] On June 4, Chancellor Kohl presented the government's decision in the Bundestag. He did so in a rather complicated way, emphasizing that Germany could only agree to a zero option for SRINF if this were accompanied by a comprehensive concept of arms control and disarmament. This should include a 50 per cent cut of American and Soviet strategic nuclear weapons, a global ban on chemical weapons, and real progress in the disarmament of conventional

88 Urs Leimbacher, Die unverzichtbare Allianz. Deutsch-französische sicherheitspolitische Zusammenarbeit 1982–1989, Baden-Baden 1992, pp. 133–192; Schwarz, Kohl, pp. 423–433.

89 Bulletin der Bundesregierung Nr. 126/1987, pp. 170 f.; Christoph Lind, Die deutsch-französischen Gipfeltreffen der Ära Kohl—Mitterrand 1982–1994, Baden-Baden 1998, pp. 133–142.

90 Cf. conversation of Teltschik with Attali in Paris, August 27, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 239, p. 1209. Mitterrand repeated that aphorism in 1988 in the French Ministerial Council, Jacques Attali, Verbatim III: 1988–1991, Paris 1995, p. 47 (August 17, 1988).

91 Wirsching, Abschied, pp. 531–544; Schwarz, Kohl, pp. 431–439.

92 The compromise was forged into a resolution proposal that was brought to the Bundestag by the CDU/CSU and FDP parliamentary group on June 3, 1987, Deutscher Bundestag, Drucksache No. 11/405, http://dipbt.bundestag.de/doc/btd/11/004/1100405.pdf.

93 Stürmische Debatte der Unionsfraktion über die doppelte Null-Lösung, in: FAZ, June 3, 1987, p. 1.

and SNF forces. The 72 German Pershing IA missiles were mentioned as being explicitly no part of the deal.[94]

In Geneva, the Soviets were still waiting for the official American response to their SRINF zero proposal, because the Reagan Administration had told them that it had to consult with its NATO Allies first, and the Alliance was waiting for the Europeans—and especially the West Germans—to sort themselves out. At the G7 Summit in Venice, Reagan promised Kohl that the U.S. would accept the German demand for a comprehensive NATO disarmament plan that would include negotiations on SNF systems with a range below 500 km.[95] Finally, on June 11/12, NATO's next Ministerial meeting of the North Atlantic Council (NAC) in Reykjavik was able to give Washington the green light to go ahead in Geneva.

It underlines the crucial importance of West Germany in the whole INF matter that the NAC communiqué at Reykjavik repeated the wording of the German coalition paper almost exactly.[96] Nevertheless, even hours before the NAC's session, at the traditional preliminary quadripartite meeting of the American, British, French, and German Foreign Ministers, Genscher was having to fight hard to keep the plan afloat. Britain and France did not want any commitment to follow-on negotiations on SNF, so as not to endanger the "firebreak" they favored; both Howe and Cheysson made strong attempts to water down the relevant passage.[97] Although Genscher repeatedly emphasized that no one in the Federal Government wanted a third zero option, the Allies did not trust his assurance, because Genscher had assured just the same with regard to a SRINF zero only half a year ago.[98] This was just a foretaste of further controversies that would come within the Atlantic Alliance in the next years. Nor was the controversy over the INF Treaty yet over in West Germany itself.

94 Verhandlungen des Deutschen Bundestages, Stenographische Berichte, 11th Legislation Period, 16th Session, pp. 923–928.

95 Conversation of Kohl with Reagan, June 8, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 164.

96 Communiqué of the North Atlantic Council at Reykjavik, June 11/12, 1987, http://archives.nato.int/statement-on-ministerial-meeting-of-nac-at-reykjavik-on-11th-and-12th-june-1987.

97 Conversation of Genscher, Howe, Raimond and Shultz, June 11, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 170.

98 Memo of AA's head of NATO unit, VLR I Dreher, June 15, 1987, in: PA/AA, B 150/668. For Genscher's former rejection of an SRINF zero, see his meeting with Howe, Raimond and Shultz at Chevening, December 9, 1986, in: AAPD 1986, Doc. 353, p. 1826.

3. The Abandoning of the Pershing IA, Summer 1987

From late April 1987, the Soviet side complicated things further by demanding, as an ultimatum, that the 72 *Bundeswehr* Pershing IAs should be included in an INF Treaty[99]—this, despite the fact that, ever since their beginnings in 1981, the Geneva talks had been confined to American and Soviet land-based nuclear systems (to be precise: to carriers, not the nuclear warheads themselves).

The Pershing IA (P IA) was a SRINF system with a range of approximately 750 km. In other words, it could hit the deployment area of the second echelon of the Warsaw Pact at the Vistula River in Poland. The P IA had been used by the *Luftwaffe* since 1963. It could be armed with nuclear warheads, though these were always under American control and custody.[100] Germany's share in NATO's nuclear weaponry (*Nuklearteilhabe*), crucial for a country at the front line of the Cold War, basically relied on these Pershing missiles and on the multi-role combat aircraft, the "Tornado". In 1987, it was first and foremost the political asset that remained of this arrangement; the military value of the evermore outdated Pershing IA had declined rapidly and the lifespan of the P IA system would come to an end in the early 1990s. Modernization had been debated within NATO since the mid-1980s,[101] and the former 108 American Pershing IAs in Germany had already been replaced in 1983 with an improved successor model, the Pershing II, thanks to the Dual-Track Decision.

The official position of the Federal Government, of the U. S., and of NATO was that the Pershing IA, as an "established pattern of co-operation" system, could not be part of an American–Soviet INF agreement—just as was the case with the British and French nuclear arsenals. This position was reaffirmed again and again on various occasions throughout the summer of 1987. The State Department confirmed it in a press release of April 29;[102] Defense Secretary Weinberger reconfirmed the non-inclusion of the P IA in an INF Treaty at NATO's Defense Planning Committee (DPC) in Brussels on May 26/27;[103] Secretary Shultz again

99 The Leader of the Soviet INF Delegation in Geneva, Obukhov, demanded this in his oral presentation of the Soviet draft for an INF Treaty on April 28 (whereas the written form did not mention it, nor even a SRINF zero solution). Obukhov's Press statement, in: Dokumentation zur Abrüstung und Sicherheit, Vol. XXIV, 1987/88, p. 150; Telegram No. 553 of Ambassador Holik, Brussels, April 27, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 119. In NAC on April, 16, Secretary Shultz informed that at his Moscow visit no Soviet had asked him about the German Pershing IA, Telegram No. 521 of Ambassador Hansen, NATO, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 115. This was confirmed by Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Vorontsov who, on May 6, was telling Genscher that without the inclusion of these missiles there would be no real zero solution, AAPD 1987, Doc. 126.

100 Memo of Referat 201, January 26, 1987, in: PA/AA, B 150/659.

101 Memo of Staatssekretär Sudhoff and LR I Adamek, both May 20, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Docs. 144 and 145.

102 Archiv der Gegenwart 57 (1987), p. 31068.

103 Telegram No. 731 of Hansen, NATO, May 27, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 155.

affirmed it at the North Atlantic Council in Reykjavik on June 11;[104] and at the G7 Summit in Venice, President Reagan himself assured Kohl that "the question of the 72 P IA is now off the table."[105] But the Soviets kept on pressing, and even indicated that the proposed INF Treaty could come to nothing just because of this issue.[106]

Moscow's threats had an immediate effect in West Germany. The opposition parties vociferously demanded that Bonn should comply, instead of blocking the prospect of real nuclear disarmament.[107] The FDP made yet another U-turn, abandoning the coalition's consent, and joined in demands for the abolition of the Pershing IAs. For the Liberals, preserving these outdated systems (or modernizing them, which would be extremely controversial and might endanger East–West détente)[108] was simply not worth it, if Germany were to become the final obstacle to an INF Treaty. Although the coalition's difficult compromise over the double zero option of June 1 had explicitly underlined the established position that Pershing IA missiles must be kept out of the Geneva talks, only the next day Genscher secretly indicated to an emissary of the GDR that he himself would not mind getting rid of them.[109] He could be sure that this intimation would be heard not only in East Berlin, but also in Moscow.

Thus, the Foreign Minister was hardly surprised when his Soviet colleague tried to grill the German delegation on the Pershing issue during President von Weizsäcker's visit to Moscow in July. Shevardnadze complained that the Soviets felt they were being cheated because, whether they talked to Germans or Americans, the responsibility for the P IA was always passed from one side to the other: the Americans would declare that the systems were German (so they could not negotiate about them); the West Germans would claim that the nuclear warheads were solely American, and that Bonn was no party at all at the Geneva disarmament table. Moscow was now saying that the P IA had become

104 Ortez No. 36 of VLR Stöcker, June 16, 1987, in: PA/AA, B 150/669. See also Shultz in the preceding meeting with Genscher, Cheysson and Howe, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 170.

105 AAPD 1987, Doc. 164 (June 8, 1987). In the CDU executive committee, Kohl therefore showed confidence that the Pershing IA would be kept out of an INF Treaty: Kohl, Berichte zur Lage 1982–1989, p. 541 (June 18, 1987).

106 Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze labeled the refusal to include the German P IA in a double zero solution a "grave obstacle for disarmament", Europa-Archiv 1990, Z 135 f.

107 E.g. the Defense spokesman of the SPD fraction, Erwin Horn, on his visit to the U. S. A., in: Telegram No. 3140 of Ambassador van Well, Washington, in: PA/AA, B 43/135403.

108 Ambassador van Well, Washington, reported on June 27 that Shultz had told him again that the Pershing IA could not be part of an American–Soviet INF deal. However, Shultz indicated at the same time that, for Washington, modernization of the P IA had no alternative, AAPD 1987, Doc. 214, Fn. 2.

109 Memo of the Rector of the Academy for Life Sciences at the Central Committee of the SED, Otto Reinhold, for General Secretary Erich Honecker, June 5, 1987 about Reinhold's conversation with Genscher in Bonn on June 2, in: Detlef Nakath and Gerd-Rüdiger Stephan (eds.), Von Hubertusstock nach Bonn. Eine dokumentierte Geschichte der deutsch–deutschen Beziehungen auf höchster Ebene 1980–1987, Berlin 1995, Doc. 52, p. 313.

"the main obstacle" standing in the way of an INF solution, and Shevardnadze asked what the USSR could do to facilitate West Germany "voluntarily" giving up these missiles. Would a real global LRINF zero help—an elimination of the 100 remaining LRINF nuclear warheads?[110] A fortnight later, Gorbachev announced precisely this step.

In the meanwhile, controversies dragged on in the Bonn coalition. Whereas the FDP clearly favored the abandonment of the P IAs, the CDU/CSU "steel helmet" hardliners around Strauß and Dregger insisted that these SRINF missiles be kept at all costs: not only to retain at least a remnant of the direct threat West Germany could pose to the East (and thus keep deterrence alive), but also in order to kill off the already evolving intra-Western debate over a SNF modernization program, which would surely get going fully as soon as there were no SRINF left on NATO's side.[111] Using the argument that the USSR would presumably demand a zero option for French and British nuclear forces as soon as the P IA was removed,[112] the CDU and CSU tried again to get backing from both key European Allies. But London and Paris were already harassing the FRG with regard to SNF modernization—just as Washington did. Even within the CDU, figures like Deputy Party Chairman and Minister President of Baden-Württemberg, Lothar Späth, publicly announced that the Pershing IA issue was only a bargaining chip to get the Warsaw Pact to disarmament talks over SNF.[113] Such statements indirectly indicated a readiness to renounce P IA.

As Ambassador Günter van Well reported from Washington, the Reagan Administration was having increasing doubts about the firmness of Bonn's commitment to keeping the Pershing IAs, in face of the mounting pressure from Moscow. Van Well did not rule out the possibility of Secretary Shultz disregarding German (and British) objections and ruthlessly sacrificing the German Pershing IAs, all contradicting promises notwithstanding. The American wanted to get an INF agreement and prove his disarmament approach was right.[114] After talks with the U. S. delegation in Geneva, German diplomats came to the conclusion: "blatantly obvious, the wish was expressed that we solve this [Pershing IA] problem for the U. S."[115] Apprehension grew that Washington might lay all the blame on Bonn if an INF Treaty should fall apart because of the Pershing IA issue.[116]

110 Genscher–Shevardnadze delegation talks in Moscow, July 7, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 204.

111 Am Kleiderständer, in: Der Spiegel No. 24, June 8, 1987, p. 26.

112 Conversation of Kohl with the Foreign Affairs Committee of the French *Assemblée Nationale*, June 3, 1987, in: PA/AA, B 150/668. Exactly for that reason, Thatcher, too, objected to an abandoning of the P IA, Thatcher, Downing Street, p. 771.

113 Interview with Späth, in: Der Spiegel Nr. 24, June 8, 1987, p. 24.

114 Telegram No. 3049 of van Well, July 16, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 214.

115 Memo of AA's Deputy head of the Disarmament Division, Ambassador Hartmann, to Genscher, July 21, 1987, in: PA/AA B 150/671.

116 Handwritten comment of State Secretary Sudhoff on a memo by AA's Head of the Disarmament Division, Holik, on August 17, 1987, which analyzed another letter of Secretary Shultz to Genscher confirming that the U. S. would steadily refuse to include the German Pershing IA in an INF agreement, PA/AA, B 150/673.

On August 18, Soviet ambassador Yuli A. Kvitsinsky urgently called on Genscher, who was on holiday in the south of France, relaying the alarming message that, due to the Pershing IA question, the INF Treaty really was at risk. Because of this Shevardnadze was confidentially suggesting that Bonn should take the appropriate initiative itself.[117]

It is worth noting that exactly this pattern would be repeated three years later in the process of German unification, this time concerning the controversial issue of the size of the *Bundeswehr*. In 1990, Shevardnadze again confidentially indicated that Germany should submit a proposal as its own initiative that would enable Soviet agreement.[118] Kohl acted accordingly during his famous Caucasus meeting with Gorbachev.[119] On a multilateral level, the result was confirmed by a declaration of Genscher at the Vienna CFE forum, which was finally incorporated in the Two plus Four Treaty.[120]

In 1987, back home, Genscher held a for-your-eyes-only conversation with Chancellor Kohl. He had thoroughly prepared it by previously winning over the more compromise-orientated, left-wing CDU leaders like Employment Minister Norbert Blüm, Späth, and Geißler.[121] He succeeded in convincing the Chancellor. Without any prior consultations with the NATO Allies or even with the CSU itself, Kohl then made a complete U-turn. On August 26, he declared that, in order to help the American quest for an INF Treaty, his government would autonomously agree to a unilateral dismantling of all German Pershing IA missiles if the INF Treaty were to become effective.[122] Just as in the fall of 1989, when he presented his famous Ten-Point Plan, Kohl's unilateral move took Washington completely by surprise.[123] On both occasions, however, the American Presidents backed their proven and trusted German ally. In 1987, Kohl's declaration was accepted all the more readily, because it substantially facilitated the finalization of the INF Treaty.

117 Conversation of Genscher with Kvitsinsky in Théoule-sur-Mer, in: PA/AA, B 150/673; Genscher, Erinnerungen, pp. 572–573.

118 Conversation of Genscher with Shevardnadze in Copenhagen, June 7, 1990, in: Andreas Hilger (ed.), Diplomatie für die deutsche Einheit, Munich 2011, Doc. 32, p. 167; Genscher, Erinnerungen, pp. 817 f.; Tim Geiger and Heike Amos, Das Auswärtige Amt und die Wiedervereinigung 1989/90, in: Michael Gehler and Maximilian Graf (eds.), Europa und die deutsche Einheit. Beobachtungen, Entscheidungen und Folgen, Göttingen 2017, p. 85.

119 Conversation of Kohl with Gorbachev in Archyz, July 16, 1990, in: Deutsche Einheit. Sonderedition aus den Akten des Bundeskanzleramtes 1989/90, ed. by Hanns Jürgen Küsters and Daniel Hofmann, Munich, 1998, Doc. 353, p. 1365.

120 For Genscher's declaration of August 30, 1990, Bulletin der Bundesregierung 1990, pp. 1129–1131, and Die Einheit. Das Auswärtige Amt, das DDR-Außenministerium und der Zwei-plus-Vier-Prozess, ed. by Heike Amos and Tim Geiger, Göttingen 2016, doc. 147; for the 2+4-Treaty of September 12, 1990 (esp. Article 3), ibid., Doc. 152.

121 Genscher, Erinnerungen, p. 573; Kohl, Erinnerungen 1982–1990, pp. 550 f.

122 For Kohl's declaration Bulletin 1987, p. 682.

123 Telegram No. 3618 of Gesandten Paschke, Washington, August 26, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 235.

Within his government, Kohl's action did not go down so well. His declaration was widely seen as yet another capitulation a weak Chancellor was making to his strong deputy, Foreign Minister Genscher, and it caused a real crisis with the third coalition partner, the CSU. Strauß, who had never ceased from attacking his rival Kohl as a naïve "clunk," was caught off guard during a visit to Bulgaria. His outrage ended in a very aggressive declaration from the CSU executive committee, delivered on August 31, which charged the Chancellor with a breach of promise and accused him of destroying the basis for cooperation.[124] For some weeks, the Bavarian sister party even withdrew its Ministers from the cabinet, but in the end, they fell in line. It must be conceded that Strauß's criticism had a point: the INF Treaty did indeed eliminate only 3 per cent of the global nuclear arsenal[125]—an aspect that was often glossed over by the Treaty's advocates (and that has been largely forgotten since). Nevertheless, at the end of 1987, Strauß flew to Moscow himself. After conversations with Gorbachev and Shevardnadze,[126] he underwent a "Damascus" conversion. From that moment, even Strauß acknowledged that serious changes were taking place in the USSR.

Similarly, relations between Bonn and Moscow improved steadily following the Federal Government's "voluntary" renunciation of the Pershing IA. At his annual meeting with Genscher during the UN General Assembly in New York, Shevardnadze praised the important contribution the Federal Government had made in the final round of negotiations for an INF Treaty: Gorbachev himself had referred to Kohl's declaration and Genscher's contribution to it. If an INF Treaty were to come about, the Soviet Foreign Minister declared, it would not only be due to the negotiating skills of the Americans and Soviets, but also to the responsible political leaders in Bonn.[127] Gorbachev repeated this praise personally in a letter to Kohl.[128] The "Ice Age" of German–Soviet relations had definitively come to an end. In October 1988, Chancellor Kohl paid an official visit to the USSR.[129] Some

124 10-point-statement of CSU-Parteivorstand, in: Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik 32 (1987), pp. 1373–1375; Weisheit am Werk, in: Der Spiegel Nr. 37, September 7, 1987, p. 23.

125 Telegram No. 2448 of Ambassador Hellbeck, Bejing, on conversation between Strauß and Chinese Premier Minister Zhao Ziyang, October 15, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 288. On the Soviet side, the percentage of eliminated nuclear weapons from the global stockpile was estimated at 4 per cent, Eduard Shevardnadze, The Future Belongs to Freedom, London 1991, p. 92; Aleksandr G. Savel'ev and Nikolaj N. Detinov, The Big Five. Arms Control and Decision Making in the Soviet Union, Westport/Connecticut 1995, p. 137.

126 Conversation of Strauß with Shevardnadze, December 28, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 381; Memcon with Gorbachev, December 29, 1987, in: Gorbatschow und die deutsche Frage, Doc. 19; Wilfried Scharnagl (ed.), Strauß in Moskau … und im südlichen Afrika. Bericht, Bilanz, Bewertung, Munich 1988, pp. 21–55.

127 Telegram No. 25 von Richthofen and Holik, New York, September 22, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 268.

128 AAPD 1987, Doc. 280, Fn. 4.

129 For Kohl and Genscher's visit of October 24–27, 1988 AAPD 1988, ed. by Michael Ploetz, Matthias Peter and Jens Jost Hofmann, Docs. 300, 301, 303, 304, 309; Kohl, Erinnerungen 1982–1990, pp. 755–772.

months later, in June 1989, Gorbachev was accorded a euphoric reception in West Germany, which led some observers to talk of "Gorbymania."[130]

In retrospect, it is obvious that 1987 was a turning point in Soviet–West German relations. This was especially true with respect to the personal and political relationship of the two leaders of both countries, who learned the hard way how they could trust each other. Without the success of the INF Treaty, Gorbachev would hardly have had any chance of being accepted in the West as a partner whose *Perestroika* and *Glasnost* really brought a profound change in East–West relations. On the other side, the acceptance of the double zero solution and the unilateral abandoning of the Pershing IAs proved to the Soviet leadership that the Kohl–Genscher government could be a reliable and a serious partner whom Moscow could trust. This was an indispensable basis that helped to open the door for a development that only three years later would wind its way to German unification and the real end of the Cold War.

4. Outlook and Summary

As stipulated in the INF agreement, all Treaty-limited equipment had to be dismantled within three years of the date when the Treaty entered into force: June 1, 1988. Destruction of the Western launchers (but not the nuclear warheads!) took place in the United States; so all the 108 Pershing IIs and the 64 GLCMs that had been deployed in the FRG since 1983 were withdrawn in the following months. On September 26, 1990—exactly a fortnight after the signing of the Two Plus Four Treaty in Moscow, which handed back sovereignty to a Germany that was to be formally reunited on October 3, 1990—the last eight American GLCMs left the Federal Republic.[131] Simultaneously and independently, the West German P IA missiles were also transferred over the Atlantic to be destroyed. This started in April 1990 and was finished by the fall of 1991.[132]

During that time the Federal Republic (like the other four European deployment countries) had to host numerous on-site inspection teams from the USSR and to meet the strict requirements of the detailed inspection regulations.[133]

130 For Gorbachev's visit to Germany, Deutsche Einheit, Docs. 2–4; Gorbatschow und die deutsche Frage, Docs. 33–44; Wirsching, Abschied, p. 562; Hermann Wentker, Gorbatschow in Bonn: Ein historischer Staatsbesuch aus westdeutscher und ostdeutscher Sicht, in: Andreas Kötzing, Francesca Weil, Mike Schmeitzner, and Jan Erik Schulte (eds.), Vergleich als Herausforderung. Festschrift für Günther Heydemann zum 65. Geburtstag, Göttingen 2015, pp. 277–299.

131 Deutsche Außenpolitik 1990/91. Auf dem Weg zu einer Europäischen Friedensordnung. Eine Dokumentation, ed. by Auswärtiges Amt, Bonn 1991, p. 39.

132 Bundeswehr beginnt mit dem Abbau der Pershing-Raketen; Deutsche Pershing- und SS-23-Raketen zerstört, in: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, April 5, 1990 and November 15, 1991.

133 As Shultz announced in NAC on November 25, 1987 within the first three years (the destruction period) there would be 20 on-site inspections per annum, 15 in the next 5

Initially, these obligations could clash with some left-overs of the Allied powers' reservation rights over Germany. The Three Western Powers—France, Britain and the U.S.—were still in charge of controlling German air space, and therefore had to "permit" every Soviet military aircraft that brought the inspection teams to the Frankfurt air base serving as their "entry point." Not surprisingly, this procedure caused trouble when the time between each Soviet announcement of an inspection and the arrival of its inspection team at the nuclear deployment site was so tight. Not very sensitively, the British representative tried to shrug that question off by bluntly (but accurately) saying to his German Ally: "You are not sovereign."[134]

However, this was just a minor concern in comparison with the trouble that Britain and other NATO Allies like the U.S. caused for the *Bundesregierung* during the next two years as they continually pressed for an immediate modernization of short-range nukes. The Germans did not want this: rather, they wanted further disarmament of SNF. Throughout 1988/89 there was fierce argument over the issue in NATO. For the FRG the nuclear controversy was far from over—even after the INF Treaty was signed.[135] This time, however, Germany's national interest ("the shorter the nukes' range, the deadlier for the Germans!") won over Anglo-American pressure and even over the sanctified axiom of Alliance solidarity, which Bonn had hitherto prioritized. Kohl and Genscher jointly pointed to their government's historic record—their imperturbable implementation of the Dual-Track Decision against all opposition, their final agreement to double zero, most recently, their abdication of the P IA. In return, they now demanded understanding for their objections to any new SNF armament. At the NATO summit in May 1989, the controversy was by no means solved. Decisions were postponed to 1992. By then, the revolutions of 1989 and the rush to German unification (within NATO) had changed the international scene completely. On May 3, 1990, President Bush announced that the United States would not pursue the modernization of ground-launched SNF; and NATO endorsed this at the next NPG ministerial meeting.[136] From the German perspective, it was only this decision that ended the controversy over nuclear missiles.

For the Christian-Liberal coalition, the wrangling surrounding the INF Treaty that raged in 1987 was a watershed. Genscher's clever, but populist solo actions and U-turns, along with the public image they created, that the tiny FDP was the

years and 10 in the following 5 years, AAPD 1987, Doc. 340, p. 1737. For more details on verification measures, Telegram No. 5132 of Gesandter Paschke, December 1, 1987, in: ibid., Doc. 349 as well as the Multilateral Basing Country Agreement (MBCA) between the U.S.A., Belgium, Britain, FRG, the Netherlands, and the UK of December 11, 1987, ibid., Fn. 6. See also the essay by Wolfgang Richter in this volume.

134 Memo of AA's legal advisor Hillenberg, December 4, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 354, p. 1802.

135 For the SNF controversy Wirsching, Abschied, pp. 570 f.; Fröhlich, Kanzler, pp. 176–186; Josef Holik, Die Rüstungskontrolle. Rückblick auf eine kurze Ära, Berlin 2008, pp. 61–66.

136 Die Einheit, Doc. 95, Fn. 19 and Doc. 93, Fn. 4.

tail that wagged the dog, left deep scars within the CDU and the CSU. Personally, Chancellor Kohl came out wounded too. The old personal friendship he had had with Genscher was badly harmed, and these two alpha males never again completely trusted one another. The enmity left its marks in significant trifles: from now on, neither politician would inform the other of conversations they had with foreign leaders. It was a sign of poor cooperation and surely not the best way to handle a stringent German foreign policy.

For many political observers, the events of 1987 confirmed the popular verdict that Kohl was a mediocre Chancellor who lacked real leadership skills. That soon proved wrong. However, it is hardly a coincidence that, only two years later, all those in the CDU who had early on favored Genscher's political line and who (like Geißler, Späth, and Blüm) had helped swing the Party round on the double zero and P IA issues, joined in spearheading the internal *fronde* that tried—unsuccessfully—to dethrone Kohl at the Bremen Party Convention in summer 1989.

From an American perspective, it was a mixed blessing that, due to the INF controversy in Bonn, the political impact of Foreign Minister Genscher grew and grew. Though Washington appreciated the effect of Genscher's crusade for double zero (and his influence on giving up the P IA), officials there continued to distrust his wheeler-dealing and the offers he made to Gorbachev—his "Genscherism." In Moscow, however, it was precisely this that unmistakably made Genscher an influential *persona gratissima*.

The Reagan Administration was well aware that its INF policy caused real problems for its staunch ally, Chancellor Kohl. However, coming to terms with the other superpower over nuclear disarmament was more important; and in the end, Washington could not help Kohl with his political dilemma. Nevertheless, the U.S. Administration could rely on the fact that this dyed-in-the-wool Atlanticist and realist would never seriously embark on Gaullist daydreams of a dubious European *fronde* against the superpowers, as did Strauß and Dregger. Washington tried to show Kohl appreciation. In mid-December 1987, Secretary Shultz praised the Chancellor publicly as an important leader who had had a decisive share in implementing NATO's Dual-Track Decision, thus laying a foundation for the developments bringing about the successful INF Treaty.[137] The Administration also pushed within the Alliance to secure German Defense Minister Wörner's appointment as next Secretary General of NATO, when Kohl announced Wörner's candidacy at the same press conference in which he said that the Pershing IA would be scrapped.[138] Last but not least, Washington showed its gratitude in 1989/90 by strongly supporting Kohl's rush to achieve German unification. The Bush Administration backed this historic move against all objections from the Allies and the Eastern powers, and vigorously helped Kohl's government through the process on the international stage.

137 Shultz bestätigt westliche Berlin-Initiative, in: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, December 16,1987, p. 1, also conversation of Kohl with Shultz, December 15, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 371.

138 Letter Genscher to Shultz, November 2, 1987, in: AAPD 1987, Doc. 304 and Doc. 371, Fn. 35.

The Soviet leadership, too, would hardly have agreed to German unification if trust in West Germany had not grown further between 1987 and 1990. The initial rather hesitant and grudging reaction of the Federal Government to the double zero solution was soon forgotten. What counted in the end was Bonn's far-reaching concession when it "voluntarily" gave up its Pershing IA missiles. Thus, this move not only helped the INF Treaty come into being—a major breakthrough in the cause of disarmament—but brought ample rewards to the German people, who for decades had been living in a divided country in the shadow of the Cold War.