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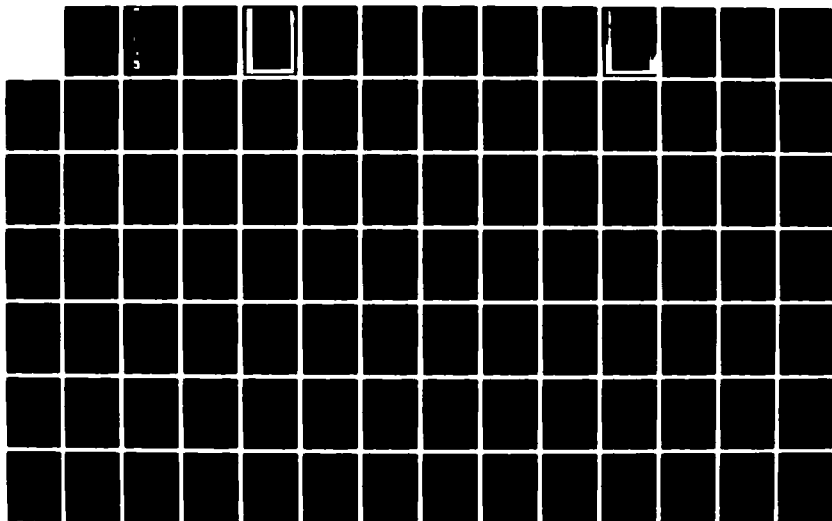
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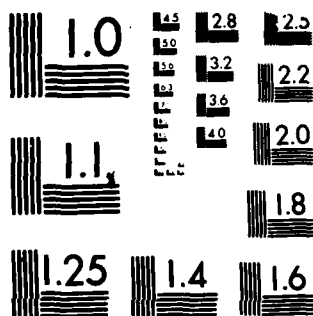
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Stanley M. Kanarowski

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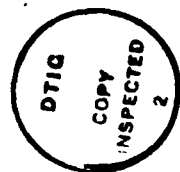
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**THE GERMAN ARMY  
AND  
NATO STRATEGY**

by

Colonel S. M. Kanarowski, USA  
Senior Research Fellow  
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National Security Affairs Monograph Series 82-2  
1982

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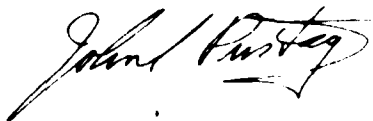


## FOREWORD

An economic giant, West Germany now fields the largest ground component of the NATO Central Europe forces. The German Army's role in NATO strategic planning, therefore, is of keen interest to Western defense analysts, and is the general subject of this monograph by Colonel Stanley M. Kanarowski, US Army.

Colonel Kanarowski reviews the evolution of NATO strategy, using recently declassified materials from the Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Security Council which are now available at the National Archives. As he organizes and sifts through this wealth of material, he focuses on the interaction between the evolution of NATO strategy and the development of the German Army. An appreciation of the German Army contribution, which is the focus of this study, can lead to a better understanding of NATO.

Is Germany on the path to an increased leadership role in NATO? How will planned increases in German Reserve Forces affect NATO strategy? How might German strategic thinking affect the design of future forces? The author explores these and other questions in his study of an important European ally in a crucial US alliance.



**JOHN S. PUSTAY**  
Lieutenant General, USAF  
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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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## Chapter 1. Introduction

In the era after World War II, the NATO alliance, a framework of alliances around the world, provided a fundamental element in the free world efforts to keep peace. From the outset and for a variety of reasons, however, these alliances have not always sufficed, have been circumvented, or have been set aside. Now they are being strained in new directions. Recent developments in NATO exemplify alliance strains. NATO Allies are confronted on the one hand with the threat the enormous modernization of Warsaw Pact forces presents. This modernization challenges former NATO qualitative superiority and, if unanswered, could intimidate the alliance into being too cautious were it faced with major Soviet aggression. Despite this threat, on the other hand, some believe NATO is investing too much in defense against an unlikely threat to central Europe.

In this context, a close examination of a significant European ally, Germany, and mutual US-German interests can be useful. A general discussion can provide some insight into an aspect of these interests—military developments pertaining to NATO, the strategy for defending central Europe, and the German contribution. This monograph concentrates on the development of the German Army, the army's mission and design, and current prospects for change. In addressing these and related issues, this monograph will do the following:

- Review development of the NATO strategy and the motives behind changes;
- Examine in detail the impact of this strategy on one major ally, Germany;
- Discuss the German system and the way it functions;
- Identify the fundamental direction of the new Structure 4 force design.

Why concentrate on German forces? An appreciation of the evolution of the German force contribution and present German Army capabilities can contribute to a better understanding of the alliance. Beyond this study, a number of factors make such an examination timely:

- The increase in German economic and political strength and influence;
- The dominant role of the German Army as the largest ground force component of NATO central European ground forces;
- The potential of Germany to increase its army and reserve forces and take on an even larger role, thus permitting other NATO Allies to reduce their contributions;
- The impact of German Army views toward various proposals to alter the current NATO strategy.

Other factors also motivate this research. A better understanding is needed of the present German conception of strategic requirements, and how these requirements are influencing and will influence developments of the German Army. The discussion that follows will clarify certain misunderstandings about the size and design of the German Army and its reserves, and where the army units are stationed or could be deployed.

The NATO strategy will be summarized primarily from recently declassified military sources, Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) and National Security Council (NSC) papers, and the classified files of various JCS Chairmen, on file at the National Archives. The primary documents are quoted at some length, to save others the burden of detailed research. The discussion of German rearmament decisions draws from recently declassified NATO documents, and extensive materials and work made available by German researchers in the Bundeswehr. The examination of the German Army addresses the total army size, type of units, deployments and strategy, and the role of the reserves. The length of conscription, composition of the officer corps, rate of modernization, and place of the German Army in the democratic state are also covered. The principal sources for these issues are various Bundeswehr studies, regulations, and publications; official White Papers; and interviews with key staff members in the General Staff and at the German Command and Staff College. The overall emphasis is on military strategy issues.

Military professionals of many nations have long studied German ideas about critical strategic and tactical issues. German military leaders have occupied an especially significant role in German modern history, a role harshly criticized by some historians, scholars, and political leaders. Yet genuine respect exists for the German

military acumen. Loss of WW II reduced this respect, particularly among Anglo-Saxon military professionals and to some extent among the Soviets. In the last 10 years, however, much has changed, at least from the US viewpoint. Troubled US military professionals are genuinely interested in alternative solutions to common problems, having been plagued with their own imperfect war in Vietnam and the strong societal pressures that followed. German solutions can provide useful and important ideas on such problems as the draft, active/reserve force balance, and force design.

As will be seen, the German force structure development emphasizes a forward, graduated deterrence defense strategy. The German viewpoint draws on the 1939 Polish campaign, the 1940 attack against the French and British on the Continent, and recent Middle East conflicts. These military actions were extremely violent and destructive, and were followed quickly by peace through negotiations or a truce. The threat of early escalation to nuclear weapons use is integral to the short war idea. Prolonged conventional fighting, which is viewed as potentially destructive to Germany as nuclear war, is not integral to this concept. Obviously the Germans are opposed to a long, conventional, "flexible response" option, sometimes put forth by US strategists.

Real concern that any special bilateral US-German relationship, either constructive or competitive, will be unhealthy for NATO also exists. Special relationships within NATO have created tensions in the past; even the US-United Kingdom special relationship at the end of WW II, extending as it did to nuclear weapons, may have motivated eventual French commitment to national nuclear armament development. Within days after withdrawing from NATO, France detonated her first weapons. Today, from a number of quarters, a larger German role at NATO headquarters is urged at the expense of the British.

The Germans are reluctant to see major abrupt changes in their present role and contributions. Naturally, keeping contributions and responsibilities at today's level—from the German viewpoint—is less expensive. But the Germans also see an equilibrium now among strategic requirements, forces, and policies. Their planned increases in reserves constitute a major and significant increase in their forces; this increase is being accomplished without adding more active forces or creating excessive political fanfare. Accordingly, the Ost-politik initiatives, aimed at reducing East-West tensions, are not be-

ing jeopardized. German initiatives in another direction, toward gaining French assistance, would also be useful. Clearly, the Germans are quietly embarking on a much larger leadership role, one that could be important for the German Army.

## **Chapter 2.**

# **Defense of Central Europe— Evolution of the Strategy**

### **Emergence of the Strategic Issues**

As Europe recovered from World War II, the German role became central to strategic concepts for Western security. Germany lay at the heart of central Europe. Its population was by far the largest of the central and West European nations. At the outset of the postwar period, however, the issues were yet to be clarified. Consensus was slowly reached on the important topics:

- The source and nature of the threat. The enemy had been German militarism and Hitler. Communism was in the background, but there had been a history of close cooperation with the Soviet Union. The Soviet takeover of Poland, Romania, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, and threatened actions in Greece and Iran changed the situation and caused deep concern. Soviet development of an atomic weapon, the victory of Mao Tse-tung in China, and, most decisively, the Korean War—these events further focused the attention of European leaders on a new danger. As the Soviet threat grew, fear of German reemergence, militarism, and influence declined. The Korean War would be the decisive turning point.
- The concept for defense. If the threat was now from the East, how would the defense be conducted? The line dividing the Soviet-German zone in the East from the US and British zones in the West did not follow naturally defensible terrain. The Elbe-Leipzig line in the Soviet zone would have better met that need. The zonal boundaries were selected for political rather than defense reasons, following the Ardennes Offensives, when the US and British negotiators underestimated how far the Western Allies would eventually penetrate. Other defense lines included the Lech-Weser, the Rhine, the Pyrenees, and the Atlantic/Channel/North Sea. A series of other questions affected selection of a defensive line—how many forces would be available, how would the enemy attack be stopped, how would lost terrain be retaken, and how would hostilities be ended?

- The role for nuclear attacks. Following WW II, the United States had the capability of attacking the Soviet Union with atomic weapons. Initially, such attacks would have been more retaliatory than destructive to Soviet Armies capable of overrunning Europe. A strategy that coupled the nuclear capability with the overall defense concept was needed. Under the new Republican administration of 1953, the nuclear strategy would be further developed. The implication that Germany would be a nuclear battlefield if a war were ever fought was strongly to influence German strategic thought. Other related issues involved in the strategic debate concerned who controlled initial use of nuclear weapons, what were the target limitations, and whether the use of nuclear weapons in Europe should be coupled with an overall global US-USSR nuclear war.
- The provision of forces. At the outset, the German potential was not of priority importance, other than to prevent it from coming under Soviet control; if it did for any substantial period of time, reasonable hope for a conventional defense of Western Europe would be lost. This basic viewpoint would gain increasing significance as planners, first from the Western European Union and later from NATO, began their work.

The development of these issues is reviewed next. The focus is on goals, objectives, rationales, priorities, and force requirements. Undoubtedly, these considerations are relevant today, qualified by the changes since the early 1960s and the ascendancy of a Soviet nuclear might. The geography, however, is still the same, and many problems of ground defense are fundamentally unchanged. Additional background information is provided in appendix 1.

#### **Global War and Defense of Europe: Neoisolationism**

A global war concept dominated US planning from the immediate postwar period until early 1951. The concept and plans primarily addressed US forces and were supported by the British in areas of Commonwealth concern. A European contribution was not significant to the concept because little capability existed; Europe was heavily engaged in rebuilding, and its immediate strategic importance was less, for example, than that of the energy sources in the Middle East. Within the global war concept, first priority was assigned to defense of the Mediterranean, Egypt, the Near East, and Iran. By 1948 this situation had changed.



Recognition of the Soviet threat grew slowly and was not seriously considered until 1948.<sup>1</sup> Acknowledgment that the danger of war was not immediate was also made. The Russians were burdened with repairing war damage, dismantling German factories as "war reparations," and consolidating Communist Party control in the East European satellite countries. Analysts judged Russia unwilling to commit additional resources to taking over and occupying more of Europe, risking war with Britain and the United States and possible atomic retaliation—at least not before the Soviets solidified control of Eastern Europe.<sup>2</sup>

The US answer to the threat was straightforward, following the WW II model. At the strategic level, the guiding policy would be to weaken the Soviets and strengthen the Allies through political action. If war occurred, the objective would be to eliminate Soviet domination and to destroy the Communist Party in non-Communist countries.

The initial US war plans were slow to develop. Code named PINZER, HALFMOON, and TROJAN, these plans were limited, consisting of target lists and bombing plans for a strategic air offensive. Attacks were to be directed against Soviet war-making capability, using conventional and atomic means, from bases in the Middle East—principally Cairo. Strong disagreement developed on the effectiveness of the strategic bombing plan. The critics were skeptical of the bomber's ability to penetrate to *deep targets*, and air strikes into rear areas did not appear useful in stopping advancing Soviet armies. The critics would have concentrated air resources on defeating an advancing Red army. Subsequently, the strategic air plans were subjected to close analysis and congressional review. As a result, the strategic bombing plan would become probably the best-thought-out component of the future plan.<sup>3</sup>

The first complete war plan was called OFFTACKLE. The overall goal was "to impose the war objective of the US upon the USSR by destroying the Soviet will and capability to resist, by conducting a strategic offensive in Western Europe and a strategic defense in the Far East." Defensive tasks were as follows (paraphrased):

- Initiate a strategic air offensive as soon as possible, aimed at vital elements of Soviet war-making capability.
- Develop a capability to hold a defensive line no farther west than Rhine, Cairo-Suez-England. Toward this end, a bridgehead

in Europe should be held, or at least a quick return should be accomplished. (Long term disastrous effects of a withdrawal from Europe were underscored.)

- Provide for extraction of US forces for a defense on the line of the Pyrenees, for withdrawal through Western Europe or Southern French ports to the United Kingdom or Northwest Africa, or both, within the plan of the US Commander in Chief, Europe. Forces in Austria would withdraw through Italy.
- Secure England as the first priority. (In this respect, the Soviet attack was considered more likely to move toward Gibraltar, reaching the area in approximately 210 days.)<sup>4</sup>

A four-phase campaign was planned, keyed to available capabilities and the time needed to mobilize. The first phase dealt with the first 3 months. This phase consisted primarily of strategic air offensive and extrication operations. The strategic bombing plan focused on disrupting war-making industry, eliminating government and party control centers, undermining the Soviet desire to continue the war, and destroying the armed forces. Targets were petroleum refineries, aviation fuel production facilities, power plants, military weapon and ship factories, and other war support facilities. The campaign would require atomic bombs and 17,610 tons of conventional bombs in the first 3 months. The estimates were based on an 85-percent probability of complete destruction of key targets listed for atomic attack.<sup>5</sup>

The air operations were expected to hinder the Red army advance. Curtailed petroleum stocks and replacement equipment would reduce the rate of advance and sustainability of the force. Disruption of mobilization and a possible loss of morale would force Soviet reassessment of the strategic situation, although what results were expected was not stated. Units available for the offensive operations were 11 air groups. Use of the Middle East for staging, planned previously in HALFMOON, was dropped—that area was left to the British.<sup>6</sup>

The primary task of the phase 1 ground forces would be withdrawal. Army actions in the second phase—D+3 months to D+12 months—would focus on deploying additional ground forces into the western Mediterranean and North Africa, and making preparations for an eventual return to Europe. The defense of the United Kingdom (UK) would be stabilized. Through mobilization, the United States

would increase its forces by nine divisions, the UK by two and one-third, and the remaining Commonwealth by one to two divisions. Phase 3 (D+12 to D+24 months) would see US mobilization under way at a complete war rate. Conditions for return to Western Europe would be created and the return initiated. A total of 36 US divisions were planned for the Western Europe counteroffensive, initially. The final stage—D+24 months and thereafter—would involve continued operations to end the war.<sup>7</sup>

The US plan was significant in a variety of ways. It was a repeat of the WW II campaign plan, implementing a new US basic strategy (NSC 20) and new US objectives (NSC 20, NSC 68). The first planned goals were modest, and based on the existing forces. Initial NATO defense plans would be different; rather than campaign plans, the NATO documents would be the program rationale for rearming France, the Benelux, and eventually Germany. The effect of this difference between actual plans versus programs became starkly clear in 1949. When the British military staffs were briefed on the US OFFTACKLE plan in August 1949, they were astonished. Their own planning activity in the Western European Union had accustomed many senior British officials to treating "future programmed" forces as though such forces already existed.<sup>8</sup> OFFTACKLE remained the basic US plan until early 1951, 6 months after the attack in Korea.<sup>9</sup> US realism was rooted in the conservation of the experienced WW II commanders then involved in directing US defense policy.

The OFFTACKLE plan also provides an interesting assessment of worldwide strategic priorities. Explicit was the early need to secure the Middle East oil sources. In joint US-UK planning, this priority task was to be undertaken by the British, in their case, prior to commitment of additional forces in Western Europe. The Western European Union and early NATO strategy and planning would focus more specifically on central Europe first, then the flanks north and south as additional nations joined. NATO politics would come into play as each nation brought forth its own concerns. Significant for the Dutch, Danes, and Germans, and presupposed, would be a linkage between their contributions and "forward defense."

The need had been recognized since 1947-48 for a European organization to plan the defense of central Europe and to motivate the nations of Western Europe to build defense units. As expressed by General Omar N. Bradley, speaking for the JCS in July 1949, if Western Europe was to be defended, the Europeans should do it:

"The man in the best position, and with the capability, should do the job for which he is best suited."<sup>10</sup>

#### **European Defense—First Efforts and the Western European Union—Toward a Defense on the Rhine**

The European organization to plan for a defense of central Europe was the Western European Union (WEU). It was founded in Brussels on 17 March 1948, as a regional defense organization for the defense of Western Europe. The charter members were France, Great Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg. The self-defense nature of the organization complied with Article 51 of the UN charter.

The WEU defense policy, decided by mid-July 1948, was to deter Soviet expansion and to convince Russia that war would not succeed. If the policy failed, the strategic concept envisaged was an immediate air offensive, a "ground offensive in Germany as far to the east as possible," air defense of the countries of the Western Union, a defense of the Middle East and North Africa, operations to control sea communications, and, finally, an offensive on land as early as possible. By early October, under Field Marshal Bernard L. Montgomery's leadership, a staff had been created and preparation of war plans was under way. A forward headquarters was established on the Continent and a rear headquarters in London. Field Marshal Montgomery and General Lucius D. Clay had established coordination procedures between the WEU forces and the US occupation forces in Europe by early November 1948.<sup>11</sup>

The British viewpoint dominated WEU planning. The British believed a sea blockade would not have a serious effect. They foresaw little chance for a successful land defense campaign, initially, although fighting on land would be necessary. An air offensive offered the best prospects, but it would be complicated by the wide dispersion of targets. The overall objective would be to defend the metropolitan areas of Western Europe and those overseas areas that had economic or military significance. Priority had to be placed on Middle East oil in case of a longer war. Sea lanes would require control. Since US land forces would require considerable time to mobilize, selection of initial defense positions would be important. Defense planning would normally require the enemy to be engaged and held as far forward (east) as possible. But in this case, if the Soviets were engaged farther west, when their supply line was extended (a rever-

sal of the WW II German-Russian campaign), they would be more vulnerable to strategic bombing.<sup>12</sup> The final WEU defense concept was the following: (1) hold the enemy in Europe as far east as possible; (2) conduct an air defense of the WEU, primarily the metropolitan areas; (3) defend the Middle East and North Africa (representing French and British interests and oil); and (4) secure sea communication lines, particularly in the Mediterranean. This concept also entailed an immediate US-UK air offensive, employing "weapons that will be most decisive in bringing the Russian war effort to a standstill."<sup>13</sup>

The tasks and force requirements for this concept were distributed among the WEU member countries. France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg would concentrate on land and supporting air forces for early stages of the European land campaign. France also assumed and was assigned responsibility for air defense of North Africa and the central and western Mediterranean. Sea communication in the southern North Sea was assigned to Holland. The UK would concentrate on air defense and defense of sea lanes and of the Middle East in conjunction with the United States, and would contribute to the European land campaign in cooperation with all Allies.<sup>14</sup>

Selection of an initial defense line in late 1948 presented difficulties. Montgomery's view was that the best available *natural* defense line would be from the North Sea, along the Yessel River in Holland, along the Rhine, the Swiss-French border, and along the Italian-French border, to the Mediterranean. This line was criticized by the Dutch because it sacrificed too much of Holland. It was criticized by the French General de Lattre de Tassigny for strategic and tactical reasons. Between defending Europe on the English Channel, on the Rhine, or along the edge of the Iron Curtain, the French preferred the last-named—on the Elbe River and the East-West German boundary. The French chief believed the line should be as far east as possible. "The fight should be on the Elbe, if necessary the Rhine, but at all costs there must not be another Dunkirk and another occupation." All continental Europeans agreed. The plan was criticized by the US senior military leaders because the capacity of the WEU Allies to achieve needed forces to hold such a line within 4-5 years was considered unlikely. On the other hand, the WEU Allies appreciated "that the British Chief of Staff must advocate and seek to achieve the capability of successfully conducting the defense of the Rhine" for political reasons, that is, to offset defeatism.<sup>15</sup>

The forces needed for the Rhine defense far exceeded what was available. The initial Montgomery estimate was 61 divisions—50 mechanized infantry, 9 armor, 2 airborne—or about two-thirds of what General Dwight D. Eisenhower had needed. At the founding of NATO in the spring of 1949, the requirement had been altered—34 divisions on M-day, an additional 22 by M+1 month (total 56), and another 44-69, for a total of 100-125 divisions, by M+12 months. Only about 10 division equivalents were immediately available—950 tanks against 5,000. The French were attempting to build 12-18 divisions, but equipment for the first 9 divisions would not be delivered until after the US Military Assistance Program (MAP) was approved in 1949. The United States was not eager to accelerate MAP deliveries because of concern about what would happen to the equipment if the Russians invaded before the defense was ready.<sup>16</sup>

Were the force requirements raised deliberately by British planners to stimulate French acceptance of the need for German force contribution? Field Marshal Montgomery had stated that he saw German participation as essential for the support of the German populace, for the use of German terrain, and for a military contribution—otherwise, a defense on the Continent would be impossible. The French alternative that might reduce the force needs was examined. Perhaps the Rhine defense could be lightly organized and use new techniques—"by organizing small units to meet threats as they occurred . . . or small units, lightly equipped and self supporting, along with reconnaissance and close air support, to obtain intelligence and engage" the Red army along the East German border. This proposal was made directly to the US Secretary of Defense by the Premier of France—along with supporting rationale. Montgomery did not agree with the forward tactics. He did not want to waste limited forces when they would be badly needed for the Rhine defense. These forces would also lack such support as ammunition and maintenance, needed to be effective. An evaluation was eventually conducted; the Field Marshal prevailed.<sup>17</sup>

The official US public posture was to support the WEU efforts. However, the US longer-range policy goal was to seek, through diplomatic channels, support for a broader, collective defense agreement—more along the lines of the eventual NATO—which included, for example, Italy, Germany, Austria, and Spain.<sup>18</sup>

By November 1948, the Allies had progressed considerably toward a broader, collective defense arrangement. The list of potential

member countries included the entire North Atlantic area, the United States and Canada included. Denmark, Norway, Iceland, Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Spain, and West Germany—"the relationship of Spain and West Germany to such an arrangement must eventually be determined but it would be premature to attempt to determine the relationship of the latter two areas at [that] time"—these countries made up the US scope.<sup>19</sup> The US policy goal was achieved by the following year.

The North Atlantic Treaty became effective in the summer of 1949. The Western European Union was not disbanded, but it delegated most of its responsibilities to carry out defense plans to NATO, a point of importance that would complicate development of the West German armament program. The NATO planning groups, primarily the Western Europe Planning Group (with the participation of the United States, Canada, Denmark, and Italy), took over the WEU defense planning group's work:

On 24 August 1949, the North Atlantic Treaty entered into effect with the US government, the governments of the Western Union, and certain other countries as full participants. The "Western Union" (the Brussels treaty), naturally continues in effect and full use will be made of its progress in coordinating the military forces and resources of its members, and as much of its existing machinery as possible." At the same time, US relations with members of the NATO must, as from the date of its entry into force, be considered within the framework of the treaty (NSC 57, quoted/paraphrased).<sup>20</sup>

#### **From the Western European Union to the First NATO Strategy: On the Rhine**

The military planning of the WEU dominated early NATO thinking. Based on the effort and the leadership of Field Marshal Montgomery, the first NATO midterm defense plan was quickly completed without major controversy. The goal was to defend as far forward as possible. The concept of holding back at the Rhine was accepted for initial planning only, for a war beginning after 5 years (January 1954) of NATO preparation. In addition, a defensible Scandinavian bastion and as much of Italy as possible would be held. Use of nuclear weapons was included—but this had already been assumed by Montgomery. The plan (MC 14 1) involved the following phases:

Phase I — From D-day to the stabilization of the initial Soviet offensive, to include initiation of the Allied air offensive.

Phase II — From stabilization of the initial Soviet offensive to initiation of Allied major offensive operations.

Phase III — From initiation of Allied major offensive operations to capitulation of the Soviets.

Phase IV — From capitulation of the Soviets to achievement of Allied war objectives.<sup>21</sup>

Only the first phase of the concept was developed in detail. Following the Montgomery plan, a defense along the Yessel-Rhine line in central Europe was envisioned. To the south, the line would go through the Austrian-Italian Alps to the Isonzo in southern Europe; to the north, the line would encompass the Kiel Canal and northern Norway if possible. Control of coastal areas, islands, and sea and air lanes was also planned. The strategic air offensive, which by previous US-UK agreement had been made a unilateral US responsibility, was not detailed in the plan.<sup>22</sup>

The plan required 90 divisions for phase I—54 for Western Europe (the Montgomery division requirement was 61), 21 for southeastern Europe, 14 for northeastern Europe, and 1 for the North Atlantic area. Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Gen. Bradley believed that force levels were highly unrealistic: "Every instance in which the validity of these requirements is either expressed or implied or in which they are used to represent a target or a goal will increase the difficulty of securing adequate downward revision, which appears necessary in view of financial and economic realities." That such reductions would sacrifice some security was recognized. The constructive answer to the shortfalls would be a quick, efficient military assistance program.<sup>23</sup> (See table 2-1.)

**TABLE 2-1. DEFENSE OF CENTRAL EUROPE  
GROUND FORCE REQUESTS: CENTRAL EUROPE 1948**

<i>Planning</i>	<i>Requirements</i>
Western European Defense Plan (January 1949)	61 Divisions
NATO 14/1 (1951)	53 Divisions
<i>Actual Forces</i>	<i>Available</i>
End WW II, Western Front	91 Divisions
Western Europe, 1948 end	10½ Divisions



As a result of the lack of European divisions, the US plan called for sending ground reinforcements to northwest Africa, pending developments in Europe. The Europeans viewed the US plan as too pessimistic, arguing that the initial commitment of US forces should be in the UK or France. As a compromise, a series of successive defense lines was developed, beginning on the Rhine, then Brest, then Bordeaux, then the Pyrenees, and finally northwest Africa. For the US planners, these lines would be phases in the extrication. The United States hoped that the Allies might examine their time requirements, revise goals downward, and relate the goals to the terrain. US skepticism about the effectiveness of the ground defense was so deep that even proposals to place a US commander at the head were resisted. The JCS view was, "We do not want an American commander too closely associated with the initial operations which, on an overall basis, may not be too successful."<sup>24</sup>

Conflicts also developed over the priorities for air assets. The USAF goal was to "insure the ability to carry out strategic bombing promptly by all means possible with all types of weapons without exception." The Air Force believed the strategic air offensive must have highest priority because such an offensive held the most promise of decisive, far-reaching results. Accordingly, the capability of the Strategic Air Command to execute the air offensive must not be diminished or dissipated by other tasks, except by US decision. In contrast to this view, others saw a need for earlier close support that might reduce force needs. As expressed by General Bradley:

The greatest possible early destruction of Soviet stock-piles in the forward areas, together with the maximum interference of Soviet capabilities for reinforcement and resupply ... [could] materially increase the time required for Soviet offensive operations ... and reduce the size forces which they can support.<sup>25</sup>

Perhaps more air support would reduce the force requirements and make the defense more feasible.

The Korean War brought a radical change. The United States would support development of NATO as a full-fledged military alliance, and provide a commander and forces. Defense would be a combined undertaking. Since Western Europe alone could not raise the needed forces, the United States would lead

all nations in a concerted effort to increase available forces, by augmenting its force as soon as practicable. The JCS wanted four infantry and one and one-half armor divisions, plus a reinforcement after hostilities of a three-division corps. Efforts would be made to accomplish the deployment quickly. From the alliance viewpoint, gaining West German support and force contribution were critical. This important decision was also made. The plan for building German divisions had already been made. The problem now lay in carrying out the plans.<sup>26</sup>

## Chapter 2. Endnotes

1. Archives: NSC Group. NSC 7, 30 March 1948. "The Position of the United States with Respect to Soviet-directed World Communism."\*
2. Archives: NSC Group. NSC 20; Department of State; "Factors Affecting the Nature of the US Defense Arrangements in the Light of Soviet Policies," 25 August 1948.
3. Archives: JCS; *The History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Vol II, 1947-1949*, Historical Division, JCS, Kenneth W. Condit, ed. The earliest plans (HALFMOON and PINZER) provided for operations to secure bases for the air operation against the USSR, and regaining control of Middle East oil for use during later phases of the war. Defense of Western Europe is not envisioned initially. Air operations would begin by D+15 from the UK, Cairo, and Okinawa. By D+12 months, sufficient forces could be reconstituted to reopen the Mideast Theater; pp. 288-292. Archives: 218, JCS, CCS 381 USSR, sec. 41. Admiral Leahy questioned whether the decision to use nuclear weapons would be made at all. Sec. Def. Forrestal also expressed concern. "I do not believe that air power alone can win the war." The Harmon Report indicated 30-40 percent of Soviet industrial capacity could be destroyed. However, the attacks would not reduce the Red army advance. Sustainability of the Soviet Army would be limited, particularly because of lack of petroleum. The Soviet Union could be expected to retaliate. Other issues were more technical—could the aircraft penetrate the air defense? Would the 70 selected targets produce the damage? Could the Navy do better? Was the B-36 effective?—all of which led to the B-36 hearings, 81st Congress. The hearings had far-reaching effects—Chief of Naval Operations Denfield was relieved, the Commandant Marine Corps

\* NOTE: Through an agreement with the National Security Council, copies of NSC documents have been placed on file at the Modern Military Branch Division, National Archives.

was added to the JCS, and the chairman position would rotate every 2 years. Ibid., pp. 330-345.

4. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 381 USSR, sec. 41, pp. 353-382.

5. Archives: JCS; *The History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, JCS and National Policy, Vol. II, 1947-1949*. Historical Division, JCS, Kenneth W. Condit, ed., p. 299.

6. Ibid., p. 301. Also Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 381 USSR, sec. 41, pp. 353-362.

7. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 381 USSR, sec. 41, p. 15.

8. Allied Military Strategic Planning for Defense of Western Europe, Lt. Col. Christian Greiner, German Military History Agency, unedited draft, p. 185. For discussion of European reaction to visit of JCS: *New York Times*, 30 July 1949, p. 1. The trip had major significance for the United States in highlighting concern and involvement in defense of Europe and providing insights and support needed for congressional hearings on the proposed Military Assistance Programs. The European press used the visit to create an impression that the United States would defend Europe on the Continent rather than returning. *Le Monde*, 3 Aug. 1949; Archives, RG 218, CCS 092 Western Europe, sec. 25, 26. For example, the French noted deprecatingly "that the possibility of equipping Germans with light arms was being unofficially considered ... rebirth of the German danger exactly 35 years after the 2 Aug. 1914 attack."

9. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 381 USSR, sec. 41, p. 1.

10. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092 Western Europe, sec. 25. Message War 92193.

11. Archives: NSC Group, NSC 9/6, JCS Memo to the Sec. Def. Sub: Developments with Respect to the Western Union, 24 Nov. 1948.

12. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092 Western Europe, sec. 5. DELWU 15.

13. Ibid.

14. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092 Western Europe, sec. 8. Message PM 794, 10 Oct. 1948.

15. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092 Western Europe, sec. 26. Letter from DA to JCS, dated 23 Aug. 1949.

16. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092 Western Europe, sec. 20. Analysis of MC 49/28, OSD, 4 Apr. 1949. Also 22 Jan. 1949 transcript, M. Muriller, in sec. 10. PM 958, 11 Oct. 1949, for MAP priorities. Actual forces available are given in sec. 17. The US Occupation Forces were included (one and one-third division equivalent) and assigned a reserve mission. The JCS objected on the grounds that the United States would serve only within the US Sector.

17. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092 Western Europe, sec. 24, OSD 6 July 1949. The evaluation of the alternatives is in sec. 44, Msg., 13 Apr. 1950. Montgomery criticized the proposed French division—the units would be destroyed by Soviet air superiority, the French weapons might be ineffective at longer ranges and without decisive engagement, and the remaining elements would not have needed staying power on the frontline when they return. He felt that overwhelming Soviet air and ground power would force withdrawal to the Rhine in 3–4 days. Greater confidence would be inspired by improved standard units. "The mobile division presents an advance towards highly flexible, hard-hitting land forces that Western Europe needs to counter the Russian masses. Mobility and strike power are the basic characteristics. Air power is required, planned and provided in advance." (Interestingly, this conception of mobile strike forces was also guiding the conception of what Germany would need—as expressed in the Himmeroder Denkschrift in Aug.–Oct. 1950 and discussed in Chapter 3.)

18. Archives: NSC Group. NSC 9, Position of the United States with Respect to Support for Western Union and Other Related Countries, 13 April 1948.

19. Ibid., NSC 9/5, 8 Nov. 1948.

20. Ibid., NSC 57, 13 Sept. 1949.

21. Archives: *JCS History 1947–49*, p. 399 ff. Also RG 28, JCS, CCS 092 Western Europe, sec. 34, JCS letter, 10 Nov. 1949.

22. Ibid.

23. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092 Western Europe, sec. 45. Memo, Chief of Staff, Army, 1 May 1950. Military assistance is discussed in JSPC 986/130, 25 May 1950 (sec. 47).

24. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092 Western Europe, sec. 43, JCS 2073/7-8, 21 Mar. 1950, sec. 41, JCS letter to Sec. Def. 17 Feb. 1950, JCS 2073/4, "OFFTACKLE would be the US concept for use in developing the NATO plan."

25. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092 Western Europe, sec. 43, JCS 2073/8, 21 March 1950; sec. 50, JCS 2073/41, 12 July 1950. Also sec. 51, Gen. Bradley memo to Sec. Def., 17 July 1950.

26. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092 Western Europe, sec. 55, JCS 2073/61, 1 Sept. 1950.

## **Chapter 3.**

### **The Basic Decisions on German Rearmament**

#### **Background**

A spectrum of issues on German rearmament emerged at the same time that the strategic debate developed. Four approaches addressed the main issues:

- Germany could contribute manpower, funds, and certain equipment to a European army;
- Germany could provide national units to NATO, on a basis equal to other member nations;
- Germany could create a border defense force capable of securing the border without NATO help if necessary;
- Germany could build a new army that could be used to defend independent of NATO help.

The departure point was the French initiative, which favored the first approach. Ultimately, the second would be followed. The other two, explained later, also had adherents and retain some interest even today.

#### **The Korean War: Turning Point**

Until the outbreak of the Korean War, a decision on German force design was not considered urgent.<sup>1</sup> The US view, even as late as May 1950, was that necessary political conditions for German rearmament did not exist. A summary of this perspective, shared at the highest level of the Government, is provided by NSC 71/1. Key judgments are as follows:

The majority of Germans, and particularly the democratic elements, do not today desire to see Germany have armed forces;

Germany already is presently contributing 22 percent of her budget for occupation costs and cannot be expected to contribute much more;

"More time is needed for German political development and for anchoring Germany irrevocably in the West by ties of economic and political self-interest." The OEEC and the Schuman proposal for pooling heavy industry in Europe were viewed as means of firmly cementing Germany to the West;

"It would not add true strength to the West to create a strong military force in Germany whose loyal support in the long run could not yet be counted on with reasonable certainty." This caution was qualified with the judgment that absolutely no short range danger of Germany turning away from the West existed;

"The next year to 18 months would be critical."<sup>2</sup> British and French foreign policy were similarly oriented.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand these judgments were not fully acceptable to military planners. From the military viewpoint as expressed by the Chairman, JCS, "the early rearming of Western Germany was of fundamental importance, ... the disarmament policy with respect to West Germany should be changed ... and Germans should, as soon as feasible, be given real and substantial opportunity to participate ... in NATO."<sup>4</sup>

The Korean War created the conditions for rearmament. Parallels between the Korean and German situations were developed in the German media, stimulating a German public desire for some type of defense arrangements with NATO. Konrad Adenauer's policy of alignment with the West began to make good sense. The impact was equally dramatic for Americans. The extended efforts to reshape US policy toward containing USSR expansion, represented in the historic NSC 68 discussions in April 1950, had resulted in almost no changes to the defense budget or forces. For many in the US Department of Defense (DOD), that document was largely a State Department project that did not directly affect defense programs. After June 1950 the changes began. Abrupt major increases for all DOD programs were proposed and approved—increases well beyond the needs for Korea. The Korean War became a catalyst or turning point in relations with the Soviet Union. For the Russians, the Korean War was a strategic and political miscalculation of the highest order.<sup>5</sup> One major byproduct, the US troop buildup in Europe, would have major significance for German rearmament. Specifically, the large scale deployment of US forces to Europe provided tangible evidence to the Soviets that they could not expect to interfere unopposed into German affairs if Germany chose to rearm.<sup>6</sup>

## **A European Defense Organization**

For French Premier Pleven, the preferred course would be for Germany to contribute manpower, funds, and equipment to a European Defense Community (EDC). This course would have provided a political solution at home and the hope for a stronger European defense. Despite the fact of Korea, the French were still apprehensive about German militarism—a stereotype concern shared equally by many Americans and others. Using the then-current international European enterprises as an example, economist Jean Monnet and the French Defense Ministry developed a proposal for the European army. Premier Pleven presented the plan in the fall of 1950.

A European Defense Organization, subordinate to a European Defense Community, was the proposed concept. This "army" would be manned and funded by Europeans and commanded by the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR). Individual national army components—such as French, Belgian, or German—would have no identity above regimental level. The British were excluded. Funds would be contributed by each country and managed by a European defense community agency. Although details of the supra-European organization to which this defense agency would report were not developed, a political organization was considered. The Germans would have no national army or national general staff. Initial German participation at highest command levels was expected to be limited. For the French, the concept implied a much increased voice on defense issues that were previously the exclusive purview of the US-UK WW II team.<sup>7</sup>

The French plan was acceptable to the Germans only if it was modified to accord the Federal Republic equal rights with France. In the words of Chancellor Adenauer during the Bundestag debate:

If the request (for German participation in the defense of Western Europe) is made ... then the Federal Republic must be ready to make an appropriate contribution ... the prerequisite of such a contribution is the complete equality of the rights of Germany with other Powers taking part; and, furthermore, the strength of the defense front must be adequate to render any Russian aggression impossible.<sup>8</sup>

The initial concept was also unacceptable to the British, French, US, German, and other military planners. For most, the corps (approximately 60,000 troops) was the smallest feasible national com-

ponent. Agreement that division-size units would be acceptable was eventually reached in NATO headquarters. For some French, even the division was too large. To reduce opposition, public discussion focused on building regiments, a necessary interim step on the way toward divisions. The language of the North Atlantic Treaty (NAT) agreement was specific:

... the limiting size should be the smallest national formation in which the fighting arms, supporting arms and administrative services are welded into a single fighting formation capable of fighting a sustained major action with its own resources. It should be able to fight independently. ... In the case of land forces, the division is the smallest national formation which fully satisfies these requirements.<sup>9</sup>

The military planners were also concerned that development of German units should be tightly controlled. They agreed that "Germany should not be allowed to contribute complete heavy armour formations, ... [that] the number of German land formations should at no time exceed one-fifth of the total number of like Allied land formations, allocated to and earmarked for SHAPE [Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers Europe], ... [and continued stationing] of allied defensive forces on German soil."<sup>10</sup> This control was needed as an essential safeguard.

The NAT Council compromised to avoid conflict with the French and to assist continued staff work toward creating German units. The French were to proceed, with all haste, to gain agreement for and develop the European Defense Community idea. At the same time, the High Commissioners were authorized to open direct discussions with Chancellor Adenauer's government on technical issues involved in creating a German army. Ten days later, on 2 December 1950, preparations of these details began with the Chancellor and his designated representatives, Theodor Blank, General Heusinger, General Speidel, and Colonel Kielmansegg.<sup>11</sup>

The French Foreign Ministry devoted full efforts to the Pleven plan, which was a solution to political difficulties with German rearmament. Conferences were immediately scheduled and work begun to develop the sketchy initial concept. In February, July, September, and November 1951, the Foreign Ministry conferences made important progress. By that December, agreement had been reached on essentials. The European Defense Community Treaty, signed in May 1952, was the first step. This treaty is important because it estab-



lished limits for the total German defense-force strength and on component army, air, and naval units. The total peacetime force strength would be limited to about 500,000 men. The army would be limited to 12 division-size units in the active force. These limits are still in effect. Certain changes, for example, in the size of ships, have been negotiated since that time. German staffs accept that the limits on the size of the army will remain in effect.<sup>12</sup>

The May EDC Treaty was the high point for the Plevan plan concept. France was faced with requirements for forces in Indochina and North Africa; the strain for the French of meeting such requirements and also contributing to a European army arose as an issue. The French would require two armies, an impractical situation. By early 1952 the Gaullists had decided that a German national army was preferable to the loss of control of their military, a condition implied in the EDC. Originally, the French proposal had not included Britain. By mid-1952, however, the French were concerned about the dynamism of the Germans. They saw advantages to Great Britain's joining the European army to further offset the Germans. French uncertainty was reflected in Foreign Minister Schuman's decision to delay, from May 1952 until January 1953, presenting the signed EDC Treaty to Parliament for approval.<sup>13</sup>

For the United States, obtaining Germany as a Western ally was a priority. Admiral Arthur W. Radford even contemplated German rearmament over the objections of the French.

A German contribution is essential to the defense of Europe and the Free World. Therefore, the United States should seek such a German contribution, preferably with the concurrence of the French and British, but if this cannot be obtained, we should be willing to go as far as making a bilateral agreement with the Germans in order to get their participation and to keep them on the side of the Free World. A really sound defense of Europe depends on an adequate contribution from both Germany and France as well as the smaller nations. Failure to obtain French cooperation ... will require a basic change in NATO commitments and structure, but this should not deter the United States from working out the best possible arrangement ... in ... the interests of a Free Europe.<sup>14</sup>

This view was an extreme judgment for the times. Army Chief of Staff General Matthew Ridgway resisted the Joint Staff direction.

It can be concluded that a large, mobilized German force coupled with the US, British, and other forces would provide a

deterrent to Soviet aggression in the Cold War. However, in the event of aggression, no feasible strategy for defense of Western Europe north of the Alps and Pyrenees can be devised. Forces disposed in Germany but denied the use of French territory would be in an untenable position. The available LOC (supply routes) are parallel to the front and vulnerable to the enemy. These routes must run ... within easy fighter-bomber range of the enemy or over the Alps through easily-blocked defiles. Bases for air support are limited and must be located at a great distance from the battlefield. There is no depth of position nor is there room available for maneuver. The terrain in the Low Countries has not proven well suited to defense in the past.

Ridgeway was especially pessimistic in his conclusion.

Any defensive concept which did not include France would expose practically all of Western Europe to virtually unopposed occupation by Soviet forces so small in size as to offer unremunerative atomic targets. Subsequent efforts to destroy Soviet ability to capitalize on the industrial potential of Western Europe would mean the destruction of major cities ... of our allies. In the wake of the destruction, it is extremely doubtful the people of Western Europe would ... assist ... to regain Western Europe.<sup>15</sup>

The Army strategists' concerns were prophetic. The French were facing difficult challenges in Indochina and North Africa. As a result, they had withdrawn most of their NATO M-day forces, reducing the overall NATO capability by 30 percent. The alliances could have recognized the French activities outside NATO as contributing to NATO interests, and assisted the French. The US took this approach in the South Vietnam War and in numerous Middle East initiatives. The alliance could also have concentrated more narrowly on its defense plans and requirements, and pressured the French to meet NATO commitments. The US Army Chief of Staff preferred the first of these choices. Overall US policy was not clear; SACEUR applied pressure on the French to provide substitute forces, and within the US the use by the French of MAP-provided equipment outside Europe was criticized.<sup>16</sup>

By August 1954, a major and continuing debate politicized the issues. The Government changed, Pierre Mendes-France was Premier, and passions were against Monnet and the united Europe his ideas symbolized. In the end, a new French Government rejected the earlier French proposal.

## **A German Concept**

At the outset the Germans were not in a position to develop and debate their own alternatives openly. The most educated and experienced viewpoints, those of the best military professional leaders, were held in silence. The prevailing mode was demilitarization of Germany. The Nuremberg trials were under way. Either reunification of East and West Germany or neutralization remained possibilities. The driving force for alinement of Germany came from Chancellor Adenauer and the Christian Democratic leadership.<sup>17</sup>

Chancellor Adenauer needed the best thinking and advice available within Germany. To this end, a secret conference was convened, with the acknowledgment of the Allies but unpublicized among the German populace. The results of this conference, reflected in the report entitled the "Himmeroder Denkschrift," developed and completed during the period August-October 1950, present an interesting viewpoint on strategy, force levels, and the German contribution.

Certain immediate conditions were set for German alinement with the West and direct contribution to defense. First, Germany would have to be placed on equal footing with the other Allies. This condition would have required fundamental changes in the occupation force relationship. Second, the German area east of the Rhine was not to be considered as a delay area but, rather, Germany was also to be defended. Third, differentiation was to be made between the police and the army, to prevent memories of the "Black Reichswehr" used by the German Republic to mobilize quickly. Other considerations included specific means to avoid "blind military obedience," a requirement of the Reichswehr under Hitler.<sup>18</sup>

The German experts wanted a mobile defense strategy. They saw a threat in two phases—an attack temporarily stopping at the Rhine and an attack to the Atlantic. To combat this threat, the better defense line would run along the Elbe, then extend southward to Leipzig. Unfortunately, most of this line lay in East Germany. The barriers presented by the marsh lands in northern Germany and the Harz Mountains and Thuringer Wald in the south were recognized as major obstacles. Accordingly, the German concept would be to fight a two-stage defense. The first phase would be an offensive defense on the border between East and West Germany—to disorganize, disorient, and destroy an attack. This phase would require 12 to 18

German armored divisions. The second phase would be a concerted defense in front of the Rhine, which would be necessary only if the first phase failed. The second phase would initially call for 30 deployed divisions. The force for this second phase would primarily come from the NATO nations.

German requirements for the defense along the East-West border would shape the size of the army needed and its deployment. For active units, 12 armored divisions and 6 corps headquarters were envisioned. Provision could exist for expanding to 18 divisions if needed. The units would be concentrated in counterattack assemblages—one south of Fulda, the other to the north, in Schleswig-Holstein. German tactical air forces would be part of the corps structure.<sup>19</sup>

The overall size of the force during peacetime would be about 500,000 men. This figure approximated 1 percent of the expected German population. The 1-percent manpower allocation was historically and traditionally credible as a reasonable allocation for defense.<sup>20</sup>

Careful consideration was also given to avoiding an army "state within the state," the historic characterization of the Reichswehr. Soldiers would be drafted from throughout the country, serve a specified period, and be released into reserves. Civil laws would apply, except in purely military situations. The requirement to eliminate what the Allies considered "traditional militarism" was an important task in the design of future German civil-military relations.

The Himmeroder Denkschrift took on the nature of a Magna Carta for the future Bundeswehr. To a large degree, this report provided the context, unifying concept, and basis for much that followed during 1951-54 within Section Blank, the forerunner of the German defense ministry. The report also shaped Adenauer's thinking on the military aspects of German rearmament. When talking about the size of the German Army, the Chancellor saw the German contribution as 12 divisions. When discussing equipment needs with the United States, he expressed the initial German requirements for all armor divisions. When discussing the two-phase defense concept, or the Germans alone on the East-West border, Adenauer followed a different approach.<sup>21</sup>

#### **Adenauer and the German Security Policy**

The viewpoint that Germany's interests were best served by close alliance with the West was the dominant influence and decid-

ing factor in developing the rearmament policy. In comparing the alternatives of neutrality or alliance with the Socialist countries and Russia, the West German leadership considered a divided Germany a necessary evil. This fact was accepted by Adenauer, and the judgment stemmed from a realistic appraisal of the two possibilities. The Chancellor saw no likelihood that the Russians would permit Germany to become strong. The Russians stated repeatedly that emergence of an independent, reunited Germany aligned with NATO would be the most serious threat to stability in Europe.<sup>22</sup>

Close alliance with the West had specific strategic implications. On the one hand, for Germany to have a responsible role, the relationship would have to be between equals. As the debate over the French EDC proposal lengthened, this judgment gained support in France. Long-range stability required that relations between Western European alliance nations be based on equality. On the other hand, to ease concern about "German dynamism," the Germans would need to act as followers on many issues and as partners on most, and control their demands (or requests) for major changes in the NATO strategy. Accordingly, Germany did not press its wish to move the defense line to the East-West border.<sup>23</sup>

Adenauer's opposition in the Social Democratic Party (SPD) took strong issue with his "too eager" approach to the West. They wanted compensatory NATO decisions favoring German desires. One argument was that defense on the Elbe should be a *quid pro quo* for a German defense contribution. This debate was more concerned with politics than strategy. The view that insufficient forces existed for even a Rhine defense was accepted, and to seek a forward defense that would be far more demanding in strength and units was unrealistic. This issue would wait until the German Army had been built and the forward defense was feasible. Many, however, gave assurances that the long-range future NATO objective would be to defend as far east of the Rhine as possible.<sup>24</sup> Argument about future possibilities could wait.

### **The Soviet Response: The Neutral Buffer State**

By late 1951, French political resistance to German rearmament appeared more certain to be overcome. Concurrently, the East German police and army buildup had progressed substantially; these forces considerably outnumbered their West German counterparts. The initial impact of the Korean attack had passed, and West Ger-

man enthusiasm for arms was weakening. For these and other reasons, Stalin believed the time was propitious for creating a neutral Germany. Certainly he would want to hobble NATO progress toward creating meaningful forces. Accordingly, on 10 March 1952, the Soviets proposed that Germany be neutralized.<sup>25</sup>

The Soviet proposal stimulated an intensive policy and strategy debate. On the policy side, the question whether Stalin was serious or using "spoiler" tactics would remain unanswered. Austria serves as a subsequent example of the potential "neutralized buffer zone" that might have existed. On the strategy side, the Soviets' willingness to risk creation of a strong independent nation in central Europe so shortly after WW II is hard to conceive, especially with memories of the German developments after WW I not too distant. At any rate, the proposal was a disruptive factor throughout the long period of French debate on German rearmament. By late 1954, when the West European nations had resolved their reluctance about German rearmament, the Soviets again presented the proposal and revised it in February 1955.

The analysis of the military strategic aspects of a neutralized Germany is interesting. Could the alliance defend Western Europe without the contribution of the Germans or Germany? The Rhine and associated German territory were initially accepted as the natural defense line. The manpower and economic resources of Western Europe would seriously be reduced without West Germany. The lack of continuity of the defense line into Denmark and Norway would reduce NATO flexibility. Allied and Soviet occupation forces in Germany would require relocation. The issue was carefully studied by SACEUR, his international staff, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. For the NATO forces in Germany, the following repositioning would be needed:

- Continental European ground and air forces would return to their respective countries;
- A UK corps of two divisions would be stationed in Denmark, the remainder of UK forces and all Canadian forces in the Netherlands, Belgium, and northern France;
- US ground forces would be redeployed to southern Belgium, Luxembourg, and east central and south central France;
- UK air units would be stationed in Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, and northeast France;

- US air units would be redeployed to central France, northern Italy, the UK, and possibly Greece and Turkey;
- Canadian air units would be redeployed to new locations in France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Denmark.<sup>26</sup>

Logistics lines would also require reevaluation. The basic Allied approach had been to concentrate British support in the north and US-French support in the center. This approach fit the earlier US planned withdrawal toward France and the Pyrenees and the earlier UK planned withdrawal north to the Channel. The US and UK forces would not be crossing. An earlier State Department proposal to put the United States in the north was analyzed and rejected by High Commissioner General Lucius D. Clay and by the Joint Chiefs. To provide logistic support, portions of the US sector had to be exchanged for portions of the French sector—the United States had gained important space in central Germany in exchange for areas south of the Augsburg-Stuttgart line.<sup>27</sup> New logistic facilities would be needed, "contingent on final determination of NATO troop locations and concept of defense and by a further detailed analysis by USCINCEUR."<sup>28</sup>

The NATO strategy would also have to be reevaluated. If Germany were to become a NATO member, German forces would lack an integrated atomic capability. If Germany were not a NATO member, its forces would not only be restricted to conventional means, but NATO would lose what was then the potentially significant German contribution. This option would entail:

... probable abandonment of the "forward strategy concept" (a forward defense of Western Europe well to the East of the Rhine-Yessel). With Germany outside NATO, it would probably be impossible for NATO land forces to operate on preselected ... prepared defense zone. Even with Germany a member of NATO, it would be difficult ... to prepare ... defense zones ... properly coordinated with those of German forces.<sup>29</sup>

Could Germany defend itself as a neutralized country? What would be its strategy, and what size forces would be needed? The JCS also addressed these issues. Their analysis focused on German needs to combat the Soviet threat. Their estimates indicated that force needs would vary, depending on whether Soviet forces withdrew from Germany to the USSR, to Poland, or to Poland and Czechoslovakia. Force requirements would be substantially reduced

if Germany subsequently aligned with NATO. An attempt was made to keep estimates low—realizing that memories of WW II were still fresh and that strong pressures would arise, from France in particular, against a large German standing army.

German force needs would be least if the Soviets withdrew to the USSR. According to the JCS, "the minimum acceptable force is 16 divisions in order to prevent rapid overrunning of Germany before NATO forces can be properly committed." This requirement could be reduced to 12 divisions, "the figure currently agreed to by all NATO nations as the appropriate German contribution under the NATO concept," if the reunified Germany aligned with NATO. The additional four divisions would be required "because of the greater area involved, ... the lack of an integrated atomic capability in German forces, and the lowered utility to the West of a German force not operating within the framework of NATO ... operational plans." A force of 16 divisions was certainly achievable—being less than the discussed combined East and West German force levels at the time.

The force needs would be much higher if Soviet forces withdrew only as far as Poland. The JCS believed Germany would need 18 divisions if it were to be aligned with NATO but no Allied forces permitted on German terrain. In the event of a threat of hostilities, 8 or 9 of the withdrawn NATO divisions would quickly reinforce—combining with those of the Germans and giving a total of 26 to 27 divisions. This total would approximate what NATO initially needed on the front. The remaining six to seven Allied divisions in NATO would serve as operational reserves. If Germany were separate from NATO, about the same number of divisions would be needed:

... the minimum acceptable force is 26 divisions in order to prevent rapid overrunning of Germany before NATO forces can be ... committed. This figure is based on providing an independent Germany with forces approximately equivalent to the number of German (12) and allied divisions (14) to be located in Germany under current plans and on the proximity of Soviet forces.<sup>30</sup>

Withdrawal of Soviet forces from East Germany into Czechoslovakia was considered unacceptable as a quid pro quo for withdrawal of Allied forces from Germany. The requirements are summarized in table 3-1.



**TABLE 3-1. ILLUSTRATIVE GROUND FORCE  
DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS: REUNIFIED GERMANY**

<i>Assumption</i>	<i>Germany with NATO</i>	<i>Neutral Germany</i>
Soviets withdraw to USSR	12	16
Soviets withdraw to Poland	18	26

General Gruenther, SACEUR, believed the United States could negotiate from strength. In his view, a neutralized Germany would be more desirable to the Soviets than "the present probability of increasing NATO military power through the addition of a West German contribution."<sup>31</sup> Admiral Radford, CJCS, warned that "it would be hazardous to accede to any arrangement which could result in a limitation on German forces below the prospective German contribution to NATO" (12 divisions).<sup>32</sup>

The Germans proposed a variant, built around the European Defense Community. Soviet forces would withdraw within the boundaries of the USSR (except for Rumania), and a demilitarized zone would be created in the area of the Vistula-Elbe Rivers—Trieste, with EDC forces permitted to be stationed in the remainder of Germany. Other NATO forces would be restricted to areas outside German borders—which would effectively withdraw the potential for early use of atomic weapons.

The demilitarized zone was believed to lessen border confrontations and the potential for Soviet surprise attacks. The EDC forces would replace US and UK occupation forces. From the viewpoint of US military strategy, the proposal would be generally acceptable provided the demilitarized zone was carefully designed—excluding "Denmark, Schleswig-Holstein, and German shipbuilding facilities on the Western Baltic. It should include, however, that portion of Czechoslovakia extending roughly, west of the Morava and Oder Rivers." The proposal, developed by the German Blank Office, was considered "so heavily weighted in favor of the Western Powers" that the USSR would probably never accept it.<sup>33</sup>

The Belgians put forth another variant. Their proposal was similar to that of the West Germans, but it reduced the demilitarized zone to an area "roughly the northeast half of the present occupation zone of Germany and extending from the Baltic Sea to the Czech border." It also called for withdrawal of Soviet forces from Germany and Poland.<sup>34</sup>

The Soviets also advanced proposals equally as one-sided as those of West Germany and Belgium. At the subsequent General Summit Conference, 17-23 July 1955, Premier Nikolai A. Bulganin, representing the Soviet Union, agreed to withdrawal of Soviet forces to Russia, contingent on withdrawal of US and UK forces from Europe and a limitation of 150,000 to 200,000 men in the German Army. This limitation was only 40 percent of the total strength needed to support a balanced German armed force with 12 divisions. The Soviet proposals also contained political, economic, and governmental aspects offensive to the West Germans and the Allies.<sup>35</sup>

Nothing came of the Soviet proposals or Allied countersuggestions. Some believe Allied distrust of the Soviets was too great and the Soviet timing too poor. The Soviets also seemed to lack driving interest in an agreement. The internal uprising in East Germany and Poland certainly may have caused the Soviets to reevaluate their confidence in controlling the areas. Moreover, a united Germany would pose its own threat of major strategic significance. The initiatives on the Soviet side were dropped. At the outset, it had been recognized "that it may be necessary to forego certain possible immediate benefits for the greater advantages which may accrue in the longer term as concomitants to the unification of Germany." When those benefits were no longer evident, the time had come to concentrate on essentials, that is, bringing West Germany into NATO. In the words of General Bradley, "rapid formation of combat-effective German units and the maximum utilization of German productive capacity at the earliest possible time are definite and urgent military requirements."<sup>36</sup> The Soviet proposals were most significant because they did not interrupt progress toward German rearmament at the diplomatic and staff levels.

### **France Decides**

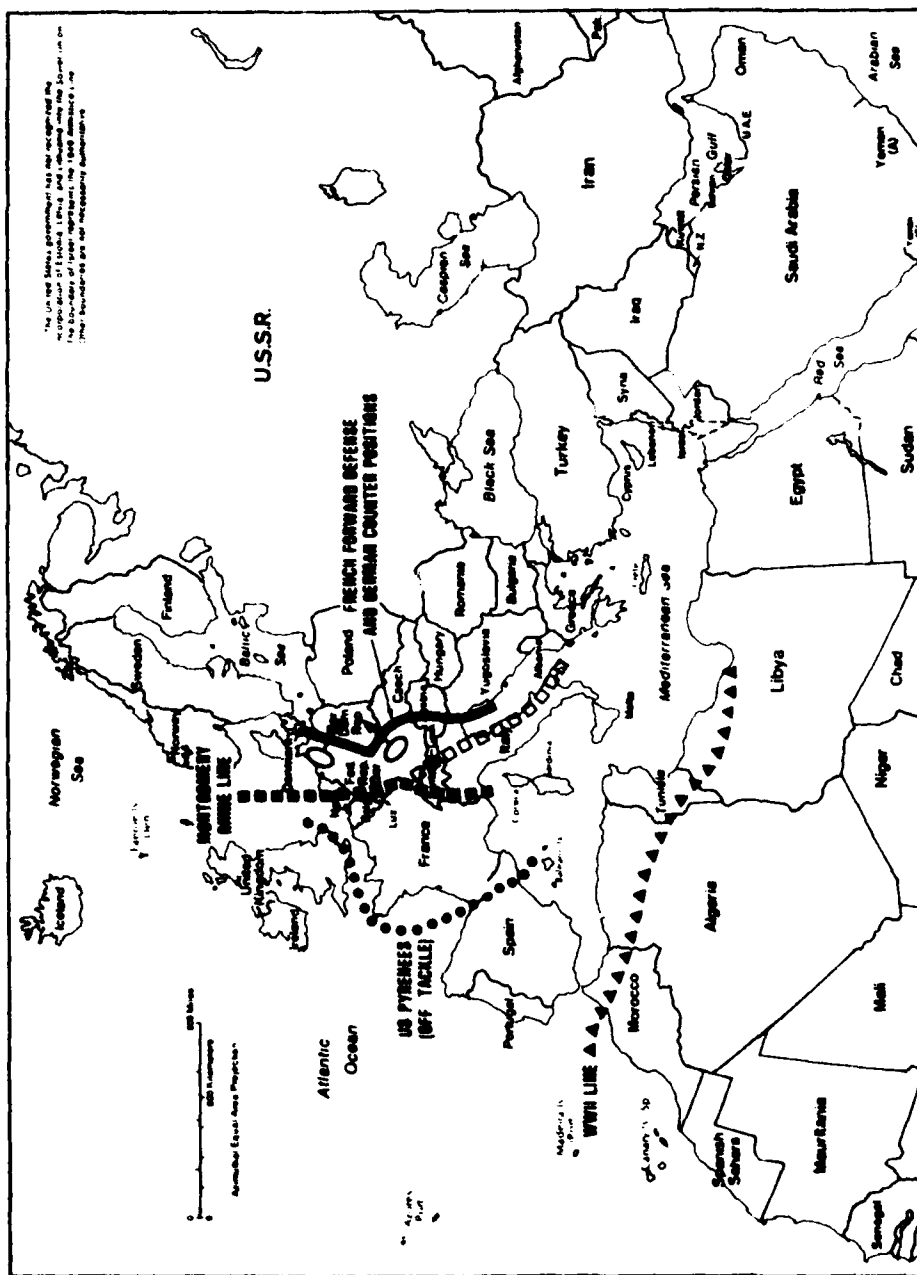
When the French rejected the EDC in August 1954, the way was opened for German rearmament, using NATO plans. Such a rearmament was acceptable to all, and was completed in principle in October 1954. The limitations on the size of German forces, stemming from the EDC treaty, would continue to apply—an active force limit of about 500,000 and 12 divisions. NATO assumed responsibility to enforce these WEU limitations. Of particular significance would be the much larger, direct US influence on details of force design and deployment. Under EDC, the French and UK roles would certainly have been greater, and US conceptions on design and forces would necessarily have flowed through that multilateral agency.<sup>37</sup>

Adenauer delegated decisions on the details of force design and development to the staff. No confrontation at the political level emerged when, on the initiative of US military planners, NATO set aside the German goal of 12 armored divisions. The planners believed the goal was "unbalanced." No issue was made when the rate at which divisions were to be formed was slowed. NATO recognized that the Americans were providing the bulk of initial NATO equipment, and that they must balance German needs with previous commitments to other NATO members.<sup>38</sup>

The German leadership had strong desires on specific deployments. Available force installations were limited. As the US troop buildup in Europe during the Korean War exhausted the reasonable alternatives, additional kaserns needed to be built and training areas constructed. A close relationship existed between the NATO strategy and the selection of these new locations. This relationship has taken on increased importance today and has occasionally become the source of conflicting interests.

Two strategic considerations guided these German desires. First, the Germans wanted their units to fight alongside or interspersed with the other NATO ally units. Thus, any attack would confront the entire NATO alliance from the outset and quickly bring the US threat of nuclear retaliation into consideration. Alternatives such as a specific German task on the East-West German border, suggested in the Himmeroder Denkschrift, were rejected. Concentration of German units in a particular zone was considered equally undesirable. Second, the Germans wanted their units to deploy as close as possible to the border areas. Such deployments would be consistent with "defense as far east as possible." The movement toward a forward defense was anticipated.<sup>39</sup>

Gaining early forward deployment for German units presented some difficulties. Stationing German units too far forward of the other Allies would create a situation where an initial aggression might be faced only by Germans. The deployment of other NATO units in front of the Rhine, rather than on the border, was an important limiting consideration. A compromise that resulted was a midline—Weser-Lech deployment. This compromise is now inconsistent in part with the current strategy. Early alternative defense lines are depicted on the map.



MAP 1. CENTRAL EUROPE DEFENSE LINES

## Conflicts and Alternatives

The dominant political and military viewpoints, voices, and support motivated the Adenauer decisions. This judgment is clear, not only from the writings of the day, but also from most analyses since then. But contrary political issues were raised, stemming from the bitter and long experience with the blacker aspects of German militarism.

The overwhelming majority of German military thinking also endorsed the Government's rearmament and NATO defense policy. Of the alternatives considered, however, one line of analysis is particularly interesting, partly for the support and interest it still holds today. The rationale is best represented in the Bonin plan. Colonel Bonin was a WW II staff planner and one of a small number of key planners in the Adenauer forerunner to the Defense Ministry—the already mentioned German Blank Office (Dienststelle Blank). As the intensive work continued toward development of a German contribution to NATO, Colonel Bonin felt that more emphasis was given to the contribution itself than to the plan that would best defend Germany. The Soviet proposals for reunification intensified this conviction. Perhaps another alternative for German forces existed—an alternative that would facilitate Russian acceptance of a reunified, neutral Germany. Bonin's alternative might serve such purposes.

The Bonin defense concept encompasses a number of themes. Bonin developed a theory based partly on the battle at Kursk in 1943. His theory called for defeating a strong armor attack without relying solely on a tank heavy defense. This plan would be desirable because, in Bonin's view, the reliance on armor units in a mobile defense was threatening. He thought the armor heavy approach stemmed from relying too much on WW II experience; flexibility of thinking and imagination was needed instead. As an alternative to a tank heavy defense, Bonin preferred a strong defense force heavily armed with antitank weapons. This force would defend the border area, extending back approximately 50 kilometers. Placement of units would be coordinated with barriers and obstacles. The air force would provide reconnaissance. Conventional air support and artillery would add firepower. A limited number of German mechanized units would be maintained in rear areas to combat penetrations of the forward defense line. If a massive penetration occurred, the Allies, with their forces along the Rhine, would be available.<sup>40</sup>

Bonin's plan called for removal of all nuclear weapons from Germany. He thought their presence might present an unneeded risk to Germany if the United States and the Soviet Union became involved in a nuclear war that did not include the rest of Europe. Such a war could result in attacks on targets in Germany. Without nuclear weapons inside its borders, Germany might be spared.

The relationship between forces of this type and a neutral Germany is clear. The assumption was that the Soviet Union might accept an independent, neutral Germany if Germany was only armed for self-defense. The concept remains alive and finds support among those whose long-range goals for Germany are to neutralize and reunify it. The Austrian model is supportive.

The dominant military viewpoint among NATO military experts and leaders was that pure antitank units could not provide a credible defense. The ability of existing forces to hold an attack to within 50 kilometers of the border was questioned, notwithstanding their heavy armament, force mobility, and ability to concentrate against penetrations. If the strengths were held constant but these existing forces made less lethal, less mobile, and less able to survive—by taking away armor protection and by reducing mobility—the defense would appear even less credible. The need for mobile units that can survive depends upon the extent of the defendable border. With 25 divisions forward deployed, each division still covers some 50 kilometers of front. A static defense alternative, the so-called Maginot Line approach, uses antitank forces, inviting penetration at weak points—as the Germans penetrated Ardennes in the 1941 attack on France. A major Soviet force reorganization and reduction of tank units could provide the basis for rethinking these viewpoints.

The Bonin alternative was interesting for the emphasis it placed on forward defense. Military professionals were sensitive to Frederick the Great's observation that "in order to win the decisive battle it may be necessary to sacrifice a province." Now, 200 years later, they could see a NATO strategy that might propose to give up Germany. On this theme, Bonin had the support of the main body of West German military thinking. Colonel Bonin's overall concept, however, was politically and militarily unacceptable. He was released from his position in 1955.<sup>41</sup>

### Chapter 3. Endnotes

1. Gerhard Wittig, *Entmilitarisierung und Weidewbewaffnung in Deutschland 1943-1955* (München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1967), pp. 306-338. Klaus von Schubert, *Weidewbewaffnung und Westintegration* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1972), pp. 184-185. Robert McGeehan, *The German Rearmament Question* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971), pp. 4-49. Militargeschichtlichen Forschungsamt *Verteidigung im Bundnis* (München: Bernard and Graete Verlag für Wehrwesen, 1975), pp. 25-34.
2. Archives: NSC Group. NSC 71/1, "State Department Views on the Rearmament of Western Germany," 9 June 1950.
3. McGeehan, *Rearmament Question*, pp. 49-55. Wittig, *Deutschland 1943-1955*, pp. 301-305.
4. Archives: NSC Group. NSC 71, JCS Views on Rearming Western Germany, dated 2 May 1950. By 1951 the JCS view was much stronger. Excellent statement provided in CJCS memo to Sec. Def., Sept. 1951—Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092 Western Europe, sec. 11.
5. There has been much theorizing on the importance of the NSC 68 analysis and subsequent decisions on US-Soviet policy. As indicated in JCS and DOD documents, however, the budgetary and program impact was minimal. See Archives: *JCS History*, vol. II, Kenneth W. Condit, ed.; *JCS and National Policy*, pp. 231-32, 247, 276. The decisions to expand the defense budget were part of the Korean War package. Also, same file, *JCS History*, vol. IV, Walter S. Poole, ed., pp. 92, 96, 102.
6. McGeehan, *Rearmament Question*, pp. 62-66.
7. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092 Western Europe, sec. 5-6, RDC/5/10, 9 July 1948; DELWU War 87419, 11 Aug. 1948. Sec. Def. Letter to Sec. State, 23 Sept. 1948. Mechanisms for cooperation, combined planning, communication, and operations control that developed between the United States and the UK during WW II had a strong influence on postwar thinking about organizing for coalition warfare. The United States excluded topics from discussion, for example, its global warfare plan. Some topics were confined to US-UK channels only. The French were outside on nuclear issues.
8. McGeehan, *Rearmament Question*, pp. 71-72.
9. NAT Military Committee, 22 Dec. 1950. Text of official NAC decision (originally TS, declassified by NATO). Available at Militargeschichtlichen Forschungsamt, Freiburg-background files, *Verteidigung im Bundnis*.
10. Ibid.

11. Ibid.

12. *Verteidigung im Bündnis*, appendix 6. The tonnage limitation for destroyers was raised to 6,000 tons by WEU action, 24 May 1961. The treaty runs for 50 years. It is treated as setting limits in the Force Structure Committee report, *The Force Structure in the Federal Republic of Germany* (Mommer Report) (Bonn: Federal Republic Defense Ministry, Nov. 1972). The documents are in Protocol No. II to the Paris Agreements of Oct. 23, 1954, and the Special Agreement annexed to the Treaty on the Establishment of a European Defense Community, 27 May 1952. NATO was charged with providing inspections to insure compliance with these agreements.

13. Raymond Aron, *France Defeats EDC* (New York: Praeger, 1957) pp. 2-21.

14. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092 Germany, sec. 25, Admiral Radford, CJCS Memo to Sec. Def., 22 Sept. 1954, p. 2.

15. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092 Germany, sec. 27, Army Chief of Staff Memo, Reference NSC 5433/1, *Immediate US Policy Toward Europe*, 11 Oct. 1954, pp. 2-4, appendix.

16. Archives: RG 218 JCS, CCS 092 Western Europe. An analysis of French-NATO problems in 1953-55 would extend too far beyond the scope of this review. NATO total strength was 30 percent less in 1955 than 1953. The principal reason was the withdrawal, without replacement, of French units previously in Europe and available to NATO, and their deployment to Indochina and Algeria. The United States and others recognized that France's conflicts in these areas were expensive and that France opposed Soviet aims and objectives. Requiring France to build other units for Europe would have crippled French efforts, in view of the generally agreed-upon conception that the Soviet threat was deterred by the US presence and willingness to fully support NATO. The French withdrawals were subject to strong SACEUR pressure. The use of US MAP-provided arms and munitions in these areas was also criticized. Accordingly, the alliance had to recognize the French interests and assist or else tighten the legal bindings of the alliance, thus pressuring the French. Underlying the Army Chief of Staff's thinking was a preference for the first of these choices. This conflict planted seeds of frustration and misunderstanding in the minds of policymakers who would be criticized in 1966 decisions on withdrawing military forces from NATO.

17. Wittig, *Deutschland 1943-1945*, pp. 281-286. Announcement of German willingness to participate in and contribute to a Western alliance was made in an interview with the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, 4 Dec. 1949; it attracted singular notice.



18. Hans-Jurgen Rautenberg and Norbert Wiggerhaus, *Die "Himmeroder Denkschrift" vom October 1950* (Karlsruhe, G. Braun, 1977), pp. 36-41.
19. Ibid., p. 42.
20. Interview, Lt. Col. Christian Greiner, *Militargeschichtlichen Forschungsamt*, Freiburg, Federal Republic of Germany, 19-20 Nov. 1979.
21. *Verteidigung im Bündnis*, pp. 32, 36.
22. Wittig, *Deutschland 1943-1945*, pp. 656-664. McGeehan, *Rearmament Question*, pp. 244-245.
23. Schubert, *Weidewaffnung*, p. 43 ff. Schumacher, SPD head, criticized the CDU for not pressing for the full German desires before agreeing to make a contribution for defense of West Europe.
24. NAT Military Committee, 22 Dec. 1950.
25. James L. Richardson, *Germany and the Atlantic Alliance. The Interaction of Strategy and Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 47.
26. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092 Germany, sec. 31, Admiral Radford, CJCS Memo to Sec. Def., 27 May 1955, pp. 2-3.
27. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 110.01, Letter from Sec. Def. to Sec. State, 14 Sept. 1950.
28. Archives: Radford Memo, 27 May 1955, pp. 2-3.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid.
31. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092 Germany, sec. 30, Gen. Greunther Msg. ALD 632, 25 May 1955.
32. Archives: Admiral Radford Memo, 27 May 1955, p. 6.
33. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092 Germany, sec. 19, appendix B to JCS 2124/108, 18 Sept. 1953, p. 873.
34. Ibid., p. 877.
35. Colonel John G. Keliher, *The Negotiations on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions* (draft) (Washington, DC: National Defense University, 1979), pp. 9-10.

36. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092 Germany, sec. 16, CJCS Gen. Bradley, Memo to Sec. Def., 30 July 1953, p. 1.

37. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092, sec. 26, "The Final Act of the Nine Power Conference held in London, between 28 Sept. and 3 Oct. 1952."

38. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092 Western Europe, Bulk Pack, MAP Ser 000522.

39. Greiner, Interview.

40. Bogislaw von Bonin, *Opposition Gegen Adenauers Sicherheitspolitik* (Hamburg: Verlag Neue Politik, 1976) pp. 103, 142, 146, 149. Helmut Schmidt, *Der Spiegel*, Nr48/1966, takes issue with Bonin concept, making a case for conventional forces.

41. *Verteidigung im Bundnis*, pp. 32, 36.

## **Chapter 4.**

### **Development of the German Army Structure**

The development of strong armed forces is a time-consuming task—like any major undertaking having not only human and technological impacts but also deeply felt historical and social traditions. The Bundeswehr, as exemplified by its army, proved this idea. Initially, the German leadership thought otherwise, perhaps drawing from WW II experience. They thought 2 years was a reasonable time to recruit, man, and train 12 divisions. NATO and US planners shared some of the optimism—2 years had been the US experience in the last war, and was the planned mobilization time for OFFTACKLE. Building a German Army, however, was to take much longer.

The size of the army had been set—12 divisions, approximately 340,000 men. The remainder of the 500,000 limit set by the Western European Union/EDC was allocated to navy and air force needs. Other issues were variables, and would change as the Germans adjusted their own priorities to their objectives and the resources available. These issues are reviewed here, providing some insight into NATO and German strategic goals and some comprehension of the flexibilities the resulting structure has brought.

How many divisions would the army have and how would they be organized? As discussed earlier, the Germans initially sought 12 tank divisions organized into 6 corps, with the possibility of expanding to 18 divisions. Strength would be concentrated in the combat and combat-support units. The United States would provide military assistance support, however, only for a mixed force of infantry and armor divisions. The division organization would be patterned after that of the United States. The German design to fight "tactical nuclear" war was more flexible than that of the United States. The criticism of exclusive reliance on tactical nuclear war developed in the late 1950s and early 1960s; accordingly, the divisions would be reorganized again, this time to permit either conventional or tactical nuclear employment.

How would the divisions be manned and equipped? The early recruitment for the officer and noncommissioned officer corps

was to draw heavily from WW II veterans. Their commitment to democratic ideals would be evaluated, and means would be built into the structure itself to prevent creation of a separate military culture. For example, soldiers would be subject primarily to civil law, except in strictly military matters, and nonmilitary violations would be addressed within the civil system.

Would volunteer armed forces succeed? Germany realized early that some sort of draft/conscription would clearly be needed. The system was designed to require nearly everyone to serve—either in military or alternative service. By the late 1960s, available manpower far exceeded force requirements. After detailed studies, the tour for draftees was reduced to preserve the fairness of the sharing of duty. Projections of declining future manpower availability resulting from smaller family sizes and delayed parenthood would require future adjustments. US approaches, priorities, and items dominated in the beginning—as would be expected—first because of real limitations imposed by the Allies on the rebuilding of the dismantled armament industries in Germany following the war, and second because of the necessary US procurement focus of the Military Armistice Act. As European and German armament capabilities grew, this German emphasis on US approaches was to shift to include procurement of French, Italian, and British items, and finally to rely mainly on German production. In major areas of arms production, Germany now has a substantial foreign sales program.

Where would the units be stationed? From the outset, the Germans sought and obtained a "layering" of German units with other Allied units, from north to south along the entire front. This layering took some time to achieve because the actual creation of army divisions was slow. Early units were concentrated primarily in the north. Creation of the full structure changed the situation by the 1980s. The Germans had originally wanted a mobile defense beginning on the borders. Unit locations were coordinated with Allied disposition, however, so that many of the first German installations now seem to be more oriented toward a compromise line, the Weser-Fulda-Lech, between the Rhine and the boundary. The deployments were refocused forward in the 1960s. Construction of new facilities and unit redeployments are expensive and complicated. The changes are coming slowly.

What role would be envisioned for the reserves? Could the reserves help more? These and later questions all have been significant as the German planners have set the course in designing their army. These issues are examined in more detail here.

#### **Initial Development of the Army: Structure 1—1955–1957**

The stated mission of the Bundeswehr is defense. This mission is clearly and strongly stipulated in the 23 May 1949 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany and in the 26 March 1954 law providing specific structure and guidance. Article 26 prohibits preparation for aggressive war. This orientation in the German Constitution, established 6 years before the founding of the Bundeswehr, sharply limits defense policy even today.<sup>1</sup>

The German Army units are earmarked in entirety for NATO. In peacetime they are under national control; in a defense emergency they would immediately be placed under the operational command of NATO. This commitment to NATO does not apply to the reserve force units, the Territorial Army. Although the Federal Republic can employ the Territorial Army for its own priorities, these units would presumably be made available to NATO when needed. The inactive/reserve force issue did not arise in the early formation of the German Army, perhaps because neither people nor equipment for reserve units was available.<sup>2</sup>

Original German planning called for rapid and simultaneous creation of the majority of the desired 12 divisions. This plan would have provided NATO with the needed forces within 2 years, thus reducing the force gap for 14/1 previously mentioned. That approach, however, would have required an impossibly high level and rate of military assistance from the United States. The French, in particular, but other Allies as well, were sensitive to having their agreed-to levels of US assistance reduced. Moreover, the German plan would have also required that the other NATO armies accomplish a substantial amount of initial training. This requirement would have been a further serious diversion of resources, at a time when NATO's ground strength in central Europe had been reduced 30 percent because of UK needs in Malaya and French commitments to North Africa and Southeast Asia. The German view that training could be accomplished at a rate of 4 months per division, rather than the US view of 9 months, was also considered too optimistic. Instead, a more slowly phased buildup plan was adopted, which would eventually create 5 divisions by 1957, rather than the 10 to 12 originally planned.<sup>3</sup>

The first German plan also called for all-armor divisions. This plan fit the basic concept of a mobile, "offensive" defense considered most desirable by the group advising Adenauer. From the US and NATO side, the answer was clear: "Though recognizing that the preponderance of armor in the proposed German formations is designed to utilize fully the physical characteristics of the terrain of Germany and Western Europe, ... the provision of solely armored divisions would not only be logistically difficult, but may not coincide with the overall requirements of NATO." A balance of infantry and armor divisions was selected. Another concern was that too many combat and not enough support units were planned. The German approach was accepted anyway, based on the assumption that paramilitary units could supplement support units. The Germans reasoned that the US thinking was oriented too much toward an "expeditionary Army," not one tasked with territorial self-defense.<sup>4</sup>

The organization of the first divisions was patterned after a US model. Following WW II, an extensive US study was conducted and the less mobile, less flexible US infantry division structure was altered. After WW II, divisions would follow the armor model. German experience and viewpoints had been considered, as well as those of the British, Soviets, and French. A similar German study was conducted, and the WW II models considered earlier were also set aside. The basic infantry division structure was as follows:

- Three combat commands, each consisting of three motorized infantry battalions and an armor battalion;
- Combat support from one division artillery regiment with three light and one medium artillery battalions;
- Antiaircraft, engineer, and reconnaissance battalions;
- Communication battalion, aircraft company, military police;
- Division-level support units.<sup>5</sup>

The armor (Panzer) divisions differed only in the organization of the combat commands that were tank heavy—each of the three had two armor and two mechanized infantry battalions. The artillery regiment was also mechanized. The planned structure for the airborne division and the mountain division were unique to their special employment considerations.

The Germans considered the new structure a major improvement over WW II and their initial concepts. Major disadvantages emerged as the problems of getting a limited number of NATO units to the 1000- to 1300-kilometer border were addressed. If 25 divisions were to cover such a line, each would address a typical 40 kilometers of front. This ratio was more than twice the WW II level—and the risk it presented had to and would be addressed. The solution was to make units more mobile, which would require armor protection so they could redeploy without excessive losses from artillery. Decentralization would be required because the division headquarters would be too separated from the frontline battle. As tactical factors were considered, mission-type orders (which also implied decentralization of decisionmaking) and a redistribution of fire coordination tasks to the combat command level would apparently be needed. Carrying the tactical consideration further, the combination of less mobile, vulnerable motorized infantry with highly mobile tanks in the infantry combat commands was impractical. Antiarmor support that was required for infantry might be better provided by supporting mobile antitank units, capable of going where the infantry was needed, rather than tanks. If armor units required infantry support, that infantry should be armored infantry. Another major disadvantage was the absence of artillery units capable of using nuclear munitions; the artillery size was too small. The first US nuclear-capable artillery units had begun arriving in Germany in 1953, and by the end of 1955 US plans included consideration of their use. All these issues would motivate a structural reorganization.<sup>6</sup>

Strategic considerations dominated the German stationing plan. The Germans wanted a stationing that would spread their units across the entire front, so that an attack in any area would confront NATO, not just German units. The alliance placed high value on the deterrent nature of the US presence in the forward defense line. The German emphasis was in the north, in combination with the British. This selection was also limited by available kaserns. Three of the first five divisions were located in northern division cantonment areas, one in the central US area, and one in the more southern French area. The general deployment line was through the middle of West Germany. SACEUR was satisfied "by the excellent decision to utilize division-size cantonment positions in accordance with strategic needs. Loss of time for deployment in event of emergency is thus avoided. Such a concept wherein combat forces, adequate in size, are stationed where tactical and strategic considerations govern approximates the idea."<sup>7</sup> A decade later, when the defense concept

had changed from the battle for the Rhine to a battle on the border, these central placements would be too far rearward and require costly changes. Key dates for the early development actions are shown in table 4-1.

**TABLE 4-1. BUILDUP OF GERMAN ARMED FORCES  
STRUCTURE 1: 1955-57**

21 Aug 1956	Creation of staffs for 3rd and 5th Armor Divisions, the 1st, 2nd, and 4th Infantry Divisions, and the Airborne and Mountain Division.
7 Nov 1956	These six divisions provided full cadre of officers and NCOs.
27 Dec 1956	Law for compulsory service passed.
26 Jan 1957	Defense Minister Strauss (CSU) informs NATO five divisions will be reached by end 1957.
23 May 1957	Defense Ministry decides for M48 rather than British Centurion tank. (In late 1956, the US delivered 1,100 M47 tanks )
1 Jul 1958	3rd and 5th Panzer Divisions placed under NATO.
21 Apr 1958	Mountain and Airborne Divisions placed under NATO.
23 Apr 1958	WEU approves German production of antitank weapons.

Source: Appendix IV, Militargeschichtlichen Forschungsamt, *Verteidigung im Bündnis* (Munich: Bernard-Graefe Press, 1975).

The question of a German General Staff was also controversial. In its initial deliberations, the NATO Military Committee held an opposing position that reflected the general antagonism to German militarism. In the words of General Gruenther, SACEUR, "permitting Germany to create a General Staff having the undesirable characteristics of a permanent staff corps inherent in former German General Staffs is unacceptable to the allies. It is considered, however, that a German General Staff patterned after that of the United States wherein there is a definite periodic rotation of officers on such duty is highly desirable."<sup>8</sup> The Germans also considered that general approach appropriate, and adopted it. Each member nation of NATO agreed to provide its own personnel, logistical training, and opera-



tions support. A competent staff would be required. The war planning and directing operations task would be the sole responsibility of NATO. Concern that a German Operations Staff might concentrate on planning for a war to liberate the East had been raised. But by the mid-1950s, this concern abated.

Manning the force presented problems. A structure of officers, noncommissioned officers (NCOs), and civilian staff was needed. Fortunately, from December 1950 on, the Germans had assembled a small staff and begun planning. This staff could quickly be transformed into the Defense Ministry when the final decisions were made. To man the army units, the large numbers of experienced personnel would be obtained by the following actions:

- Soliciting volunteer veterans whose military records indicated acceptable reliability and competence. By May 1954, about 180,000 volunteers had registered.
- Expanding the border police (BGS), during the interim EDC debate, with personnel who might transfer to the Bundeswehr. A decision to double the BGS was made in June 1953. By January 1954 this strength had increased to over 20,000.
- Creating legislation for conscription of enlisted men.<sup>9</sup>

The issue of manning a larger part of the army by conscription became important. A system of draft, and the obligation of all citizens to serve in the armed forces, if possible, had been considered as part of a democratic structure. Basic arguments for compulsory military service developed in the Bundestag debate:

- The demands of the growing German industry and economy were so great that manning the forces with qualified personnel would be unfeasible;
- Building a professional army would make near impossible development of needed corps of reserves;
- A professional army could become a state within the state, as did the Reichswehr; democracy requires all to share the duty of defense.<sup>10</sup>

Difficulty in obtaining volunteers forced a decision. The earlier forecasts that 475,000 personnel could be organized in 2 years obvi-

ously had been too optimistic—the rate was far below that anticipated. Reluctance to rely heavily on the veterans was understandable. Hence, political support for using a "draft" system expanded. Since the early 19th century, the German military had relied on conscription. The "all volunteer" Reichswehr had been a solution that the Treaty of Versailles had imposed on Germany after World War I. The Reichswehr is often cited as an example of a professional military—primarily the officer corps—that became socially isolated, drawn into a separate existence politically, and formed into a "state within the state." Many considered this situation an extreme case, one that need not apply to the modern Bundeswehr.<sup>11</sup> Even so, the need for conscription was a fact, and the law was passed 7 July 1956:

- All men, 18 to 45, were obligated to serve. Men who became officers or NCOs would be liable to serve in time of emergency until age 60.
- The basic service period was 12 months. (This period would later be increased to 18 months during the Berlin Crisis, and reduced to 15 months in Structure 3.)
- Provision was made for conscientious objectors.
- Equivalent service was also recognized, i.e., border police and so forth.
- The program would address the entire population of new eligibles each year. That meant that a fair system would require everyone to serve, if eligible.<sup>12</sup>

In its wording, the system is described as a "volunteer intensive conscription system." It is a combination system, involving about 50 percent volunteers and 50 percent conscripts. The procedure for handling "conscientious objectors" goes as far as or further than any other Western country. An applicant for such a deferment must apply to a county board (Kreiswehersatzamt), and a special committee reviews the application, based on the substantiation provided. Appeal procedures are available if the applicant is denied. If the application is accepted, the young man is obligated to nonmilitary service, normally directed and administered at the state and county, not Federal, level.<sup>13</sup> Also exempt are persons unfit for physical or aptitude reasons, persons convicted of certain crimes, clergymen, and sons of persons who died in war or of war-related wounds (this category

originally included 10 percent of German males, but is no longer relevant). Deferment is authorized "in cases where especial hardship" is involved. An effort is made to insure that all qualified do serve. The stated Government policy is: "We wish to achieve maximum justice by giving equal treatment to all young men liable to military service."<sup>14</sup> Because of exceptionally high birth rates in the initial postwar period, the number of eligible males began to far exceed military needs. After study and discussion, the Government passed legislation to shorten the draft period from 18 to 15 months, largely to meet complaints and spread the burden.

### **The NATO Tactical Nuclear Strategy and the Redesign of the German Army: Structure 2**

Study of a nuclear strategy had already begun in the early 1950s, and, as indicated in the discussion in chapter 2, President Eisenhower was already being advised to adopt this "new look in the nation's defense" by mid-1953. The US decision to support a nuclear strategy was made in the fall of 1950 and formalized in NSC 162. The key directive was that tactical nuclear weapons would be integrated into combat formations so they would "be as available for use as other munitions."<sup>15</sup>

An important factor in the US President's decision to support a nuclear strategy was his conviction that the NATO Allies would accept nothing less than defense as far forward as possible and initially at least on the Rhine. This forward defense objective was needed to motivate Allied participation. He knew forces were inadequate and would remain so beyond 1954. SHAPE had altered its planning horizon to 1956 as the likely peak threat period, providing a little more time for force buildup. In fact, "no plans were being developed for withdrawal from the Rhine, or for defense of other than the Rhine."<sup>16</sup> US deployments in 1951 had established the commitment to a Rhine defense, both politically and strategically. These deployments did much to provide initial forces for a defense on the Rhine and strong proof of US commitment. But the forces were inadequate for a long conventional war; accordingly, the initiative for the nuclear defense and a revision of the NATO strategy was a solution. See table 4-2 for Allied force requirements and availability. Additional policy discussions are provided in appendix 2.

The President and his key military leaders were not prepared to risk a conventional defense using inadequate forces. Extensive development of smaller battlefield nuclear weapons was undertaken,

as a matter of priority. The US Army reorganized its divisions to facilitate battlefield use of nuclear weapons. Rather than three infantry or armor regiments, the division had five battle groups. Each battle group had infantry, tanks, engineers, artillery support, and its own nuclear capability—it was a small, semi-self-sufficient, combined arms unit. With five battle groups, each fully capable of independent action for limited periods of time, more frontline coverage would be provided—to identify and channel an attacking Soviet unit into a likely nuclear target. A wider front could be assigned to each division, making up for the shortage of forces. Provision of dispersion against Soviet attacks would also be facilitated.<sup>17</sup>

**TABLE 4-2. DEFENSE OF WEST EUROPE  
NATO FORCE REQUIREMENTS—FORCE PROGRAM 1954-57<sup>1</sup>**

	<i>M-Day Available Divisions</i>	<i>M +30 Days Planned Divisions<sup>3</sup></i>
Belgium/Luxembourg	3	6
Denmark	2/3	4
France	5 & 1/3	16 & 1/3
Netherlands	1	3
United Kingdom	4 & 2/3	6 & 2/3
Canada	1/3	1/3
United States	5 & 2/3	7 & 2/3
Requirements (Lisbon) <sup>2</sup>	39 & 1/3	53 & 2/3

<sup>1</sup> Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092 Western Europe, sec. 144, JCS 2073/85Z p. 2,283. Also see 204, EUCOM Letter, 30 Mar. 1953, MAP 29679.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., JCS 2073/320. At the NATO Lisbon Planning Conference, the force requirement for central and western continental Europe was initially set at 53 2/3. This figure was subsequently temporarily reduced to 49 2/3 because the US and UK requirements were each reduced by 2 divisions. NSC 141, 9 Jan. 1953, p. 39.

<sup>3</sup> This planned figure was highly suspect, because it anticipated a level of MAP deliveries far beyond US capabilities. MAP 29679, cited above, provides a detailed analysis of these problems, drawing from the Wood Study Group.

The existence of a Soviet nuclear threat was accepted by intelligence analysts. As early as January 1954, the JCS had told SACEUR "to assume that 200-300 nuclear weapons would be used against military targets in allied Europe, and 100 in the Atlantic

area," in planning for defense in 1956.<sup>18</sup> Hence, the new "pentomic division" organization, equipped with an atomic capability, would provide the coverage for a defense of the Rhine. The occurrence of this important reorganization within the US Army in 1958, several years after General Maxwell D. Taylor, then Chief of Staff, began his crusade for a flexible response capability, can be considered a curiosity of strategic and tactical coordination.<sup>19</sup>

NATO formalized the nuclear strategy on 21 March 1957 in MC 14/2. In April, the United States indicated its willingness to provide the European Allies with weapons systems capable of using atomic munitions, to be accomplished in 1957. The concept envisioned answering a Soviet conventional or nuclear attack with either a tactical nuclear defense or a strategic counterstrike. Remaining forces would be reorganized and the operation would be carried through to a successful outcome. The new strategy was greeted by strong opposition from important elements of the German populace. An example is the "Gottinger Manifest," the atomic scientists' statement presented on 12 April 1957. Opposition would continue into the early 1960s, under a variety of banners: "Battle the Atomic Death," "Disengagement," "European Unity," and "Ban the Bomb." In general, though, the new smaller atomic weapons for battlefield use were accepted by military strategists as a further development of artillery and air-delivered bombs. The next task would be to relate the strategy to the force structure.<sup>20</sup>

The new strategy would require a minimum of 30 divisions, equipped for battlefield use of nuclear weapons. These conclusions were reached by the WEU and formalized on 9 May 1957.<sup>21</sup> The strategy required stationing nuclear weapons in Germany and providing the Germans a battlefield nuclear capability. As expected, German political resistance was immediate and strong. For other reasons, and to help attenuate this resistance, NATO publicized the introduction of the "two-key system," wherein nuclear warheads remained under US control and the launchers (artillery, rocket, or aircraft) under Allied control (in December 1957).

The Soviets and East Europeans attempted to block the deployment through diplomatic initiatives and propaganda. One alternative was the Rapacki Plan, which, in addition to various political objectives, sought to prevent the planned deployments of nuclear weapons by obtaining agreements on a "nuclear-free zone" in central Europe. The plan was unacceptable to NATO; it offered no significant limitations on the Soviet/Warsaw Pact threat, which the NATO strategy MC 14/2 was designed to meet. NATO would not be able to

carry out its nuclear strategy because use of battlefield nuclear weapons by forward Allied and German divisions would be denied.<sup>22</sup> Responding to the political pressures, Adenauer renounced German construction of nuclear weapons and stated that Germany would not accept atomic warheads under its national control. He also emphasized readiness for controlled disarmament.

The threatening nature of Soviet power overcame resistance to the new strategy in Germany. In a by-election in Nordrhein-Westfalen, 7 July 1958, Adenauer's party gained a clear victory, a strong, positive indicator. The Constitutional Court (Bundesverfassungsgericht) turned down an attempt to force a national referendum on the issue. Defense Minister Strauss informed NATO that Germany was prepared to receive the MATADOR rocket and nuclear warheads stationed in Germany. The Bundestag said it was prepared "to equip the forces of the Federal Republic with the modern weapons (atomic) so it could undertake its responsibilities within NATO."<sup>23</sup> The next task would be to reorient the German forces to carry out the strategy.

The nuclear strategy raised important issues for the German Army. How many divisions would be required? How should they be organized? What about stationing? Army Structure 2, "Divisions 59" provided the German answers to the strategic and tactical problems. In place of the three battle groups in the original division plan, three brigades were organized. With the help of combat support elements, which would be attached to the brigade from divisions units, the brigade was to be capable of fighting independently for up to 5 days. Nuclear-capable rockets and artillery pieces were added, so that either conventional or tactical nuclear war could be fought. In place of the previous motorized infantry-tank combinations (with the disadvantages already mentioned), two basic brigade types were developed; the mechanized (or armored infantry) brigade and the armor brigade. All supporting elements were also to be armored. The armor protection was to facilitate mobility—counterattack when needed—and provide protection against atomic blast effects. Most important, the units were organized to fight on a conventional or nuclear battlefield.

The overall army structure would still consist of 12 divisions: 6 mechanized infantry, 4 armor, 1 mountain, and 1 airborne division. These 12 divisions were the German share of the 30-division requirement for central Europe. However, German support and logistic capabilities at corps level and above remained weak. Also weak or undeveloped was the reserve structure. As individuals completed

their term of compulsory service, they entered a pool of reservists. Plans to use these reservists effectively were slow to develop.<sup>24</sup> Key actions in the development of Structure 2 are summarized in table 4-3. Of particular note is the steady buildup of the planned divisions, from 5 committed to NATO in early 1958 to a total of 11 by the end of 1962.

**TABLE 4-3. GERMAN ARMY STRUCTURE 2:  
DEVELOPMENT AND DECISIONS**

21 Mar 1957	NATO Nuclear Strategy (ME 14/2).
25 Feb 1958	SACEUR Gen. Lauris Norstad requests German units be made capable of fighting atomic warfare.
30 June 1958	Defense Ministry announces the restructuring of the German Army from battle groups to brigades and the equipping of artillery and rocket battalions with dual conventional-atomic systems.
1 Oct 1958	Commencement of buildup and deployment of the 6th Infantry Division.
1 Nov 1958	Delivery of first "Honest John" nuclear-capable systems.
1 Jan 1959	Commencement of buildup and deployment of the 7th and 11th Infantry Divisions.
1 Mar 1959	Conversion of previous infantry divisions to the new Division 59 structure: 1st, 2nd, 4th, 6th, 7th, and 11th.
31 Aug 1959	Defense Minister Strauss indicates reorganization complete.
1 Oct 1959	Commencement of deployment of 10th Mechanized (Mech.) Infantry Division.
2 Dec 1959	NAC approves MC 70, specifying 30-division requirement for central Europe.
1 Mar 1961	Commencement of organization and deployment of 12th Armor Division.
8 Dec 1961	Extension of the conscription period from 12 to 18 months.
1 Jan 1962	11th Mech. Infantry Division assigned to NATO.
10 Nov 1962	7th Mech. Infantry Division assigned to NATO.
6 Dec 1962	10th Mech. Infantry Division assigned to NATO (making 11 of the 12 divisions foreseen for West Germany in MC 70).

Source: Militargeschichtlichen Forschungsamt, *Verteidigung im Bündnis* (Munich: Bernard-Graefe Press, 1975), appendix 6.

The German goal in 1950 had been for a "forward defense" strategy. With the steady increases in demand for new division cantonment areas, a line of installations closer to the border would naturally be expected to develop. Plans were made; these peacetime locations would be near Regensburg in the south; Kassel, Hamburg, and Wurzburg in the center; and Hannover and Bremerhaven in the north, a general line within 100 kilometers of the border. These deployments supported the tactical plan to engage and force concentration of the enemy as close to the border as possible, limiting the depth of any penetration and use of battlefield nuclear weapons to a more narrow band of Germany. These forward locations also anticipated changes in NATO planning, to positions forward of the current Weser-Fulda-Lech line.

### **The Conventional Option, Flexible Response, Forward Defense, and the Abandonment of the Nuclear Strategy**

The nuclear strategy was controversial from the outset. From the viewpoint of NATO ground forces in general and the German ground forces in particular, two major rationales bear discussion. Both were to affect strategy and force issues. Admiral Radford, Chairman of the JCS during the period 1953-57, argued for one approach. Radford believed the cornerstone of the nuclear strategy was the Soviet judgment that the Russians would lose more than they would gain by a nuclear attack, even if only some targets in Eastern Europe and Russia were destroyed. For the nuclear strategy to be credible, however, a "trip-wire" of US and Allied forces and installations was required; such a visible commitment had been lacking in the Korean situation. Radford's key judgment was that the perception and fact of US determination were not enhanced by increasing US forward-deployed forces beyond a couple of divisions. The opposing rationale, eventually argued by General Taylor, Army Chief of Staff, was that the nuclear deterrent might not work, particularly as the Soviet development of nuclear weapons increased. The United States had not used atomic weapons in Korea—which was some type of indicator. For several reasons, then, NATO required a "conventional option."

The Radford rationale began with the judgment that a nuclear stalemate already existed between the United States and the Soviet Union. He hoped announcing US intentions to use tactical nuclear weapons on the battlefield would extend this strategic nuclear stalemate over a greater field of potential US-USSR conflicts. All the Joint



Chiefs, at least initially, shared this viewpoint. Administration strategic policy had authorized the use of nuclear weapons (NSC 162, previously discussed). But Radford carried the implications further. He believed battlefield use of nuclear weapons would reduce the requirement for frontline US divisions. Others qualified this judgment. General Greunther, SACEUR, believed nuclear weapons should be used at the outset, but that losses and the need for dispersion and reserves would keep requirements high. General Ridgeway, Army Chief of Staff, was equally concerned that force requirements would remain high for other reasons. The concept needed testing and evaluation. Moreover, if Soviet units were not identified in the attack, would the decision to use nuclear weapons still be automatic?<sup>25</sup>

The viewpoint that reducing deployed units would not adversely affect the effectiveness of nuclear deterrence was apparently shared by some Allies. The British reduced their forces; their explanation lay in Suez needs and domestic economic problems. The French removed all but two divisions from the NATO area. Their commitment had been for six: five in Germany, one in France. Eventually all were moved to North Africa. Federal Republic Defense Minister Strauss wrote to the US Secretary of Defense asking whether military assistance was required and would be provided for any more than the five divisions under development for commitment to NATO.<sup>26</sup> At the same time, the JCS, over Army objections, was proposing a reduction in active divisions and a major reduction in programs related to an extended conventional war. The JCS would reduce the 17-division FY 58 Army to 13, and to 12 and 11 divisions in FY 59-61.<sup>27</sup>

Radford believed a small, 11-division US force was reasonable. He could see an ultimate force of six Army and two Marine divisions in a more stringent "Fortress America" strategy; however, he considered this combination the outer limit of alternative against which the basic 11-division program could be compared.<sup>28</sup>

In contrast, Army Chief of Staff General Taylor wanted 16 divisions, with the ability to mobilize to 26 divisions by M+6 months. His rationale was based on two requirements. He saw the need for an additional phase in the NATO strategy, one more conventional in nature—a counteroffensive. During a period of crisis, these forces could have major value as they are brought to full readiness and deployed. Also at issue was the need for ground forces for limited wars. Taylor generally agreed with the other JCS members on the initial

phase of a war in Europe—that nuclear weapons would be used at the outset in a strategic exchange and in tactical operations, and that the loss of enemy war-making capacity from strategic exchanges and the destruction of attacking elements by effective tactical use of nuclear weapons by frontline units would bring a NATO stalemate or advantage on the frontline, if not Soviet capitulation.<sup>29</sup>

The issue ultimately focused on whether the NATO defense would require a short or long war. Radford believed a war would be short. As to Taylor's plan, he reasoned that additional Army forces may have been of use under the outdated WW-II-type OFFTACKLE long-war plan that called for mobilization and outshipment of large numbers of Army divisions. This plan and these deployments, however, assumed a long warning period and no large-scale use of nuclear weapons until after the period of large-scale deployment of forces. For the JCS Chairman, this assumption was unrealistic and inconsistent with the NATO strategy: "I am convinced that D-day forces, and forces immediately available subsequent to D-day, are the only ones which contribute appreciably to US security in general war, as well as being the most readily available forces to cope with situations short of general war. Therefore, [in the design of mobilization forces] selected reserve forces must be those, and only those, which can be brought into operation in the early stages of an emergency."<sup>30</sup>

Radford's extreme "Fortress America" example was leaked to the press, and when the NATO Allies learned of it, they reacted strongly and adversely. General Heusinger, Chief of the German Armed Forces, visited Secretary of Defense Charles E. Wilson and made a forceful counterargument, pointing out the indispensable need for a strong ground force as part of the NATO strategy. The US Secretary of Defense assured him that the level of US deployment would remain relatively unchanged.<sup>31</sup>

Senior official acceptance of the need for a conventional option had been growing for some time in the United States. In January 1955, the National Security Council (NSC 5501) stated that "the US must also have . . . ready forces, which, together with those of its allies, must be sufficient to help deter any resort to local aggression, or punish swiftly and severely any such local aggression in a manner and on a scale best calculated to avoid the hostilities broadening into total nuclear war."<sup>32</sup> Taylor interpreted this statement to mean a requirement for conventional war capability was part of a graduated

deterrence strategy for Europe or elsewhere. Radford saw the new ambiguity and worked directly with Secretary Wilson toward a clarification.<sup>33</sup>

A stronger statement for conventional capabilities followed in the 1956 restatement of the BNSP: "With the coming of nuclear parity, the US and its allies must avoid getting into a posture where they must choose between (a) not responding to local aggression and (b) applying force in a way which our people or our allies would consider entails undue risk of nuclear devastation. The apprehension of US allies as to using nuclear weapons to counter local aggression can be lessened if the US deterrent force is not solely dependent on such weapons, thus avoiding the question of their use unless and until the deterrent fails. In the event of actual local aggression, the US should, if necessary, make its own decision as to the use of nuclear weapons. . . . The US should provide for . . . the progressive integration of such weapons into NATO defenses. . . . The mobilization base should be adequate for the early phases, and adequate with reserves for successive phases." President Eisenhower approved the new policy on 1 March 1956 (NSC 5602). The 1957 Basic National Security Policy (BNSP) statement was generally the same (NSC 5701). By 3 October 1959, a new strategic concept was emerging, under the advice that "it is of great importance for NATO to maintain a flexibility of responses." (NSC 6017, Draft BNSP.)<sup>34</sup>

The need for a strong conventional capability was also recognized in Europe. In a German contribution to the analysis of NATO strategic issues entitled "Defense or Retaliation," written in 1960 by Helmut Schmidt, the present Federal Chancellor advanced a strong rationale for a graduated-response strategy. Key aspects of his then-preferred strategy and force structure involved the ability to match the Soviets, then deter them across the range of conflicts, without building up forces threatening enough to create instability. Forces should not be designed or deployed to force immediate early use of battlefield nuclear weapons. Schmidt believed the MC 14/2 strategy and forces would lead directly to early atomic use, becoming an "all or nothing" strategy. Instead, "NATO needs a strategy of flexible response." He emphasized that conventional forces must be increased to meet Soviet conventional threats. His perspective was grounded in "the military-technical equivalence (with NATO) the Soviets had reached, making the current (14/2 nuclear strategy) unworkable." The nuclear weapons "should not be on the front nor should frontline

units be organized solely for nuclear fighting." Schmidt believed that all the alliance countries must agree on the strategy; otherwise the Soviets would use the strategy to isolate a part of the alliance from the whole.<sup>35</sup>

Agreement to change the military strategy would not be reached until France's departure from the military organization. The NATO Council addressed the graduated-deterrence doctrine in December 1960. In April 1961, President Kennedy asked for an increase of conventional forces, referring to the flexible-response concept as the basis for troop requirements. As the strategy debate continued, the critical issue became who decides when to initiate the use of nuclear weapons. The French were openly concerned about whether the decision would be made in time. Their solution was to develop a French nuclear force. Various alternatives emerged, designed to give the Allies some control over initiating the escalatory steps but with the United States retaining control. US control was US policy: "Discouragement of additional independent nuclear capabilities, which is reflected in the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 . . . has long been the keystone of US nuclear policy. By this means the US has endeavored to protect its classified atomic information, minimize the risk of accidental or irresponsible use of nuclear weapons, facilitate disarmament negotiations by keeping the number of nuclear capable nations to a minimum, and made optional use of other Free World resources. . . . With respect to development of other national capabilities, US policy also identifies the need to consider plans for development of NATO arrangements for determining requirements, holding custody, and controlling the use of nuclear weapons."<sup>36</sup> Moreover, "nationalistic aspirations for independent nuclear capabilities may undermine, progressively, the unity and effectiveness of the NATO alliance. Therefore, it would appear the US is justified in attempting to meet this concern by means which would not involve the creation of additional independent national nuclear capabilities—i.e., by the development of a NATO capability on a multilateral control basis."<sup>37</sup>

The new Kennedy administration made significant efforts to clarify and resolve the nuclear issues. In May 1961, President Kennedy proposed the possibility of a NATO force equipped with atomic weapons; the proposed Multi-Lateral Force (MLF) was detailed at the December NAC meeting. The MLF would use POLARIS nuclear-armed submarines. The key issue remained, however: Would ultimate control over the weapon use remain with the United States?

This condition was unsatisfactory to the French. In January 1963, President Charles de Gaulle announced that France would withdraw from the MLF. Disagreeing with the strategy and scenario for a NATO staff exercise (Fallex-1965), the French declined to participate. By September 1965, after refusing to sign the nuclear nonproliferation treaty, the French indicated they would withdraw from the NATO military organization. For the remainder of the alliance, a political forum for addressing nuclear issues was created—the Nuclear Planning Group. Alliance discussions would continue within this group, which excluded France.<sup>38</sup>

The nuclear issue complicated and delayed acceptance of the flexible-response strategy. The President had called for a conventional option in 1961. By September 1963, at the NATO staff level, planning the forward-defense strategy was the primary focus. At the political level, however, the new strategy was not approved for planning until December 1964.

On 4 May 1967, the new strategy was formally adopted in MC 14/2.<sup>39</sup> Implementation was swift. Actions required at the force level had been underway in Germany since at least 1963.

### **Structure 3: A Revision to Implement the New Strategy**

The forward-defense and flexible-response "graduated deterrence" strategy raised a new issue for German force planners. If units were positioned closer to the border, would changes in organization be needed? How could the threatening aspect of a forward-deployed, highly mobile force be attenuated? How could the reserve capabilities be used more effectively?

The Structure 3 changes in the field army were designed to enhance forward defense. The overall force level remained at 12 divisions; however, units were reorganized to better accomplish assigned tasks within this limitation. The previous structure, for example, had included 6 armored infantry, 4 armor, 1 airborne, and 1 mountain division. In the new structure, 2 of the armored infantry divisions were reorganized into straight infantry divisions—one deployed in the Hessian Hills and one in the Bavarian Forest. The operational areas where these units were to fight were not as suitable for vehicles. Drawing from the armored equipment and forces thus released, three new tank regiments were formed, one for each

corps area. These regiments would be available as reserve "points of main effort in defensive operations."<sup>40</sup>

Deployed divisions were also increased in strength. About 10,000 soldiers were added to frontline units by shifting personnel priorities away from support units to frontline combat units. Overall army strength remained at about 300,000-320,000, and total armed forces strength remained at under 500,000, the limitations set on overall West German active forces. Under the new "graduated availability of field army units," brigades and regiments would be maintained at 95 percent, division support units at 75 percent, and corps support troops at approximately 50 percent. The units would be built up in crises by activating the reserves.

The new "graduated availability" concept was possible because of a large buildup in reserves. Reserves had not been essential during the "massive retaliation" nuclear strategy. Moreover, since many early volunteers and enlistees had remained in the service, the initial buildup of prior service veterans was slow. Necessary organizational work had begun in 1957, but a firm decision to build up the reserve force did not occur until 1963. The buildup was slow, but by 1967 a number of reservists had been identified and trained. In 1969 the important decisions were reached on the new reserve structure. Key aspects were the following:

Stand-by and graduated-availability (cadre) unit reserve to fill the active force to fighting strength. For the first year following completion of active duty, most conscripts would be assigned to this alert reserve.<sup>41</sup>

Home guard units (Heimat Schutz Truppe) to supplement the active army structure by providing capability to secure rear areas. Most such security tasks are in the zone that would be under control of the Federal Republic and agreed to by NATO; the units would not be under NATO control initially.

Replacement units (Feldersatz and Wehrleitersatz) to serve as replacement battalions. One is organized for each brigade and higher level unit. In war, these units would be the source of replacements. Replacement battalions were also to be organized at the level of the county induction organization to feed replacements to the battalions assigned at brigade level.

Manpower pool reservists. Normally, reservists serve in the above three categories for 6 years after leaving service, or until reaching a specified age limit; then they leave the active reserve and are listed in the national manpower pool.

Under Structure 3, the German Army would expand from about 320,000 soldiers to more than 900,000 in war. The entire Federal Republic armed forces would increase from some 450,000 to about 1,200,000.

These key aspects were the Structure 3 goals. Progress in building and training the units has been slow, requiring time, funds, equipment, and training, in addition to people. In 1972, a German Force Structure Commission subjected the concept to further detailed review that resulted in modification.<sup>42</sup> Planned manning levels for the reserves are summarized in table 4-4.

**TABLE 4-4. COMPONENTS OF THE ACTIVE ARMY  
AND RESERVE STRUCTURE—1973/74  
ILLUSTRATIVE STRUCTURE 3<sup>1</sup>**

<i>Active Army</i>	
Active	320,000
Alert	15,000
Variable Component <sup>2</sup>	varies
	<hr/>
	340,000
<i>Reserves</i>	
Active Unit Fillers	<sup>3</sup> 275,000
Active Army Replacement Battalions (Bns.)	70,000
County Replacement Bns.	85,000
Home Guard Units	160,000
	<hr/>
	590,000
Total	930,000

<sup>1</sup> This is an illustration compiled from *White Papers* 69, 70, 71/72, and 74/74. See also Lt. Col. Henry Cole, "The Bundeswehr Reserve and Mobilization System" in *Military Review*, Nov. 1977, US Army Command and General Staff College.

<sup>2</sup> *White Paper* 73/74, p. 71.

<sup>3</sup> Includes equipment-holding units.

As indicated, the mobilization program does not significantly increase Federal Republic frontline combat units. Various early estimates equating the Heimat Schutz units to divisions are in error, equivalent to considering primarily police-type elements as army units. Under Structure 3, the expansion of supporting units substantially enhances the German Army's ability to fight conventionally, a significant improvement on the previous structure. Nevertheless, the increase in ground force potential provided by the reserves is the most significant strategic aspect of Structure 3.

#### Chapter 4. Endnotes

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2. *White Paper 1971/1972 on the Security of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Development of the Federal Armed Forces* (Bonn: Federal Ministry of Defense, 1971), p. 24.
3. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092 Germany, sec. 8, "CINCEUR's Comments on Bonn Conversations," 2 July 1951; sec. 9, JCS 2124/52, pp. 404-405.
4. Ibid., p. 405.
5. *Briefing charts on the German Army Structure*, Hamburg: Bundeswehr Fuhrungs Academy, 1980. For a detailed description of US division development following WW II, the basic study is The General Board, ETO, "Type Division Post War Army," 22 April 1946, Discussion contained in USACGSC: RB 61-2, (Fort Leavenworth, KS: US Army Command and General Staff College, 1971).
6. Generalleutnant A. O. S. Schulz, "Nur der Wechsel ist Bestandig 20 Jahre Heeres Konzeption," *Jahr Buch des Heeres*, 1975.
7. Archives: CINCEUR (SACEUR) Comments, 2 July 1951, p. 3.
8. Ibid., Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092 Western Europe, sec. 124 quotes a 29 Jan. 1952 letter approved by the US Cabinet: "Entrance of the



West Germans into NATO would alter the defensive nature of the Alliance, because of West German territorial claims. . . . Of course there is apprehension that the Germans would dominate the EDC and draw it into conflict with the east. . . ."

9. *Verteidigung im Bundnis*, appendix 6.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 113.

11. Force Structure Commission of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, *The Force Structures in the Federal Republic of Germany* (Bonn: German Defense Ministry), p. 109.

12. *Verteidigung im Bundnis*, p. 114.

13. Defense Ministry: *White Paper 1970 on the Security of the Federal Republic of Germany and on the State of the German Federal Armed Forces* (Cologne: Drukhaus Deutz, 1970), p. 61.

14. *Ibid.*

15. Archives: NSC 162/2, p. 22.

16. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092 Western Europe, sec. 102, Conversations—Generals Eisenhower and Collins.

17. USACGSC: RB 61-2, pp. 2-113.

18. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092 Northeast, sec. 261, JSPC 806, 25 Jan. 1954. J1C 558/225, 4 Feb. 1954: "The SHAPE estimate of the Soviet atomic capability is that by 1950 the USSR stockpile will be 500-800 atomic weapons of which . . . 200-300 will be allocated to military targets in Allied Command Europe."

19. Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, *The Uncertain Trumpet* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959). Gen. Taylor, Chief of Staff at the time (1955-59), is limited in his comments: "If the military are assured of their [atomic weapons], it is obvious that the military forces required will be different in size, organization, and equipment from those required if the employment of atomic weapons is uncertain. The services have never been given a clear-cut statement allowing them to plan with complete confidence on the use or limitations of use of atomic weapons. . . . In the absence of clear guidance, the Air Force and, to a lesser extent, the Navy have virtually eliminated their capacity for prolonged effectiveness with conventional weapons, while the Army has endeavored to retain a so-called 'either/or' capability." President Kennedy ordered the Army to develop a new structure in 1961, a high-level direction on details that had been previously Army specifics for Army or Defense Department decisions.

20. *Verteidigung im Bundnis*, p. 84.

21. Ibid., p. 85.
22. Col. John Keliher, *Force Reductions*, pp. 26-57.
23. *Verteidigung im Bündnis*, p. 84.
24. General Schulz, pp. 26-57.
25. Archives: RG 218, CCS 092.2 Radford 381, Evaluation of Viewpoints on Nuclear Warfare for the CJCS.
26. Ibid., Radford, Memo to Sec. Def., 28 Feb. 1957.
27. Ibid., Radford, CM 502-57, 16 July 1957, Memo to Sec. Def.
28. Ibid.
29. Radford, CM 502-57.
30. Ibid.
31. Taylor, *Trumpet*, p. 42.
32. Archives: NSC Group. NSC 5501, Basic National Security Policy, 6 Jan. 1955.
33. Radford, Sec. Def. Letter, 27 Jan. 1956.
34. Archives: NSC Group. NSC 5602, Basic National Security Policy, 1 March 1956; NSC 5707/4, Same title. NSC 6017, 3 Oct. 1959. Gen. Taylor gives a different interpretation to these restatements of policy: "Meanwhile in both 1956 and 1957 the National Security Council performed its annual review. . . . I felt they tended to encourage increased dependence upon the use of atomic weapons and watered down the reference to forces with flexible and selective capabilities." Taylor, *Trumpet*, pp. 42-48.
35. Helmut Schmidt, *Verteidigung oder Vergeltung* (Stuttgart: Seewald Press, 1961), pp. 211-218.
36. Archives: NSC Group. NSC 6017, pp. 46-47.
37. Ibid., p. 215.
38. *Verteidigung im Bündnis*, appendix 6.
39. Ibid.
40. *White Paper 1970*, p. 53.
41. Defense Ministry: *White Paper 1971/72 The Security of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Development of the Federal Armed Forces* (Bonn: Press and Informationsamt, 1971), pp. 51-52. Describes the call-up

system. Detailed description of the system provided by Col. Boser, Federal Ministry of Defense, interview, Nov. 1979.

42. Defense Ministry: *White Paper 1973/74, The Security of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Development of the Federal Armed Forces* (Cologne: Kolnische Verlagsdruckerei, 1974), pp. 70-78. Commission finding summarized, pp. 81-83. The commission report is referred to above.

## **Chapter 5.**

### **Current Developments and Issues:**

#### **Structure 4**

The advent of the latest structure for the Bundeswehr marks full maturity for the German military. Heretofore, major force structure changes within the Bundeswehr and in the German Army followed the direction and timing of changes in NATO or within the Allied armies, particularly those of the United States and UK. After they withdrew from NATO, the French embarked on several variations in ground fighting concept and organization. The Germans also tried some variations in Structure 4.

A number of factors contributed to these German initiatives. Successive Mideast conflicts taught important lessons about high-intensity warfare. Simultaneously, USSR units were being reorganized, no longer mirroring the West's. Also, by the 1970s German planners had identified a series of uniquely German issues, which required German solution. Drawing from the 1970-72 Force Structure Commission (referred to previously), the Defense Ministry undertook three major planning projects: a new army structure, centralization of interservice functions, and the reorganization of medical and health services. At the same time, interest in German strategic and tactical thinking was increasing in the US military. Respect for the new army was growing. The capabilities of the German LEOPARD tank and MARDER infantry fighting vehicle on the materiel side gave increased worth to German units. Off the record, some senior US commanders even evaluated German battalions as equal to the best in NATO.

The German Army planners wanted to strengthen the forward defense capability strategically and tactically. Basing NATO security primarily on effective deterrence was essential. However, "should deterrence fail to dissuade an enemy from attacking, the effectiveness of the military strategic principle of Forward Defense will be ... vital." The German situation was complicated by lack of depth—"About 30 percent of the population and 25 percent of the industrial capacity are located in a 100-kilometers-wide zone west of the Federal Republic's border with the Warsaw Pact States." Hence, NATO

had to be swift and vigorous in reacting to a threat, and from the German viewpoint, "NATO's response must . . . preclude sustained combat operations in the territory of the Federal Republic of Germany, for any such prolonged combat would end by destroying the substance of what was to be defended." Tactically, "[t]o prevent a rapid and decisive success [of a Soviet/Warsaw Pact attack], the defender must be able to rely on forces which are quick to react in countering the attack." For the army, this plan meant placing divisions "close to the border so they can reach defense areas forthwith. All combat forces must be highly mobile and must possess a high degree of firepower."<sup>1</sup>

As a part of the strategy, the Germans also saw a need for a strong counterattack capability. "Under NATO's concept of Forward Defense, the territorial integrity of member nations is to be preserved and, failing this, restored. Restoration of territorial integrity implies the recovery of lost territory, which can only be achieved by forces capable of conducting counter-attacks. The Bundeswehr has to be trained and equipped accordingly. Tactical attack is an element of the strategic defensive."<sup>2</sup> At the extreme, forward defense even implied carrying the battle forward to the attacker's home terrain. Improving the capability to carry out this strategy required the following actions:

- Increasing the number of units available for defense, within the established limits on the overall size (500,000 men) and structure (12 divisions);
- Increasing the number of battalions immediately available for the frontline task;
- Addressing the complexities presented by new technology and greatly increased mobility, which were not easily resolved in the seemingly oversized infantry or armor pure units of Structure 3;
- Improving the capability and usefulness of the reserve structure, drawing on equipment expected as line units were modernized, and using reserve concepts found workable in Germany and other NATO nations during the recent past.

The need for more units grew directly from Soviet and Warsaw Pact modernization. NATO units could no longer rely on qualitative superiority to offset a numerical disadvantage: Soviet weapons merited reevaluation, based upon lethality and survivability in Middle East use. The need also grew from a new appreciation of the importance of not losing the first battle of the next war—another strategic lesson learned from the Arab and Israeli experience.

A basic concept for the new structure had been developed by 1976, and a number of alternatives were identified to be evaluated. The brigade was taken as the basic building block. To increase the potential of the brigade, the frontline commander's ability to fight his unit had to be enhanced. Relieving him of administrative and logistic tasks would accomplish such a goal. Frontline companies would also be made smaller, but the number of companies in a battalion and the number of battalions in a brigade would be increased. Total active brigades would be increased from 33 to 36. Support units at division and corps level would be transferred to vertical management organizations, so these tactical commanders could better direct tactical operations. In addition, the standby reserve system would be expanded and streamlined so that units could quickly reach readiness. Limitations on the previous Structure 3 home guard reserve forces were recognized—the lack of tanks, artillery, and armored protection—and to be addressed. In the active forces, German planners envisioned that tank strength would increase to 2,700 (from 2,052), anti-tank missiles to 2,500 (from 545), and artillery howitzers to 594 (from 540). These changes made up the initial point of departure.<sup>3</sup>

Five brigade Structure 4 models were evaluated between July 1976 and June 1977. In 1978, the Minister of Defense made some basic decisions. The general conclusion was to expand further the "graduated availability" concept for manning units. For the reserves, a major reorganization would be undertaken. The 6 previously poorly equipped "Home Defense Groups" would be increased to 12, and reorganized into "Home Defense Brigades" able "to reinforce NATO formations employed in Forward defense operations." These improvements composed the approved plan.<sup>4</sup>

The increase in units for frontline deployment was impressive. The number of battalions per brigade was increased by one, from three to four battalions. This increase implied a 3-up-1-back approach, rather than 2-up-1-back—a tactical increase of 10 to 12 percent in frontline forces. Armor and mechanized infantry battalions

were increased about 45 percent, from 99 to 144. These changes were partly offset by a decrease from 5 to 4 tanks per platoon and from 54 to 41 tanks per battalion. The overall net increase in frontline forces was one-third; such an increase reflected an underlying strategic evaluation that early frontline unit strength could have the greatest value. Stated in other terms—winning the first battle would be the key in the next war. A summary of the changes is shown in table 5-1.

**TABLE 5-1. COMPARISON OF MANEUVER UNITS:  
STRUCTURES 3 AND 4**

	<i>Structure 3</i>	<i>Structure 4</i>
<i>Brigades</i>		
Armor	12	17
Infantry (Mech.)	12	15
Airborne	3	3
Infantry	6	1 (mountain)
Armor Regiments	3	—
<i>Battalions</i>		
Armor	43	68
Infantry (Mech.)	40	64
Infantry	10	4 (mountain)
Airborne	6	12

Much of the increase was linked to the graduated-availability concept for manning units. The complexity of the revised system of manning was reflected in the plan to increase battalions. Under the new manpower approach, battalions would be maintained at the highest manning level—95 percent. This goal would be accomplished as follows. In peacetime, three battalion headquarters would command four companies each. In periods of tension, a fourth battalion headquarters would be activated, drawing from personnel already on active duty in the other three battalions. The active-duty personnel would be replaced by reservists, plus other activated reservists. The companies would be redistributed, giving each battalion three companies. The company-level combat assets of four battalions would thus be available in peacetime, but at reduced manpower cost at headquarters level.

The new structure also reflected a reevaluation of ground combat needs at the tactical level. New technology would permit greatly

increased accuracy and ranges for tank and antitank weapons. A smaller unit could cover larger areas. Vision-enhancing technology, in particular night-vision and fog-penetrating devices, would extend these capabilities to periods of low visibility. Improved intelligence capabilities would permit expected enemy attack concentrations to be identified, and improved roads and increased numbers of forest trails would facilitate rapid movement of units where needed. Accordingly, mechanized units that were too large would be reduced, as reflected in the smaller tank and infantry battalions.

The changes were planned over a period of 5+ years. The pacing factor would be production of LEOPARD II tanks. As these tanks were used in sufficient numbers, entire brigades would be converted to the new structure. About 650 older M48 tanks would be refitted with 105 mm guns, and along with 2,400 LEOPARD I tanks (105 mm guns), would eventually be assigned to the reserve brigades.

#### **Emergence of a Strong Territorial Army (Reserve Force)**

The creation of a strong reserve force, capable of contributing directly to the frontline defense, was a further innovation in the new force structure. As mentioned earlier, the six previously poorly equipped Home Defense Groups would be reorganized into Home Defense Brigades, making them into additional mechanized infantry brigades. The command structure of the territorial army remained unchanged, consisting of territorial commands, military district commands, and military region and subregion commands.

Each new Home Defense Brigade would contain 5 battalions: 2 armor (41 tanks apiece), 1 mechanized infantry, 1 motorized (trucked) infantry, and 1 field artillery. The previous organization had 4 motorized (trucked) infantry battalions. Peacetime manning for 1 brigade would be 85 percent of its wartime strength. Two brigades would be manned at 65 percent, and the remaining 3 at 52 percent. The headquarters would be manned by active army personnel, but at reduced levels. Several battalions would be fully manned within each brigade, with others selectively manned as equipment holding units (that is, the unit would be manned at about 15 percent strength). In periods of tension, the equipment holding units would be filled with assigned reserves; usually about 120 reservists would be designated for 100 positions, to allow for individuals unable to mobilize. Mobili-



zation practices would be planned, budgeted, and conducted. A typical exercise would involve a battalion that mobilizes and deploys to a major training area and participates in weapons, small-unit, and tactical training—culminating in a field exercise.<sup>5</sup> About 130,000 reservists take part annually in such training; the intention is to increase this number to over 190,000.<sup>6</sup>

The Home Defense Brigades do not exist now as armored infantry brigades. The brigades will be built, drawing from the existing six Home Guard Groups. The process will require several years because of the enormous amounts of additional equipment needed. The guiding factor will be delivery of tanks to the increased number of active units; these deliveries should reach a point in the 1980s that will permit old equipment transfers to these brigades. Six additional similarly equipped brigades are planned, which would be postured as equipment holding units in peacetime. This addition "will be fully implemented by the middle of the 1980s."<sup>7</sup>

Other security elements of the territorial army remain unchanged in Structure 4. To provide security for key areas—such as bridges—security battalions, companies, and platoons are organized. Major changes are indicated in table 5-2.

**TABLE 5-2. TERRITORIAL ARMY COMPARISON OF COMBAT AND SECURITY FORCES**

	<i>Structure 3</i>	<i>Structure 4</i>
Home Defense Groups	6	—
Infantry Battalions	24	—
Home Defense Brigades	—	12
Tank Battalions	—	18
Infantry Battalions	—	30
Artillery Battalions	—	12
Security Battalions (semimobile)	27	—
Home Defense Battalions (mobile)	—	45
Security Companies (semimobile)	300	150
Security Platoons	120	300

Source: *White Paper* 1979, p. 155. Interview, Col. Boser, Ministry of Defense, Nov. 1979.

Structure 4 will provide a major increase in available combat power for forward defense. Strong effective territorial army security forces should free frontline units from excessive rearward concern. The additional mechanized Home Guard Brigades can augment committed divisions or reinforce where needed—strengthening the forward elements. Because the increases are being accomplished within the Territorial Army/Reserve Structure, they not only fall outside the Western European Union peacetime limitations on numbers of active divisions or active soldiers, but also avoid higher costs of fully active units.

### **Insufficiency of Time**

The new structure obtains from a small number of soldiers a maximum number of divisions, brigades, and battalions. Germany has succeeded in achieving an extremely high output of combat capability. With roughly twice the army manpower, the United States maintains only one-third more divisions. Put differently, if the US organization were similar to the German, the United States might maintain 25 divisions instead of its present 16. But the German system for achieving this high output is complicated; hence, concern that the day-to-day capability of these units may be far less than the numbers show is justifiable.

This German efficiency is to be achieved by manning battalion, brigade, and higher staffs at reduced levels. Consequently, additional work output will be required from these staffs by assigning more companies and battalions to them. The extra workload will clearly be a source of further tensions. In contrast, comparable US headquarters are at least 50 percent larger at battalion and division level. Brigade-level headquarters are about equal in size. The disparity is a frequent observation in US-German encounters at unit level.

Further efficiency is achieved by tasking combat units with responsibility to train draftees and recruits. Approximately 4 times a year, each battalion releases 20 to 25 percent of its strength, as soldiers complete their obligatory service period, and receives new men for training at the basic unit level. This training task is normally concentrated in one company, a unit that is marginally combat-ready for some months. In the United States, a large percentage of basic training is done at training centers—units outside the framework of combat-ready forces—by an additional cadre of trainers whose specialty is basic training. From the German unit leaders' viewpoint, this extra training task detracts from the unit's combat mission.

Manpower availability in German units is further reduced by the requirement to develop noncommissioned officers, in particular, as well as junior officers. In extreme cases, one-third of the unit professional leadership might be away on such temporary education assignments. For the remaining leaders, the same tasks and deadlines must be met. A similar burden falls on commanders of US units as well, but to a lesser degree. Most US school attendance is accomplished between assignments to units or staffs. In the United States, the extra manning levels are required and maintained, and provide a reserve of officers and NCOs that can be squeezed when needed.

Other factors contribute to leadership overload in German units. The new generation of equipment and associated advances in technology place a short half-life on experience—an additional pressure on leaders, on the one hand, and an argument for specialization and centralization, on the other. Organizational development, or whatever one calls it, coupled with "management" techniques, has led to increasing numbers of regulations, time delays, and frustration for the leader at the bottom of the organization—the company commander. Along with efficiency and management, the need for management information—reports, analyses, and explanations—has also increased. The cumulative impact has not always been positive, focusing unnecessary management and leadership time on explanations of past actions rather than on constructive future programs.

In 1978 the German Minister of Defense formed an independent commission to examine leadership issues. The commission was to determine the following:

- Means to increase leadership initiative and responsibility;
- Methods to widen freedom for decisionmaking;
- Possibilities for decentralizing leadership responsibility.

The commission completed its work in late 1979, providing additional understanding of the complexity and significance of the burden on leadership. A number of general and specific recommendations were made. Important interim actions taken by the Defense Ministry were also noted.<sup>8</sup>

The problem does not permit an easy solution. If the Structure 4 improvements are to be achieved, additional work at all levels is re-

quired. The new structure will increase the demands on leaders' time at unit levels. The suggestion of reducing 10 divisions to 8, although mentioned in informal discussions, is strategically unacceptable. An alternative would be to increase manning from 495,000 to about 520,000. The extra 25,000 spaces would be used to provide individuals for training, schooling, and additional tasks. Another possibility would be to expand the length of service commitment from the present 15 months to 18 or 24 months. This approach would reduce the training task and provide relief of another potential problem—insufficient future manpower.

### **Manpower Sufficiency**

Germany may lack the manpower to continue manning its forces at present strength. Certain problems and shortages may in fact create pressures for force structure reductions. The key issues are shortages in regulars and NCOs and projected shortages in available manpower for the draft.

The first issue concerns the ratio of regulars to draftees in the force. The current army strength is 341,000. The NATO goal is that 60 percent of this total force be regulars and short-service volunteers—officers, NCOs, and soldiers who will normally serve more than 2 years and provide some professional competence. This 60-percent goal affects achievement of high training standards and high force operational readiness, which are necessary attributes of combat units for a forward defense on short notice. Germany itself has set a lower goal of 55 percent regulars.

The Federal Republic has not fully succeeded in achieving its desired level of regulars. The shortfall has been made up by substituting conscripts for regulars. Regulars presently compose only 48.5 percent of the army structure; the goal, as previously noted, is 55 percent. In absolute numbers, this is a shortfall of 15,000 to 25,000 enlistments, or roughly 15 percent, a year. The impact of this shortage is aggravated by the way it is absorbed. Positions calling for experienced, mid-level supervisors are filled by junior NCOs or draftees who are nearing the end of their 15-month conscription. Over 25 percent of the structure thus could be undermanned professionally. The impact is also aggravated by the complexity of modern military organizations, equipment, and battle techniques. Ignorant mistakes while using antitank missiles or during tank, artillery, or air defense gunnery training can lead to enormously expensive maintenance problems. Accordingly, some staff studies state a need for more di-

rected, controlled, and centralized training. The staff tendency is to oppose development of the self-reliant initiative that is needed for high-intensity warfare. These issues are under intense study. Recent Bundeswehr strength data is tabulated in table 5-3.

**TABLE 5-3. REGULAR FORCE AND CONSCRIPT COMPONENTS—BUNDESWEHR**

	<i>Regulars</i> (Goal: 55%)	<i>Conscripts</i> (Goal: 45%)
1969	49.1	50.9
1970	54.2	45.8
1971	53.7	46.3
1972	52.6	47.4
1973	52.7	47.3
1974	56.1	43.8
1975	52.4	47.6
1976	48.5	51.5
1977	48.8	51.2
1978	51.4	48.6

Source: *White Paper* 1979, p. 222.

The major shortfall in volunteers had been concentrated in the 21-month or 2-year enlistments. The overall force structure calls for 207,376 regulars; 38,073 of these are to be short-term volunteers, the remainder (169,303) long-term career regulars. Recent actions have reduced the short-term shortfall considerably: "By offering vocational qualifications ranging from a journeyman's certificate to a technician's diploma and subsequent vocational experience, which is recognized in civilian life and can be put to use in service assignments, by providing vocational advancement schemes for a period up to three years following termination of service, and by paying a transition allowance to ex-servicemen, the Bundeswehr has been recruiting ... with some success." Another important motivator has been the recent "Act on Job Reservation for Conscripts," a form of veteran preference that normally guarantees the soldier will not lose his place in his civilian career during his military service term.<sup>9</sup> This program applies to conscripts and those who enlist for 2 years.

An NCO shortage is also a serious army problem, requiring intensive effort to overcome. One of every five NCO positions in the army cannot be filled. Some staff and technical position vacancies are being analyzed to determine if civilian substitutes are feasible.

With respect to officer strength, two issues exist: overstrength in certain year groups, and recruitment. In the period 1955-60, a large number of young men needed to be brought in and trained as officers. The resulting overstrength in those year groups is enormous and presents special personnel management problems. The net effect is that during the next 15 years, fewer officers will be retiring, promotions will be slower, and reassignment opportunities will be fewer. Recruiting young men to become officers is proceeding satisfactorily, although shortfalls have emerged in recent years. For high-interest careers, such as air force pilot, nearly 100 applicants apply for each position. Interest across the board is high, primarily because of the integration of university studies into the preparatory education program of all new officers.<sup>10</sup>

By far the most serious foreseeable problem is obtaining conscripts. The next few years will not be difficult; the number of young men eligible for call-up will continue to increase until 1983. After 1985, however, the age-group sizes become progressively smaller, and by 1988 the Bundeswehr will not be able to obtain its 207,000 conscripts annually. This forecast of decreasing age-group sizes assumes that as the population from which volunteers come decreases, the number of volunteers will also decline, all else being equal. The situation is summarized in table 5-4.

**TABLE 5-4. A COMPARISON OF AVAILABLE WITH  
REQUIRED CONSCRIPT MANPOWER**

<i>Induction Year</i>	<i>Manpower Available</i>	<i>Overage or Shortfall</i>
1981	270,000	+ 20,000
1982	280,000	+ 30,000
1983	285,000	+ 35,000
1984	270,000	+ 20,000
1985	270,000	+ 20,000
1986	260,000	+ 10,000
1987	250,000	—
1988	230,000	- 20,000
1989	210,000	- 40,000
1990	190,000	- 60,000

Source: *White Paper* 1979, p. 226.

The ability of the German populace to support its present force levels in 15 years will be severely challenged by this major reduction in manpower, where available manpower is virtually cut in half. The Defense Ministry is examining alternatives, and those being informally discussed range widely. Required manpower could be reduced by lengthening the draft period from 15 to 18 months, the length used during the Berlin crisis. The large number of conscientious objectors could be screened for those who could serve in partially related military functions, although the idea is politically repugnant. ("There is an inherent conflict between compulsory military service and conscientious objection.") Under the terms of recent law, conscientious objectors were to be called for alternative civilian duty; unfortunately, the Federal Constitutional Court recently set this law aside. This legislation must be reenacted, or, as an alternative, women could be inducted. Under the present constitution, women are prohibited from serving in the military services. A few dozen women are civilian doctors. However, "The Federal Government rejects proposals for the introduction of a general national service scheme under which young women would also be required to perform service in the public interest. . . . A liberal and democratic state does not impose heavier burdens on its citizens than are necessary."<sup>11</sup>

Whatever solution is adopted, it certainly should not be a force structure reduction. Increases in the active forces would be a particularly heavy social burden for the next generation of German youth. They would be required to make a substantial sacrifice while being cognizant of the less demanding situations in other NATO nations. A thoughtful evaluation of the future political implications of such proposals is in order.

### **Sufficiency of Funds**

The Germans possess ample economic resources; such a fact is unquestionable. The indicators—low inflation, high growth rate, high average wages, strong currency—are all strong when Germany is compared not only with the Warsaw Pact countries, but also with all other NATO Allies. When the 1980 budget was first officially disclosed, disappointment was considerable, particularly within the United States, that a larger share was not earmarked for defense. The budget is recognized as substantial, the second largest in NATO, and does include a sizable component for modernization.

The Federal Republic has advanced a number of reasons for maintaining the present funding level. For several years, the budget

has included heavy spending in excess of revenues. To control the resulting inflationary pressure of these expenditures, and to bring the budget more into balance, the government initiated actions in 1980. The present policy calls for a reduction of government spending below the growth rate of the economy "in order to avoid endangering the once more tightening price situation by overtaxing the money and capital markets or perhaps by awarding too great a volume of construction contracts."<sup>12</sup>

The Germans argue that over 80 percent of the NATO long-range goals for required force modernization have already been met. The Germans have consistently provided 30 percent of past and planned defense budgets for modernization. NATO criticism—"failure to meet stated goals and expectations, lower growth rate in real terms, subproportionate growth by comparison with the overall budget, declining percentage of the GNP"—is set aside by the Germans as not directly relevant to the actual force effectiveness achieved.<sup>13</sup> Much more could clearly be done to man and equip units of the new expanded reserve structure in anticipation that 5 years from now the 30-percent modernization goal may be difficult to achieve. In the mid-1980s a larger percentage of the defense budget will probably be needed for pay, to attract more soldiers in the forecasted smaller labor market.

The Federal Republic planners also argue that Germany continues to bear a large share of NATO infrastructure costs, a share that approaches that of the United States. At present, "26 percent of the NATO infrastructure cost is paid out of the German defense budget. . . . An increase of the German share in common projects—large as it is in any case—would change the German position in the Alliance." The Germans see this increase as undesirable, with the "suggestion of a preferential bilateral relationship with the United States." An equally plausible counterargument can be advanced that since ultimate title to NATO projects within Germany resides with the Federal Republic, the German contribution should be larger.<sup>14</sup>

The Germans have resisted the argument that the greater German economic power justifies larger defense outlays. They point out that even though the gross domestic products (per capita) of Denmark, Canada, and the Netherlands are of the same magnitude as Germany's, these countries contribute less (per capita) than the Germans. The Germans also argue that the United States must pay for its role as a world leader, a role that calls for a much larger per capi-



ta defense burden. They assign priority to maintaining a healthy and prosperous economy, an example of freedom and prosperity on the boundary of Warsaw Pact economic stagnation.<sup>15</sup> This priority reduces funds available for defense.

### **Chapter 5. Endnotes**

1. Defense Ministry: *White Paper 1975-1976 on The Security of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Development of the Federal Armed Forces* (Bonn: Federal Ministry of Defense, 1976), pp. 85-86.
2. Ibid. p. 83.
3. Ibid., p. 114. "On 24 January 1975, the Bundestag by a unanimous vote ... introduced a standby readiness system to replace the former ... Ready Reserve Service. Under this system, conscripts that have completed basic military service ... may be subjected to a twelve-month standby readiness obligation. The decision as to whether and to what extent personnel in standby readiness are to be recalled rests with the Federal Minister of Defense. To ensure that they will be available at all times the men in standby readiness are subject to certain restraints and obligations."
4. Defense Ministry: *White Paper 1979 on The Security of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Development of the Federal Armed Forces* (Bonn: Federal Ministry of Defense, 1979), pp. 149-168.
5. Witnessed by author. Exercise conducted 19-29 Feb. 1980.
6. *White Paper 1979*, pp. 154-156.
7. Ibid., p. 155.
8. Gen. Ulrich de Maiziere, *Kommission Des Bundesministers der Verteidigung zur Stärkung der Führungsfähigkeit und Entscheidungsverantwortung in der Bundeswehr*, BMV, 31 Oct. 1979.
9. *White Paper 1979*, pp. 228-230.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Dr. Haupt, Federal Republic Ministry of Defense. Interview with the author, Nov. 1979.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.

## **Chapter 6.**

### **Future Questions**

One can sense a dichotomy of major proportions emerging in German strategic thinking. On the one hand, one recognizes the reasonable balance that has been achieved in matching the present force structure to the needs of NATO, and bringing complex and divergent management, manpower, economic, and strategic needs into equilibrium. On the other hand, one sees indications that not enough is being done, that the present situation is perhaps too convenient, and that Germany will be called upon for a much larger leadership role, of proportions yet to be defined. How this dichotomy will be resolved is a question for the future.

Sensing this dichotomy, many strategists outside Europe question the size of the German Army. Is it large enough? What does one have in mind when considering an increase: More divisions? Faster growth or better use of the reserves? More help in areas of combat service support? Assimilation of certain functions completely, for example, rail, telecommunications, fixed-point air defense? What would the impact be on Allied contributions to NATO and Allied force structures worldwide—and why? Aren't the Germans already contributing fully, short of dominating the land forces of NATO or moving to US-German bilateralism?

Why do these questions arise? Insufficient ways to meet worldwide military needs can be constantly frustrating to the United States. Much of the US defense budget seems to be tied to the NATO commitment. The trend will be for more; the 3-percent increase called for by President Carter showed he recognized the Soviet qualitative force increases and the need for an alliancewide response. Since Germany is prospering, its economy is strong, its leadership is recognized, and strategically it has the most at stake, perhaps Germany should be encouraged to provide more forces. As indicated in the previous chapter, such an inclination does not recognize the increases under way in the present programs or the complexity of the problems now being faced. It also fails to grapple with the importance to the Germans of Ostpolitik.

The proposal for a larger German Army poses strategic questions. What would be its mission? Why would it be needed? For ex-

ample, if the Germans increased their NATO contribution, perhaps the other Allies would seize the opportunity for further reductions. Already the Belgian, Dutch, and British forces have been reduced, either through organizational changes aimed at "economizing and modernizing" or as a result of lower manning priorities. German historians see a parallel in the earlier Prussian and Austrian experience: Because Prussia and Austria maintained ample forces, the other smaller members of the German Federation reduced their own armies to mere police forces. Moreover, the German constitution is specific in limiting use of German units to self-defense. Even deployment of German units to Norway or Turkey could raise basic constitutional issues. Deployment outside the tight NATO context—for example, for a Yugoslavian need—would confront even more complex political and constitutional opposition. These issues require examination and resolution to free the Germans from constraints that may not be appropriate in the future.

Increasing the active army size would also conflict with the Western European Union and European Defense Community general limitation on the size of German forces. That limit was set at not more than 12 divisions, and about 500,000 men, in the active forces. NATO has also discussed imposing limits on the German component of total NATO ground forces: Originally not more than one-fourth, and more recently not more than 50 percent (the withdrawal of France changed the ratios), of NATO central European forces could be German. In the past (as indicated in previous discussion), the Federal Republic had gone to the WEU to obtain agreement on increases in the size of forces (for example, ship size). Would the other European nations agree to authorize a larger army? An affirmative answer to this question would involve a full range of political issues, pressures within the alliance, countercharges from the East Germans and other Warsaw Pact members about hypothetical German aggressions, and undercutting of Ostpolitik. Ignoring the WEU and EDC limitations could be equally odious, raising all the same issues anyway.

The French reaction should also be considered. German officials state, off the record, that the French are strongly opposed to any substantial increase in the size of German forces. The initial strong French opposition to German rearmament has already been discussed. The Germans consider the French political situation delicate. With the large role and influence of the French Communist Party, major force increases by the Germans could be used to fuel

historical antagonisms. This thinking, wedded as it is to the status quo, ignores some interesting potentials in today's politics. At the level of head of state, the relationship between the French President and the German Chancellor is excellent, built on long years of close association. France's independent foreign policy is expensive, and therefore subject to constant reevaluation. At the military level, contacts between the French and NATO are widespread and continuous, although the needed logistical cooperation has not resulted in real-world facilities and bases. The French clearly profit from the NATO force buffer between their borders and those of the Warsaw Pact countries. Accordingly, if they strongly oppose increases in German forces, they could perhaps offer to reopen to NATO use of essential French bases and facilities. The Germans should take the initiative in achieving such a reopening now, either independently or in conjunction with NATO.

In the near term, the planned modernization of the reserves offers potential strategic options. The reorganization of 12 brigades by the mid-1980s, the equivalent of 4 divisions, will enhance considerably the conventional capability of the alliance. These units could be used to reinforce active German divisions after an initial conventional battle, increasing NATO capability for dealing with Warsaw Pact follow-on attacks. Careful planning and close alignment of reserve brigades to active divisions would be required. The management of reserve personnel assignments would be complex, because reserve units tend to be headquartered nearer the rearward population concentrations. The location of additional kaserns, which would have to be built anyway, should be coordinated with such a concept. Coordination with NATO would also be needed; heretofore, the decisions with respect to reserves had been largely outside formal NATO purview. This type of planning would help bridge the gap between a flexible-response strategy, which sees the threat of early use of nuclear weapons as enhancing deterrence, and the strategic viewpoint that a more substantial conventional option is essential.

The expansion of the reserves also offers other strategic possibilities. As already noted, several of these brigades will be manned at high levels—one at 85 percent and several at 65 percent. With the reserve units aligned and integrated with active units, and capable of assuming their NATO wartime mission, the potential exists for freeing active brigades or divisions quickly for use as a reserve within NATO. This capability could have major significance, strengthening NATO in the event of threats on its flanks, such as in Turkey.

Developing the details for these types of active-reserve force concepts is the subject for future study. As with the initial rearmament work under the German Dienstelle Blank in 1951-55, essential planning and management actions could be addressed in the future. Implementation, with all the associated domestic and international political problems, would depend on and await the international crisis that would require it.

## **Appendix 1**

### **EARLY US POLICY GUIDELINES**

Recognition of the Soviet threat grew slowly, and was not considered seriously until 1948. This fact presented a particular problem for US leadership. A mass education campaign about Soviet actions and potentialities would be needed. The public urgently needed to understand Soviet goals. As stated in one NSC document:

The defeat of the axis left the world with two great centers of power, the US and the USSR. The USSR, drawing on its formidable material power and facilitated by the chaotic aftermath of the war, [has as its] ultimate objective ... world domination. The US is the only source of power capable of successfully opposing this Communist goal. The vast areas of Europe and Asia are of great potential, which, if added to the existing strength of the Soviet world, would enable the USSR to become so superior in manpower, resources, and territory that the prospect for survival of the US would be slight.<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, it was also acknowledged that the danger of war was not immediate. The Russians were burdened with repairing war damage, dismantling German factories as "war reparations," and consolidating Communist Party control in the Eastern European satellite countries. Analysts judged them unwilling to commit additional resources to taking over and occupying more of Europe against the risk of war with Britain and the United States and possible atomic retaliation—at least until the Soviet consolidation of Europe. This tone underlies the main US policy evaluations of the time. For example, from NSC 20 (18 August–23 November 1948):

... the Soviet Union is not planning deliberate armed action, but rather seeking to gain its aims through political action and military intimidation. These factors entail the danger of war through miscalculation, and accordingly, military action is a possibility. Key judgments:

- The Soviet Union can't achieve victory without decisive destruction of the US, as indicated by the results of WW I and II;

- WWII destruction in Russia required a major rebuild effort;
- War weariness among Russian people;
- Soviets have shown preference for political means of gaining control in Eastern Europe;
- Military action doesn't assure the type of control desired; invasion entails antagonism and requirement for large occupation forces;
- Red Army morale is not up to sustained occupation duty;
- USSR will eventually suffer an economic collapse.<sup>2</sup>

US actions and those of its Allies were considered adequate. In a subsequent NSC 20 series evaluation it was held that "Had the US not taken vigorous means ... to stiffen the resistance of Western Europe ... most likely it would have been captured by the Communist movement." "During this period (1948) intelligence estimates attributed to Soviet forces the capability of overrunning in about six months all of continental Europe, the Near East as far as Cairo, and important parts of the Far East." If the USSR were engaged against the US, however, "Soviet capabilities might prove unequal to holding the areas."<sup>3</sup>

The US answer to the threat was twofold. First, at the overall strategic level, the guiding policy would be to weaken the Soviets and strengthen the Allies through political action. Second, however, if war occurred, the objective would be to eliminate Soviet domination and destroy the Communist Party in non-Communist countries. Key points were outlined in NSC 7.

- Defeat of Soviet-directed world Communism is vital to the security of the US;
- The US should take the lead in organizing a world-wide counteroffensive aimed at mobilizing and strengthening our own and anti-Communist forces in the non-Soviet world;
- Give priority to Western Europe. Adopt and implement the European Recovery Program. Strongly endorse the Western European Union and actively encourage its development and expansion as an anti-Communist association of states;

— Work out a formula that would provide for:

- Military action by the US in the event of unprovoked armed attack against the nations in the Western Union or against other select non-Communist nations;
- Initiation of political and military conversations with such nations with a view toward coordination of anti-Communist efforts;
- Assistance in building upon the military potential of select non-Communist nations by provision of machine tools to rehabilitate their arms industries, technical information to facilitate standardization of arms, and by furnishing military equipment and technical advice.<sup>4</sup>

Implementing these policy statements with specific programs and war plans was not easy. The cost of necessary US warmaking capabilities appeared enormous. In deciding which specific military means to buy, Secretary of Defense James V. Forrestal requested guidance from the President:

It is imperative that a comprehensive statement of national policy be prepared, particularly as it relates to the Soviet Union, and that the statement specify and evaluate the risks, state objectives, and outline missions to be followed. Such a statement is needed to guide the National Military Establishment in determining the level and character of armament which it would seek.

The Secretary of Defense was facing competing Navy-Air Force budgetary demands put to him by Gen. Bradley, Chairman of the new Joint Staff. As he analyzed alternatives further, he also noted that devoting a percentage of funds to arming Western Europe might prove more economical and sounder strategically, "rather than to create additional divisions of our own."<sup>5</sup> Further attempts were made but the guidance did not become more specific—at least not until after the start of the Korean War, the revision of NSC 68 in the fall of 1950, and the major buildup of US forces worldwide.<sup>6</sup>

NSC 68 provided the first attempt to be specific about goals and military objectives. With respect to policy, it reaffirmed the NSC 20 goals:

- (1) To reduce the power and influence of the USSR to limits which no longer constitute a threat to the peace and national



independence and the stability of the world family of nations, and (2) To bring about a basic change in the conduct of international relations by the government in power in Russia, to conform with the purposes and principles set forth in the UN charter.<sup>7</sup>

The military objectives in the event of war were equally broad and sweeping:

- To defend the Western Hemisphere and essential allied areas in order that war-making capabilities can be developed;
- To provide and protect a mobilization base while the offensive forces for victory are being built up;
- To conduct offensive operations to destroy vital Soviet warmaking capability and to keep the enemy off balance until the full offensive strength of the US and its allies can be brought to bear;
- To defend and maintain the lines of communication and base areas necessary to the execution of the above task;
- To provide such aid to allies as is essential to the execution of their role in the above task.<sup>8</sup>

#### **Appendix 1. Endnotes**

1. Archives: NSC Group. NSC 7, "The Position of the United States with Respect to Soviet-Directed World Communism, 30 Mar. 1948."
2. Archives: NSC Group. NSC 20, Department of State. "Factors Affecting the Nature of the US Defense Arrangements in the Light of Soviet Policies," 25 Aug. 1948.
3. Archives: NSC Group. NSC 20/3, Executive Secretary, p.3.
4. Archives: NSC Group. NSC 7, 30 Mar. 1948.
5. Archives: NSC Group. NSC 20, "Appraisal of Degree and Character of Military Preparedness," Sec. Def. letter to President, 10 July 1948.

6. Archives: NSC Group. NSC 68, "US Objectives and Programs for National Security," 14 Apr. 1950. The effectiveness of US programs for National Economic Cooperation Act, 1948, and Mutual Defense Assistance Act, 1949 was yet to be determined. "Considering the Soviet Union's military capability, the long-range Allied military objectives in Western Europe must envisage increased military strength in the area sufficient to possibly deter the Soviet Union from a war or, in any event, to delay materially, the overrunning of Western Europe and, if feasible, to hold a bridgehead on the Continent," p. 19 ff.

7. Archives: NSC Group. NSC 68, *ibid.*, p. 61.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 55.

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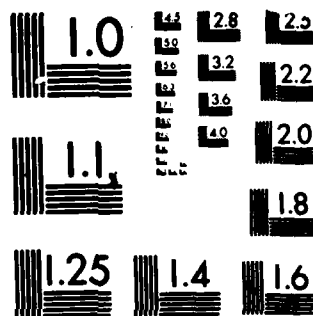
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## **Appendix 2**

### **NATO NUCLEAR STRATEGY: EARLY ISSUES**

In January 1953, the United States had a new administration, which had promised a new look at defense needs. One result was a detailed evaluation of the European situation by Ambassador Draper. His report was quickly completed and given to the President by June 1953. He identified political unity, economic equilibrium, and an adequate defense posture as specific goals to be sought. His rationale with respect to defense would have major significance.<sup>1</sup>

The new administration wanted a sound military strategy with reduced forces. The following issues involved NATO:

Are the United States and its NATO allies, with their greater industry and resources as compared with the Soviets, able and willing to provide the forces needed to deter Soviet aggression or to meet it successfully if necessary on the field of battle?

Are the resources presently available for Western defense being put to the best use, for the best weapons, under the best strategy, and for a mission which can successfully be carried out?<sup>2</sup>

On the first issue, the Allies lacked six to nine divisions for the D-day D+30 forces. These forces would be essential for an effective defense of the Rhine, with the front (it was hoped) being stabilized at this point. The rearmament of Germany would provide those forces. But Draper appeared more interested in the second issue—how the battle would be fought, and specifically, when and how the use of atomic weapons would be initiated and what the force implication of their use would be.

The debate over use of atomic weapons in NATO had been under way for some time. General Bradley, the former Chief of the Joint Staff, believed destruction would be so great on both sides that NATO force requirements would not be reduced. To clarify the issues, studies were undertaken by SHAPE and the JCS. Upon returning from his European evaluations, Ambassador Draper had obtained a copy of the SHAPE study, which he attached to his report to the President.<sup>3</sup>

The SHAPE study cited three alternatives:

Continue to build toward the present force requirements, recognizing that the forces actually to be realized will be incapable of carrying out the defense tasks envisaged for them and accepting the great risk inherent in this situation [This alternative was discarded.];

Reduce the area to be defended. [This alternative had been the US approach up through 1950 and early 1951. It was now] correctly disqualified on political grounds in that it would leave a number of NATO countries without expectation or hope of a defense of their national territories and thereby seriously jeopardizing European popular support of NATO.

Evolve a new approach to NATO defense. [This alternative was recommended.]<sup>4</sup>

The proposed approach would be to compensate for the shortfall in ground forces through the immediate and abundant use of atomic weapons. A well-trained, fully combat-ready force would be deployed, armed with the means and the authority to meet an attack with the full tactical use of atomic weapons. By destroying the initial attack through a strong atomic counterattack, and "fully exploiting the effects, SACEUR would expect to maintain the integrity of its forces and of vital areas, and to dislocate, canalize, and retard Soviet advances. This action would be combined with an interdiction effort which would prevent enemy reinforcements from being moved to the front from the Soviet zone of the interior." Eventually an offensive would be launched by all arms to complete destruction of the enemy.<sup>5</sup>

The JCS, now headed by Admiral Radford, noted that the plan would be useful only during the then-current period of atomic superiority. As to forces, more ground divisions would be needed on D-day than were in the existing plan, naval requirements would be about the same, and Air Force requirements would also be larger (plus 30 percent). Forces for D+90, however, could be substantially reduced. These conclusions had been reached tentatively in the SHAPE study as well, but required further review. The JCS-initiated study confirming the general conclusion on force requirements stated that "In order to realize the potential benefits from the tactical use of atomic weapons, fully trained and combat-ready forces must be deployed on the defense line in sufficient strength to force the enemy to concen-

trate to the point of presenting lucrative targets." Forces would also be needed to exploit conventionally the effects of an atomic counter-attack while the Soviet forces were off-balance. The JCS concluded: "The availability of large quantities of atomic munitions in 1956 will neither open the way to an entirely new and different strategy . . . nor permit a reduction in force requirements." However, "Large scale use of atomic weapons would compensate, but only in part, for the gap between estimated force requirements and attainable force goals."<sup>6</sup>

The new US nuclear strategy was adopted in the "Basic National Security Policy," NSC 162/2, approved 30 October 1953. It notes that "NATO and associated forces are now sufficient to make aggressive action in Europe costly for the USSR and to create a greater feeling of confidence and security among the Western European peoples." Even though significant progress had been made, however, military strength was not sufficient to cope with full-scale Soviet aggression. Western European efforts, coupled with military assistance, would help build forces that were affordable; however, this "certainly could not be expected to produce forces adequate to prevent the initial loss of a considerable portion of . . . Western Europe in the event of a full-scale Soviet attack. The major deterrent to aggression against Western Europe is the manifest determination of the United States to use its atomic capability and massive retaliatory striking power if the area is attacked. . . . However, the presence of US forces in Western Europe makes a contribution other than military to the strength and cohesion of the Free World coalition."<sup>7</sup> The United States set forth the following policy on the use of nuclear weapons:

In the event of hostilities, the United States will consider nuclear weapons to be as available for use as other munitions. Where the consent of an ally is required for the use of these weapons from US bases on the territory of such ally, the United States should promptly obtain the advance consent of such ally for such use. The United States should also seek, as and when feasible, the understanding and approval of this policy by free nations.<sup>8</sup>

The NATO strategy was finally revised in 1956.

## **Appendix 2. Endnotes**

1. Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092, sec. 165, Msg. Ridgeway to Bradley.
2. Ibid., pp. 4, 417.
3. Ibid. Also, Archives: RG 218, JCS, CCS 092 Western Europe, sec. 165, Msg. Ridgeway to Bradley.
4. JCS 2073/630, pp. 4, 419.
5. Ibid., pp. 4, 421.
6. Ibid., pp. 4, 425-426.
7. Archives: NSC Group. NSC 162/2, Basic National Security Policy, p. 11.
8. Ibid., p. 22. Secretary Dulles elaborated on the strategy, giving its "massive retaliation" characterization. On 16 March 1954, in a State Department news conference, he made clear the difference between the US "capacity to retaliate instantly" and the fact that other options would also be considered in all situations. Press Release No. 142.



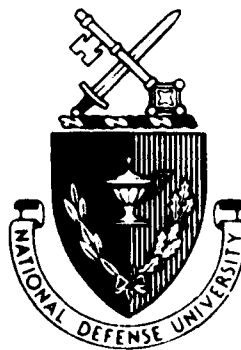
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