KURT SCHUMACHER AND THE WEST GERMAN REARMAMENT
MEDIA ANGST

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Kurt Schumacher and the West German Rearmament Debate 1948-1952: The
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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

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1948-1952: The Rise of U.S. Diplomatic and Media Angst
by
Schorsch L. Kaffenberger
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Following the end of World War II, divided Germany faced multiple reconstruction challenges, which the Allies played a critical role. One of the most poignant obstacles was overseeing the political developments rapidly evolving in West Germany. Kurt Schumacher and Konrad Adenauer, West Germany’s leading political figures in the early cold war period presented different views on how the future of Germany should be shaped. The central theme of this research analyzes the rearmament debate and how a small circle of American officials and governmental departments strategically utilized print media outlets to implement its foreign policy between 1948-1952. The controversy of re-integrating West Germans into military units was a critical issue for Allied personnel and ordinary Germans alike that addressed another concern, German reunification. On the other side of divided Germany, Soviet control in the East is put into context and how willing and prepared the Soviets were militarily to counter any conflict with the Western Allies. The media response in both the U.S. and West Germany polarized the different approaches to the West German rearmament debate between Kurt Schumacher and Konrad Adenauer. The U.S. remained committed to championing Adenauer’s conservatism, using newspaper articles to stigmatize Schumacher who was a staunch opponent to Soviet communism. Schumacher’s aims of uniting East and West Germany deserve a close examination, particularly at a time when he posed a special problem for U.S. personnel.
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INTRODUCTION

In the years following World War II, print media played a vital role in shaping public perception concerning efforts aimed at rebuilding Germany. In the United States, major media outlets such as the New York Times, Washington Post, and Time consistently promoted American values like democracy, progress, and capitalism. The postwar years posed a daunting task in the Allied sectors of West Germany for German civilians and Allied occupation troops alike with regard to economic, social, and political reconstruction. One of the immediate challenges for occupation forces in West Germany was to prevent any further outbreaks of combat from erupting with the Soviets. Concern over military rearmament in West Germany was multifaceted because it was also contingent on whether German reunification was going to be achieved and how German politicians responded to the controversial debate. As early as 1948, anxiety over West German rearmament became increasingly apparent in political and public debates throughout Germany and the United States, which raised critical questions: whether or not West Germany was prepared for this national defense measure, and to what lengths the U.S. was prepared to orient its foreign policy toward West Germany. Rhetoric throughout print media in the U.S. reiterated strong support for rearmament between 1949-1952, while German publications such as Die Zeit, Lüneberger Zeitung, and Neue Vorwärts were equally vocal in criticizing U.S. and other Western officials for supporting West German rearmament.

This thesis will analyze the debate surrounding postwar rearmament in West Germany, and one of its fiercest political opponents, Kurt Schumacher of the Social Democratic Party (SPD). In addition to analyzing Schumacher’s outspoken opposition to Allied proposals for implementing West German military units and soldiers, this research will highlight U.S. attempts to discredit Schumacher’s popularity throughout West Germany. U.S. newspapers in West Germany, including the Neue Zeitung were effective in applying sophisticated psychological approaches to curb Schumacher’s growing influence in the late 1940’s and early 1950’s. Channeling American foreign policy through the media was largely supported by U.S. government agencies like the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Psychological Warfare Division (PWD), which later evolved into the Information Control
Division (ICD). To assure the success of American foreign policy, these organizations utilized the media to showcase Allied support for Konrad Adenauer, the conservative leader of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) that formed in 1945.

Newspaper coverage relating to West German rearmament in the U.S. and West Germany expressed major concerns over the threat of communism in the immediate postwar era, and discreetly promoted public support in creating West German military units as early as 1948. In 1948, West German conservative newspaper outlets including Frankfurter Rundschau, Die Welt, and pro-CDU Süddeutsche Zeitung (SDZ) pointed out that an effective defense of Western Europe was only possible with the contribution and integration of West German troops. The previous year American military leaders had investigated the role that West Germany and Japan might play in the strategic balance between Russia and the U.S. West German rearmament was further analyzed by the U.S. National Security Council, particularly over the importance of re-establishing German military units. High-level meetings between the Allied and German representatives took place in Europe and the United States throughout the early Cold War period to negotiate support, opposition, and address potential setbacks stemming from the rearmament debate that continued to intensify and circulate throughout print media. The journalistic denunciation of rearmament in the West German media also backfired on U.S. personnel, including Military Governor Lucius Clay, Secretary of State Dean Acheson, and John McCloy who all supported re-integrating West German troops as part of a larger European army to protect Western Europe from communism. The concern of rearmament in its early phase was viewed by political parties like the SPD as a doomed Allied strategy that would provoke Russian military strength and trigger a resurgence of right-wing sentiment among former soldiers who remained committed to Nazism. This concern was not only reflected in Schumacher’s speeches, but also in speeches that other postwar SPD leaders like Carlo Schmid and Erich Ollenhauer gave, as well as in letters ordinary Germans personally wrote to Schumacher.

Soviet control in East Germany prompted the Western Allies to counter communism with various economic, cultural, and political incentives for West Germany. Maintaining a

strong military presence in West Germany created opportunities for the U.S. to analyze and assess what measures were effectively working to simultaneously counter Soviet influence and rebuild West Germany. The involvement of U.S. agencies including as the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Department of State, and Psychological Warfare Division (PWD) worked jointly on formulating strategies that would build a stronger alliance with other Western powers. Some of the early measures initiated by the Western Allies to impede Soviet advances in Germany consisted of a currency reform in 1948, the Marshall Plan, and the Berlin Airlift.

For German political leaders on the left like Kurt Schumacher, rearmament for West Germany was perilous and threatened any potential for German reunification, which he saw as Germany’s most important postwar goal. An overwhelming positive reaction to U.S. aid among large parts of the West German population undermined Schumacher’s aspirations of gaining confidence from the German public. The aim of the Social Democrats rebuilding Germany independent of Allied involvement were considered dangerous by U.S. officials who wanted to maintain a strong presence in their occupied zone. When Schumacher assumed leadership of the SPD in 1946, his commitment to Marxist principles was still misunderstood as sympathies for Russian communism. U.S. Military Governor in the American Zone, Lucius Clay, was convinced that the Social Democrats would ultimately side with the communists in the East. Schumacher was convinced that unification could be achieved peacefully by negotiating with the Soviet Union and having free elections throughout East and West Germany, rather than Germans taking up arms in the West as a means of securing peace. Schumacher was relentlessly vilified and perceived as a demagogue throughout U.S. media outlets including Time, and by notable American journalists such as Drew Middleton from the New York Times. He was continuously denigrated because SPD support for rearmament did not comply with Adenauer’s policy of strength that was unconditionally backed by the U.S.

Scholarship on West German rearmament after WWII has not adequately addressed the public perception of eminent figures such as Kurt Schumacher. Scholars have also paid little attention to the role the U.S. played in advocating West German rearmament through diplomatic and psychological tactics that were intended to marginalize the influence of Kurt Schumacher and the Social Democrats in the political and public sphere. Since Lewis J.
Edinger’s early biography of Kurt Schumacher provided an adequate account of his political career, few scholars have addressed in depth, the bias of both the American media and U.S. officials when portraying Schumacher. American agencies like the Psychological Warfare Division (PWD) were valuable sources of information for U.S. officials who monitored political, economic, and military activities throughout occupied Germany. One of the core functions of the PWD was to meticulously analyze how different media outlets in West Germany could be most effective in promoting U.S. values. Edinger’s analysis of Schumacher’s role in the rearmament debate is limited to Schumacher’s overall opposition to policies that were supported by Adenauer and U.S. officials. Other considerations associated with Schumacher’s position on West German rearmament, and how it correlated to national sovereignty and equality throughout Germany as expressed in SPD party pamphlets and speeches were not thoroughly explored.

Another book highlighting the opposition of Kurt Schumacher and the SPD toward West German rearmament is Gordon Drummond’s The Social Democrats in Opposition: 1949-1960. Drummond follows the rise of Kurt Schumacher as a postwar politician whose stance on national and international policies caused the SPD to be more susceptible to political attacks from American diplomats and other Allied personnel in West Germany. Since the 1980’s, when Gordon Drummond’s book was published, a number of other scholars have written about Kurt Schumacher and postwar rearmament. However, none of them analyzed in depth, the American media’s role in marginalizing Schumacher in the public and political realm, and the importance of diplomatic conversations between U.S. officials in how they could advance the rearmament debate and discredit Schumacher simultaneously. Conversations going back and forth through cables from Washington to Berlin highlight the polarizing perceptions of Schumacher from both the public and private U.S. standpoint. American efforts to discredit the SPD as a dangerous political party significantly impacted the rearmament debate and helped forge public perceptions of Schumacher in Europe and the United States. At times during the early Cold War period,

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3 Drummond, The German Social.
these efforts proved to be politically detrimental for the Social Democrats under Schumacher’s leadership.

Jessica Hecht analyzed the role of the media in the Western sectors of postwar Germany, in a case study of the *Neue Zeitung*. The publication’s declared aim was to counter any expression of Nazi sentiment from resurfacing in West Germany. As with other newspaper publications in the American occupational zone, *Neue Zeitung* was financially supported by the U.S. and overseen by American military personnel in Munich where its publishing offices were located. One of the main objectives of the *Neue Zeitung* was to re-educate Germans and promote American values to counter Nazi and Communist ideologies. German journalists who worked for the *Neue Zeitung* had the responsibility of translating the periodical into German. Its editorial viewpoint was strikingly similar to that of American newspapers and magazines that negatively characterized certain German politicians and parties they represented. Hecht briefly mentions Schumacher and addresses the growing popularity of the SPD in early postwar West Germany. Yet the discussion of Schumacher in this book is limited. Hecht’s analysis does not examine Schumacher’s portrayal as a leading political figure in American-sponsored media outlets in West Germany. I argue that Schumacher’s role in postwar Germany merits a closer examination because he publically contested American foreign policy and its approach to maintaining control over West Germany.

Larry Hartenian’s analysis of the Information Control Division (ICD) examines the U.S. government’s dissemination of American propaganda through the West German media after WWII. In his book *Controlling Information in U.S. occupied Germany, 1945-1949*, Hartenian explores how the U.S. succeeded in democratizing and re-educating the German population in the American sector of West Germany. The political and cultural efforts of the U.S. reflected the desire to establish a West German society that was similar to American

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5 Gienow-Hecht, *Transmission Impossible*.

society in its functioning and core values.⁷ Hartenian touches on the fact that Schumacher became a political target of the ICD for his opposition to Allied occupation of Germany, while he was being praised simultaneously by American officials for his outspoken criticism of both the Socialist Unity Party (SED) in East Germany, and the Communist Party of Germany (KPD) in the West. Many of Schumacher’s critics among the elite circles of Western officials failed to realize that his anti-communist outlook helped sustain the rearmament debate and the need for West Germany to cooperate with other Western powers that vehemently denounced communism. The ICD acknowledged Schumacher’s fierce opposition to the Nazis that predated their rise to power. Ironically, Schumacher was also perceived as a democrat, but not as a democrat as American officials understood the term. For U.S. personnel, democracy was an integral pillar that upheld American society and went hand in hand with a free-market economy. Then again, Schumacher did not embody or advocate a democratic model that American officials believed would best represent German society. In the early postwar years as Konrad Adenauer consolidated his position in the newly formed Christian Democratic Union party, U.S. officials were championing his vision of a corporatist political economy based on Christian principles.⁸ Schumacher’s leftist outlook in Allied Germany prompted the ICD to isolate him from the political sphere by utilizing the U.S. media to limit the SPD’s influence in West Germany, particularly because leading American officials perceived Schumacher’s criticism of American occupation and rearmament in West Germany as a threat to U.S. foreign policy goals.

This thesis presents new historical analysis, highlighting efforts of American agencies and officials to discredit Schumacher and the Social Democrats for their opposition to West German rearmament between 1949-1952. Raiment and German reunification were seen as mutually exclusive during the early postwar period. If rearmament became a reality, reunification with the East would become unthinkable. Kurt Schumacher who stood at the core of the West German rearmament debate merits careful analysis as he persistently clashed with Adenauer and American officials. Schumacher’s role as a political contender for

⁷ Hartenian, *Controlling Information*, 3.

Chancellorship in 1949 highlights a critical turning point in West German-U.S. relations, and how Western Allies responded to his rigid opposition. More importantly, Schumacher unknowingly inherited the political dilemma that came with West German rearmament, because his priority after 1945 was immediately geared toward German sovereignty and unity, not national security issues. My study examines the critical role U.S. media played in stigmatizing Kurt Schumacher, which ran counter to internal perceptions U.S. personnel gained of him over time. Over time they came to understand that Schumacher opposed Allied occupation in the West and communism in the East. Eventually, he would be fighting battles on different political and diplomatic fronts as a result of his political principles and vision for rebuilding Germany. Schumacher’s fight for sovereignty and attempt to restructure the SPD from a worker’s party into a people’s party catapulted him into the public spotlight, which is highlighted and contrasted from U.S. and German viewpoints.

Chapter one of this thesis examines how Kurt Schumacher was targeted by the U.S. media outlets for his criticism of West German rearmament, which conflicted with Cold War attitudes expressed by American journalists in the *New York Times* and *Time* and their support for American foreign policy. Scholarship of the U.S. media concerning the West German rearmament between 1948 and 1952 is often vague and gives little insight when probing deeper into which political figures were supported and targeted by American newspapers, and how they shaped the rearmament debate and U.S. foreign policy. Equally important, the issue of rearmament developed incrementally as four-power meetings between the Allies were becoming more complex, and tended to revolve around other issues that were given more media attention such as how West Germany would redeem itself of its Nazi past and be a dependable ally in West European relations. Considerations for West German rearmament were frequently redefined by American journalist between 1949-1952, changing the estimates of how many German troops would be required to serve under the control of an integrated European Army. From the perspective of U.S. officials, print media was highly effective at persuading the American public that U.S. efforts to democratize and rearm West Germany were sufficient measures to contain Soviet power in Europe. Public perceptions of West German politicians and parties were largely shaped by the rearmament debate in the U.S. media, as they were characterized as being commendable and trustworthy, or dangerous and threatening. More importantly, it was either Konrad Adenauer who was going to move
the country forward with his support of integrating German soldiers into a larger European army, or Kurt Schumacher, whom the *New York Times* tarred with nationalistic labels, and whose “fanatical” speaking style was condemned as resembling that of Hitler. 9

Chapter two examines a series of discussions between U.S. officials, which explicitly detailed how they envisioned U.S. foreign policy and political developments in West Germany would take shape. These declassified cables underscore the degree to which the U.S. perceived Kurt Schumacher and the SPD as a threat toward American foreign policy in occupied Germany. Conversations between John McCloy and Secretary Acheson evaluated various strategies on how the U.S. could best align West Germany with the Western community of nations, and what the contribution of German troops should be. These conversations highlight the cordial yet tense relationship American officials had with Chancellor Adenauer, who at times shared Schumacher’s views on acquiring sovereignty for the Federal Republic. CIA reports and other U.S. national intelligence drafts foreseeing results of the West German federal elections in 1949 recorded the popularity of the Social Democratic Party in postwar West Germany. Similarly, these documents expose different approaches that U.S. personnel would have to adhere to if parties like the SPD upset U.S. predictions of a CDU stronghold in the Federal Republic. Analyzing declassified documents from the U.S. Psychological Strategy Board details how the use of increased U.S. propaganda and exploitation of U.S. media outlets would operate in conjunction to discreetly influence and shape public opinion in West Germany. The PSB demonstrated how the U.S. would continue to play a positive and integral part in strengthening an Atlantic community, and the alliance between Germany and the United States intimately involved in strengthening the support for rearmament and political parties like the CDU. Finally, this chapter demonstrates how Schumacher’s rising popularity threatened U.S. hopes of having a Christian conservative in office willing to negotiate and adhere to rearmament proposals proposed by U.S. officials. Findings in this chapter reveal the tension between American personnel in West Germany and Washington, in addition to the difficulty of decision-making aimed to undermine the political credibility of Schumacher and the Social Democrats.

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Chapter three explores the response of the West German media to the rearmament debate. Unlike American newspapers, West German newspapers tended to criticize U.S. personnel and Allied measures that were supportive of West German rearmament, including organizations like the European Defense Community (EDC) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) that were both created in the early Cold War years as Western alliances against communism. This chapter draws the attention to articles with headlines stating that German volunteer troops in the Rhineland were an idea stemming from a U.S. that was demented, and that West Germans opposed such “death divisions.” These are only some examples of the immediate responses to how West Germans newspapers interpreted the call for Germany to rearmed. Many Germans, including politicians like Schumacher, understood that the creation of West German military units was a dangerous provocation that could prove fatal if they provoked Soviet military forces. Using the term “death divisions” implied that occupation forces were exercising similar practices as former Nazis. A close analysis of West German periodicals, public opinion surveys, and personal letters written to Schumacher from distraught West Germans suggests that the SPD had broad popular support in its opposition to rearmament. This included many Germans who resided in the U.S. sector of West Germany and voted for Adenauer in 1949. Above all, this chapter reveals the public and private viewpoint of the West German media and citizens that rearmament was a doomed Allied strategy from its inception. Equally important, while vigorously campaigning for national sovereignty and reunification, Schumacher was simultaneously leading the SPD toward a new trajectory in trying to advance social democracy. Some of the SPD’s core values utilized the Marxist model of class-consciousness and conflict that divided Germany. This allegiance to Marxism rapidly evolved during the early postwar period and the Social Democrats grew into a party of a “new type.” It was no longer an Arbeiterpartei (worker’s party), but became a Volkspartei (people’s party). This chapter will look at some of the central arguments and causes for the evolution of the SPD, including why the U.S. did not entirely understand the changing structure of the SPD under Schumacher’s leadership. This research explains how and why the SPD under Schumacher paid a severe political price for

standing firm against rearming German troops before Germany could embrace national sovereignty. Political opposition to Adenauer and public attacks on American officials whom the SPD perceived as pushing the country further away from reunification are other important factors that merit deeper analysis to decipher puzzling political developments in Germany’s postwar period.
CHAPTER 1

DISMISSING SCHUMACHER IN THE MEDIA

It was only thin little Socialist, Dr. Kurt Schumacher making a speech. But he spoke up to the Allies in some of the boldest language yet used in public by a German in defeated Germany.

-Time

Over the span of five years, Konrad Adenauer’s solemn face graced the cover of *Time* magazine three times, proudly depicted with the colors of the West German flag in the background. In 1949, a quiet and desolate war-torn city at night was nestled in the background, and in 1953 the German eagle boldly hung behind a confident Adenauer. In January 4, 1954 issues of *Time*, the Chancellor was praised as “Man of the Year,” with a damaged and aging tree trunk draped in black, red, and gold resting behind his portrait. From the lifeless trunk, new branches emerged with vivid green summer leaves representing Adenauer’s role in West Germany’s revival. In publications such as *Time*, and the *New York Times*, Adenauer was portrayed as the leader of a new Germany that was emerging with hope, life, and momentum from its recent Nazi past. Adenauer’s main political opponent in the postwar years, Kurt Schumacher, who also made the cover of *Time* (June 9, 1952), was depicted amid the remnants of a defeated Berlin, with the subheading, “Enmity toward the East, opposition to the West.” Schumacher’s condemnation of the ongoing allied occupation in Germany attracted the wrath of the U.S. media at the time because he resented Germany conforming to Western capitalism and military influence. His depiction in the U.S. media stood in sharp contrast with a positive portrayal of Chancellor Adenauer that was consistent with West German-U.S. cooperation. Schumacher’s stance vis-à-vis the Western Allies derived from his hopes for unification. He recognized that unification between East and West Germany could only be achieved if Germany regained full national sovereignty, especially with regard to U.S. and Soviet Cold War interest.

Positive portrayals as a skilled politician were attributed to Adenauer by notable American journalists like Drew Middleton, as well as by leading U.S. officials. Adenauer rejected Schumacher’s idea of the welfare state and nationalization of major industries in
West Germany, which he deemed akin to communism. Rather than attempting to compromise with the Social Democrats, Adenauer declared his support for foreign investment, presuming that a West German industry would produce enough to give all Germans work and a decent standard of living. American influence over Adenauer was evident to the SPD and West Germans alike. Adenauer publically stated on various occasions that the free enterprise economic policies of the U.S. were the path toward leading West Germany away from financial ruin. Adenauer was described as someone who was trying to be a good German and a good European, in addition to stating that the “world must be convinced of American strength.” He went on to claim that in a human and historic sense, the U.S. had the mightiest mission in history, to see that the “light never goes out on the Earth…and in order to see a united Europe, West Germany needed the help of the best Europeans of all -- the Americans.” After World War II, U.S. economic and humanitarian aid through the Marshall Plan (European Recovery Plan) and the Berlin Airlift, were popular among German citizens and praised by Konrad Adenauer. Assistance through these programs showcased American involvement in West Germany, and was depicted in the U.S. and German media as a positive step toward reconstruction efforts.

The Social Democrats played an important role in West German politics in which they obliviously aided the Western Allies in their campaign to discredit communism. Schumacher did not refrain from publically expressing anti-communist sentiment prior to the postwar years, on the grounds that parties like the Communist Party of Germany (KPD) were a threat to peace. During the Weimar Republic when Schumacher served as political editor for the SPD periodical Schwäbische Tagwacht in Stuttgart, his favorable view of Marxism did not lead him to identify with the KPD. According to Schumacher, radical left communists were nothing more than fascists painted red. As historian Arno Scholz pointed out, it was no surprise that Schumacher became the most hated Social Democrat in

12 Ibid.
13 Ibid.
14 Drummond. The German Social, 13.
The U.S. radio and publications responded to postwar German communism by discrediting the Socialist Unity Party (SED) and Communist Party (KPD) as evil forces. This was a sharp turn in attitude from the early postwar years, when Western Allies regarded Russian communists as democratic for their anti-fascist stance. This was a brief continuation of the Allied alliance against Hitler.

U.S. agencies such as the Psychological Warfare Division, which later became the Information Control Division (ICD), were originally concerned with combating right-wing resurgences in West Germany. The PWD employed members of all German “democratic and anti-fascist” parties including the KPD as late as 1946. The following year, the ICD changed its policy and placed a stronger emphasis on suppressing communist political views, in addition to monitoring criticism of Allied policies by Schumacher and other Social Democrats. In January 1947, the ICD radio control officers edited out the words ‘catastrophic’ and ‘disastrous’ in German news reports, referring to transportation and industrial problems in Allied regions.

Schumacher’s criticism of the U.S. continued to intensify as his radio speeches were ‘toned down’ and edited without his consent. Domestic problems like unemployment that were broadcast in the Rundfunk im Amerikanischen Sektor (Radio in the American Sector of Berlin) were downplayed as the U.S. presented conditions in West Germany to be better than they actually were. This included the dismantling of industrial plants for reparations, destruction of German military facilities, Schumacher’s criticism of the “American capitalist system”, and Pastor Martin Niemöller blaming the Allies for a loss of faith in democracy.

The ICD played a crucial role in shaping postwar German values that U.S. occupation forces sought to instill in German consciousness. It took less than three years after the end of World War II for the U.S. to be fully aware of Schumacher’s political strength. By 1948, the

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18 Hartenian, Controlling Information, 157.

19 Ibid., 232.

20 Ibid.
U.S. was already identifying Schumacher as the largest political threat in West Germany after Hitler. Along with other political prisoners, Kurt Schumacher had suffered 10 years of imprisonment in the Dachau concentration camp for protesting Nazism before its rise to power. A failed assassination attempt on Hitler in 1944 was another near-death experience for Schumacher. Orders were given to Nazis who supervised the camps to execute political inmates after the failed attempt. Schumacher’s name was on a list with other SPD members to be killed.

Kurt Schumacher felt that succumbing to West German occupation forces jeopardized reunification. By 1948, with the federal elections in West Germany on the horizon, Adenauer’s CDU party was already securing a positive public image in both West German and U.S. media outlets that repeatedly showcased friendly relations between Adenauer and other leading U.S. officials. The U.S. was simultaneously finding ways through the media to intensify the public concern that Soviet forces in occupied East Germany posed a perilous military and ideological threat to the West. Former CIA director and U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union during 1948, Walter Bedell Smith called for building a defensive wall consisting of military forces that would safeguard Western Europe from potential Soviet aggression. In a letter to U.S. Secretary of State George Marshall, Smith stressed that American success in Germany would assuage congress and the public, leading them to believe that a war had been won and the U.S. could relax and enjoy the fruits of victory. Bell went on to caution that if the Kremlin assumed the defensive in Europe it would be more important than ever to follow through vigorously by building up U.S. strength, and reminding the American public why this was necessary. Bell’s warning also echoes a wave of public concern in the U.S. stemming from the West German rearmament debate.

SPD opposition to rearmament does not imply that Schumacher’s position to a military regime in West Germany was absolute. Rather, his priority was that if a military force were created, the Federal Republic had to be considered an equal partner in other

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21 Edinger, Kurt Schumacher, 71.
23 Ibid., 215.
European and Trans-Atlantic unions like the European Defense Community (EDC), Western European Union, and NATO. Schumacher believed that membership in these organizations without being considered as an equal partner would limit the control of the Federal Republic with one-sided support of Western power championed by the CDU. Schumacher rejected rearmament unless certain national and international conditions were met. For example, considering Germany a free and equal partner of the Allies, and more than just an expendable front-line area were vital issues to Schumacher and how the Social Democrats perceived progressive steps toward equality.\textsuperscript{24} Schumacher played down the danger of a direct Soviet military attack because the Russians were aware of the strength of Western nuclear capabilities and strategic economic resources including industrial regions in West Germany that would contribute to the revival of West Germany’s economy.\textsuperscript{25} Unlike Adenauer, Schumacher wanted to explore all possible venues toward unification with the Soviets because he feared that rearmament was the easiest way to provoke military tension with the Russians.

American diplomats and military leaders were compelled to defend Western Europe against any communist aggression, which also meant that West Germany’s industrial and military potential needed to be utilized. This position changed from the Morgenthau Plan and Potsdam Conference in 1945 where stipulations were presented by the Allies to demilitarize and dismantle Germany’s industrial potential. By 1948, coal and steel productivity was rapidly increasing in numbers that would not have been foreseeable during the time of the Potsdam Conference. The main objective of the Allied forces was for Germany not to become an industrial giant and exhibit the potential to regain military dominance in Western Europe. Two important coal-producing regions located in the British and French zones had the economic potential to revive a stagnant economy. For instance, Ruhr coal production was 137 million tons in 1938.\textsuperscript{26} In 1945, it was a mere 35.5 million tons, rising slowly to 53.9 million tons in 1946, 71.1 million tons in 1947, and 87 million tons in 1948, still far below

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid.
pre-war levels. The Western Allies relaxed control of coal distribution during the early postwar years only when strict policies were implemented. Similar to coal mining, the steel and iron industry also had significant economic potential to remilitarize Germany. The Ruhr region under British occupation yielded 70% of Germany’s steel and iron—14.4 million tons of raw iron, 16.4 million tons of steel, and 10.5 million tons of rolled steel. The rehabilitation of the coal and steel industry under Allied control reflected the ongoing Allied effort to reduce Germany’s ability to wage war. The Social Democrats continued to promise that West Germans would never again become a threat to democracy, and relaxing coal and steel production throughout the Saar region would give opportunities to Germans who were not able to find work after the war.

British and American zones merged into one administrative unit referred to as Bizonia in 1946, and France joined them to form Trizonia in 1948. The same year a currency reform was introduced by the three Allies, changing from Reichsmark to Deutschmark. The Reichsmark not only became valueless after 1945, but transferring to a new form of currency gave West German occupation forces an opportunity to prevent the Soviets from replacing the Reichsmark with Soviet currency. Currency reform was a critical step in the evolution of Allied control in West Germany. During the Moscow Foreign Minister’s Conference in 1947, the British persuaded the U.S. to reject a proposal that would permit the Russians to take some reparations from the current coal and steel production in the Ruhr and focused instead on rebuilding the West German economy. The creation of the German Economic Commission shortly after may have indicated to Schumacher that West Germany was being exploited by the Allies for their own economic gain, and that there was no legitimate concern for its citizens.

Contributions of American financial aid and the importing of consumer goods after World War II coincided with a military arms buildup throughout Western Europe. The U.S. constrained European economic, military, and political interdependence, which prompted claims that the United States had established a Pax-Americana, or American Empire, at the

27 Balabkins, Germany Under Direct Controls, 112.
28 Ibid., 128.
“invitation” of Europeans themselves. In 1948, a U.S. public opinion survey polled 3,400 West Germans in the American Zone and U.S. and British sectors of Berlin. Respondents expressed an overall satisfactory opinion of Western Allied reconstruction developments throughout Europe, particularly with U.S. aid through the Marshall Plan. In an effort to better understand and analyze public sentiment, respondents were surveyed on the merits of the Marshall Plan. The plan received high approval with 78% of respondents in the American Zone believing that it would solve Europe’s economic difficulties. Even more West Berliners (88%) viewed the plan as a positive measure toward reconstructing German and European life. However, the brief description of the Marshall Plan in the survey provided no additional information as to how it was described by interviewers. It is probable that leading questions could have elicited inaccurate or manipulated responses. Results from the survey may have been modified in an effort to gain the favor and ongoing support of the American public and West Germans for U.S. involvement in Germany.

Looking further into the strategies of U.S. agencies in postwar Germany, a declassified document from the Psychological Warfare Division (PWD) discussed psychological strategies to maximize public support in West Germany for American foreign policy. For example, the draft presented to members of the PWD emphasized how the U.S. had to adjust its approaches when surveying West Germans in accordance with the changes in public opinion, and with impressions of which political, economic, and cultural issues influenced the German psychological climate. This indicates the importance placed on agencies like the PWD in developing strategies that promoted a strong cultural awareness to support U.S. foreign policy and influence the evolving political platform of West Germany to how they saw fit. The U.S. used the creation of the Federal Republic in 1949 as a sign of democratic growth fostered by an American governing model that Konrad Adenauer complied with. The United States would continue to leverage its involvement in West

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30 Kisatsky, The United States, 5.
31 Williamson, Germany from Defeat to Partition, 172.
32 Ibid., 173.
33 Ibid., 172.
Germany through media outlets and American journalists who advocated American foreign policy and West German rearmament.

As Schumacher campaigned throughout the Western occupation zones for SPD support prior to the 1949 West German elections, he emphasized that the Allies who had an economic stake in Germany did not know and could not agree on what they wanted there. In an article published in Time, Schumacher pleaded, “do not accuse the SPD of being nationalistic itself…and if Europe was to become or stay united, Germany must be united…we are distressed that the Ruhr has now become the nucleus in international relations.”35 Schumacher understood that Western Allies had vested interests in this resource-rich area of coal and steel that would help revive West Germany’s economy. Excerpts from a speech Schumacher gave in London in 1950 were reprinted in the New York Times by Drew Middleton, a correspondent who built strong ties with high-ranking U.S. officials in postwar Germany, and eventually Konrad Adenauer and members from his cabinet. The article stated that Schumacher was the first important German spokesman the British heard since Hitler, yet clarified that his intent was exactly the opposite to that of Hitler.36 This early account of Schumacher giving a speech in London is critical and useful when analyzing media bias in the early postwar period even though Schumacher’s aim for Germany was described to have been the opposite of Hitler. Middleton’s article conjured up the image of a German leader who was influential, outspoken, and spellbinding when he addressed German audiences in his “fanatical” manner, which was a haunting reminder of when Hitler commanded Germany’s unconditional support. More importantly, the acoustics resonating when Schumacher delivered speeches was another frightful reminder to U.S. officials when Hitler once stood at a podium and passionately shouted to crowds of listeners. Schumacher’s public attacks on Adenauer made discrediting him easier for American journalists and newspapers. Schumacher became an easy target since he was the foremost German politician in the occupied West who persistently challenged U.S. occupation policies and reconstruction efforts.

36 “Germany: Last Call For Europe,” Time, September 18, 1950.
In 1948, the Organization for European Economics Cooperation (OEEC) was created and Congress approved funding the Marshall Plan (European Recovery Program), which was to help rebuild West European economies.\(^{37}\) The Marshall Plan was a significant step that strengthened relations between the U.S. and Western European countries. However, the success of the Marshall Plan elevated SPD suspicions that such forms of U.S. aid were capitalistic maneuvers intended to link the U.S. economy with West Germany in order to appeal to East Germans. The same year the Marshall Plan was introduced, Schumacher delivered a speech at an SPD rally in Nürnberg on what he presumed would not be a viable long-term solution to Germany’s reconstruction efforts. In his speech, “Germany and Europe,” Schumacher condemned the Marshall Plan and viewed it as a dangerous contribution to West Germany by the United States.\(^{38}\) He cited excerpts from a speech General Marshall gave in July 1947, at a foreign minister’s conference in Paris where Allied officials were in attendance. Schumacher considered the Marshall Plan an expression of economic imperialism under the disguise of American capitalism intended to rebuild West Germany. To Schumacher the idea of “dollar imperialism” or “occupation dollars” was distressing, because it would only benefit German parties like the CDU that represented interest groups in sectors of German capitalism.\(^{39}\)

The Berlin Blockade of 1948 was a watershed event of the Cold War that continued to distinguish the cultural and ideological differences between the Soviets and Western Allies. The Blockade was two-fold: with Soviet forces preventing access of American goods to regions beyond East Berlin, and the U.S. response with the Berlin Airlift that supplied goods with American airplanes conducting hundreds of successful flights daily.\(^{40}\) For the SPD, the first major Cold War crisis created internal strife over leadership within the party, when Ernst Reuter emerged as interim party leader during Schumacher’s absence. Reuter stood at the forefront as SPD spokesman and leader of a free Berlin, at a critical time when


\(^{39}\) Ibid.

the Berlin Airlift sustained the western half of the city. Due to Schumacher’s ill health throughout 1948, the temporary leadership of another Social Democrat in Schumacher’s absence presented a profoundly different image of the Social Democrats in the U.S. media during the tense months of the Berlin Blockade.

Schumacher was bedridden in Hannover for much of 1948, leaving him detached from political activity. The transition of new political leadership during Schumacher’s absence was backed by the SPD when Ernst Reuter was elected as Berlin’s first postwar mayor. Time took advantage of Schumacher’s absence from the political scene in West Germany by crediting Reuter for his leadership in mobilizing citizens throughout Berlin, and forming a coalition government with the CDU to demonstrate Berlin’s unity. During a critical time when Schumacher opposed currency reform in West Germany, Reuter agreed to accept U.S. airlift supplies. Between 1949-1950, the U.S. Department of State brought Reuter and fellow SPD Allies Max Brauer, and Wilhelm Kaisen to the U.S. under the invitation of the American Municipal Association in an effort to strengthen intraparty opposition to Schumacher’s leadership. If Schumacher’s health did not improve, Reuter would have been a likely candidate to assume party leadership, along with other SPD members including Carlo Schmid and Erich Ollenhauer who were already closely involved within the SPD circle of decision making. The U.S. was essentially testing the public response of alternative leadership within the SPD hierarchy. U.S. publications like Time were strategically used to bring the issue of a permanent political change in the SPD leadership to the forefront. Interestingly, Ernst Reuter graced the cover of Time on September 19, 1950, depicting a romanticized image of Berlin’s mayor standing in front of a cascading row of hands attempting to bring a red star representing communism to a rapid halt. The sub-heading from the Time cover read, “To Arms-Again? And if not?” captured the symbolic references of the rearmament debate with the image of the stone grey Bundestag in the background. In Ernst Reuter the U.S. found a politician on the center-left who not only detested communism, but also had something in common with Adenauer. Both Reuter and Adenauer demonstrated that they were flexible politicians willing to cooperate with U.S. officials and adhere to their policies. Schumacher’s absence happened at a critical time when his opposition hampered

41 Kisatsky, The United States, 35.
U.S. foreign policy, making it difficult for Adenauer to continue to get public praise for his close ties with Allied personnel.

Soviet controlled East Germany refused to acknowledge the candidacy of Ernst Reuter as the official SPD mayor of Berlin. For the communists in the East, this was another attempt to politically undermine the SPD in Berlin and replace the party with the Socialist Unity Party (SED) that was intended to be the unifying party between the SPD and KPD. During the Berlin Blockade, Reuter went beyond the role of mayor to become a national figure who proclaimed the determination of his people in the struggle against Soviet pressure from the East. The same year, Schumacher suffered another physical blow to his already frail health with the amputation of his right leg. Nevertheless, Schumacher remained politically attuned to Germany’s evolving developments. As the Berlin crisis continued to draw more attention in U.S. and German media, Schumacher’s vision for the SPD was distinct and fundamentally opposed to that of Reuter’s. Both disagreed on two principles: Reuter did not agree with Schumacher’s assertion that a bitter class struggle defined postwar German politics, or that the SPD strategy should be based on a conviction that economic conditions were deteriorating to the advantage of the party’s struggle for power. Schumacher believed he held the key that would unlock a solution to all contemporary crises that confronted Germany. International developments like the Marshall Plan, the Berlin Airlift, and Berlin Blockade all exacerbated Schumacher’s suspicions of American and Soviet motives and remained central to his criticism and understanding of why Germany remained divided. With the dawn of a new decade on the horizon, and the continuity of the rearmament debate showing no signs of withering away, the public image of West Germany’s leading politicians had already taken shape.

A 1949 article by *New York Times* journalist Flora Lewis takes a different approach to vilifying Kurt Schumacher by using images of the animated SPD leader to discredit him. In the article, Schumacher is described as a party leader, “who has a tight grip on his party and a more clean-cut authority than any other political leader in Germany, including the

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43 Ibid., 134.
The same article notes, “some observers compared his speaking style to Hitler’s, and superficially there is a resemblance as he gesticulates fiercely with his one arm, screws and wrinkles his face into wild, frenzied patterns.” Constrasting Schumacher with Hitler conveyed negative connotations, stigmatized him, and discredited his claim and previous political credentials as a fierce anti-Nazi who wanted to re-establish a functioning democracy in Germany based on SPD principles. This article slandered Schumacher further by associating his socialist aims with those of communism, which according to Lewis criticized Western style democracy and its capitalist economy. Additionally, the photo shows Schumacher speaking to a large crowd of onlookers that created a visual association with Hitler. The images of Schumacher aggressively shouting into the crowd elicits comparison with the time when Hitler addressed large audiences, and employed a similar speaking style. When juxtaposing this with Adenauer’s often relaxed demeanor, U.S. journalists like Flora Lewis took advantage of the way in which visuals could be used to shape and redirect public perceptions.

U.S. news articles attached labels to Schumacher deeming him a German nationalist, particularly at a time when the term German nationalism still was equated with Nazism and the horrors that were inflicted under Hitler. As a result, this was a contributing factor to why Schumacher was seldom praised in any U.S. media outlet let alone by any American official who had the chance to meet him. In U.S. media outlets, expressing nationalistic views was not ascribed to Adenauer, and any of his postwar goals of regaining the trust and prestige for Germany in the international community. The main difference was that both politicians essentially had different visions of rebuilding Germany; yet associating the term nationalistic with a German political figure remained a loaded term eliciting negative connotations. In the postwar period using these terms were systematically orchestrated by U.S. newspaper outlets and journalists as a political warning against repeating history despite the collapse of National Socialism. Journalists like Flora Lewis often depicted Schumacher as an ailing, older man who was incapable of leading West Germany in a new direction and complying with Allied forces. However, Adenauer was 19 years older than Schumacher, suggesting that

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45 Ibid.
there were political expectations in the U.S. of what constituted a reliable leader. On the other hand, U.S. newspapers associated Adenauer’s age with wisdom and years of political experience attempting to justify why he was a better leader. The contradiction stemming from U.S. media outlets that targeted Schumacher highlighted his physical disabilities as a “legitimate” way to render his inability to assume the role as chancellor. Yet, this stood in sharp contrast to Roosevelt’s battle with polio that was seldom mentioned in U.S. newspapers. These aspects of media bias were critical, particularly at a time when the public remained indifferent about Schumacher and the SPD.

The *New York Times* gave readers an opportunity to respond to feature stories with letters to the editor. One reader, Walter R. Story, not only responded to Flora Lewis’ article on Schumacher, but more generally to the bias that the *New York Times* expressed toward him. Story wrote that Germans who shared Schumacher’s ideas of democracy were “the most dependable allies in the fight against Russian imperialism disguised as world communism.”

Story recalled that political figures such as Schumacher had been some of the earliest opponents of Nazism, in addition to addressing what America’s real concern in Europe should have been, ensuring the implementation of a peaceful democracy as an alternative to totalitarian regimes like the Soviet Union. Story goes on to say that the *New York Times* should stop worrying about the labels of European political leaders and concentrate on testing whether they would work with us for peace and freedom. He observed that Schumacher was labeled a socialist in order to associate him with communism. Story suggests that stronger relations should be built between Schumacher, the SPD, and American diplomatic leaders. The opinion piece ends by stating that Schumacher can be trusted, and if Germany attained economic stability, it should be admitted into the family of nations.

Story’s letter to the editor makes it clear that some readers were aware that journalists who reported for the *New York Times* vilified political leaders like Kurt Schumacher, which inadvertently revealed how important he was to West Germany and German-American relations. However, attitudes such as those expressed by Story were overshadowed by

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47 Ibid.
48 Ibid.
journalists predicting a detrimental outcome if the SPD’s influence continued to expand throughout West Germany. Regardless, such sentiment as Story’s paled in comparison with the overwhelming damaging depictions of Schumacher in the U.S. media.

The New York Times article, “Schumacher Reports Plan to Delay State,” highlights Schumacher’s alleged aggressiveness by reporting that, “the fiery, crippled Socialist leader said: the dismantling program and the creation of the Ruhr authority were preventing Germany from becoming, free and democratic.” Strategies alluding to the manipulation of American and German audiences were also indicated in the article. It went on to state that the United States Military Government “ordered its propaganda organs to try to counter the bitterly anti-American tone of the election campaign.” The “propaganda organs” referenced in the article referred to the Neue Zeitung, the German-language newspaper that was published in Munich by the Office of Military Government of the United States (OMGUS) since the fall of 1945. Editors of the Neue Zeitung were ordered by the U.S. government’s civil affairs division to “do something” about the sharp attacks on the U.S. by German political leaders like Schumacher. Under the supervision of U.S. personnel, newspapers such as the Neue Zeitung promoted American values in addition to criticizing Schumacher’s political influence as the anti-American opposition leader.

Schumacher’s reluctance to compromise with the CDU on foreign policy and his political attacks on Adenauer reinforce the bullying image of him that media articles did not refrain from using. With the subheading: “Schumacher Gives Advice on the Subject of Rearmament,” the menacing image of Kurt Schumacher is again reinforced with Schumacher stating that “Germans had better keep their mouths shut about rearmament”, and, “if extreme right-wing politicians continued their frightful nationalistic remarks no big power would support German unification.” This is an example of how the U.S. media amplified Schumacher’s criticism of Adenauer’s support for rearmament. Adenauer’s plea to Western officials for the continuation of their military presence was condemned by the Social

50 Ibid.
51 Gienow-Hecht, Transmission Impossible, 2.
Democrats as dependence on the Allies. Finally, the article concludes with Schumacher’s remark, “only the United States believes this step to be justified.” This also underscores Schumacher’s distrust of U.S. personnel who pledged to the American and German public that they had no stakes in West Germany, but only served to foster cooperation with other occupation forces in the West. Schumacher continued to resent the privileged ties the U.S. continued to have with Adenauer.

The election of Adenauer as Chancellor of the Federal Republic in 1949 was a watershed event in U.S.-German relations. On one hand it continued to strengthen Trans-Atlantic ties as hoped for by U.S. agencies like the Psychological Warfare Division. On the other hand, it antagonized and embarrassed the SPD even though the party only lost by a narrow margin. In the U.S., President Truman felt the media and political pressure building up with military tensions mounting as Soviet tanks dotted the East-West German border. Presidential advisor Clark Clifford advised Truman that there was a political advantage in the U.S. conflict with the Kremlin. Clifford commented that as matters worsened with the real danger of imminent war, not only would the public sense the crisis, but back up the president in a time of crisis. Truman addressed the rearmament issue when members of congress and the CIA advocated West German participation in national defense with other Western powers including Great Britain and France. Democratic representative from Texas, William Poage believed that Germans should contribute their “fair share” (25 German divisions) to prevent a communist takeover of Germany as a form of repayment for the Marshall Plan. Secretary of State Acheson and John McCloy were convinced that rearmament would ensure West Germany’s role as an ally in the Western defense community. The House of Foreign Affairs Committee announced that it would recommend including the Federal Republic in the Western Alliance, stating that Bonn was now a “part of the family.” Chairman of the Senate’s Subcommittee on Appropriations, Elmer Thomas, mandated the gradual

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54 Kofsky, Harry Truman, 134.
56 Ibid.
rearmament of West Germany to quickly tie the Federal Republic to the West, but did not support arms manufacturing by Germany.  

Strong support for rearmament in West Germany throughout Truman’s cabinet strengthened Trans-Atlantic ties between the U.S. and West European countries. The Petersburg Protocols of November 1949, made substantial strides in cementing such relations. During the meetings, Adenauer promised Western officials to bring West Germany into international bodies like the Ruhr Authority and the Council of Europe. In return to pacify Adenauer who feared a Western troop withdrawal from West Germany, Western Allies agreed to systematically incorporate the Federal Republic into the European community. This prompted West German participation in the Organization of European Economic Cooperation (OEEC), International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank. West Germany also gained a certain degree of autonomy by being permitted to open consulates abroad.

Following the Petersberg Protocols, in December 1949, a New York Times article recounted diplomatic meetings between foreign ministers held in Bonn. The article sheds light on Schumacher’s response to the Petersburg agreements, in addition to citing a clause from the occupation statute presented by the Allies and later signed by Adenauer and the High Commissioners in 1949. The clause stated that the Federal Republic would continue its demilitarization efforts to prevent the re-creation of armed forces of any kind, in which the Federal Republic would continue to cooperate with the High Commission. This provided a safe platform for media outlets to bring to public attention and whether they supported or opposed the remilitarization measure. The end of the article cautioned, “the optimism that bubbled over in Petersberg may be justified, but the shadow of Dr. Kurt Schumacher, Socialist leader, still darkens the scene.”  

Developments resulting from the Petersburg meetings also provoked one of the most bitter clashes between Adenauer and Schumacher,

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58 Kisatsky, The United States, 42.
59 Ibid.
which not only caused a media uproar in both the U.S. and Germany, but also deserves some attention in the nature in which it was conducted. The rhetoric stemming from the *New York Times* article responding to the rearmament debate was able to effectively portray Schumacher as the political obstacle in West Germany, and created a call to action for its U.S. audience.

Schumacher’s unrelenting criticism of Chancellor Adenauer’s embrace of U.S. foreign policy had damaging political consequences for himself and the SPD. This was proven during a Bundestag session on November 25, 1949, when Schumacher openly criticized Adenauer for being a “Chancellor of the Allies”, which led to his suspension for 20 sessions.\(^6\) Schumacher was struck by Adenauer’s demand that the SPD support German entry into the Ruhr Authority, or permit completion of the Allied dismantling program.\(^6\) Schumacher’s attack was widely dispatched in newspapers throughout the U.S and Germany, resulting in political setbacks for the SPD leader, such as his exclusion from meetings with Allied personnel pertaining to rearmament talks. Adenauer’s pledge to work closely with American officials enhanced his image in the media as Germany’s new savior. More importantly, Schumacher assumed the German public would reject any political proposals presented to Adenauer by U.S. officials concerning the integration of German soldiers into a multinational European army. Schumacher was convinced that exposing the Chancellor’s submissiveness to these Allied requests would sway voters and align them with the SPD.

Kurt Schumacher’s public image as a principled left-wing leader made it seem as though the Social Democrats were not well positioned to negotiate with U.S. personnel and Chancellor Adenauer. Schumacher also believed strongly in the democratic process as a precondition for Germany’s development into a strong, independent democracy. According to Jessica Hecht, Adenauer had no real sympathy for democracy in practice as Schumacher understood it at the time.\(^6\) Adenauer had a different approach to resolving Germany’s problems that conflicted with those of the SPD. The chancellor was criticized by Social

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\(^6\) Ibid.

\(^6\) Gienow-Hecht, *Transmission Impossible*, 164.
Democrats for being clerical, conservative, capitalistic, and cartelistic. Adenauer was confident with the new trajectory he was taking the Federal Republic along with U.S. backing. In addition, the *New York Times* were attributing more attention to stories that underscored the relationship between the U.S. and the Federal Republic with feature stories that made the front page. One such article, “New German Era Linked to Acheson,” underscored an end to the technical state of war between the Federal Republic and the United States. Dean Acheson’s visit to Bonn in 1950 was described as a triumphant celebration of the positive diplomatic relations between the Secretary of State and Chancellor Adenauer. The article appeared with a photo of both men on the front page of the *New York Times*.

Adenauer and American officials alike believed American troops in West Germany guaranteed its security. Acheson went on to comment on the presence of U.S. ground troops in the Federal Republic: “as much of a nuisance, they were needed in Germany’s interest.” Adenauer wanted to assure West Germans that the security of the Federal Republic was being protected from both the Russians and the communists in East Germany whose *Volkspolizei* already constituted a sizeable paramilitary force. Security measures in West Germany’s postwar period transitioned quickly from German demilitarization and denazification to the prevention of a communist expansion into West Germany. Adenauer worried about the military strength along the Federal Republic’s eastern border. In August 1950 he sent a cable to the three High Commissioners in West Germany warning him of the threat posed by 22 Soviet divisions consisting of 6,000 tanks and 150,000 troops in the Soviet zone alone. However, this is not to overlook the fact that the U.S. had already been planning German rearmament and the involvement of NATO in some form prior to 1949. NATO demanded the integration of West German troops. Without German participation, it was believed that an anti-Soviet military alliance largely supported by the U.S. and Great Britain was unlikely to provide sufficient manpower to defend Germany. By this stage of

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67 Ibid.


69 Manfred Jonas, *The United States and Germany: A Diplomatic History* (London: Cornell University
the Cold War, any attack on West Germany was equivalent to an attack on the U.S. The *New York Times* article applauded Adenauer as the leader that West Germany needed, and one who opened a new era of negotiation, friendship, and mutual trust.

Some historians argue that Adenauer stood far out in front of public opinion on the integration of West German troops. The Chancellor’s offers to recruit 150,000 men (nearly the same amount as the *Volkspolizei* troops noted by Adenauer in the Soviet sector) in 1950 gave a false impression of the ease with which West German civilians would once again enlist as soldiers.70 West German opposition to rearmament weakened the public’s support of the CDU throughout 1950. Additionally, the *New York Times* continued to raise critical questions that could not be answered by Allied officials or any governmental agency. One major concern was how the U.S. would be expected to defend Western Europe, which now included a portion of Berlin, against a minimum of 175 Russian divisions without drawing on German manpower?71 John McCloy noted that Adenauer was becoming known for sending up “trial balloons” when discussing German rearmament with U.S. journalists in order to see what kind of public response he could elicit. In an interview with the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, Adenauer alluded to an offer of a defense contribution proclaiming that Germany should contribute to the defense of Europe as part of a multinational European Army.72 Prior to making this comment, Adenauer had learned that the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* was one of the few newspapers regularly read by Truman. Additionally, the European reporter for the newspaper spoke no German, which some scholars argue would make it easier for Adenauer to later deny the comments attributed to him as lost in translation, especially when the public reaction proved less positive than he had hoped.73 If Adenauer’s proposition did not go over well with the German public, he could find a way to disavow the contradictory remarks by alluding to the confusion over the role of German troops and the conditions for their deployment. Nevertheless, rearmament remained a focal point of public attention on both

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71 Onslow, “West German Rearmament,” 452.

72 Ibid.

sides of the Atlantic. Mounting political, diplomatic, and military pressure from Western officials were testing Adenauer’s governing abilities. How well he dealt with these situations would have an immediate impact on his perception in the German public. For any West German politician of the time, public opinion was a high priority.

During the early 1950’s, public opinion polls gained importance both in West Germany and the United States for measuring attitudes toward postwar developments. In the former U.S. occupation zone, American officials created specialized departments of trained U.S. military personnel to work closely with native Germans to conduct interviews. This arose from the logic that Germans would be more open when speaking with fellow Germans and would appreciate the opportunity to tell their side of the story. German interviewers took pains to assure other Germans that the questionnaires and surveys conducted were recorded anonymously.74 U.S. Military branches like the Psychological Warfare Division and Information Control Division, in partnership with sociologists, placed a strong emphasis on utilizing public opinion surveys to obtain information concerning West German attitudes toward politics, nationalism, national defense, and Allied occupation.75 German politicians and political parties soon recognized the value of polling as a valuable resource that would put the strength of their political base into context. Allies in the West were able to jointly construct surveys to study densely populated areas in West Germany and to better understand the political landscape and how it impacted local and national elections.

The effectiveness of the U.S. media in promoting American ideas and values was reflected in public opinion. Throughout the postwar period, public opinion research, including the Gallup Polls and U.S. media outlets were used simultaneously as a source of confirmation and legitimation of public sentiment. As American news reporter Walter Lippmann noted, there was a determination for U.S. media outlets that the “gospel of Americanism might be carried to every corner of the globe,” which in Germany’s case needed prompt attention.76 The function of social research in postwar West Germany was

75 Ibid., 5.
intended to promote a better understanding of what the Allies stood for culturally, politically, and militarily. The surveys conducted by the U.S. strategically ignored the Social Democrats’ perspective on West German reconstruction. Nevertheless, the German public remained attuned to ongoing political developments throughout West Germany in the postwar years. Public opinion research made it easier for the U.S. to identify which politicians, and domestic and national issues the German public would support or reject. For the U.S. Psychological Strategy Board, there was an urgent need to gain support for U.S. policies from the West Germans. The PSB stressed that the U.S. had to adjust its approach in accordance with changes in public opinion. To achieve the “maximum effect” of shaping the psychological climate in West Germany, the PSB proposed a major effort to develop new and more effective methods of influencing West German public opinion within the framework of an integrated psychological strategy plan that included NATO and the Atlantic Community. Unlike the U.S., the Soviets did not effectively exercise or show any interest in conducting public opinion research and surveys in the immediate postwar years.

The German Democratic Republic (DDR) did not conduct public opinion research until the 1960’s. There continues to be uncertainty relating to the dissemination of opinion research throughout the DDR in the 1950’s. As a state restricted by close Soviet oversight, it is unknown who compiled public opinion surveys and for what purpose. Also, the question arises if there were any negative consequences for those who were surveyed who expressed negative views toward the East German state. Even by the early 1950’s, the DDR was becoming a “normal country,” in the sense that East Germans learned how to “behave” under communism. The SED along with its Soviet supporters were successful in restoring order, even though the public still wanted to see the government deliver on its promises of improving living and working conditions for East Germans. The rejection of the infamous Stalin notes proposing reunification talks in 1952 by Western officials further crystalized East Germany’s future under communism. As pointed out by Mark Allinson, the aftershock

77 Psychological Strategy Plan.
78 Ibid.
of Stalin’s death revealed the tight grip that communism had on East Germany. The lack of public opinion research was something that Soviet officials did not believe merited careful analysis. Citizens tolerated the DDR not out of sympathy for communism, but due to the lingering fear of a new world war or being reprimanded by the state. As the Cold War persisted, East Germans had already been living their life under communist rule in that particular postwar framework.

The prospect of rearmament raised a number of difficult questions throughout the public and political sphere. How would German troops psychologically handle putting on military uniforms again? How would they respond to orders of Allied authorities against whom they had until recently fought in combat? West German research institutions helped gauge public sentiment on how well politicians were received by the public. In a public opinion poll from the Allensbach Institut for Opinion Research in West Germany, Germans were asked if they agreed or disagreed with policies backed by the CDU. From the end of 1949 through 1952, the statistics revealed that 45 percent of those polled were undecided, which gradually decreased to only 37 percent undecided by the end of 1952. In 1949, 32 % of Germans surveyed agreed with Adenauer’s policies, which reached a low of 23 % by 1951, and by the end of 1952, climbed to roughly 37 %. Those disagreeing with Adenauer’s policies were at a low of 23 % toward the end of 1950, and steadily increased throughout the next year with a 38 % approval rating in 1951. The Allensbach Institut, like its American equivalent the Gallup Poll, served as a source of factual information about public perception on foreign and domestic policy. The 45% of Germans that were undecided or disapproved of Adenauer between 1949-1952 underscores the importance of issues such as militarization and reunification, which were both central themes in the Federal Republic and intertwined with the rearmament debate.

80 Allinson, Politics and Popular Opinion, 76.
81 Anja Kruke, Demoskopie in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Meinungsforschung, Parteien und Medien 1949-1950 (Düsseldorf, Germany: Droste Verlag, 2007), 38.
83 Ibid.
In another survey the Allensbach Institut conducted in the fall of 1950, over 50% of Germans in the West feared that war might break out the following year and that the Western powers would withdraw their military units if the Red Army decided to invade. The destruction that World War II had brought to Germany remained physically visible with scores of bombed out buildings, and even more poignantly, millions of disabled veterans and fatherless families. More importantly, the thought of Germans engaging in another war repelled many Germans. The possibility of West German soldiers fighting with a rifle in hand on the front lines of a new war was an image that haunted political debates, which the SPD fought hard to prevent this scenario.

Communication between Western officials and news media in the U.S. were dependable and consistent. The speed with which news information was able to make its way to the U.S. from Germany, was contingent on how quickly journalists were able to write stories that would appear in U.S. newspapers the next day. Interviews, speeches, or any other public testimonials that German politicians made had the potential to make headlines in the U.S. the same day. This was particularly true for major developments and discussions associated with rearmament, unification, or Allied occupation in West Germany. During the latter part of 1950, Adenauer was becoming more vocal when making public statements that supported the participation of German troops in a European army. When Adenauer proposed recruiting a German defense force of 150,000 men, his proposal appeared the same day in a New York Times article on August 18, 1950.

The CDU benefitted from the personal ties that New York Times journalist Drew Middleton had with Adenauer and other members of his cabinet including Minister of Economics Ludwig Erhard. In his autobiographical account, The Struggle for Germany, Middleton’s observation as a foreign correspondent reflected the conservative viewpoint held by U.S. diplomats and American media outlets. Middleton was critical of the Social Democrats, and cautioned U.S. officials against the growing political power of Schumacher.

85 Drummond, The German Social, 54.
86 Schwartz, America’s Germany, 134.
87 Middleton, The Struggle for Germany.
Middleton saw the tightly controlled party structure of the SPD led by Schumacher as a dangerous force. He described Schumacher as aging, and feared that he could provide a blueprint for a future German authoritarian state.\(^{88}\) It was often the case that journalists in both the U.S. and West Germany were alarmed by Schumacher’s “nationalistic outlook” in wanting to rescue Germany from occupation forces. Middleton shared the view of other U.S. personnel and agencies that associated SPD principles closely with those of communist parties like the SED and KPD. Schumacher wholeheartedly defended his “nationalism” stating, “it was not nationalism if one defends the remaining fortune of Germany from foreign nationalists.”\(^{89}\) Schumacher’s patriotic outlook was often misunderstood by U.S. officials and news correspondents from the *New York Times* and *Time* which made little effort to untangle the negative association of German nationalism with Nazism. Schumacher believed it was important to protect Germany from capitalistic and conservative factions that he associated with the CDU and the U.S. This reminded Schumacher how critical it was to protect German industries from falling into the control of dangerous political parties, organizations, and foreign influences.

Kurt Schumacher advocated a strong nationalistic position in democratic Germany that U.S. officials did not fully understand. Journalists such as Flora Lewis and Drew Middleton likened Schumacher’s passionate pleas for German unification to the fanatical excitement of Hitler’s speaking style and a dangerous authoritarian ruler. One of the immediate goals that Schumacher fought for until his death was to unite East and West Germany into one sovereign nation, and he wanted to do this by gaining the public’s confidence in the SPD. When Schumacher became party leader, he believed that Germans could identify with the trials and hardships in his own life, such as volunteering as a soldier in World War I (losing his right arm in battle), his political activism against National Socialism prior to 1933, and surviving imprisonment in the Dachau concentration camp. Regaining German confidence also meant reclaiming territories that were lost to Allied forces after World War II. SPD officials planned to direct the country away from its Nazi past and oust the Soviets from the East by regaining territories beyond the Oder-Neiße line.

\(^{88}\) Middleton, *The Struggle for Germany*, 58.

This popular goal would enhance public support for the SPD. For example, borders separating Poland, Czechoslovakia, and other pre-1933 German territories in the East could still be changed. Schumacher believed there was still a fighting chance to bring that region back under German rule. While the Social Democrats realized the need for Europe’s security, it seemed apparent to Schumacher that rearmament measures were an inappropriate basis for peace. 90 On the other hand, Adenauer cherished the idea that cooperation and confidence with other nations were a requirement for Germany to gain equality and partnership in the free world.

Kurt Schumacher embodied German nationalism as a Reichspatriot dating back to 1871 when the German Reich was founded. Adenauer represented a more contemporary West German patriot whose loyalty was perceived by Schumacher to favor conservative and capitalistic forces that would impede unification. Schumacher grew up in Kulm, which during the late 19th Century was a part of East Germany that possessed a different political culture than that of the German heartland. 91 Schumacher’s early exposure to protecting a German fatherland traces back to the perceived threat from Russia that bordered Kulm. Throughout the 1920’s, German Social Democrats saw themselves as the defenders of Western civilization against Russian barbarism, reflecting the democratic consensus in Prussia. 92 Growing up, Schumacher witnessed notable German achievements including a growing economy as a result of industrial growth, scientific progress, technological advancements, and German scholars and artists who were attracting international attention.

Schumacher identified himself and his country with European civilization, but at the same time thought of himself as a German first and European second. Schumacher saw West German currency reform and the Marshall Plan in 1948 as detrimental to West German society and unification. This was not the first time the destruction of war put Germany in a state of financial debt in a postwar period. Three years after World War I, the U.S. set a fiscal plan in motion, in which Germany would repay its wartime debts to creditor nations. In 1924,

90 Drummond, The German Social, 19.
91 Edinger, Kurt Schumacher, 11.
a settlement was reached between the U.S. and Germany that was approved by the Reichstag. Germany faced a monetary crisis. Germany’s stagnating economy after World War I was expected to meet central tenets imposed by the Treaty of Versailles. For example, Germany would have to repay its debt in payments. The creation of new taxes would be imposed, and the Reichsbank would be reorganized under Allied supervision. The U.S. realized that Allied occupation of the Ruhr area also created a major crisis of inflation that had a negative effect on Germany’s economy. Architects of the Dawes plan did not foresee that Germany would not be able to repay a debt over an expanded period of time.

In 1929, another financial attempt to rescue Germany from its second financial crisis was adopted under the Young Plan. The Young Plan took reign and became synonymous with a complete settlement of reparations. Additionally, assistance from other countries including France, Italy, Great Britain, and Belgium agreed on relaxing repayment methods. The Young Plan, like its predecessor, reinforced the international involvement of other countries in order to stabilize Germany’s economy. Creditor nations under the Young Plan offered financial incentives of backing Germany. Consequently, the Marshall Plan was not a new phenomenon to U.S. and German relations. The implications of these relief programs were understood by Schumacher to be detrimental. Schumacher did not want West Germany to have to turn to the Allies to make major decisions for the country, particularly at a time when Germany was not sovereign. In an article from Time, Schumacher was said to have “violently attacked Chancellor Adenauer for agreeing to the West’s conditions”, and that Schumacher’s followers went further than he and fought election campaigns with demagogic anti-armament slogans. Recognizing Schumacher’s followers as posing a serious threat to national security matters, the U.S. worried that a wider demographic of the West German population might fall under the spell of the SPD.

CHAPTER 2

DIPLOMATIC DISTRUST

A German, who five-years ago, did not give up his rusty cavalry sword, but buried it in his garden, was reckoned a Nazi and an enemy of democracy. A German who today says he has no liking for carrying a rifle, and that he will put on a steel helmet with distaste, is again regarded as a bad democrat.

-Martin Niemöller

When the Allied High Commission (HICOG) replaced the Office of Military Government, United States (OMGUS) in 1949, West German rearmament remained a high priority for U.S. officials despite growing opposition from West German citizens and political leaders throughout the Federal Republic. Other organizations like the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) stressed the need for coalition governments in the newly established Federal Republic. The CIA feared that the SPD would become more dominant than the CDU in the Federal Republic. U.S. preferences for championing the CDU over Social Democrats ensured the continuity of American foreign policy that included the support of defense organizations like NATO and the European Defense Community (EDC). John Foster Dulles, who would later become Secretary of State in 1953, warned that an SPD victory would reorient German foreign policy in the direction of greater independence from its U.S. protector and subvert American hegemony in Europe.\(^{96}\) The Truman administration remained worried that the Social Democrats would continue to be a source of anti-American sentiment.

Even though Adenauer pledged to the German public and Western occupation forces that the Federal Republic would not set in motion the creation of an armed forces of any kind, the U.S. had been arranging plans that would integrate Western Germany into defense alliances like NATO. When the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was created on April 4, 1949, it continued to uphold European-American relations on the grounds that its

\(^{96}\) Kisatsky, *The United States*, 25.
sole purpose was to implement an enduring Western defense community to contain Soviet expansion. Even by 1949 NATO was beginning to cement U.S.-West German relations, pledging direct involvement and decision making in the formulation of defense policies for West European military forces. Even though the Federal Republic did not become a member until 1955, NATO conveyed a strong sense of protection for many Germans who persistently felt threatened by the stationing of Soviet military forces along the East-West border. Opposition to NATO from the SPD camp exacerbated the rearmament debate in West Germany. Schumacher rejected the proposed inclusion of German units within a diverse European army when talks intensified in 1950 during the New York foreign minister’s conference. The SPD leader argued that West Germany needed to command its own soldiers, and demanded a guarantee from Western Allies that they would share the risks and make the same sacrifices as any German soldier would. Military equality existing with a German defense contribution did not seem feasible, especially under the constraints of non-German leadership in a larger European army led by old military elites. Basically, Schumacher warned that if hostilities intensified with Soviet troops in Berlin, occupation troops had to share the same risks as any potential West German counterpart.

Adenauer and Schumacher held opposing views on West Germany’s bid for membership into the NATO alliance since its creation. Schumacher conceded that in principle it was not possible to reject the rearming of West Germany because it would be equivalent to an invitation of Soviet forces marching into West Germany. Carlo Schmid argued it would be frivolous to talk of defense with only 30 divisions on one side and 105 on the other, underscoring Soviet military superiority. The U.S. wondered if Germans could be relied upon for combat, how they would be selected, and when they would be prepared to play a decisive military role. The SPD believed the Western alliance nurtured the illusion that Germans were morally bound to sacrifice themselves in the next war to atone for Nazi sins. Many West Germans who backed the SPD on a moral premise that reunification could be achieved peacefully, also presumed that East and West Germany had everything to lose.

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97 Edinger, Kurt Schumacher, 231.
and nothing to gain from another war. German unity was a precondition for peace, which highlights why Social Democrats pursued reunification through negotiations with East Germany. The SPD and scores of other displeased Germans saw the mounting political pressure for rearmament as a direct path leading to another unwanted war on behalf of occupying powers they did not entirely respect.

Schumacher saw any German military contribution as being contingent on equality that U.S. forces did not seem ready to grant. If military hostilities ensued, Schumacher feared that a German army would be defeated by the Soviets and forced to retreat across the Rhine. Adenauer shared Schumacher’s concern, arguing that military equality was a prerequisite for any rearmament talks to advance. However, Adenauer publically called on West Germans to accept the proposal for common defense against Soviet aggression, arguing that military equality meant a German General Staff controlling German troops, and a security pact between West Germany and the North Atlantic treaty powers. Adenauer was committed to forging a Western alliance, even though he promised no revival of German militarism. Schumacher believed Adenauer did not share public fears over rearmament and was just raising the need for equality to maintain public and Allied support, justifying his distrust toward the Chancellor.

In the U.S., President Truman believed opposition to West German rearmament proposals would jeopardize congressional support. In a U.S. survey taken in 1949, Americans were polled in response to Truman’s plan to send war materials to Germany and Western Europe. Respondents expressed whether they approved, disapproved, or had no opinion to rearm German soldiers. Overall, the approve/disapprove rating was almost evenly split, except for college students, democrats, and Southerners whose rates of approval were higher than any other group polled. Those who supported rearming German troops reflected American concerns about postwar international developments the U.S. was engaged in, and West German rearmament. In retrospect, both the West German and American public were opposed to rearmament for different reasons. For example, just as many Germans were opposed to rearmament on the grounds that they either sided with political parties like the

SPD or were opposed to the thought of engaging in another war. Americans were equally resentful of the prospect of losing U.S. soldiers overseas in the postwar period. Schumacher perceived U.S. policies as economic imperialism and damaging to a country that was still recovering from the aftermath of World War II. West Germany was largely rebuilt with U.S. economic and military aid under the assumption that the Federal Republic led by the CDU leadership would comply with U.S. priorities.

U.S. agencies including the Department of State, CIA, and PWD frequently tried to assess how West Germans were responding to issues supported by political parties like the CDU. It was important that the German public did not interpret American contributions as strategies to psychologically condition West Germans. For example, the PSB was aware that American involvement and contributions to West Germany were at risk with West Germans and that they might backfire on the U.S. The PSB noted this progressive loss of U.S. leverage in European governments. In West Germany the feeling became widespread and intense that at times U.S. political, economic, military, and psychological pressures ran the risk of being self-defeating in the long run.102 Such observations made by U.S. agencies were critical to American intelligence at the time. Looking at a declassified government report, the CIA monitored political parties in West Germany that would likely gain the most votes and become the most influential in the newly established Federal Republic.103 The political environment favored by the CIA was composed of a CDU-CSU coalition. The CIA report relied on state election results throughout Trizonal regions between 1946-1947, assuming that the electoral outcomes in those elections would not drastically change in 1949. In these elections the CDU/CSU coalition gained 36.5 % of votes, SPD 35.9 %, and the FDP 10.3 %, and these results did not drastically shift in the 1949 free elections with the CDU enduring as the dominant party.104 These figures were used to predict possible political coalitions that would ideally evolve into the new political consensus. Additionally, the same report

102 Psychological Strategy Plan.

103 Probable Consequences of the Forthcoming West German Elections, 19 July, 1949, Papers of Harry S. Truman, Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, MO.

104 Ibid.
highlights how the U.S. would respond to rigid SPD opposition under Schumacher’s leadership.

The CIA report *Probable Consequences of the Forthcoming West German Elections*, emphasized that none of the major parties would win majority support, and a coalition between the CDU-CSU, potentially with the SPD, would be in line with U.S. interest to prevent communism in Germany. Throughout the six-page report, Kurt Schumacher was the only political figure specifically mentioned, referring to him as the SPD leader who dominated the most highly centralized left-wing party in West Germany. The report did not mention Adenauer, or any other leading West German politicians, suggesting that Schumacher’s influence in the West could not be overlooked. The CIA report did not detail how far of a leftist Schumacher was perceived, though his socialism was often misunderstood by American officials who labeled him as a threat to West German democracy. Party presses of the SPD and CDU were noted as significant propaganda instruments within the party organizations. The CIA stressed that the U.S. would have to negotiate with opposition leaders like Schumacher, regardless of how much he was disliked by U.S. personnel. Schumacher’s antagonism toward Adenauer was firmly grounded on the belief that German capitalists would always feel compelled to use their money to influence politics and undermine democracy. Schumacher accused the CDU of favoring capitalism and emphasized the importance of class and socialization of key industries, which were reoccurring themes throughout Schumacher’s tenure as SPD leader. The recognition of the place of the middle class in the SPD’s platform would require careful planning and direction from the 1950’s onward. Tackling the historical task of the Social Democrats through reformulating the party structure and shifting the economy away from a capitalistic market economy in West Germany remained a priority for Schumacher to convince U.S. officials and the German public that it would democratize Germany.

Postwar goals of the SPD shed light on how German socialism and the SPD were evolving as a party of a new type. The socialization of major industries was a launch pad for

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105 *Probable Consequences of the Forthcoming West German Elections*.
107 Childs, *From Schumacher to Brandt*, 94.
Social Democrats to begin their political agenda for the 1950’s. Two major tenets supported these goals: socialization would be a vehicle as a means for overcoming class divisions and also serve as a prerequisite for increasing productivity and the general welfare of the people. After 1945, the former ruling classes and large landowners had largely disappeared along with the loss of their property. New social differences sprang in Germany’s postwar period in which a different social hierarchy emerged with a new ruling class of bureaucratic technocrats that Schumacher believed Adenauer and foreign powers like the U.S. had sponsored. One challenge that the SPD grappled with revealed the limitations of Marxist socialism. Former CDU cabinet member Gustav Heinemann stated in the SPD journal, *Neue Gesellschaft*, the prophecy stated in the Erfurt Program of 1891 concerning the inevitable growth of the proletariat and inevitable proletarian domination in the future had been contradicted by modern economic developments. Even shortly after the war Schumacher propagated that the SPD had to become a party of all classes and not only the working class. The Marxist model that identified solely with the working classes was in need of revision.

As stated in the SPD Protokoll, Marxist class categories did not correspond with postwar German society. German society was uniquely different in the postwar period. For a long time workers had not been the proletariat class on the lowest stage of society. The middle class was growing and the millions of pensioners posed a special problem in Germany. Moreover, much of what Marx said and predicted more than 100 years ago had to be set aside. Schumacher’s unwillingness to succumb to U.S proposals was also mistaken by Western officials as a strict commitment to his ideological outlook that was intended to preserve classical Marxist ideology. In fact, Schumacher was no ideologue, even though he remained supportive of a Marxist model for achieving SPD aims. Schumacher recognized the importance of expanding the SPD’s electoral appeal, which helps explain his ambition for West Germany to regain control of lost territories in the East. He proposed that the SPD become a party of a “new type,” transitioning from a working class party to a coalition

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109 Ibid.


111 Ibid.
between the working and the middle-classes. According to Schumacher, socialism was no longer the affair of the working class, but was a program for artisans, civil servants, intellectuals, small business owners, and workers, which shared a concern for free development of the individual.\footnote{112 Scholz, *Turmwächter der Demokratie*, 39.}

Occupation in West Germany laid the groundwork for cooperative relations between the CDU and the U.S. From the outset when political parties in West Germany started reforming as early as 1946, American officials privileged conservative political parties over Social Democrats. This was not done out of American ideological preference per se, but U.S. authorities associated SPD reconstruction efforts with political radicalism that was equally dangerous in a nation recently governed by Nazi extremism.\footnote{113 Kisatsky, *The United States*, 28.} U.S. strategies aimed to weaken the political influence of the Social Democrats in the postwar years highlight American efforts to counter the socialization of major industries like coal, chemical, electrical, and steel. Since the Social Democrats were supportive of these measures, American officials continued to view the SPD as a party representing a version of communism. The success of SPD dominated governments in various German states throughout the former British and U.S. zones intensified animosity with American officials because SPD leaders wanted to nationalize coal and steel production. Nevertheless, the relationship between Adenauer and the U.S. was personally upsetting for Schumacher, as efforts to persuade U.S. officials to back the Federal Republic into the West European alliance persisted. Prior to a Paris conference between the Allies where discussions of West German admission in the Council of Europe had been introduced, Adenauer held a luncheon in Berlin honoring Secretary Acheson for representing the U.S. and its efforts in rebuilding West Germany. During Acheson’s visit, Adenauer famously remarked, “Americans are the best Europeans.”\footnote{114 Establishment of the Federal Republic of Germany, n.d. Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS) Papers, University of Wisconsin Digital Collections, 252.} As recently elected Chancellor, Adenauer had to decide if the time was right to raise the question of German membership in the Council of Europe before the Bundestag. Ongoing attacks by Social Democrats on Adenauer for praising U.S. officials and
pursuing policies that further dimmed the prospect of unification continued to politically weaken Adenauer, who was criticized for being a proxy for American interest. Following the reception, Secretary Acheson met with SPD leaders Schumacher, Carlo Schmid, and Erich Ollenhauer. A cable sent to John McCloy from Secretary Acheson addressed the conversation he had with Schumacher, during which Schumacher questioned the current status of U.S.-West German relations. Acheson was probed on dismantling factories in the Ruhr, and to what extent the secretary believed that the German government actually represented the German people. Acheson did not directly address Schumacher, stating that the U.S. could only deal with the established German government under Adenauer, and Schumacher may as well ask whether if Truman or Acheson himself represented the American people. These meetings marked a failed attempt at cooperation and understanding between Schumacher and Acheson, in addition to it being one of the rare instances where Schumacher could have relaxed the tensions with the United States. This meeting proved that being anti-communist did not necessarily mean being perceived as an ally to the West.

Acheson saw his meeting with Schumacher as a positive encounter despite Schumacher’s skepticism of the U.S. role in West Germany. Acheson stressed that the SPD should agree on a bipartisan foreign policy with the CDU over West German rearmament. Schumacher remarked that the SPD did not oppose the Western occupation powers, but only the Russians because they represented a totalitarian and dictatorial regime, and would offer nothing to Germany. Schumacher’s criticism of Adenauer’s negligence toward the German people was interpreted by Acheson as a way for Schumacher to blame the U.S. for supporting a bipartisan foreign policy between the CDU and SPD. Any coalition between the CDU and SPD would be more detrimental for the SPD. If the SPD decided to relax its opposition toward rearmament, and show some support of West German defense proposals, it would likely alienate Schumacher and SPD loyalists who shared the conviction that rearmament had been a doomed Allied strategy from its inception. Schumacher blamed

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115 Establishment of the Federal Republic of Germany, 312.
116 Ibid., 313.
117 Ibid.
Adenauer for conducting foreign policy in an autocratic manner by keeping the SPD and Parliament uninformed, and felt the chancellor was not respecting the dignity of Parliament. Commenting on Acheson’s report to High Commissioner McCloy, Carlo Schmid pointed out to Acheson that his remarks to Schumacher would fail to have an effect on the foreign policy debate in Germany. Adenauer’s warm reception for Acheson was a direct insult to Schumacher as his concerns over U.S. occupation were vaguely answered.

Adenauer demonstrated that he was a seasoned politician as he transitioned from being opposed to integrating West German troops, to complying with U.S. mandates on how German troops could be successfully integrated into a West European army. The chancellor initially opposed rearmament on the grounds that too much blood had been shed in the last war, and that it was too dangerous to provide West Germany with arms even though Soviet Marshal Rokossovski was building Soviet military strength in Berlin. Adenauer and Schumacher believed the Russians were opportunists, looking to extend their influence and find deficiencies in American foreign policy that would prevent the Allies from maintaining a military stronghold in the West. For example, Soviet official Molotov, who was often in attendance at the major conferences held between Western officials, expressed disapproval on behalf of the Soviet Union that the Potsdam agreement of 1945 prohibited any military conscription for Germans. Molotov was supportive of the measure that West Germany should not surrender an opportunity to negotiate reunification. He argued that Social Democrats were aligned with Soviets views concerning the four-power talks over rearmament. Foreign Minister Molotov suggested that the “Federal Republic should not assume new obligations in connection with the Western defense system before a new and serious attempt was made by negotiations with the Soviet Union to clarify whether it is possible to solve the issue of reunification on the basis of free elections.” Like many Germans at the time, Adenauer imagined that Soviet military strength would ultimately expand westward when Allied forces retreated from West Germany.

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118 Establishment of the Federal Republic of Germany, 313.
119 Ibid.
120 Ibid., 311.
121 Drummond, The German Social, 130.
Whether Germany symbolized a cultural bridge to integration with the West, or a battlefield with the East characterized the different approaches of the CDU and SPD. The threat of Germany once again becoming a battlefield was a sufficient argument supported by the Chancellor for the Federal Republic to remain committed to a Western alliance. Furthermore, this helped justify the formation and contribution of German military units to safeguard Western culture and values. Secretary Acheson continued to express his concern to Adenauer about West German appreciation of American efforts, suggesting that if Americans could be shown that some progress was being made in European understanding and cooperation, Americans would continue to support West German integration into NATO. SPD opposition was successful in a sense that it derailed and delayed immediate ratification of U.S. policies like rearmament. Financial and military aid from the United States was contingent on the Federal Republic taking effective steps in suppressing communism and committing itself to maintaining alliances with other West European powers. Acheson remarked that if cooperation between the Federal Republic and the U.S. failed, American public support for West Germany would diminish on the grounds that West Germany did not reciprocate. It was critical for Acheson that the Western Allies continued to exhibit a collective trust in the Federal Republic, otherwise it would be increasingly difficult for American officials to push for congressional support to continue military and financial aid.

Adenauer’s chief advisor, Herbert Blankenhorn, kept a confidential and close correspondence with High Commissioner John McCloy, particularly when talks over the Federal Republic being admitted into the Council of Europe reached a critical point in March 1950. Blankenhorn suggested that if Schumacher and Adenauer agreed to the Federal Republic joining the Council of Europe, it would finalize the separation between East and West, and Adenauer would have a greater responsibility toward the West German people. Membership in the Council of Europe would be a critical step toward Western integration increasing the Federal Republic’s participation in decision making over European issues.

122 Establishment of the Federal Republic of Germany, 312.
123 Ibid., 310.
Blankenhorn and U.S. officials understood the importance of Schumacher supporting a Western alliance because SPD cooperation would aid the web of international organizations the Federal Republic was already involved with. For Schumacher at this point, without all the possibility of reunification being fully explored, membership of the Federal Republic in the Council of Europe remained unthinkable.

By continuing to lure West Germany under the umbrella of international organizations such as the Council of Europe, the U.S. could simultaneously preserve ties to West German markets and resources that constituted the bulk of key industries. Continued U.S. access to European markets and resources sustained the American economy and helped perpetuate the United States’ privileged international status. A European army under French leadership was an important requirement. French diplomat Armand Bérard was also fearful of the opposition Schumacher exhibited toward West German rearmament and the Federal Republic joining the Council of Europe because the SPD was fiercely opposed to the continuation of French economic control over the Saarland. According to Bérard, Schumacher pleaded to West Germans that the Federal Republic should not take sides in the Cold War, but act as a mediator for the East-West conflict instead.

John McCloy expressed his skepticism of accepting Bérard’s concern over Schumacher as truly legitimate, on the grounds that Bérard’s genuinely disliked the Social Democrats for their criticism of France. McCloy further based his suspicion of the French diplomat on the premise that the SPD would continue to oppose France having an economic stronghold over the Saar region. The Schuman Plan gave France substantial economic power over coal and steel production. Schumacher was convinced that France saw this region as a means to strengthen France’s economy, by regulating its natural resources. Bérard used his meeting with McCloy to put pressure on the U.S., underscoring the importance of membership of the Federal Republic on the Council of Europe. Differences of opinion ensued between both officials, because McCloy’s meeting with Schumacher and Schmid did not reflect what Bérard considered reliable and accurate sources from Adenauer’s cabinet. Bérard countered Schumacher’s

125 Kisatsky., *The United States*, 43.
126 Central and Eastern Europe, 625.
127 Ibid., 624.
proposal for West German membership into the Council, by arguing that the majority of Germans identified with the West and opposed the middle ground suggested by Schumacher and Schmid, whose ideas of a centralized government allegedly made them more vulnerable to communist influence.\footnote{128} Regardless if French and American attitudes were not always aligned, Schumacher continued to personify the antagonist who did not embody the qualities of a statesman that U.S. and French officials desired. Essentially, Schumacher would not support the Federal Republic’s position on an emerging Trans-Atlantic alliance, as long as Germany remained divided.

Communist military activity persisted in East Germany throughout 1950. A confidential cable sent to the Chief of German Affairs, Brigadier General Byroade, contained a summary of McCloy’s conversation with Adenauer over an intelligence report the Chancellor received from unnamed German sources concerning the Soviet military buildup in East Germany. According to Adenauer’s report, there were 175-200 Soviet divisions at peace strength, 40,000 tanks, 50-60,000 men who were sufficiently trained, and 12,000 \textit{Volkspolizei} who were recently issued new field uniforms.\footnote{129} This gave American officials an indication of the military challenge they were facing and provided a rationale as to why a robust addition of West German troops was essential for West German rearmament. Adenauer’s report revealed substantial quantities of equipment, the construction of long runways, long range jet bombers, full militarization of the \textit{Volkspolizei} (which no longer were ordinary police), 15 training bases for special training units (medical, engineer, propaganda), nine motorized divisions and 13 armored divisions, all of which considerably strengthened Soviet forces.\footnote{130} Even though these figures were estimates, the Soviets could easily demonstrate that satellite communist territories in the East were sufficiently equipped. According to McCloy, soldiers in East Germany were being indoctrinated with a mission to liberate the workers of West Germany from Anglo-American and capitalistic oppression.\footnote{131}

\footnote{128} 1950: Central and Eastern Europe, The Soviet Union. Foreign Relations to the United States (FRUS) Papers, University of Wisconsin Digital Collections, 625.
\footnote{129} Ibid., 707.
\footnote{130} Ibid.
\footnote{131} Ibid., 625.
should be noted that communists in the East were also reacting to Allied security developments in the Federal Republic, which elevated their fears.

In order to sway public opinion throughout West Europe and the United States, Chancellor Adenauer, McCloy, and Acheson cultivated a high level of trust between West Germany and the United States. U.S. sponsored programs in West Germany nurtured friendly relations. For example, the General Clay Fund for German Youth Activities sought to boost German and American morale by idealizing the role of the U.S. occupation forces in West Germany.\(^\text{132}\) American efforts to target West German youth through various organizations discredited any antipathy against U.S. occupation troops stationed in West Germany. For officials like Acheson and McCloy, Germany was still in need of reconstruction, and Germans had to recognize their dependence on American aid and show they were conforming to U.S. values.

Despite the ongoing embrace of the Atlantic alliance between Adenauer and the U.S., there were also internal disagreements in Washington between the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) and the administration under the HICOG that reflected an uncoordinated approach of U.S. foreign policy. The JCS proposed that German ground forces be granted immediate entry into NATO on a national basis. Prior to attending the New York conferences in 1950, McCloy told reporters that Germans should be allowed to defend themselves if they so desired.\(^\text{133}\) Following the New York conferences in 1950, West German rearmament was introduced as a plan for European and West German defense. The New York conferences highlighted the continuation of U.S. presence throughout West Germany, a unified command under a U.S. supreme commander, financial aid to West European forces, and the formation of a West German army. Schumacher was unrelenting when he demanded new elections in the Federal Republic the following year. Thus, it became easier for the SPD to criticize Adenauer on the grounds that West Germans would not be able to make a significant defense contribution despite meetings between Western Allies that had been taking place. Adenauer offered to rearm German troops in the West; yet he sacrificed his strongest bargaining position without


\(^\text{133}\) Large, *Germans To The Front*, 83.
achieving any substantial support from West Germans.\textsuperscript{134} Adenauer’s rearmament policy demonstrated that the chancellor was willing to sacrifice unification in order to secure a prominent place for the Federal Republic within the Western alliance. Various groups of West German socialists, youth, German intellectuals, religious figures, and a large number of the German public identified with Schumacher. Schumacher’s denunciations of an outdated military caste backed by American forces and the CDU also brought the political and moral problems of rearming into context. Even five years after the war rearmament in West Germany was still an open wound in the public’s conscience. Adhering to any military mandates dictated by former enemies was entirely out of question for the Social Democrats. More importantly to change these policies championed by the CDU, Schumacher believed that changing German society was only possible through new elections, in the democratic tradition that he convinced the public the SPD would continue to uphold.

In 1950, during the council of foreign ministers meetings in New York, the state of war between the Federal Republic and the other Western powers officially ended. More importantly, a Soviet attack against West Germany justified the right for Allied forces to use counter measures against Soviet military aggression. The New York meetings reinforced other Cold War developments pertaining to communist expansion that was extending beyond Europe. In conjunction with the U.S., France proposed to the North Atlantic Treaty Council on September 26, 1950, the establishment of an integrated European defense force under a non-German supreme command, and a German contribution to the new defense force.\textsuperscript{135} The American Chairman for the North Atlantic Council, Mr. Spofford proposed the creation of a European army with the immediate formation of German combat teams of about 6,000 men to be permitted on the basis of a five to one ration from the Atlantic treaty nations.\textsuperscript{136} U.S. officials perceived the New York conferences as a success because they strengthened the Western position in the Cold War. For Schumacher rearmament ran political risks with the Korean crisis intensifying the same year. With communism threatening to divide Korea into two states, building a Western defense in Europe seemed more practical for Western leaders.

\textsuperscript{134} Paterson, \textit{The SPD and European Integration}, 74.
\textsuperscript{135} H. G. L., “German Rearmament: Policies,” 76.
\textsuperscript{136} Ibid., 84.
Diplomats used high-level meetings like the New York conferences of 1950 to emphasize rearmament as a pressing matter and reinforce a military commitment to safeguard Western Europe. The U.S. remained cautious and suggested rearmament mandates stemming from the New York conferences would be implemented.

Timing was critical for Chancellor Adenauer as public opinion easily shifted in the newly founded Federal Republic. As historian Michael Geyer argues, there was a paradox in postwar public polling throughout the Federal Republic in which wartime trauma was significantly correlated with the rejection of rearmament in the early 1950’s. Public opinion polls held a uniquely fitting key for unlocking the strange irony of a nation that was largely opposed to rearmament, but voted for the government that was in the process of putting West German armed forces in place. In conversations that Ernest Bevin, Robert Schuman, and John McCloy had with Adenauer, the chancellor assumed the proposals for a German army had the most appeal to the Federal Republic, parliament, and West German public. If putting German soldiers within a larger, and nationally diverse West European army was approved by the North Atlantic Treaty Council in 1950, Adenauer would have to find a way to make the idea more palatable to the German public. Adenauer wanted to work out a plan for an army that would give Germans a chance to prove that they posed no military threat to other Western partners. Adenauer’s attempts to do this may have stemmed from Schumacher’s demand for the equality of West German troops; yet Adenauer wanted to have Schumacher not involved in such talks.

Adenauer’s foreign policy and diplomatic relations with Allied personnel highlight how he differed from Schumacher, as one of Europe’s foremost advocates of Western integration in the early Cold War period. Shaping foreign policy to make it more acceptable to the public was a quality that Adenauer continued to refine and get better at, both as chancellor and statesman. Schumacher on the other hand embarked on a different political course stubbornly overseeing his party’s goals in the postwar years, which he assumed SPD


139 Ibid., 804.
loyalists would unconditionally support like his opposition to policies like rearmament (which at times proved to be true). He proved that he was capable of doing this with former CDU members who were part of Adenauer’s cabinet (most notably Gustav Heinemann), in addition to those who voted for Adenauer in the 1949 elections. For Adenauer, limited sovereignty by joining Western organizations was unobjectionable as the most pragmatic policy.\footnote{Wolfram F. Heinreider, \textit{West German Foreign Policy: 1949-1979} (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1980), 17.} Regardless, rearmament decisions had to be implemented before Adenauer’s policies lost public support as a result of ongoing SPD attacks.

It is important to note that the SPD continued to attract West Germans in regions throughout the former U.S. zone that were CDU strongholds. By late 1950, Adenauer’s popularity had dropped, as the SPD made notable gains throughout Bayern, Hessen and Baden-Württemberg.\footnote{Schwartz, \textit{America’s Germany}, 146.} Public dissatisfaction with rearmament had reached a boiling point in West Germany. Political gains for the Social Democrats throughout Hessen, Württemberg, and Bavaria, were significant for the SPD which won as 155 of the 402 seats in the Bundestag compared with only 130 seats for the CDU.\footnote{Edinger, \textit{Kurt Schumacher}, 230.} Schumacher saw this as another big opportunity for Germans to put the Social Democrats in power. The SPD remained hopeful that Schumacher’s plea to Adenauer for free elections in 1951 in West Germany would be considered. The SPD campaigned vigorously against rearmament with posters targeting the CDU, stating that a vote for the Christian Democrats meant a vote for remilitarization.

Schumacher used the rearmament debate as the most pressing issue in West Germany to force new elections and replace Adenauer as chancellor.\footnote{Schwartz, \textit{America’s Germany}, 146.} Schumacher also took advantage of the political momentum fueling the SPD at the time to express his dissatisfaction with Adenauer in the Bundestag and mass rallies. In a speech delivered in Stuttgart on September 17, 1950, Schumacher spoke in length about German equality as the first priority of international relations.\footnote{Schumacher, \textit{Reden-Schriften-Korrespondenzen}, 850.} This ties in with Schumacher’s assertion that Germans had not been...
given enough time to make political decisions on the political complexities of international developments that were taking place in Germany after 1949.

Schumacher’s request for new Bundestag elections in 1951 would have given voters in the Federal Republic enough time to choose a new chancellor without Germans thinking that adhering to Allied mandates was the only solution to Germany’s postwar problems. Schumacher was convinced that the people had matured as citizens in the Federal Republic and gained a broader understanding of what both Schumacher and Adenauer politically stood for in the short period between 1949-1951. However, Adenauer exerted his power by making it clear that regardless of the public opinion, he would not resign or subject the Bundestag to new elections as requested by Schumacher. Schumacher saw this as a devastating setback for the SPD, particularly within a newly established Federal Republic committed to democratic principles. Adenauer proved he was capable of ruling with an iron hand, which was exemplified by disregarding bipartisan cooperation with the SPD. Adenauer was supported by the majority in the Bundestag, which quashed Schumacher’s hope for any possibility of new elections. Aside from deepening the divide between the SPD and CDU, it also meant that Schumacher did not have many options as a party leader to retard the advancement of rearmament, but rather had to focus on maintaining popular support for his party.

American and Soviet forces remained under the impression that Germany’s military strength was not entirely broken, regardless of its losses from two wars. For the U.S., the danger of Soviet aggression hung over West Germany because the radical Marxist principle of world revolution was championed by the communist in the East. The U.S. and West Germany were largely concerned with the Soviet expansionist drive, and the imbalance of military strength between East and West that favored the Soviets. They feared a military conflict would trigger the use of atomic weapons, given that the Soviets also possessed atomic weapons. At the time, U.S. and West European forces believed that Soviet forces

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could easily match any West German defense unit gun for gun, plane for plane, tank for tank, division for division, in a ratio of two or three to one if needed.147

1950 was a pivotal year in advancing West German rearmament. American military experts and intellectuals from the Pentagon and Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) were becoming increasingly alarmed at Soviet atomic weapon capabilities. The year prior, the Soviets and the AEC tested their first atomic bomb. The Pentagon created a committee of top scientists and generals who analyzed how Europe would be defended through conventional and atomic weapons to counter a Soviet attack.148 Head of State Policy Planning Staff George Kennan’s successor, Paul Nitze, assembled NSC 68, a report that re-examined American defense policies an international level. What this report recommended aside from a $40 billion increase in defense spending (three times more than the Truman administration’s projections), was integrating conventional, tactical atomic, and strategic nuclear capabilities and an increase in weapons production to strengthen the defense of the Western Allies.149 When the Atomic Energy Commission was created, the escalating crisis of Soviet expansion beyond Europe justified why the U.S. felt it was necessary to showcase its military strength. The rearmament debate in West Germany and communist expansion in Korea made it difficult for German politicians to ignore both issues.

Despite the mounting tension in Korea reported through media and diplomatic correspondence, Adenauer and Schumacher used the expansion of Soviet ideology as a political instrument to reinforce their party’s stance on national defense. The Korean crisis further polarized the CDU and SPD positions on rearmament, in addition to momentarily isolating American foreign policy from the discussion of rearming West German troops. Schumacher and Adenauer had a bigger platform to appeal to the public on whether West Germany should adhere to a policy of peace or policy of strength. The German newspaper, Die Zeit, linked America’s failure to adequately arm the South Koreans with Allied unwillingness to sanction a West German federal police force arguing that it understood why

147 Schuman, “The Soviet Union and German Rearmament,” 80.
148 Large, Germans To The Front, 64.
149 Ibid.
the people in Seoul spoke bitterly about U.S. policy. The Korean War and the aims of U.S. officials who worked to ensure that the Federal Republic would not be neutral weakened the SPD.

Adenauer privately met with U.S. personnel and government coalition leaders prior to a Bundestag session in late 1950 in order to build stronger political support for the CDU. Leaders from the CSU and FDP were expected to individually (on behalf of each coalition party) make a declaration that would set forth West Germany’s willingness to contribute to European defense. For Adenauer, the meeting was necessary to clarify German thinking over a West German defense plan. After his meeting with Adenauer, John McCloy met with Schumacher in order to reiterate the U.S. position on West German defense as a deterrent to Soviet expansion. McCloy noted in his cable to Secretary Acheson that he had to stress the importance of utilizing a German army, in a way to avoid the creation of a national army or a German general staff. McCloy went on to express his confusion about SPD policy, arguing that it seemed entirely negative. The U.S. could not accept its insistence of new conditions for a German defense contribution. McCloy insisted on the creation of an Allied force sufficient to take the offensive in an event of war because West Germany should not be called upon to cover an Allied retreat or court a Soviet attack with its participation in a weak and vulnerable force. Schumacher demanded that the Allies station a massive force along the Elbe to safeguard Germans in any case they should rearm, and wanted Allied forces to revise their strategy and take an offensive rather than defensive role against the Soviets in the East. Nevertheless, even if Schumacher supported an offensive role at this point, the SPD campaign for peace did not lose momentum. Equally important were the financial burdens that would be added to any debt of the Federal Republic since West Germany’s struggling economy could not afford increasing Allied occupation costs. Schumacher pointed out to McCloy that even though other countries might be able to contribute 10% of their national

150 Large, *Germans To The Front*, 66.
152 Ibid.
153 Ibid., 732.
income toward defense spending, Germany would not be able to meet such financial requirements.\textsuperscript{155}

Adenauer saw the security of the Federal Republic principally threatened from the East, and was inclined to continue an alliance with the Western Powers. A CIA report in 1951 suggested that if rearmament was viewed as less dangerous and more advantageous to West Germany, public opinion would be less adverse to it and Schumacher would then change his position.\textsuperscript{156} Closely monitoring Schumacher’s political actions, American intelligence knew his anti-communism was politically important because it strengthened the overall effort in preventing Communist control in West Germany, of which most West Germans remained supportive. Although Schumacher expressed the concern that little or nothing was to be expected from negotiating with the USSR, his outlook for negotiations reinforced popular sentiment throughout West Germany that no decision should be taken on rearmament until a committed effort toward a peaceful agreement with the Soviets was made.\textsuperscript{157} The Federal Republic had been asked by Allied forces and the Chancellor to take up arms not as a sovereign state, but as a subordinate member of an alliance led by its former enemies.\textsuperscript{158} This was a condition that Schumacher found difficult to come to terms with. Officials like John McCloy and Secretary Acheson found that Schumacher’s unwillingness to support a German contribution made it difficult to find middle ground between the Allies and the Social Democrats.

The SPD saw the importance of socialism as a means to secure peace, and a solution that could assure the world that the Germans were no longer militaristic, or posed a threat to democracy. Regardless of how vigorously the SPD was in campaigning against West German rearmament, CIA national intelligence estimates suggested that rearmament would better serve the interest of Germany in the long run as allies of the Western powers rather than as a neutral or pro-Soviet country.\textsuperscript{159} The Soviets understood German sentiment and the

\textsuperscript{155} 1950: Central and Eastern Europe, The Soviet Union, 732.
\textsuperscript{156} German Attitudes on Rearmament.
\textsuperscript{157} Ibid., 1
\textsuperscript{158} Ibid., 3.
\textsuperscript{159} Ibid.
desire many Germans had for unity. Soviet officials realized that they could control these aspirations skillfully by “invitations” from Moscow to unite East and West Germany. Adenauer’s assertion that such propositions to sit down with Soviet officials and discuss unification were just a ruse intended to portray him and other Western leaders as scheming officials turning their backs against Germans. Unlike Adenauer, Schumacher was successful in presenting himself as a champion of the people. For Schumacher, the fate of Germany hinged on whether a coalition between manual workers and the middle class could be achieved. Schumacher thought in national and not in class terms. He believed SPD aims were in the best interest of Germany as opposed to abiding by Western mandates that undermined unification.

Schumacher’s concept of Marxism was central to the postwar aims of the Social Democrats. Marxism was a method of analysis, which Social Democracy relied upon to understand history and contemporary issues. Since the creation of the Federal Republic in 1949, Adenauer saw an alliance with the Western Allies as the best course for securing the Federal Republic’s political and economic interests. Schumacher suggested that the North Atlantic Alliance should offer a practical solution that would not just defend West Germany from Soviet rule, but also Europe before any talks on rearmament could evolve. Speaking at a Bundestag session in Schumacher’s absence, Carlo Schmid argued that before German rearmament could be considered, a European supranational political authority had to be created first. The Social Democrats were motivated by a deeper concern that if this was not recognized, Germans would be confronted with an even greater obstacle toward reunification. Schumacher stressed the necessity to raise the living standards in order to give the ordinary citizen the feeling of having something to defend. It was necessary to build confidence in Europe and Germany by the concentration of decisive military forces on the Eastern borders of the Federal Republic. Still, this continued to put Schumacher in a difficult political situation despite the anti-communist spirit of the SPD and the ohne mich

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160 German Attitudes on Rearmament.
161 Scholz, Turmwächter der Demokratie, 33.
162 Paterson, The SPD and European Integration, 73.
163 Ibid., 74.
(without me) slogan widely popularized by West Germans and media outlets to express opposition to rearmament. This concerned officials like McCloy, who recognized Schumacher’s popular support. In a memo to Acheson, McCloy stated that Schumacher had been attempting to disassociate the SPD from the ohne mich catch phrase because strong SPD opposition toward rearmament was declining. McCloy believed this might be a response to a recent election defeat of the SPD in Baden and Rhineland-Pfalz, and General Eisenhower’s visit to West Germany in 1951 when he called for more financial aid from the U.S. toward German defense. Eisenhower’s visit to the Federal Republic was perceived by McCloy as a success to usher in a smooth transition for West German membership in NATO. Eisenhower’s visit gained the U.S. trust of many West Germans, arguing that he knew the real difference between the regular German soldier and officer, and Hitler and his criminal group, emphasizing that the German soldiers did not lose their honor. Eisenhower understood the importance that political figures and the public attached to national defense and military equality, stressing that NATO would not tolerate second-class membership of any West German contingent operating within a diverse European army. McCloy stated that mounting communist propaganda for unity and peace against rearmament was putting pressure on the SPD toward conditional acceptance of rearmament. Schumacher’s demand for military equality was grounded in how he and his party refused to see German troops as subordinate to the United States, France, or Britain. McCloy pointed out to Schumacher that it was unrealistic for him to insist on this condition. It became apparent for the Social Democrats that their efforts to derail West German rearmament were failing, more so with the outbreak of the Korean War that fed the fear of Soviet domination with a proxy war unfolding outside Europe. The Social Democrats were losing the fight for national sovereignty with their unconditional opposition of U.S. foreign policy. The SPD would soon have to start softening its opposition to rearmament, as one Social Democrat noted, “Alright than if we must.”

165 Ibid., 447.
166 Ibid., 1009.
167 Ibid., 1010.
Schumacher’s non-compromising stance with Western forces did not leave him with sufficient political leverage in parliament. The major goal for the U.S. was to make rearmament appear advantageous rather than detrimental to West Germany. Neither Schumacher nor any other Social Democrat leaders could change their position on rearmament before all possibilities of peaceful reunification were thoroughly explored. Acheson believed the SPD would continue to exploit public opposition to rearmament in order to undermine Adenauer’s public support. The U.S. suggested that there should be no obvious discrimination against German units in equipment, organization, command, sector assignment, and deployment. Allied knowledge of Soviet military strength put into context the desperate need for rearmament, and more importantly, placing German troops in a diverse European army. A real threat continued to loom over Germany as SPD member Erich Ollenhauer pointed out, the addition of West German forces to NATO defenses would be equally matched by the Soviets in their zone of occupation, gun for gun, tank for tank.

168 German Attitudes on Rearmament, 4.
169 Ibid., 5.
CHAPTER 3

REARMAMENT AND GERMAN VIEWS

Chancellor Adenauer pledged that by supporting rearmament, the Federal Republic would be part of the most sophisticated defense system of the time. One of Adenauer’s goals was to uphold the cordial relations he had with American personnel, in addition to rebuilding ties with France. This chapter concentrates on the period from 1951 to 1952, highlighting new developments in the West German rearmament debate and political challenges the SPD continued to face despite its ongoing public support. Schumacher’s opposition to rearmament in the early 1950’s is deeply interwoven with political pressure ensuing from the Cold War. One focal point that merits discussion is how the SPD would maintain public support as defense policies in the Federal Republic continued to be shaped by the CDU and its U.S. and French counterparts without taking SPD proposals of holding four-power talks with Soviet leaders into consideration. Even though Germans like Schumacher did not want to supply German troops for a proxy war between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, the Social Democrats continued to reformulate their party principles. SPD anxiety over Soviet military power evolved with a U.S. position in the Cold War that was not as fixated on the political threat the SPD posed to the CDU, but more toward to forging a Trans-Atlantic alliance that would operate to contain communism from spreading to Western Europe.

Nevertheless, the U.S. continued to be vigilant of socialist parties like the SPD fearing they could be radicalized into communism. Looking at the rearmament debate as covered in the West German press and views expressed by German citizens adds another layer to the complexity to the rearmament debate that was fundamentally different from U.S. views. Examining print media in postwar West Germany is useful to assess public sentiment on politically charged issues such as rearmament and reunification. More importantly, it was a combination of print media, surveys, and personal letters that reflected the growing dissatisfaction Schumacher could not neglect as the ongoing battle for Germany’s sovereignty continued to clash with the economic, political, and diplomatic goals the United States set for West Germany. Schumacher’s opposition was not based on old arguments, but
changed within a short period of time on his response to the rapidly evolving decision making of American policies in Germany.

A classified document from the Psychological Strategy Board (PSB) analyzing the psychological effects of U.S. media throughout West Germany underscored the negative perceptions that West Germans had of the United States.\textsuperscript{170} This analysis reinforced existing anxieties that U.S. personnel had, fearing that their orchestrated propaganda campaigns promoting American values were not working effectively. Two years after the creation of the Federal Republic in 1949, the United States remained the dominant country among the Western Allies in charting the future course of West Germany. The U.S. was committed to rejuvenating democracy in West Germany. Many West Germans and left-wing political parties thought American military actions were driving the continent deeper to the brink of war with the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{171} The PSB cultivated support of military preparedness among intellectual and political leaders in Western Europe, to successfully strengthen a North Atlantic Alliance. U.S. officials believed it would be more practical and effective if the U.S. led a North Atlantic community to build strong opposition to Soviet rule, rather than organizations like the European Defense Community that would be introduced in late 1951.

The U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) were not convinced that American troops stationed in West Germany possessed sufficient manpower needed for a defense strategy against the Soviets. Furthermore, the JCS pressed for the creation of ten German army divisions and convinced President Truman to enact this defense measure, demanding that Secretary Acheson convince NATO foreign ministers that the U.S. had no intention of permitting the Federal Republic of using the divisions as an instrument of foreign policy.\textsuperscript{172} French officials like Robert Schuman remained fearful of a German army, believing it was too early to rearm the Germans. With ongoing criticism from the SPD toward France for its economic control of the Saarland, France began playing a more decisive role in the rearmament debate in the early 1950’s.


\textsuperscript{171} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{172} Drummond, \textit{The German Social}, 48.
The Pleven Plan proposed in late 1950 by French Premier René Pleven demonstrated France’s early attempt to exert its diplomatic influence in the early Cold War period. Under it, Germany would contribute small combat teams, but would be denied a national army, a general staff, and a defense ministry.\textsuperscript{173} This infuriated the Social Democrats, who always feared that postwar rearmament would reduce German troops to proxies fighting for French and U.S. interests. French interest in maintaining economic control over the Saar region was dependent on American and CDU cooperation. Even though a CDU deputy initially called the Pleven Plan an unrealistic program for German participation in Western defense, Adenauer expressed his willingness to help in advancing it, suggesting to the German parliament it was a worthwhile contribution to one of the main objectives of German policy and European integration.\textsuperscript{174} The underlying goal of the French defense proposal was to create a European army with West German troops sharing the responsibility of securing peace in Europe. Furthermore, Adenauer perceived this as an essential step toward restoring German sovereignty.\textsuperscript{175} Schumacher feared that Adenauer had made a fateful decision by forfeiting German sovereignty in accordance with French policies.

French publications acted similarly when attacking Schumacher, accusing him of trying to impose a democratic facade on West Germany, and calling him “A New Hitler.”\textsuperscript{176} Schumacher was portrayed as a fanatical and scheming politician looking into a mirror with Hitler’s reflection looking back. French opposition to the SPD was just as relevant to French officials as it was for the CDU, because it signaled the danger Schumacher would pose if the SPD became the ruling party. Even if Schumacher did not become chancellor, his demand for new elections the following year continued to alarm members of the Atlantic alliance. Schumacher accused the U.S. of being willing to sacrifice German lives to appease the French and adhering to a defense plan that would abandon European and German ground troops on the frontline.\textsuperscript{177} Stationing American troops in West Germany was costly and

\textsuperscript{173} Drummond, \textit{The German Social}, 49.
\textsuperscript{174} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{175} Williamson, \textit{Germany from Defeat to Partition, 1945-1967}, 40.
\textsuperscript{176} “Le Point De Vue: du Dr Schumacher,” \textit{Horizons} 6 (1947).
\textsuperscript{177} Drummond, \textit{The German Social}, 50.
contingent on financial aid the U.S. was prepared to give Europe. Schumacher did not support a half way measure toward a national defense contribution. This gave Schumacher public support from like-minded citizens who rejected West German rearmament if the demand for military equality was not respected.

Many Germans wrote to leaders like Schumacher, expressing their anxieties from previous military experiences dating back to World War I. In 1951, Frankfurt resident Rudolf Hauser wrote a letter to Schumacher, praising the leader’s unyielding position on rearmament. In the beginning of the letter, Hauser mentioned that as a non-member of the SPD he had never been more convinced about the dangers of remilitarizing West Germany based on his wartime experience during World War II. Hauser based his views on Allied proposals of integrating West German soldiers within a larger multi-national European force. Hauser touched on his personal experience when he enlisted as a soldier for the Nazi regime against his will. Hauser stated that he and several other thousand soldiers would have rejected the war, especially after experiencing Soviet captivity. Hauser feared that he would relive the wartime experience if the Soviets continued to be provoked, since German troops would be deployed on the frontline against their will. His letter to Schumacher underscores the political confidence the public had in Schumacher, especially in a former staunchly CDU stronghold. Nevertheless, it is important to note that both Schumacher’s and Hauser’s positions to rearmament were grounded on two different and distinct explanations. Even though Schumacher would have been sympathetic to Hauser’s letter, Schumacher’s stance against rearmament was derived from pan-German, European, and international considerations. Schumacher’s opposition went beyond Hauser’s fear of seeing German men involved in another war.

Trying to better understand public attitudes that identified with the Social Democrats, it is imperative to look at at political polls and election results throughout the Federal Republic between 1950-1952. From the Hessen state legislature elections in 1950 and local elections in 1952, one can see the political success of the Social Democrats as it gained the

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179 Ibid.
majority of votes in both elections. For the Hessen state legislature elections of November 1950, the SPD received 821,268 (44.4%) of votes cast, compared to 348,148 (18.8%) of votes supporting the CDU. In the local elections for Hessen in May 1952, the SPD received 856,440 (38.5%) compared to 396,137 (17.8%) votes going to the CDU. It is useful to look at other elections from neighboring regions in the former U.S. zone to put the political dissatisfaction for the CDU into perspective. Even though the SPD received more votes in the state legislature elections in Bavaria, public opinion was almost equally divided with 2,588,549 (28%), compared to 2,527,370 (27.4%) going to the CSU-CDU coalition. Communal elections held in communities and municipal counties throughout Baden-Württemberg were also favorable to the SPD. In January 1951, the SPD received 5,659,508 (28.8%) of votes, significantly outweighing the 3,646,960 (18.6%) votes going to the CDU. These outcomes indicate the faith and trust that West Germans had in the SPD, as well as identifying with a party they believed to have more in common with. Rearmament remained an emotionally and psychologically vital issue for Germans in the early 1950’s.

Hauser demonstrated that non-SPD members were genuinely fearful of West German rearmament, even if it ran counter to their political principles and allegiances to other parties like the CDU. Hauser resented Germany’s status as nothing more than an occupied area divided by foreign military powers.

In March 1951, Lothian Graham-Scott, journalist for the Guenery Star, wrote a letter to Schumacher concerning an article that was published by the British newspaper. What was striking about this letter was that Lothian Graham-Scott alerted Schumacher to edits the newspaper’s distribution department had made in his article on “Anglo-American Defense.” Two days before the article was published the printing staff made changes that

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181 Ibid.
182 Ibid., 40.
183 Ibid., 41.
184 Rudolf Hauser to Kurt Schumacher.
altered the meaning of the article. According to Scott, “editors revised the article because those who read it before it was published found it to be confusing and would not be able to understand it.”\footnote{186} He mentioned in his letter that he had additional typed copies made of the original article, which he planned to send to Schumacher. Scott concluded the letter by recalling that he had close connections to the Auswärtiges Amt (Federal Foreign Office) on Wilhelm Straße, presuming that as an English citizen and media correspondent this would resonate positively with Schumacher.\footnote{187} Scott’s letter to Schumacher suggested he knew (and was respected by) notable German governmental figures in the West. Scott penned his letter to Schumacher in English, assuming Schumacher was aware of how the SPD was perceived by the British press.

The Social Democrats had to accept that diplomatic efforts to derail West German rearmament were failing. U.S. officials including Secretary Acheson were determined to keep European defense under American control. Acheson forewarned his French colleagues Schuman and Pleven that military proposals under the Pleven Plan did not constitute a significant improvement over U.S. proposals.\footnote{188} Acheson’s tone implied that this was a marching order coming from Washington, thus resembling similar political scare tactics used by Acheson in his previous encounter with Schumacher. Acheson wanted to send a strong signal that the United States was not intimidated by France, or scared to abandon other Allied forces and withdraw American troops from West Germany if France decided to ignore U.S. mandates. However, French officials were becoming more vocal in their concerns that a German military resurgence would pose a threat to the economic resources of the Saarland. Hence, the attitudes of French officials like Pleven who supported German military participation became more responsive toward U.S. proposals of increasing the number of German troops. On October 1950, Pleven addressed a French Assembly and pushed for a “\textit{une fusion complète},” based on consultations with the same group advisers that had written the Schuman Plan.\footnote{189} In this proposal, he described an army of 100,000 men with

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\item \footnote{186} Lothian Graham-Scott to Kurt Schumacher.
\item \footnote{187} Ibid.
\item \footnote{188} Large, \textit{Germans To The Front}, 92.
\item \footnote{189} Schwartz, \textit{America’s Germany}, 141.
\end{itemize}
German soldiers integrated on the level of the smallest possible unit in order to avoid anything approaching a separate German General Staff or Defense Ministry. This impeded Schumacher’s fight for Germany to regain full control of the Saar region, which he tirelessly argued should not be under French authority.

Another letter to Schumacher regarding a Bundestag speech he delivered on November 8, 1950, exemplifies the importance of Franco-German relations as perceived by the West German public. The letter from Mrs. Liane Heidrich was brief and pointed out two important themes that revolved around the SPD’s postwar agenda in the early 1950’s. First, she highlighted that she was not from Schumacher’s party, but was struck and pleased with his speech given at the Bundestag. She agreed with Schumacher that Germany must have equality first and foremost, and intentionally underlined the word “must” in her typed letter, in addition to sharing Schumacher’s opinion that communism had to be flushed out of Germany. Finally, the Bavarian resident from Anschaffenburg ended her brief letter foreseeing Schumacher taking on a more direct and diplomatic role between France and Germany. Concerning policies toward France, although particular ones were not specified, Mrs. Heidrich stated that Schumacher should be more diplomatic with France. As in previous letters to Schumacher, the viewpoints from non-SPD members reveal important information as to what kind of politician Schumacher was, and what he stood for politically and nationally.

In the same Bundestag speech that Liane Heidrich was referring to, Schumacher explained how Germans were disappointed in Chancellor Adenauer for overlooking and failing to emphasize the significance of the Saar region, and how it was being used as a means of securing economic profits for France, which slowed Germany’s economic recovery. Schumacher praised his fellow Social Democrats for exposing Adenauer’s willingness to place the Saarland under French economic administration. Schumacher noted that Adenauer and French officials including Robert Schuman were abusing the newly

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190 Schwartz, *America’s Germany*, 141.


192 Ibid.

established moral and political laws of the European Council. Schumacher was irritated and wondered how any German could not recognize the prerequisites for equality at a particular time when France was asserting its sovereignty throughout the Saar. Schumacher proved that he had the charisma and ambition of a leader who would rescue Germany; but his attitude revealed his political stubbornness too.

Western leaders continued to demonstrate that they were reluctant to abandon ties with the Federal Republic and France. American Ambassador to France, David Bruce, suggested the U.S. should propose to Schuman that France assume leadership in continental security matters, because it was “the nation with the greatest European army.” Bruce believed that getting Schuman to rally French support would secure their contribution for a supranational European defense organization. Adenauer, along with U.S. and French officials, perceived the overarching goal of integrating French economic and military policies with Germany’s as a way to eradicate Franco-German hostilities and commit a vital part of Western Europe to secure long-term peace. Even though this intensified the already bleak relationship between Adenauer and Schumacher, it was not politically or economically practical for the chancellor at this point to sever ties between France and the U.S. Piecing this information together, it’s clear why Schumacher maintained a thorny relationship with French officials stemming from West German rearmament talks and French occupation of the Saarland.

Some historians argue that Schumacher and the Social Democrats were overly ambitious in trying to win the support of West Germans against rearmament, hoping that public pressure would accelerate reunification. Reiterating the SPD’s early opposition to National Socialism prior to 1933 was a theme constantly used by Schumacher to identify with Germans who also disavowed Hitler. Schumacher asserted that with his early activism he knew what political and military consequences would ensue if the same mistakes were

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195 Large, Germans To The Front, 88.
repeated and democracy failed again as it did with the Weimar Republic.\textsuperscript{197} With the growing discontent over rearmament six years after the collapse of Nazism, Schumacher persisted with his appeals to West Germans by attacking and criticizing the American economic model of “free enterprise” as an insult to German democracy. Anything short of full recovery of German national identity and national self-awareness would place Germany as a subordinate country in comparison with its Western neighbors, thus inviting the same brand of bitterness that had fueled Nazism after Versailles.\textsuperscript{198} Schumacher saw American capitalistic designs and French domination in the Saarland as tools for subjugating the Federal Republic. Adenauer knew that public concern over rearmament was profound, and more importantly, that many voters had lost confidence with the CDU for accepting policies imposed by the Western Allies.

The underlying difference between Schumacher and Adenauer over defense policies in the early 1950’s continued to be their interpretations of the Soviet threat, and how West Germany could best minimize public fears. The common ground between Social Democratic and conservative perceptions was the Soviet Union’s unyielding ambition for world domination. From the conservative standpoint, the CDU devoted more attention to the military threat imposed by the communists. On the other hand, the Social Democrats were concerned with ideological, social, and economic dangers. Adenauer’s diplomatic maneuvering with Western officials to strengthen an integrated European army highlights the differences that the CDU and SPD had in their views of communism. Furthermore, Adenauer’s offer by 1951 to recruit 150,000 German soldiers had given the false impression of the ease with which Germans would return to uniform, underscoring that he stood far out in front of German public opinion despite mounting political and public opposition.\textsuperscript{199} For the SPD, the ideological threat of communism was equally detrimental to democracy as was the influence of the military. It is important to note that the conservative way of thinking did not entirely dismiss the ideological dangers of communism, or its ability to effectively utilize

\textsuperscript{199} Schwartz, \textit{America’s Germany}, 145.
propaganda in West Germany to discredit Western values. Both the CDU and SPD assigned these issues different levels of importance. The SPD presumed that a proposal from the Western powers for free elections in East Germany would prompt Moscow to take the next pivotal step toward reunification. The period between 1951-1952 was crucial for the SPD with Western neutrality and reunification on the bargaining table with the Soviets. Additionally, the withdrawal of occupation troops from the Federal Republic seemed like a viable option the SPD felt it could get approved to open the window for reunification talks if it were able to apply enough political pressure on the CDU. Frustrated with Western Allies for violating the Potsdam agreement for a demilitarized Germany, Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov successfully pushed for negotiations, assuming that the ongoing pressure to rearm in the Federal Republic would be relaxed by Western powers. SPD leaders Schumacher and Schmid championed the idea of not pressing ahead with German rearmament until the Western powers discovered what Soviet intentions really were.

Even with Schumacher supporting the idea of communists convening four-power talks to address reunification, he did not see it as a genuine step in uniting East and West Germany. Schumacher presumed it was a Soviet ruse to delay Western defense preparations and promote neutralist sentiment by exploiting the unpopularity of West German rearmament. Defense policies of stationing Western troops throughout the Federal Republic were backed by organizations like NATO on the premise that the Soviets were equally committed to ousting Western military presence as the SPD and Western powers were in replacing communism in East Germany. Fritz Baade, who was a prominent Social Democrat from Kiel, stated that West Germany would remain protected by American air power, and the collapse of the Soviet system in East Germany could be assured if free elections ensued. Baade concluded that if both Germany states signed an honest agreement based on respect for their own interests, the security and integrity of a free and unarmed Germany could be guaranteed.


201 Ibid.

202 Ibid., 52.

203 Ibid.
The U.S. continued to utilize the media throughout the Federal Republic to generate support for the CDU and Allied efforts to help rebuild Germany. The major American publications available to the German public were *Newsweek*, *Life*, and the *New York Herald Tribune*. The Psychological Strategic Board provided an in-depth quantitative analysis of most of the West German newspapers at the time. The newspaper analysis included circulation statistics, and a general newspaper hierarchy of the periodicals the U.S. deemed politically and religiously influential. By 1952, as many as 95 daily newspapers were distributed throughout the Federal Republic, including nine published in West Berlin alone. A total of 12,000,000 newspapers were distributed annually. Some of the more influential newspapers were *West Deutsche Allgemeine* (Essen: often close to the right wing of SPD), *Die Welt* (Hamburg: Independent), *Westfälische Rundschau* (Dortmund: Independent), and the *Frankfurter Rundschau* (Liberal, Progressive). According to the same PSB report, some periodicals that were considered “outstanding” included *Gegenwart* (Frankfurt), *Die Zeit* (Hamburg), *Rheinischer Merkur* (Koblenz), *Christ und Welt* (Stuttgart), *Frankfurter Hefte* (edited by the President of the German European Union), which were all under the umbrella of the German Press Agency (DPA) that was regarded as the most important press agency servicing all of Germany. Newspaper readership is an important tool for gauging public attitudes to contemporary times. The PSB wanted the German press to endorse U.S. and CDU policies.

Additionally, the Psychological Strategy Board charted the most important political figures and parties in West Germany, and grouped their significance according to a formula based on the extent of public support each figure and party had attained. For example, political parties and personalities were systematically categorized: the CDU and Chancellor Adenauer were regarded as the most esteemed party and public figure in West Germany, and included in the same grouping as the Christian Socialist Union (CSU) in Bavaria, Free Democratic Party (FDP), and the German Party (DP) were all collectively identified as part


205 Ibid.
of the coalition generally favorable to U.S. policies.\textsuperscript{206} The SPD was listed as the next most important party in the Federal Republic, but referred to as the Social Democratic Opposition Party, whose leader Schumacher, was described as “frequently opposing CDU programs and U.S. policies.”\textsuperscript{207} The PSB desired to see membership in left-wing parties like the SPD decrease. From this working draft, notations in parenthesis were made above the KPD that read “prevent membership from 300,000 to 148,000.”\textsuperscript{208} Other extensive notations and edits throughout this document expose the internal attempts to lower left-wing party membership, and that of anti-American parties. However, the PSB expressed interest in the Refugee Party (BHE) and saw it as potentially beneficial when it started to gain prominence in Schleswig Holstein, and started to become identified with right-wing conservative parties like the CDU.\textsuperscript{209} The BHE aimed to integrate German refugees continuing to come from Soviet captivity and former expellees who temporarily lost their rights under denazification. The majority of refugees that were expelled came from previous German territories that had been given to Poland and Czechoslovakia. Germany absorbed around 10 million expellees, thus underscoring the importance of parties like the BHE.

The Refugee Party showed surprising gains in the Schleswig-Holstein elections (six months after being founded). For example, they secured 21 percent during these elections, which took away voters from the CDU whose support dropped by 9 percent.\textsuperscript{210} The growing strength of the BHE persistently rose with 600,000 refugees that had sought asylum in West Germany by 1951.\textsuperscript{211} Like other displaced Germans, many returnees had no immediate interest in politics and were more concerned with personal problems like finding work. Politically, the BHE was a rallying point for other conservatives with no commitment to any other party.\textsuperscript{212} The BHE emerged into a party held together by a common identity as victims

\textsuperscript{206} Germany-Country Plan.  
\textsuperscript{207} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{208} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{209} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{210} Frederic Spotts, \textit{The Churches and Politics in Germany} (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1973), 141.  
\textsuperscript{211} H. G. L., “German Rearmament: Policies and Opinions;” 75.  
\textsuperscript{212} Spotts., \textit{The Churches and Politics in Germany}, 141.
of Soviet oppression and American de-Nazification programs. Public resentment would become an ongoing burden for Adenauer if the U.S. decided not to soften its policy toward ex-Nazis. The Social Democrats argued that former Nazis who had committed more severe Nazi crimes were serving lighter sentences than those who had minimal roles as soldiers. Schumacher held a number of meetings with former Nazi generals including Hans Speidel and Adolf Heusinger, both of whom were military advisers to Adenauer. Schumacher saw these meetings as ammunition that would aid the SPD in its quest to repeal rearmament measures dictated by the CDU and Western powers. The opinions and support of military personnel would carry a great deal of political weight with veteran’s organizations throughout Germany and would be listened to by politicians engaged in the rearmament debate.

The SPD continued to oppose U.S. efforts in West Germany, but other leaders like Erich Ollenhauer accepted that adhering to CDU and Allied policies would be difficult to do without overlooking national security. Schumacher believed that Adenauer’s policies could be stopped. The rearmament negotiations between Western Allies and Soviets could not neglect the issue of German territory and the borders that continued to divide Germany. Soviet leaders despised seeing American troops on the Oder-Neisse line bordering Poland and other territories in the East. Equally, the U.S. did not want Soviet forces advancing any further than they already had. The SPD did not ignore the fact that Germans were caught between two fronts that were militarily prepared for war, asserting that Germany’s division resulted from external tension between Western powers and the Soviets. Schumacher perceived defense organizations like NATO and the EDC as threats designed to provoke Soviet forces to intensify their military stronghold in East European satellite territories, further diminishing any foreseeable chances of German unity. Erich Ollenhauer’s criticism of U.S. foreign policy went further to point out that Americans negotiated peace treaties with Japan and Italy while procrastinating on German unity for the sake of the balance of power in Central Europe. Schumacher believed German reunification could be achieved if Germans

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were given the opportunity to hold new elections not only in West Germany, but also in the East.

The rearmament debate in Germany rose to a crescendo that continued to leave the prospect for unification up for grabs. In February 1952, an agreement was reached that proposed a draft treaty for the European Defense Community (EDC). Just one month prior, the German parliament ratified the Schuman Plan linking the West German and French economies, further cementing diplomatic relations that Adenauer had been seeking with France. The EDC was the successor to France’s Pleven Plan that was introduced the year prior. The new blueprint for a multinational defense community under the EDC was not exempt from ongoing criticism by the Social Democrats. Schumacher publically stated that if the EDC treaty were ratified, no one willing to conform to this policy could call themselves German.215

1952 was off to an uncertain start, ushering in a new wave of Soviet fears (see Figure 1). Moreover, Schumacher could not forget, nor abandon those whom he fought for the most, the German public (see Figure 1).

West European and American officials remained suspicious of any Soviet proposals that offered reunification. On March 10 1952, Moscow formally presented West German Allied forces with a letter outlining Soviet policy on reunification. The contentious “Stalin Note” highlighted critical issues that made it difficult for Western Allies to adhere to new occupation statutes. The memo from Moscow included proposals for the withdrawal of all foreign troops on German soil, a guarantee of “free activity” for democratic parties in Berlin, equal civil and political rights for former soldiers and rehabilitated former Nazis, and prohibition of German membership in an alliance directed against any wartime power.216 As requested from Moscow, all of these mandates were to be completed within one year of the treaty’s signing. One of the focal points stemming from the proposals was the provision for a German national army. Some historians argue that in addition to granting full political rights to former Nazis, the Stalin Note was designed to impress West Germany’s veterans and highlight earlier attempts by Moscow to court Nazi officers through its wartime committee

215 Large, *Germans To The Front*, 92.

216 Kopp, *Chronik der Wiederbewaffnung*, 70.
for a free Germany.\textsuperscript{217} Soviet proposals further distinguish the differences between the two German states and what they represented. East Germany claimed that it was representative of the true German state. West Germany continued to be characterized by both the SPD and communists in the East as a capitalistic and imperialist state. This was one of the paramount principles of Marxism that Schumacher could not disassociate himself from in his quest to discredit the CDU as a capitalistic party submissive to non-German powers like France and the United States. Nevertheless, Schumacher continued to distance the Social Democrats as far as possible from being associated with the communists. This entailed discrediting puppet parties like the Socialist Unity Party (SED) that was created by the Soviets to unify the SPD and KPD under one political banner.

In a letter to Chancellor Adenauer from April 22, 1952, Schumacher cordially stated that in the name of the Social Democratic faction, the Stalin note had to be approached carefully.\textsuperscript{218} Schumacher continued to stress the importance of approving free elections throughout Germany and Berlin by the four Allied powers. In addition, Schumacher suggested that free elections should be carried out under the international control and supervision of the United Nations. The final point Schumacher wanted to make clear to Adenauer was that if the four powers under UN auspices wanted to exercise control of free elections, it was important that none of the four powers would discriminate against any German party or show any preference toward a party.\textsuperscript{219} The Stalin Note of 1952 merits close examination, as its failure resulted from the ongoing distrust of CDU and Western officials who presumed that the purpose of the Stalin Note was a Soviet tactic to oust U.S. military presence in West Germany. In addition, Adenauer was committed to taking the Federal Republic on a Western course coupled with a policy of strength. Chancellor Adenauer and his other Western counterparts were not prepared to negotiate or open up talks with Stalin who insisted that these policies be reversed.

By the summer of 1952, Schumacher remained at the center of the debate over German rearmament. Despite the failure of the “Stalin Note” that led to charges that

\textsuperscript{217} Large, \textit{Germans To The Front}, 146.


\textsuperscript{219} Ibid., 962.
Adenauer and other Allied officials had missed a real opportunity at German reunification. Schumacher graced the cover of various magazines, most notably *Time* in June 1952. In response to Schumacher appearing on the cover of *Time*, West German newspaper correspondents also followed how notable American journalists negatively portrayed political figures like Schumacher in U.S. newspapers. West German journalists translated these articles and published them in West German newspapers. One example comes from the June 9 issue of *Time*, which Schumacher graced the cover with the subheading, “Enmity toward the East, opposition to the West.” Within a week after the *Time* publication, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine* published a short article, “Schumacher: A Tiger,” referencing how he was depicted in the article. The *Time* article was perceived by the German publication as staunchly negative, suggesting that Schumacher was a symbol of a German discontent and unsatisfied demands in West Germany. Furthermore, it goes on to cite the *Time* article that labeled Schumacher as the biggest threat to Western democracy. More importantly, the article intended to capture Schumacher’s political personality and how he was characterized in it. Schumacher was illustriously depicted, like a bright and shining tiger in Germany’s dark woods, referencing William Blake’s poem, *The Tyger.* The tiger depicted in Blake’s poem possesses the capacity for both evil and violence. The poem underscores a question of morality and symbolic meaning that views the tiger as being destructive and beautiful simultaneously. How could a divine being permit the duality of beauty and horror into one creature? In Schumacher’s case he always wanted to reaffirm that the SPD wanted to prevent Germany from taking the next catastrophic step, which Western powers misconstrued as opposition for rearmament. For Schumacher, German unity rested on the mandate of freedom and equality that had to be granted to the German people. The *Frankfurter Allgemeine* article that followed the *Time* piece recounted that Schumacher symbolized German doubts and fears, but conceded he was one of the most significant men in Europe. The article made no

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221 Ibid.

222 Ibid.

223 Ibid.
attempt to discredit the staunchly negative *Time* article, or insinuate how many Germans rallied behind Schumacher and championed his ideas.

Two months before his death in August 1952, Schumacher graced yet another Western magazine. Although not as widely read or commercially popular as *Time*, *United Nations World* was a United Nations magazine covering postwar issues. In the May 1952 issue, the subtitle, *Schumacher: Violent Martyr* did not need to articulate how the UN perceived Schumacher, particularly with a cold and unemotional image of him with his left hand held up before his chest in a grasping manner.224 Behind Schumacher was a map of Germany, depicting four drawings of occupation troops crossed out with a bold X, each representing a flag of the occupational forces in East and West Germany225 See Figure 2, Cover of United Nations World. The front cover of this magazine alluded to the biased nature of occupation journalism that continued to support Western values with negative imagery of politicians like Kurt Schumacher. Glancing at the image of Schumacher is also indicative of where the Western alliance was in the rearmament debate, and supports the fact that Schumacher remained as significant and critical to the debate as he had been since the idea of rearming German troops became a controversial topic among West Germans. Schumacher respected the value of Marxism and applied two central tenets of Marxism to postwar Germany, which included the economic analysis of history and the class struggle.226

Schumacher understood that if the Social Democrats were to realize their postwar destiny of guiding Germany, the SPD would have to distance itself as far as possible from communism. For this, Schumacher understood the importance of expanding the SPD’s range of electoral appeal even if it meant appealing to the middle class as well as the working class, a shift in policy the SPD would adopt in the future.227 By late 1952, NATO continued to be as decisive in safeguarding the West from communism as it had been since its creation.

Analyzing West German periodicals, letters from German citizens, and other public figures are critical to understanding the complexity of U.S. foreign policy in the early Cold

225 Ibid.
227 Ibid.
War period, especially when looking at it from two uniquely different perspectives. Publications such as *United Nations World*, describing Schumacher as a violent martyr exemplify the collective attitudes that many Western officials exhibited toward Schumacher as late as 1952. Yet, many German newspapers and journalists refrained from negatively portraying rhetoric to Schumacher’s character and the position he took on issues like rearmament and unification. Rather, West German periodicals were equally vocal in using headlines to express any animosity of the thought of creating a new German army, labeling it as nonsense, and solely a device to link the U.S. and West European economies. Examining U.S. and German media throughout this research was intended to provide a balance in how Schumacher was depicted for his aggressive opposition toward West German rearmament. Public opinion polls and declassified correspondence between U.S. officials and agencies also underscore American postwar strategies to shape its foreign policy and marginalize opposition figures and parties throughout Germany. U.S. intelligence reports from the
Psychological Warfare Division continued to stress the importance of building an Atlantic community with the Federal Republic, which included close cooperation with the Christian Democrats.

West German rearmament talks did not stop after Schumacher’s death. It continued to be an important issue that has to be examined when discussing U.S.-West German relations in the first decade of the postwar period. As the end of 1952 approached, the SPD was in a similar political position where it started prior to the 1949 elections. When Erich Ollenhauer took reign of the SPD during the second half of 1952, his position remained aligned with Schumacher’s suspicion of allied and CDU efforts that continued to rely on NATO defense proposals to advance Adenauer’s policy of strength. The SPD experienced a momentary crisis of leadership after Schumacher’s death in August 1952 with uncertainty looming as to who would replace him. There were potential frontrunners that could have succeeded Schumacher like Carlo Schmid or Ernst Reuter. However, the party respected and fulfilled Schumacher’s wishes to have Erich Ollenhauer succeed him. By the early 1950’s, there had been a new generation of SPD leadership that was breaking away from the old elites who were active prior to 1933, and regained their positions after 1945.

Erich Ollenhauer upheld Schumacher’s desire for a four-power conference to be held before West Germany could join a collective security system.\textsuperscript{228} Contrary to Ollenhauer’s views, differences of opinion in how to start the rearmament debate anew continued to burden the party. Willi Eichler and Fritz Baade accepted rearmament in principle, but also believed that there had to be a better way of achieving security than through arms buildup.\textsuperscript{229} Other members including Fritz Erler disagreed with Baade, arguing that rearmament could come before unification. Erler warned against accepting West German neutrality as the price for negotiations on the German question.\textsuperscript{230} The SPD’s oppositional stance was starting to shift as considerations for a collective security system was put into perspective. Erler warned that if the Russians tried to maintain control of East Germany, they could not expect to keep

\textsuperscript{228} Drummond, The German Social, 98.
\textsuperscript{229} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{230} Ibid.
West Germany out of the Western security system as well. Another prominent SPD figure who shared Erler’s views also spoke favorably of a Trans-Atlantic partnership with the West. Willy Brandt speculated that an Atlantic Alliance, with its loosely organized military structure was vastly superior to a national army or highly integrated national force like the EDC. The momentum of exploring new avenues of cooperation with Western officials hinted at Brandt highlights an SPD motto: stating that socialism was a task for the present. Thus, the SPD was truly becoming a party of a new type amid any skepticism. Speaking to a Berlin audience in 1953, Willy Brandt made it clear to the Kremlin that a socialist-led government would not pursue a policy of neutrality but a policy of cooperation with the Western world.  

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231 Ibid.
232 Ibid.
233 Ibid., 92.
CONCLUSION

Kurt Schumacher was convinced that historical circumstances paved the way for the Social Democrats after 1945, and that he was the rightful heir to guide Germany out of the defeat of Nazism. Western oriented defense organizations that were created after 1948 included the European Defense Community (EDC) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which were intended to stabilize and promote peace during the postwar period. They became a significant instrument used to shape foreign policy, which was fundamentally linked to advancing West German rearmament in the period between 1949-1952. Western officials, particularly from the United States, displayed their support and confidence in working closely with Adenauer and the conservative party that he represented. The framework of defense communities like NATO made it increasingly difficult for political figures like Schumacher who was morally opposed to the plan to derail it, particularly at a time when Germany was divided and not a sovereign nation. In addition, there was sustained pressure by U.S. agencies and news media outlets like the PSB and the New York Times to see that propaganda efforts to influence public opinion in both West Germany and the United States were effective in denouncing non-conservative political elements as too dangerous to trust. However, the SPD held a unique oppositional stance that was both anti-rearmament, and vehemently anti-communist. This was largely molded by Schumacher’s outlook and how he interpreted the intentions of both the U.S. and Soviet Union. This research demonstrates how Schumacher remained a problem for U.S. policymakers, media correspondents, and public opinion.

Kurt Schumacher was a much more complex figure than Western officials perceived him to be. Internal communication between American personnel, both in Washington and Germany illustrate this. Additionally, CIA reports that stressed the importance of bipartisan cooperation between the CDU and SPD suggest how critical the role of the U.S. was prior to the first free federal elections in 1949. The postwar period was the most crucial period of Kurt Schumacher’s life. He displayed the charisma, determination, and moral integrity to initiate the transition of the SPD from a worker’s party (arbeiterpartei) to a people’s party (volkspartei). Schumacher’s demand for national sovereignty coincided with his mission to
turn the SPD into a party of a new type. Schumacher’s military experience during World War I, political imprisonment in Dachau, and the ongoing struggle of another political war against diplomatic forces after 1945, shaped the “oppositional” figure that has been widely recognized throughout history. Schumacher was a rock in the middle of a stormy sea, which many West Germans clung to in hopes that he would rebuild and reunite Germany, and at the same time restore German prominence.

Even though this research uses Schumacher as a focal point in which complex decision making pertaining to West German rearmament revolved, it would be unjust to say that he acted independently. Schumacher also relied on other executive SPD officials after 1945, who were also imprisoned, exiled, and politically active prior to the rise of National Socialism. The changing structure of the SPD in Germany after 1945 is something that U.S. occupation officials did not entirely understand, nor did they make any committed effort to get a better understanding of it. Rather, Schumacher and the Social Democrats were too often categorized as communists throughout U.S. media outlets, and from American personnel. Schumacher’s fiery demeanor and political stubbornness in working against Western forces and Adenauer also worked against him, as he and the SPD paid a heavy political price. The diplomatic correspondence between U.S. officials is particularly revealing because American officials such as John McCloy and Secretary Dean Acheson were aware of the immense anti-American sentiment of the German public and newspapers for America’s role in dividing Germany. Schumacher claimed that in conjunction with German parties like the CDU, the Western Allies were primarily interested in strengthening their own economies. The multiparty landscape in West Germany alone during the short interval between 1948-1952 puts several key issues that are relevant to U.S.-German relations into perspective. Schumacher’s role in U.S.-German relations after World War II further prove that personality was also a contributing factor to how foreign relations would evolve.

When Schumacher died in August 1952, the rearmament debate in Germany was far from being resolved. Erich Ollenhauer succeeded Schumacher as the new head of the SPD, and continued to uphold Schumacher’s opposition to rearmament and Western integration. However, it was the SPD party as a whole that was Schumacher’s true heir. The SPD continued to revise Marxist principles for the new realities of the Federal Republic. Kurt Schumacher’s role as the most prominent opposition figure helped change West German
society in the postwar years. He created a serious dilemma for Adenauer in how he conducted affairs with Western Allies, and how the Chancellor was perceived by the German and U.S. public. Schumacher was a man of his time, and he was the true catalyst that the Social Democrats needed in the early Cold War period. Perhaps Schumacher was born to be a martyr, married to politics as he was often described, intended to rescue a party, a country, and social democracy. Even though Schumacher lost the bid for chancellorship in 1949, he proved that acquiring democracy peacefully was difficult, and would take time. The story of Kurt Schumacher is one of inspiration and one of humanity, of what one can endure and achieve when the odds are not in his or her favor.
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