

## Final Report

NATO Research Fellowship  
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### Aggression Contained?

The Federal Republic of Germany and International Security

**Two years ago, when I first proposed this topic, I had some trepidation about its relevance to current NATO policy. Forty-eight months of work on the topic and the rush of events especially in Central and East Europe since that time have convinced me both of its timeliness and of its relevance. Germany's role in SFOR in Bosnia since 1996, the very positive deployment of the German Army (Bundeswehr) in flood-relief work along the Oder River on the German-Polish border in the summer of 1997, and even the most recent revelations of neo-Nazi activity within the ranks of the Bundeswehr, have served only to whet my appetite for the project. For, I remain convinced that the German armed forces, more than any other, can be understood only in terms of Germany's recent past and the special military culture out of which the Bundeswehr was forged.**

### Introduction

**The original proposal began with a scenario that had taken place in Paris in 1994. On that 14 July, the day that France annually sets aside as a national holiday to mark its 1789 Revolution, 189 German soldiers of the 294th Tank-Grenadier Battalion along with their twenty-four iron-crossed armoured personnel carriers for the first time since 1940 had marched down the Champs-Élysées in Paris. General Helmut Willmann's men had stepped out not to the tune of "Deutschland,**

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<sup>1</sup> The research for this report was made possible by a NATO Research Fellowship. The opinions expressed herein are my own and do not reflect NATO policy.

**Deutschland über alles"--as their predecessors had done on 14 July 1940--but rather to the strains of the European Community's (EC) newly adopted "Ode to Joy" from Ludwig van Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.**

**The soldiers of the German Army, part of the multinational EUROCORPS, along with their tearful Chancellor Helmut Kohl, had gone to Paris at the request of then French President François Mitterand--and with the blessings of U.S. President Bill Clinton. General Willmann had found the invitation to be "généreux et merveilleux." Unsurprisingly, the Parisian press had responded with headlines such as "German Tanks in Paris" and "Germans on the Champs-Elysées." Many elderly French men and women had bitterly recalled that the Germans had marched down the broad sweeps of the Champs-Elysées no fewer than 1,515 times between 1940 and 1945.**

**The German march-by in Paris had brought to the fore the larger question of Germany's military role in Europe and the world. What the historian Charles Maier of Harvard University called Germany's "unmasterable past," with specific reference to the Second World War's Holocaust, obviously remains alive. After the "accession" of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) to the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) in October 1990, many international observers had viewed with dismay Chancellor Kohl's ceremonial reburial of the remains of Frederick the Great at Potsdam in historic "Prussia"--a state whose very name had been formally expunged from international language by Order Nr. 46 of the Allied Control Commission on 23 February 1947, because "since time immemorial [it] has been the pillar of militarism and reaction in Germany." Many Germans were further disturbed when Kohl's government voted to remove the capital from Bonn (the birthplace of Beethoven) to Berlin (the capital of the Hohenzollerns as well as Adolf Hitler). And not only military historians were dumbfounded by Kohl's iron resolve in August 1991 to move the Bundeswehr's Military History Research Office (Militärgeschichtliches Forschungsamt) from Freiburg in the Black Forest to Potsdam in**

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<sup>2</sup> Charles S. Maier, The Unmasterable Past: History, Holocaust, and German National Identity (Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1988).

**Brandenburg on grounds that the Bundeswehr needed to "return to its roots"; and by the Chancellor's equally insistent demand that the Federal Ministry of Defence move back into the Bendler-Block in Berlin, the erstwhile home of both the Reichswehr and the Wehrmacht.**

### **Project Rationale**

**In order fully to understand the nature of the international reaction to the German Army march-by in Paris, it is necessary to comprehend the circumstances surrounding that organization's origins. The Bundeswehr had been founded in theory in the Himmerod Memorandum of October 1950, and in constitutional law in the General Treaty of May 1952. Well remembering Germany's military past, the founding fathers of the Federal Republic of Germany in drafting the Basic Law (Grundgesetz) in May 1949 had committed the Bundeswehr exclusively to self-defence. Articles 87a as well as 115a-115f stated that the Bundeswehr could be deployed only in defensive wars; Article 26 further stipulated that the Bundeswehr could not prepare for or conduct offensive operations. In other words, German soldiers were to be stationed, and were to operate, only within the boundaries of the Federal Republic as part of a multinational Western alliance.**

**But, beginning early in 1991, the Kohl government opted for a more active foreign policy, one that would see the Federal Republic seek a global role within the framework of existing alliances and the United Nations (UN). Incrementally, units of the Bundeswehr saw action "out of area." In January and February 1991 German AWAC planes, Alpha jets, and Bundeswehr soldiers from Erhac and Diyarbakir in Turkey assisted United States forces in the Gulf War. Clearly, the international accusations that the FRG had limited its contribution in the Gulf War to "checkbook diplomacy" via its \$17 billion contribution toward the American effort were well off the mark. In the wake of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, German mine sweepers helped clear the shipping lanes of the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz, assisted refugee work with the Kurds in Turkey as well as in Iran, and eventually flew UN reconnaissance missions over Iraq. In July 1992 German naval aircraft and destroyers operating in the Adriatic Sea began to enforce the United Nations' weapons embargo in**

former Yugoslavia (Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina); German AWAC machines were added to the Balkan presence in October.

From August 1992 to March 1993, the Bundeswehr was sent on missions outside Europe as Air Force (Luftwaffe) personnel were flown to Kenya to assist in the Somalia relief campaign. Again, from May 1992 to November 1993, medics from the Bundeswehr operated in Cambodia--where Sergeant Alexander Arndt on 14 October 1993 became the first German soldier shot while on United Nations peace-keeping duty. From July 1992 to March 1993, more than thirty German Luftwaffe personnel were stationed first at Zagreb, Croatia, and later at Falconara, Italy, to assist in the vital relief work in and around Sarajevo. In March 1993 German aircraft were deployed to fly food and medicine into the Moslem enclaves in Bosnia. And finally, a contingent of 1,700 "blue-helmeted" German soldiers landed in Somalia as part of the UN's peace-making forces. Especially the Navy's (Bundesmarine) mission had been extended well outside the North and Baltic seas, into the Mediterranean Sea (and beyond).

All these "out of area" operations stretched the scope of operations allowed the Bundeswehr under the Basic Law to the limit--if not beyond. Opposition members in the Federal Parliament (Bundestag), major newspapers, and prominent academicians began to speak out against what they perceived to be a new "global activism" on the part of the Kohl regime. The Chancellor responded to this public criticism in January 1993 by presenting the Bundestag with a special government proposal allowing a more "liberal" interpretation of the Grundgesetz. The government's Bill was passed in March, with only minor amendments. It ruled out any unilateral action by the armed forces of the Federal Republic--except, as before, in case of external attack--but it identified four specific cases under which Bundeswehr troops could deploy "out of area." These were: 1) as blue-helmeted "peace keepers" under direct orders of the UN Security Council; as "peace makers" or "peace restorers," again under Security Council command; to assist a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) ally or allies in case of hostile aggression; and to exercise "collective self-defence" under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.

**The opposition Social Democrats (SPD)--and even the Free Democrats (FDP), Kohl's coalition partners in Bonn--challenged the constitutionality of the Bill. Given that the Federal Republic is a signatory to no fewer than sixteen so-called "interlocking institutions" within the framework of NATO, the EC, and the West European Union (WEU), among others, many parliamentarians felt that the Bill's new measures were too broad, and potentially likely to involve the Federal Republic in future global "brush fires." But, on 12 July 1994, the Federal Constitutional Court (Bundesverfassungs Gericht) at Karlsruhe ruled that Kohl's Bill did not violate the Grundgesetz--so long as German forces were deployed as part of a broader multinational coalition, or as part of United Nations units to preserve and/or restore peace. Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel crowed: "The brakes that held us back have been removed."**

**A number of key players in Germany rushed to assure friend and foe alike that the new measures should not be regarded as re-emerging German global expansionism (Weltpolitik). The judges at Karlsruhe were careful to point out three crucial conditions for the new global deployment scenario: 1) any German involvement outside the borders of the Federal Republic has to come as a direct request from the United Nations Security Council; 2) such action has to have prior approval by the Bundestag; and 3) Germany's elected representatives can at any time vote to bring the troops home. The Karlsruhe Court refused, in its own words, "to turn the Bundeswehr over solely to the executive" branch of government. Instead, the judges at Karlsruhe carefully decreed the Bundeswehr to be "a parliamentary army embedded in the democratic, legal, constitutional order." Chancellor Kohl quickly assured President Clinton that the old adage, "Germans to the front," coined by British Admiral E. H. Seymour during the suppression of the Boxer Rebellion in China at the turn of the century, would not become his government's Leitmotif.**

**Still, the foreign press was quick to point out what it saw as a shift in German defence policy. "Slowly and hesitatingly," the London Times noted, Germany was once again aspiring to be a "military power." Le Monde in Paris saw "a new era" dawn in "Germany's foreign policy." Perhaps more moderately, Stockholm's Svenska Dagbladet interpreted**

the new "globalism" in Bonn as Germany's "final step out of the shadow of the Second World War." In a word, the foreign press acknowledged that a basic dilemma lies at the root of all foreign reactions to German initiatives: on the one hand, foreigners accuse the Germans of shirking their international responsibilities (i.e., the example of the Gulf War) by hiding behind the Karlsruhe Court and their Basic Law (Drückeberger); yet, on the other hand, they concurrently express concerns about what they perceive to be renewed German power politics (Kraftmeier). This dilemma will dog German planners for years to come.

Indeed, few observers outside Germany noticed (and much less, reported) that the Kohl government had quietly offered the United Nations the use of more than a hundred armoured personnel carriers--out of the arsenal of the erstwhile German Democratic Republic. The truth is that Kohl and his Defence Minister, Volker Rühle, since 1990 have sat on one of the world's greatest stockpiles of readily available arms. Never in modern history has one state (FRG) taken over the entire arsenal of a hostile neighbour (GDR) without firing a single shot! According to the Bundeswehr's own estimates, the inventory of the former National Peoples' Army (Nationale Volksarmee, or NVA) in 1990 encompassed roughly 2,300 main battle tanks, 9,000 armoured combat vehicles, 5,000 artillery, rocket and air defence systems, 700 combat and transport aircraft as well as helicopters, 192 ships of various classes, 295,000 tons of ammunition, and 1.2 million machine guns, rifles, pistols, and the like. What was to be done?

Helmut Kohl's government had been badly stung by scandals in the Ministry of Defence shortly before the two German states were reunited. In 1988 the Ministry had allowed a Kiel shipyard to deliver U-boat building plans to South Africa--despite the existence of a United

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<sup>3</sup> For an overview of how this plays in the Federal Republic, see Wolfgang-Uwe Friedrich, "In Search of Stability: German Foreign Policy and the Public in the 1990s," in David P. Conradt, et al, eds., Germany's New Politics, special issue of German Studies Review (1995), pp. 253-71.

<sup>4</sup> Recent revelations from the Finance Ministry show that the former German Democratic Republic spent as much as 11 percent of Gross Domestic Product per year on the armed forces--at times, more per capita than even the Soviet Union.

**Nations embargo against Pretoria, and a Bundestag resolution prohibiting such military sales. In 1989 the German press had reported that chemical concerns had built plants at Rabta and Tarhunah in Libya--plants that could easily be converted to produce military gas. Late in 1990 and early in 1991--that is, even after reunification--Chancellor Kohl had to concede publicly that the Federal Republic had supplied Iraq with weapons and munitions, and that Saddam Hussein's poison gas arsenal stemmed from Germany. In March 1992 then Defence Minister Gerhard Stoltenberg had had to resign when news broke that he had dispatched nineteen Leopard I tanks to Turkey--in violation of another Bundestag injunction against such dealings. And, early in 1993, the Kohl government had been forced to back away from a 12.5 billion Deutschmark (DM) deal to supply Taiwan with ten frigates and submarines--this time in the face of strong domestic and international opposition.**

**Undoubtedly remembering these past scandals, the Kohl government early in 1994 triumphantly announced that it had destroyed or turned into scrap metal a large part of the NVA "legacy": 956 main battle tanks, 2,074 armoured personnel carriers, 815 heavy artillery pieces, 140 aircraft (mainly MiG-21s), 891,271 machine guns, rifles, carbines, and pistols, and 240,000 tons of ammunition. Costs for this demolition work, within the borders of the former GDR alone, reached DM 800 million by the end of 1994. Bonn also had closed by then 332 units and departments as well as 200 bases in western Germany. The vast proportion of the 1,500 units and departments, 2,300 military compounds, and 35 bases that had once belonged to the NVA has either been decommissioned or integrated into the Bundeswehr--as have a mere 12,000 former NVA soldiers (but no high-ranking officers). Moreover, the Kohl government in the last two years has freely opened the arsenals of the former NVA to the countries seeking admission to NATO in 1999 (Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland) under NATO's Partnership for Peace initiative, so that they can continue to find spare parts for their Russian-built MiG-21 and MiG-29 fighter aircraft as well as their T-72 main battle tanks.**

**Moreover, Bonn eagerly reminds its neighbours that it has pared its forces down from 570,000 in 1990 to 420,000 in 1994; in fact, today**

that total, in accordance with international agreements on the size of the Bundeswehr, officially stands at 370,000 personnel. By comparison, the United States has stated that it will reduce its armed forces by 300,000 men by 1997; France, that it will scale down by 60,000; Britain, by 40,000; and Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Spain, Portugal, Italy, and Greece have all announced troop reductions in the future.

Still, some of the former NVA arsenal remains on hand. Moreover, some critics complain that the Bundeswehr in future is still scheduled to maintain a force 370,000 soldiers at an annual cost of just under DM 50 billion. These critics claim that both the number of troops and the costs are too high. And, to answer the further charge that Bonn lacks a cohesive security policy and that it instead lurches from decision to decision in chaotic fashion, Kohl's government between 1990 and 1992 formulated what eventually became the "Bundeswehr Plan '94," a sweeping document designed to give guidance to national and international security planners for the remainder of the century, and into the new millennium.

So-called ABC weapons of mass destruction (atomic, biological, or chemical) are no longer the burning issue that they once were during the Cold War. Under Articles 3 and 5 of the so-called "Two-plus-Four" Treaty of 12 September 1990, Germany voluntarily renounced the right to maintain such weapons--and then went a step further by stating that it would station neither nuclear weapons nor foreign troops in the territories of the erstwhile German Democratic Republic. Under Article 3 of the German-Soviet Treaty of Partnership and Cooperation, signed in Bonn on 9 November 1990, the Federal Republic assured the Russian Federation that it would neither conduct nor support an attack on the fifteen successor states of the USSR. Instead, the real issue today is the role that the 81.3 million people of the Federal Republic in general, and the 370,000 soldiers of the Bundeswehr in particular, will play in Europe and throughout the world.

The "Bundeswehr Plan '94," the result of a high-level planning conference that took place in December 1992 and which saw final Cabinet approval on 15 March 1994, is designed to defuse public charges of lack of leadership and bureaucratic indecision in Bonn by offering a planning instrument for the period 1994 to 2006. The

**"Bundeswehr Plan" or, more precisely, the "White Paper" is designed specifically to underpin the five central tenets of German foreign and security policy: 1) the preservation of the freedom, welfare, and security of the German state and its citizens; 2) the integration of the Federal Republic with the European democracies in the European Union; 3) the lasting alliance with the United States, whose military and economic potential is indispensable for international stability; 4) the reconciliation and partnership with Germany's neighbours in Eastern Europe; and 5) the maintenance of worldwide respect for international law and human rights, within a just world economic order based on market principles.**

**In terms of structure and organization, the "Bundeswehr Plan '94" envisages two major Bundeswehr components: the Main Defence Forces (MDF) and the Reaction Forces (RF). The MDF is to "comprise all the augmentable and standing forces," that is, the bulk of Bonn's forces, in the "defence of Germany and its Allies." Thus, the Main Defence Forces will remain an integral part of the overall NATO defence system. The Reaction Forces, on the other hand, will consist of "those elements of the armed forces that can be employed for conflict prevention and crisis management within an Alliance framework and as a contribution to international peace missions." In short, the RF (of at most 50,000 regular soldiers and conscript volunteers) is designed to encompass small specialized task forces, which will be detailed for overseas deployment (either for peace keeping or for peace making) through the UN<sup>5</sup>**

**Above all, the planners in Bonn have sketched out an extensive armaments modernization program, to be completed by the year 2000. The Bundeswehr will receive 255 refit Leopard II tanks, 266 Hummer-type "jeeps," 138 Uhu helicopters, a third generation of PARS antitank rockets, as well as EPHRAM "smart bombs." The Luftwaffe is to get an unspecified number of "Eurofighter 2000" aircraft--basically, the reborn**

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<sup>5</sup> See Ministry of Defence, White Paper 1994. "The Security of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Bundeswehr Now and in the Years Ahead", Abridged Version (Bonn, April 1994); and Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, Weißbuch 1994. Weißbuch zur Sicherheit der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und zur Lage und Zukunft der Bundeswehr (5 April 1994).

**"Jäger 90"--at DM 90 million each, upgraded Tornados with HARM rockets, a Patriot anti-missile system, and heavy airlift capacity through an airplane analogous to the United States Air Force's C-17 Globemaster. Finally, the Bundesmarine will complete its Frigate 123, build four new Class 124 (Brandenburg) frigates, and up to four 212-class U-boats. This renewal is long overdue: the Hamburg- and Lütjens-class frigates are now thirty years old, as are the Class 206 U-boats.**

**Whether all these units will be built remains to be seen in a climate of fiscal restraint and cutbacks--including the closing of 200 of the Bundeswehr's 745 installations. Bonn has recognized and translated into law, for example, that the "real" strength of the Bundeswehr lies at 340,000 soldiers, rather than the 370,000 allowed under existing agreements--and that this number is still declining. Today, 30 percent of eligible young males in Germany decline to serve their obligatory ten months in the armed forces, and simply mail in their postcard of rejection, which translates into thirteen months of civil-aid service. In 1995 draft-notice refusals (160,000) for the first time in the history of the FRG surpassed acceptances (140,000). And what effect cutbacks will have on the 280,000 employees in the Federal Republic's fledgling armaments industries (production DM 20 billion annually) at Daimler-Benz, MBB, MTU, and Dornier remains an open question. For, while peace researchers in Germany claim that the spin-off coefficient of war industries is less than 5 percent of overall Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the fact remains that both the German modernization program under the "Bundeswehr Plan '94" and the concomitant restructuring of the armed forces of the new NATO applicants (Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland) will offer new opportunities for domestic production and expansion as well as overseas sales.**

**Perhaps the fiscal crunch will prove decisive in the end. Bonn since 1990 annually spends DM 140 to 180 billion to rebuild the dilapidated infrastructure of the former German Democratic Republic, and will probably have to do so well into the new millennium. Additionally, between 1973 and 1991, the Federal Republic spent DM 475 million on United Nations peace-keeping missions; last year that**

figure shot up to DM 200 million for a single year. Today, the Federal Republic finances 8.93 percent of the UN's budget, making it the third largest supporter of the world organization.

Indeed, international security for the Federal Republic and much of NATO and the EC has changed dramatically--from Cold War concerns about a conventional confrontation with the Warsaw Pact nations, possibly escalating up the nuclear ladder from theatre to strategic exchanges, to international peace-keeping and peace-making missions. Bonn has identified Africa, East Asia, the Balkans, the Middle East, and the Caribbean region as the areas of immediate concern. According to past UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in 1988 his organization was involved in as many peace-keeping missions as the United Nations had undertaken over the entire four decades from 1948 to 1987. By 1992, the UN conducted no fewer than twelve global missions at a cost of \$3 billion.

This project, then, was designed to assess the German contribution to international security within the new framework of UN peace-keeping and peace-making missions. Given my discipline and training, I sought to contribute historical perception to the project, and to place it within the context of the German past. From the start, I analyzed the new "Bundeswehr Plan '94" and the disposal of the erstwhile NVA arsenal in terms of their global implications, financial feasibility, and political ramifications. I remain convinced that any German action taken beyond the borders of the Federal Republic involves more than simply a financial and logistical cost-effective calculus, as it will evoke images of the recent past. To date, discussions surrounding the "Bundeswehr Plan '94" have centred almost exclusively on its financial and military-technological implications; I am trying to provide the critical historical perspective.

To be sure, Bonn planners are keenly aware of some of the limits imposed upon them by history. They are sensitive, for example, to the fears especially in the borderlands of the former Soviet Union and in the Balkans that Bundeswehr deployment will evoke memories of Germany's two bids for "world power" in 1914 and in 1939. Yet, reality often still intrudes on these inner sensibilities. For example, while Bonn planners have promulgated an unwritten law that the

**Bundeswehr is not to be deployed in any region where Adolf Hitler's Wehrmacht was active in the Second World War, the Bundestag in 1995 nevertheless voted 386 to 258 to send Bundeswehr soldiers and Tornado aircraft to support United Nations troops in former Yugoslavia. Nor is Bonn helped by recent revelations that while it has formally renounced claims to any lands formerly held by Germany in East Europe and Russia, Chancellor Kohl's office nevertheless is currently subsidizing the so-called "resettlement" of once ethnic Germans out of Kazakhstan into Kaliningrad (formerly, Königsberg in East Prussia).**

**One of the most innovative features of my project, then, is that I place Germany and its international security policies within a broad framework of historical precedent and future possibilities--and not simply in terms of technology, force structure, and cost-benefit analysis. For, to do so without reference to Germany's rich and varied military-historical record would distort the picture. Additionally, the importance of my approach to the field cannot be overstated in light of Germany's involvement in two world wars in this century--and with an eye toward its undoubted emergence after the year 2000 as Europe's wealthiest, best armed, and most technologically advanced state.**

**But, I do not suggest for a moment that this should imply that there has been no break in German "continuity" from Kaiser Wilhelm II to Adolf Hitler to Helmut Kohl. The Federal Republic is not the Second Reich, and much less the Third Reich. The Bundeswehr is not the Prussian Army or the Reichswehr, and certainly not the Wehrmacht. First and foremost, the founders of the Federal Republic (and their successors) have undertaken a fundamental reordering of the German state, and especially of its constitutional system, along democratic, pluralistic lines. Further, they have imbedded their armed forces firmly within the socio-political structure of present-day German society (the concept of innere Führung, which will be discussed later in this report) as well as within the Western alliance system. And third, they have defined their guiding principle as deployment of Germany's economic and military potential in the service of Western alliance defence--with concurrent concern about the danger of possible new German unilateral initiatives (Eigenwege). Or, to put the problem in the words of the Bundeswehr's own Military Historical Research Office in**

**Potsdam: "Security with and from Germany!"** The European problem thus remains as detailed at the start of this proposal: how to harness the German partner's potential and to enhance its willingness to assume a greater role in European and global security--without at the same time creating a German preponderance in post-Cold War Europe.

### **Research**

**The research for this project has been far more (volume) extensive and (time) intensive than I had initially realized. The recent shuttling of the NVA military archives from Berlin to Freiburg--and the concomitant, ill-conceived move of the Bundeswehr's military historians from Freiburg to Potsdam--has wreaked havoc with both my research and my plans for on-site consultation. Another problem that I faced, was that while the papers of most Bonn ministries have been deposited at the Federal Archive (Bundesarchiv) at Koblenz, the current records of Bonn's armed forces and government planners remain at the Ministry of Defence at the Hardthöhe in Bonn. As a result, both the number of trips and the cost of research have escalated beyond what I originally had budgeted. Thankfully, I was able to use research funds accrued during my five years as Department Head (1991-96) to pay for the additional research travel. As I indicated in my "Interim Report" to NATO's Academic Affairs Officer, I have undertaken several separate research trips to Germany (and the United States) since being awarded the NATO Research Fellowship in May 1996. I was able to mount the first batch of research during, and largely made possible by, my 1996-97 sabbatical leave from The University of Calgary. To keep transportation and subsistence outlays to a minimum, I had planned several of these trips around other contractual and conference commitments (Bern University, Yale University, and a Bundeswehr Tagung at Kühlungsborn/Mecklenburg-Pommern). All transportation was undertaken by Apex excursion fares with Air Canada/Lufthansa. To facilitate note-taking in archives, where reproduction costs now average DM 1.00 per page for DIN A4, I purchased an Apple Powerbook 5300 with my own funds.**

**In the interest of thoroughness, even if at the risk of repeating a portion of what I already stated in my "Interim Report," I will break the research work down into its various separate stages:**

*First Research Leave.*

**1 July through 23 August 1996. Germany.**

**My first research trip was to the Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv (Federal Military Archive) at Freiburg, Germany, where I worked in the files relating to the founding of the Bundeswehr. The most relevant of these records are organized as follows:**

- **BW1 Bundesministerium der Verteidigung**
- **BW2 Führungsstab der Streitkräfte**
- **BW9 Deutsche Dienststellen zur Vorbereitung der Europäischen Verteidigungsgemeinschaft.**

**Most critical among these files for the start of my research was the record group BW 9, concerning both the Allied and the West German deliberations surrounding the decision to create West German armed forces. Of particular interest was BW 9/3119, "Denkschrift über die Aufstellung eines Deutschen Kontingents im Rahmen einer übernationalen Streitmacht zur Verteidigung Westeuropas." This lengthy document contained the decisive discussions among the founding fathers of the future Bundeswehr as they met at the Cistercian monastery of Himmerod, near Bitburg in the Eifel region, in September-October 1950 to lay the foundations for German rearmament. As is well known, the so-called "Himmerod Memorandum" led directly to the creation of the "Dienststelle Theodor Blank," empowered with laying the basis for German rearmament.**

**Equally pertinent were the papers of one of the founding fathers of the Bundeswehr, General Johann Adolf Graf von Kielmannsegg (N 626) at Potsdam. Kielmannsegg was not only one of the key founders of the Bundeswehr and one of the "monks" invited to Himmerod in 1950, but for the past decade has been an appointee to the Oversight Board of the Militärgeschichtliches Forschungsamt (MGFA) at Potsdam.**

**I should add as an aside that the historians and officers of the Forschungsamt kindly invited me (and helped defray travel expenses) to participate in a conference on the Bundesmarine--both past and**

present--at Bad Kühlungsborn, Wismar, and Rostock, in the new Bundesland of Mecklenburg/Pommern on the Baltic Sea. Running from 16 to 19 September 1996, the conference was devoted to "Sea Power and Naval Strategy in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries." It included a prescient lecture on "The Naval Interests of the Federal Republic of Germany," by the Commander-in-Chief, German Fleet, Vice Admiral Dirk Horten; and one on "The Bundesmarine and the Accession of the Peoples' Navy of the NVA until Today," by Captain Dieter Leder, Commander-in-Chief, Forces East. Both were followed by intensive discussions on the part of the invited audience.

*Second Research Leave.*

7 September through 15 October 1996. Germany.

This trip was combined with the delivery of a paper at Schloss Münchenwiler, Switzerland, on German submarine development and warfare as part of a conference on the concept of "total war" under the auspices of Bern University. It began with a return visit to the Militärgeschichtliches Forschungsamt of the Bundeswehr. Recently removed from Freiburg to Potsdam, as stated earlier, its staff have been instrumental in working up the pre-history and early history of the Bundeswehr. Specifically, I sought out the advice and counsel of several of its members--Colonel Dr. Klaus Maier, Dr. Bruno Thoss, and Prof. Dr. Hans-Erich Volkmann. These scholars were pivotal in producing what remains the first, and also the seminal, work on the early history of the Bundeswehr:

- Anfänge westdeutscher Sicherheitspolitik 1945-1956, ed. Militärgeschichtliches Forschungsamt (Munich and Vienna, 1982), 2 vols.

The Forschungsamt recently has followed this up with two other works that were central to my research:

- Grundzüge der deutschen Militärgeschichte, ed. Karl-Volker Neugebauer (Freiburg, 1993), 2 vols.
- Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit. Analysen und Zeitzeugenberichte zur deutschen Militärgeschichte 1945 bis 1995, ed. Bruno Thoss (Munich, 1995).

I was able to examine all five volumes in detail at Potsdam. This was

most fortuitous, given that the research facilities of the Forschungsamt have now been shut down, probably for two years, while extensive repairs are being done on the old Villa Ilgenheim, the MGFA's formal residence in the Zeppelinstraße in Potsdam.

Additionally, the Forschungsamt has collated and catalogued the documentary collections undertaken by the authors cited above as:

- Materialsammlung der Autoren.

It also has the official service papers of two of its active officers, both intensely involved in the formative years of both the Forschungsamt and the Bundeswehr:

- Materialen Brigadegeneral a. D. Heinz Karst; and
- Befragungsmaterialen Ministerialrat a. D. Heinrich Roth.

The former were especially pertinent as General Karst was a member of the "Dienststelle Blank," whereafter he headed the Bundeswehr's Education and Training Department from 1967 to 1970.

*Third Research Leave.*

11-18 November 1996. United States of America.

I was invited by Professor Geoffrey Parker of the international program of Security Studies, Yale University, to be a keynote speaker at Yale's International Conference on Warrior Cultures; I gave a paper on "German Military Culture from Bernhardt to Hitler." Physically already in the eastern part of the United States, I journeyed down to Washington, D.C. At the National Archives, I was able to peruse several documentary collections pertaining to German rearmament:

- RG59 Records of the State Department
- RG218 Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff.

These were extremely voluminous, although not organized according to subject matter. I was able to order numerous documents through photocopying, and these have now arrived safely at The University of Calgary, where I will place them in the Special Collections section of the Strategic Studies Program at the McKimmie Library.

*Fourth Research Leave.*

28 February through 16 March 1997. Germany.

This trip was undertaken to Bonn, largely to work through the extensive records and publications of the Federal Ministry of Defence

**(Bundesministerium der Verteidigung) concerning the current status and missions of the Bundeswehr. The most immediately pertinent records included:**

- **Bundesministerium der Verteidigung Rü Z II, Sonderbeauftragter für die Verwertung von Material der ehemaligen NVA (Reports of the Federal Government Concerning the Disposition of Former NVA Materials).**
- **Responsibilities and Planning Process in Germany--Assessment, Planning, Budgeting. The Current State of Defence Planning. By Lieutenant General Jürgen Schnell.**
- **Die Entwicklung des Einzelplanes 14 (Verteidigung), Haushaltsentwicklung. By Ministerialdirektor Alf Fischer.**

Moreover, I also traveled to Munich, where at the Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, I was able to look at the papers of the Bavarian representative to the Federal Republic of Germany:

- **Bevollmächtigter Bayerns beim Bund.**

These materials gave me a non-federalist view of Bonn's considerations behind the decision to rearm.

*Fifth Research Trip.*

July and August 1997.

I returned to Bonn to undertake research in the Bundeswehr records pertaining to current security matters. Among the materials I was able to consult in depth were the official records of the German parliamentary debates surrounding the genesis of the critical and highly controversial "Bundeswehr Plan '94":

- **Deutscher Bundestag, 12. Wahlperiode 1994 ff.**

These were not available at The University of Calgary, or on Internet, or by any other electronic retrieval method.

Furthermore, I was able to look into the matter of Traditionspflege, that is, the role that tradition and historical continuity have played in the Bundeswehr<sup>6</sup> This, of course, is central to my argument concerning the "cultural" or "historical" heritage of the Bundeswehr. With the generous assistance of General van Heyst at the Ministry of

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<sup>6</sup> For a previous assessment, see Donald Abenheim, Reforging the Iron Cross: The Search for Tradition in the West German Armed Forces (Princeton, 1988).

Defence, I was able to identify and examine three major collections:

- **Bundeswehr und Tradition**. Der Bundesminister der Verteidigung - Fü B I 4 - Az 35-08-07. July 1965.
- **Richtlinien zum Traditionsverständnis und zur Traditionspflege in der Bundeswehr**. Der Bundesminister der Verteidigung - Fü S I 3 - Az 35-08-07. September 1982.
- **Zentrale Dienstschrift (ZDv) 10/1. Innere Führung**. February 1993; **Vorbemerkung 3 der Neufassung der ZDv 10/1**. February 1993.

The Press and Information Office of the Federal Government at Bonn also made available several Bulletins that encapsulated comments on the subject of "tradition" by the current Federal President, Roman Herzog, the Federal Chancellor, Helmut Kohl, and the Defence Minister, Volker Rühle. The majority of these official pronouncements were made in the summer of 1994 on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the attempt on Adolf Hitler's life on 20 July 1944. They fall under the heading:

**Bulletins des Presse- und Informationsamtes der Bundesregierung:**

- Nr. 68 of 22 July 1994
- Nr. 71 of 28 July 1994
- Nr. 2 of 6 January 1995.

Finally, the Ministry of Defence made available to me its own in-house comprehensive survey of the Bundeswehr:

- **Die Entwicklung deutscher Sicherheitspolitik und die Geschichte der Bundeswehr 1945-1992**, ed. Hans-Martin Ottmer and Karl Dieffenbach.

*Sixth Research Trip.*

5 to 22 December 1997. Germany.

The last major repository of records remained the Bundesarchiv at Koblenz. I was able to get away from lectures and examinations at The University of Calgary at the start of December 1997, and spent almost three weeks at the Federal Archive with the critical papers of several mammoth government bureaus:

- B122 Bundespräsidialamt
- B126 Bundesamt der Finanzen
- B136 Bundeskanzleramt.

I was able to deal with most of these files--mainly because the bulk of the historical materials had earlier been published in some of the anthologies of the Military Historical Research Office (first at Freiburg, then at Potsdam) listed above.

I would be remiss if I did not officially thank Professor Dr. Wolfgang Mommsen of Düsseldorf University, arguably Germany's most eminent historian of international relations; Professor Dr. Stig Förster of Bern University in Switzerland, one of the brightest of the rising new stars of military-diplomatic studies; and Professor Dr. Wilhelm Deist of Freiburg University, for much of the 1970s and 1980s the "Leading Historian" of the Militärgeschichtliches Forschungsamt, when it was still at Freiburg; for their expert guidance of my research and for their willingness to discuss complex issues--both historical and current--with me during my various research trips to Germany.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the Strategic Studies Program of The University of Calgary and its Director, the eminent Canadian military historian, Professor David J. Bercuson, for their documentary and intellectual support. Largely as a result of Dr. Bercuson's constant encouragement, and in good part on the basis of the work done during my NATO Research Fellowship, in the Fall Semester 1997 I introduced an upper-class lecture course (enrollment 64 students) on the "Principles of Strategy: Past and Present" (History/Political Science 481).

### **Project Findings**

Rather than offer a shopping list of findings, all differing in degrees of importance and relevance, I will bracket my major findings under three rubrics. First and foremost, the events surrounding the founding of the Bundeswehr at the Himmerod monastery in September/October 1950 in many ways shaped the intellectual mindset of Bundeswehr leaders for a generation to come. Thus, I will analyze the Himmerod discussions in some detail. Second, the restructuring of the Bundeswehr from a bipolar Cold-War instrument into a post-Cold-War multipolar, peace-keeping instrument will be addressed in detail, so that we can understand its stated purpose. And finally, the nagging issue of the historical past--that is, Traditionspflege--will be taken up

**in the context of the role of Germany's armed forces as a vital component of a modern industrialized, pluralistic democracy.**

***I. Himmerod: Genesis of the Bundeswehr***

**On the evening of 5 October 1950 fifteen men, mostly in their mid-fifties, arrived secretly at the 800-year-old Cistercian monastery of Himmerod at the northern edge of the Rhineland-Palatinate. These "monks," who had been promised four good meals, special wine, a modest travel allowance (if needed), and (eventually) an honorarium of DM 300, were sequestered in unmarked cells. They were at Himmerod in the Eifel by order of the Federal Chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, under the auspices of what later that month would officially become the "DienststelleTheodor Blank."**

**In fact, the fifteen "monks" were former high-ranking Nazi officers. Ten had served Adolf Hitler in the flag-grades of general or admiral. Four (Hans Speidel, Adolf Heusinger, Robert Knauss, and Johann Adolf Graf von Kielmannsegg) had been loosely associated with the German resistance--not so much because of the regime's barbarism or wars of conquest, but because of its usurpation of the army's traditional command function. Seven (Heusinger, Speidel, Hans Röttiger, Friedrich Ruge, Kielmannsegg, Wolf Graf Baudissin, and Horst Krüger) would become flag-rank officers in the future Bundeswehr; two would reach the highest rungs in the Federal Republic's intelligence agency, the Bundesnachrichtendienst. As such, they eventually would become a physical link in the chain of continuity that connected the Wehrmacht to the Bundeswehr.**

**The men assembled at Himmerod were to lay the foundations for a German contribution to the defence of Western Europe within the framework of NATO. Adenauer had alluded to this possibility in November and December 1949 in two celebrated interviews with**

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<sup>7</sup> The operative documents on this issue are Ministry of Defence: "Bundeswehr und Tradition," 1 July 1965; and "Richtlinien zum Traditionsverständnis und zur Traditionspflege in der Bundeswehr," 20 September 1982.

<sup>8</sup> See Hans-Jürgen Rautenberg and Norbert Wiggershaus, "Die 'Himmeroder Denkschrift' vom Oktober 1950. Politische und militärische Überlegungen für einen Beitrag der Bundesrepublik Deutschland zur westeuropäischen Verteidigung," *Militärgeschichtliche Mitteilungen*, vol. 21 (1977), pp. 150-1.

**American newspapers: the New York Times and the Cleveland Plain Dealer. Additionally, the British Prime Minister, Winston S. Churchill, had followed up Adenauer's trial balloon on 11 August 1950 with a call for a European army. Acting on these initiatives, the three western occupation powers--Britain, France, and the United States--on 19 September in New York had accepted in principle the notion that West Germany could contribute military forces to the security of Europe. French Premier René Pleven on 24 October had informed the National Assembly in Paris of his willingness to incorporate future West German defence forces into the Atlantic alliance. The outbreak of the Korean War, the arming and barracking of about 70,000 East German "police forces" by the Soviet Union, and Moscow's demand for a Four-Power Conference to formalize total German disarmament under the terms of the Potsdam Agreement of 1945 gave the matter great urgency.**

**The secrecy surrounding the meeting at Himmerod was prompted by three factors. First, the discovery that fifteen of Hitler's former generals and admirals, many of whom had been intimately associated with the attack on, and the occupation of, the Soviet Union in and after June 1941, were laying the foundations for another German army, was bound to be exploited for propaganda purposes by East German and Soviet leaders. Nor would this revelation play well in Paris, London, and Washington, where "denazification" and "demilitarization" were still official policy under Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) Directive 1067. Moreover, it was an open secret that 60 percent of government section chiefs appointed by Adenauer were members of the erstwhile National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP), and that the man whom Adenauer had chosen to run his Chancery, Hans Globke, had been one of the authors of the infamous Nürnberg Racial Laws of 1935, which had denied basic citizenship rights to countless, now "marginalized," Germans. One can only wonder whether the "monks" appreciated the irony that, as they plotted German rearmament at Himmerod, French**

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<sup>9</sup> See excerpts of the relevant newspaper articles and public speeches in Karl Bauer, Deutsche Verteidigungspolitik 1948-1967. Dokumente und Kommentare (Eine Auswahl) (Boppard, 1968), pp. 67-76.

authorities a few miles down the road at Wittlich held under guard several hundred former Wehrmacht officers convicted of war crimes?

Second, Adenauer, who had been elected to his high office in September 1949 by a plurality of a single vote, and his Christian Democrats (CDU), who held a mere 31 percent of seats in the first Bundestag, had just suffered serious setbacks in regional elections at Hessen, Württemberg-Baden, and Bavaria. These political defeats were due in large part to the able assistance rendered Kurt Schumacher's Social Democrats by prominent church leaders such as Martin Niemöller and Gustav Heinemann (for a time a member of Adenauer's Cabinet). Thus, Adenauer was in a vulnerable position politically, and he hardly needed a scandal over possible rearmament orchestrated by former Wehrmacht generals. As late as 1965, Adenauer, in the first volume of his memoirs, still could not bring himself to include even a veiled reference to the Himmerod gathering.

Third, as the officers at Himmerod openly acknowledged in the official protocol of their meeting, their deliberations violated Article 1, Paragraph A, of Law Nr. 16 of the Allied High Commission of 19 December 1949. Indeed, under Article 3 of the same Law, their actions were punishable by imprisonment for life. The "monks," to paraphrase Pope Leo X's admonition to Martin Luther more than four centuries earlier, had chosen a difficult and potentially dangerous path.

The Himmerod Memorandum<sup>11</sup>, accepted unanimously in final plenary session, was a sweeping document that ranged from psychological to political, from military to constitutional considerations. With regard to the size of future West German armed forces, General Heusinger called for the creation by the Fall of 1952 of twelve armoured divisions with 2,400 tanks as part of a NATO force of twenty-five divisions designed to act as a "mailed fist" to counterpunch Soviet aggression--until thirty rear-echelon West European and

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<sup>10</sup> See Konrad Adenauer, Erinnerungen 1945-1953 (Stuttgart, 1965), vol. I, pp. 375 ff.

<sup>11</sup> Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv, Freiburg, BW9/3119. "Denkschrift über die Aufstellung eines Deutschen Kontingents im Rahmen einer übernationalen Streikraft zur Verteidigung Westeuropas, 9. Oktober 1950," 52 pp. All subsequent citations for Himmerod are from this document.

American divisions arrived on German soil. Eventually, Germany was to contribute 250,000 soldiers to NATO. The "monks" rejected so-called "clandestine rearmament"--that is, by militarizing border and customs guards, postal and railway security units, labour and service groups--as this would evoke memories of the infamous (and illegal) "Black Reichswehr" of the 1920s. A modest air force of 831 wings and a navy of 12 destroyers, 36 motor boats, and 24 small U-boats, were to augment ground forces. Equipment would have to come from Great Britain and the United States, given the near-total wartime destruction and postwar dismemberment of German armaments plants. Training would likewise have to be directed by the "godfather armies" of London and Washington, given the poor quality of German military instruction during the last two years of the war.

At the political level, the Himmerod Memorandum was surprisingly bold. General Speidel, reflecting Adenauer's primary policy objective, demanded "full sovereignty" for the Federal Republic as the sole government of Germany--in its 1937 borders, no less! Further, Speidel called for the abolition of the Allied Control Commission, as well as for an end to the "demilitarization" of the Federal Republic. West Germany's armed forces were to be accorded full rights and status in the Western defence system, and not to serve as Allied "auxiliaries" (Hilfswillige, or HiwiBundeswehr personnel was to be "sworn in the name of the German Volk, represented by the Federal President." They were to be deployed only in Europe. The government, for its part, was instructed to prepare the way for rearmament by enlightening the German people about the need to defend the nation against the danger from the East. The "monks" cleverly viewed German rearmament under the umbrella of the "European-Atlantic supreme command" as the best way to gain influence on Western (read, NATO) grand strategy, and full sovereignty for Bonn.

Unquestionably, the most controversial aspect of the Memorandum, the "Preamble," pertained to what the Himmerod officers called "psychological" considerations. Speidel blamed "the last five years of defamation" on the part of the Allies in general, and their Control Commission in Germany in particular, for having deprived the German people of the will to rearm. The "monks" demanded from the

West nothing less than the "rehabilitation of the German soldier" by way of an Allied declaration to this effect, the release of about 3,600 "Germans found guilty as war criminals," an immediate end to all follow-up trials of former Wehrmacht personnel suspected of crimes against peace or humanity, and reconsideration of the incarceration at Spandau of all Germans and "especially the two soldiers"--a pointed reference to Grand Admirals Erich Raeder and Karl Dönitz. And, to make quite certain that this message was not lost amidst the statistical data pertaining to future force size and structure, Speidel reiterated the neuralgic point: "Cessation of all defamation of the German soldier (including the . . . Waffen-SS) and measures to change public opinion both at home and abroad" with regard to the military. The German soldier, and especially the 260,000 former officers and 2,000 admirals and generals of the Wehrmacht, in the view of the Himmerod officers, were not to be treated as "second class" by the West.

Turning to Bonn, the "monks" requested that the Federal Government overcome regional opposition to rearmament. Under the rubric "psychology," they demanded that the Government and the Bundestag issue a "full apology" to German soldiers for any and all defamation heaped upon them by Germans and Allies alike. Further, they instructed Bonn to accord all past and future "Wehrmacht" veterans full pensions and benefits under the motto, "Equal rights for all civil servants."

The third section of the Memorandum dealt with "internal cohesion," what the officers present at Himmerod termed "innere Gefüge." Probably written by Graf Baudissin and General Hermann Foertsch, it stood in sharp contrast to the preceding two sections, drafted by Heusinger and Speidel. Baudissin, who would later head the Bundeswehr's Innere Führung, warned against creating another military "state within a state"--as had existed in the 1920s under General Hans von Seeckt, and suggested that the new German soldier be imbued with love of fatherland and respect for democratic institutions and forms. Noting that future rearmament could only be undertaken within the framework of West European and Atlantic policies and mores, Baudissin argued that the new "Bundeswehr" could

and would have to be built "without reliance on the forms of the old Wehrmacht."

Section Six, "Conclusions," clearly revealed that Baudissin and Foertsch were in the minority. Its tone was accusatory and demanding, calling on Adenauer at once to abrogate all High Commission laws, thereby making--albeit, retroactively--the Himmerod gathering legal. The "monks" pointedly reminded the Chancellor that even General von Seeckt's "Black Reichswehr" had come about "with the support of the determining members of the then ruling cabinets." And they again demanded of Bonn that "eminently visible steps" be taken "to end the defamation" of German soldiers, and to solve "the so-called 'war-criminals-question'" at the highest levels. Finally, the fifteen generals and admirals of the erstwhile Third Reich counseled that rearmament could succeed only by way of accepting at face value "the repeatedly proven loyalty and incorruptibility of the German soldier."

The Himmerod Memorandum was officially marked "Secret Federal Matter." Only four copies were made. Graf Kielmannsegg personally delivered the document to Chancellor Adenauer via Globke at 11 a.m. on 2 November 1950. Seven hours later, Adenauer discussed the Memorandum with Speidel, Heusinger, Globke, Blank, and General Reinhard Gehlen, Hitler's former military intelligence chief. There can be no doubt today that Adenauer read the Memorandum.

Closer analysis of the Himmerod text reveals several contradictions. While Generals Heusinger and Speidel repeatedly used the term "Wehrmacht" with reference to the new armed forces of the Federal Republic, Graf Baudissin spoke only of a "German contingent"; the former implied national military sovereignty, the latter Western alliance cohesion. Additionally, while the Himmerod officers lamented that "the willingness of the German people to bear arms" had suffered in recent years, they nevertheless appealed to the "soldierly feelings of the German Volk" to support their call for rearmament. Again, while Heusinger and Speidel in the Memorandum spoke about evoking a "healthy love of the fatherland" among the German people, they concurrently pandered to the prevailing Zeitgeist by asking that same

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<sup>12</sup> Rautenberg and Wiggershaus, "Die 'Himmeroder Denkschrift'," p. 164.

**Volk to overcome "traditional nationalist ties" and to make a "commitment to Europe." The Himmerod injunction in behalf of "democratic" armed forces also was hard to bring in line with the demand that the new soldier, in well-established Prussian tradition, be "apolitical". In fact, Bundeswehr soldiers were granted voting rights from the start. Today, they swear an oath in the name not of the Federal President--all too reminiscent of the infamous oath to Hitler in August 1934--but of the "Federal Republic of Germany." Finally, the "monks" admonition that the Bonn regime heed "the justified desire" of Germans to maintain their "traditional respect for the soldiery" probably reflected more the wishes of vocal veterans' groups than those of the general public.**

**On some issues, there was downright confusion. The demand that the Bonn government direct Germans by way of a massive and centrally directed propaganda campaign to accept rearmament might have been made of Joseph Goebbels; not even the authoritarian Adenauer had such power at his disposal. Nor did the Allies ever formally recognize Bonn's claim to be the sole legitimate political spokesman of the German nation--and much less the demand of the Himmerod "monks" that they do so for a Germany in the "borders of 1937." That the officers at Himmerod ranked Great Britain and the United States as co-equals for purposes of rearming and retraining German armed forces reveals a crass misunderstanding of the then existing power relations: by October 1950, Washington already was the sole supplier of military hardware to every NATO member save one. Last but not least, military "sovereignty" did not presage political sovereignty as envisaged in the Himmerod Memorandum. Quite the reverse: political sovereignty came in July 1951, when the Western Allies officially ended the state of war with Germany; military sovereignty came partially with the General Treaty of May 1952, and fully with Germany's entry into NATO in May 1955.**

**How are we to assess the Himmerod Memorandum half a century later? First and foremost, there can be no question of its centrality in West German rearmament; one German historian has called it the**

**"Magna Carta" of the Bundeswehr<sup>13</sup> Second, history has been extremely kind to the Himmerod "monks." The Bundeswehr was created. Its founding fathers rose to its highest ranks. Eventually, Heusinger and Speidel manned senior command posts in NATO. After October 1990, the Bundeswehr simply swallowed up whatever it deemed worthy and usable of the East German National Peoples' Army. The Himmerod injunction that the Bundeswehr be deployed only in Europe remained in effect until July 1994, when the government of Helmut Kohl, as discussed earlier, obtained from the Federal Constitutional Court at Karlsruhe an injunction allowing it to serve globally in United Nations operations. The Bundeswehr of 1997 consists of 340,000 men, not quite one-third above the level set at Himmerod.**

## *II. "Bundeswehr Plan '94": Into the Future*

**Today, Germany is firmly imbedded into the Western Alliance system. It is a member of NATO and of the European Union. There are no immediate threats to its security; yesterday's enemies no longer exist. Still, there are a number of global flash points at which stability may be threatened: Bonn has identified these as the Balkans, the Caucasus, North Africa, and the Middle East. In fact, Germany's first true "out of area" deployment, in Bosnia, came at the very moment at which the "Army of Unity" was being forged--and concurrently downsized at the rate of 50,000 transfers per year as well as 23 percent of defence outlays. Defence Minister Volker R  he has compared this to nothing less than "a Herculean task which can only be compared to the reconstruction of the 1950s." R  he's plans for the future are laid down in the current "Personnel Structure Model 340,000":**

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Category	PERSONNEL STRUCTURE			
	Regular	Fixed-Term	Conscripts	TOTAL
Officers	25,000	13,000		38,000
NCOs	31,000	91,000		122,000

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<sup>13</sup> Adolf M. Birke, Nation ohne Haus. Deutschland 1945-1961 (Berlin, 1989), p. 289.

<b>Units</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>135,000</b>	<b>175,000</b>
<b>Active</b>	<b>56,000</b>	<b>144,000</b>	<b>335,000</b>
<b>Reserve</b>			<b>3,000</b>
<b>Peacetime Strength</b>			<b>338,000</b>

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In terms of individual contingents, R uhe is planning a reduction in force size of 9.46 percent for the army, 6.97 percent for the air force, and 6.2 percent for the navy.<sup>14</sup> At the heart of this new force--and the most controversial aspect of the restructuring--is the "rapid reaction force" of 50,000 regulars and volunteers for NATO or UN deployment.

Therewith, we come to the second critical phase of this project: the "Bundeswehr Plan '94" and the Federal Constitutional Court's decision of 12 July 1994 concerning the "out of area" deployment of German soldiers. For, the Court's decision marks nothing less than the beginning of a new foreign and security policy for the Federal Republic. The Karlsruhe decision, enunciated in detail earlier in this study, was based on the judges' interpretation of Article 24, Clause 2 of the Basic Law, and thus allowed for "out of area" deployment only in the service of peace, with respect for international law and human rights, and squarely within the framework of international alliance and security systems and actions. Moreover, the Court demanded constant reassessment by the policymakers in Bonn, and in all cases prior and formal approval by the nation's duly elected legislature, the Bundestag.<sup>15</sup>

The old bipolar system, which threatened the world with a possible Soviet-American confrontation, perhaps escalating up the nuclear ladder, is gone. In its place, we are faced with a multipolar world of complex issues. About a dozen successor states of the former Soviet Union--as well as another dozen new states in East Europe--are struggling with social, economic, political, and military reorientation, as well as the legacy of their totalitarian past. As part of the global sea

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<sup>14</sup> IAP-Dienst, Nr. 18, pp. 1-3.

<sup>15</sup> For an interpretation of the Karlsruhe decision, see the editorial by Dieter Schr oder, editor-in-chief of the influential S ddeutsche Zeitung, 13 July 1994.

change of the 1990s, the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) made it possible not only for Germany to reunite on the basis of the Two-plus-Four Talks, but also for NATO to consider "eastern expansion" (Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland) by 1999 on the basis of the recent NATO summit discussions at Madrid. Both would have been unthinkable before 1991.

The future will bring with it much change. The European Community is already in the process of transforming itself into a European Union on the basis of the Maastricht accords. NATO, as just stated, is transforming itself from a purely military Cold War alliance, into a security and economic development agency that, under the broad framework of the "Partnership for Peace" initiative, is reaching out toward Central (Czech Republic, Hungary), East (Poland) and possibly Southeast (Romania, Slovenia) Europe. By contrast, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), while technically restructuring itself as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), has not been able to implement real reform. Thus, the future, as far as Germany is concerned, will remain militarily with NATO, and economically with the European Union. It is within this umbrella that Bonn developed its "Bundeswehr Plan '94."

Priority in German spending shifted in 1991: from the requirements of national and alliance defence, to those of German "accession." The latter has held steady at an annual cost of roughly DM 170 billion, and is likely to continue at this level well into the next millennium. For Defence Minister R uhe, this has meant overall reductions in the defence budget from DM 53.6 billion in 1991 to DM 48.48 billion in 1994; put differently, from 18.3 percent of overall budgetary outlays to 10.1 percent. Prognostications for defence expenditures until 1998 remain steady at around DM 47.5 billion. In real monetary terms, this breaks down to DM 25 million (51.6%) for personnel, DM 5.9 million (12.2%) for military procurement, and DM 2.5 million (5.2%) for research, development, and testing. Obviously,

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<sup>16</sup> Lieutenant General J rgen Schnell, "Responsibilities and Planning Process in Germany," Ministry of Defence, 28 August 1994.

outlays for research and development as well as military procurement will have to increase in future budget plans. In manpower terms, Rühle has had to trim down total force size by 178,000 men--that is, from 575,000 (including the former NVA) to 397,000 soldiers in 1991, to 370,000 in 1994, and to 340,000 today. Civilian employees of the Bundeswehr have also been cut: from 196,000 in 1991 to 175,000 in 1994, and to 150,000 by 1998.

The reductions in overall defence spending of DM 6 billion did not remain as savings with the Defence Ministry; rather, they translated into global budget cuts as part of the government's austerity program, the so-called Sparpaket. Specifically, the Bundeswehr experienced the following reductions: infrastructure by DM 60 million; retirement of existing aircraft and ships by DM 10 million; layoffs of existing troop contingents at DM 165 million; closing of hundreds of bases and training grounds at DM 45 million; cancellations of planned military hardware purchases (tanks, ships, aircraft, uniforms, ordnance) of DM 220 million; and reductions for international deployment by DM 100 million. Put differently, the Bundeswehr's ability to take part in international peace-keeping and peace-making operations is in danger of becoming a hostage of budgetary constraints. In concrete terms, for example, the Bundeswehr's contribution toward the maintenance of "NATO infrastructure" on German soil has declined from DM 415 million in 1994, to 350 million in 1995; and of direct NATO-related operations from DM 33 million to DM 19 million during the same period.<sup>8</sup>

In a strange and almost perverse sort of way, German "accession" put additional strains on defence spending. Current estimates are that the Bundeswehr will have expended about DM 800 million to dispose of the arsenal of the erstwhile NVA, at the rate of roughly DM 110 to DM 140 million per year between 1991 and 1996. Closures of former NVA depots have proceeded on target: eighteen in

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<sup>17</sup> Ministerialdirektor Alf Fischer, "Die Entwicklung des Einzelplans 14 (Verteidigung)," Soldat und Technik, vol. 9 (1994), pp. 451-5.

<sup>18</sup> Bonn, Geschäftsbereich des Bundesministeriums der Verteidigung, "Entwurf zum Bundeshaushaltplan 1995; Einzelplan 14," pp. 143, 195.

1994, nineteen in 1995, and twelve in 1996. Returns on the sale of weapons has been minimal: DM 88.6 million, which, in turn, was reinvested to finance the work of destruction of the NVA arsenals.

The size of the task at hand, quite simply, has been daunting. Systematically, the vast arsenals of the NVA have been reduced by a variety of methods, ranging from giving aircraft and tanks to domestic as well as foreign museums, to donating military ambulances to St. John's and other medical emergency units, to transferring anti-ABC weapons gear to German fire departments, and simply to handing over immense amounts of ammunition (60,900 tons), firearms (408,215 pieces), artillery (158 tubes), and tanks (501 units) to NATO allies and other friends. Furthermore, a special demolition command (VEBEG) has destroyed Treaty Limited Equipment (TLE) in the amount of 140 fighter aircraft, 2,074 armoured vehicles, 956 battle tanks, 814 pieces of artillery, as well as 891,217 guns and pistols. Much of this work has been undertaken in the so-called New Bundesländer. Additionally, the Bundeswehr has destroyed 104 tanks, 86 armoured vehicles, and 50 pieces of artillery by way of using them as practice targets. Finally, Bonn has turned 149 Type BTR-70 armoured vehicles over to the UN for its peace-keeping missions.

### *III. "Traditionspflege": The Burden of History*

To return to the founding document of the Bundeswehr, the Himmerod Memorandum, the final analysis must rest in the area of what the "monks" termed "innere Gefüge." For, a certain "unmasterable past" continues to hang over the German people and their role in Hitler's barbarism in general, and over the German military in particular. This is daily and painfully revealed by a national exhibition that started in 1995: "The Wehrmacht as a Criminal Organization," which will be examined later. More than 50 million people died in the European theatre of the Second World War--including 20 million Soviets, 6 million Jews, and about 5.3 million German<sup>19</sup>Field

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<sup>19</sup> Ministry of Defence, Bonn, Rü Z II, Sonderbeauftragter für die Verwertung von Material der ehemaligen NVA, "Bericht der Bundesregierung über den Fortgang der Verwertung von früherem NVA-Material," 6 April 1994.

Marshal Hermann Göring, Grand Admirals Erich Raeder and Karl Dönitz, and Generals Ernst Kaltenbrunner, Wilhelm Keitel, and Alfred Jodl at Nürnberg were convicted of crimes against peace and humanity. The SA, SS, Gestapo, and Führerkorps der NSDAP were declared criminal organizations. Recent works by Christian Streit, Omer Bartov, and above all by the Bundeswehr's own Military Historical Research Office (Militärgeschichtliches Forschungsamt) have revealed only too clearly the armed forces' intimate involvement in the Third Reich's heinous crimes, especially in the East. And the current "Goldhagen phenomenon"--a media blitz reviving the fifty-year-old thesis that "ordinary Germans" were in fact "Hitler's willing executioners"<sup>22</sup> further attests to the German public's confusion about the armed forces and the Second World War.

Thus, we may in closing ask what traditions the Bundeswehr, acting on the Himmerod recommendations, adopted. Legally, it could resurrect neither the General Staff nor the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces (OKW). Nor could it simply renew troop formations such as the "Hermann Göring" division or the "Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler." It adopted western uniforms and abolished officer swords and unit standards. Still, when it came to medals, three years after Himmerod, only 15 of 95 former officers questioned favoured dropping the swastika from medal ribbons<sup>23</sup>

Old traditions were hard to break. The Bundesmarine retained military tattoos and flag parades. One of its public spokesmen, Admiral Gottfried Hansen, proudly proclaimed: "The German Army does not need a trainer, for without a German soldiery there could be no

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<sup>20</sup> Martin K. Sorge, The Other Price of Hitler's War: German Military and Civilian Losses Resulting from World War II (New York, Westport, and London, 1986), pp. 1 ff.

<sup>21</sup> Christian Streit, Keine Kameraden. Die Wehrmacht und die sowjetischen Kriegsgefangenen 1941-1945 (Stuttgart, 1978); Omer Bartov, Hitler's Army: Soldiers, Nazis, and War in the Third Reich (New York and Oxford, 1991); Das Deutsche Reich und der Zweite Weltkrieg, vol. IV, Der Angriff auf die Sowjetunion (Stuttgart, 1983).

<sup>22</sup> Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust (New York, 1996).

<sup>23</sup> Anfänge westdeutscher Sicherheitspolitik 1945-1956, ed. Militärgeschichtliches Forschungsamt (2 vols., Munich and Vienna, 1982), vol. I, p. 833.

Germany.<sup>24</sup> The naming of Bundeswehr barracks (until November 1995) after Wehrmacht and SS generals such as Eduard Dietl at Füssen and Ludwig Kübler at Mittenwald could hardly have been imaginable without the Himmerod guidelines. And it is perhaps indicative of the German style of "revolution from above" that at Himmerod the issue of rearmament was co-opted in secrecy and without public debate by a small elite of Wehrmacht veterans, led by Generals Heusinger and Speidel.

Perhaps most critically, the Himmerod spirit revealed that open and frank discussion of the military past received low priority. Patriotic self-censors in the military until 1947 prevented the publication of the Hoßbach Memorandum of November 1937, wherein Hitler had revealed to his generals and admirals the full extent of his limitless plans for wars of conquest. As well, until 1959 these self-censors blocked publication in Germany of Fabian von Schlabrendorff's critical study, Officers Against Hitler. The Protestant Church's Stuttgart Declaration of October 1945, expressing "deep anguish" over the church's role in the Third Reich, found no echo in military circles.

Unfortunately, the truth is that the Bundeswehr has been lax to distance itself from the Wehrmacht. Thus, General Heinz Trettner, Inspector-General of the Bundeswehr in the mid-1960s, as late as 1991-92 denounced what he termed the "unintellectual and arrogant attempts" of civilian academics "to separate the Bundeswehr from the Wehrmacht and its predecessors." His colleague, General Heinz Karst, head of Education and Training in the Bundeswehr from 1967 to 1970, in a veterans' journal, Alte Kameraden, in 1985 openly crowed that "since the World War had somehow [sic] broken out" in 1939, without the Wehrmacht, Soviet tanks would today still be in Paris and Rome, Brussels and Copenhagen.<sup>25</sup> Such uttering only damage the reputation of the Bundeswehr's solidly democratic corps of officers and men.

To be sure, these elements of the Bundeswehr leadership were not alone in failing to distance themselves from the immediate and

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<sup>24</sup> Cited in *ibid.*, vol. I, p. 804. Hansen to Adenauer, December 1950.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 755.

barbaric Nazi past. For, there was no "hour zero" for most German professionals. Civil service reforms were torpedoed by the entrenched ministerial bureaucracy. Universities after 1945 restored the Weimar Republic's reactionary Universities' Constitution. The judiciary served Konrad Adenauer just as it had Adolf Hitler and Paul von Hindenburg, Friedrich Ebert and Kaiser Wilhelm II, Otto von Bismarck and Frederick the Great. Reform in the economic sector was limited to the 1950 currency reform. The Basic Law (Articles 140 and 4) even restored the conservative State Church Law of the 1920s for its 16,000 pastors and priests, many of whom had loyally prayed for Hitler. Thus, it hardly came as a surprise when Josef Cardinal Frings of Cologne, even before Himmerod, publicly admonished Germans that "propaganda for unrestricted and absolute refusal to undertake military service is not compatible with Christian belief."<sup>26</sup> Perhaps Friedrich Wilhelm Graf von der Schulenburg--rather than Immanuel Kant, or Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, or Friedrich Nietzsche--was the most percipient of German philosophers when in October 1806, during the French occupation of Berlin, he instructed the capital's royal servants: "Calm and order are the first duties of the citizen"

Soldiers without tradition and patriotism may well be little more than modern-day mercenaries. It is thus understandable that the "monks" at Himmerod felt the need to imbue the future West German armed forces with a sense of tradition and patriotism. Certainly, given the recent past, the Bundeswehr could not simply have started with a tabula rasa. Still, the question remains: which traditions should a conscript army in a democratic and pluralistic state adopt? Must these traditions necessarily be those of the Wehrmacht? Bonn has established a global reputation of trust, cooperation, and democracy; is it not time, we may well ask, that it endows the Bundeswehr, Germany's longest-standing army in this century, with its own traditions and values?

Certainly, Defence Minister Volker R  he is painfully aware of the problem. After decades of obfuscation by Bonn's leading politicians on the issue of Traditionspflege in the Bundeswehr, R  he in 1995 went on

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<sup>26</sup> Die Welt, 25 July 1950.

the offensive. In January he dedicated a new barracks in Berlin, and chose for its name that of Dr. Julius Leber, a labour activist who had been executed by the Nazis fifty years earlier. R uhe used the occasion poignantly to remind the Bundeswehr of the need "to draw the proper lessons from the past," and specifically lectured its leaders that by choosing the name of Leber for the new barracks, he was "effectively pointing the way for the Bundeswehr's tradition<sup>27</sup>."

In November 1995 the Defence Minister again directly addressed the issue of using the values of the past as a current model. Renaming the Generaloberst Dietl Barracks at F ussen and the General Ludwig K ubler Barracks at Mittenwald the Allg au Barracks and the Karwendel Barracks, respectively, R uhe went out of his way to inform Germans that neither Dietl ("a Nazi of the first hour") nor K ubler ("the blood hound of Lemberg") represented the values that the Bundeswehr sought to promote in cultivating new German military traditions. Specifically, the Defence Minister stated that the Third Reich's Wehrmacht was not an institution that could "provide a basis for the military tradition of the Bundeswehr." That tradition, R uhe suggested, needed to be "based upon a careful and deliberate selection from Germany's military past<sup>28</sup>

Additionally, Defence Minister R uhe in July 1994 took to the offensive yet again to link the Bundeswehr not to the old Wehrmacht leadership, but rather to those officers who had dared move against Hitler fifty years earlier. Opening a special exhibition dedicated to the officers who had plotted against Hitler on 20 July 1944, R uhe chose his words carefully. "The Bundeswehr," he reminded those present at the Bendler-Block, the old army headquarters in Berlin, "is the first German army in which the principles of freedom, democracy, and constitutionality shape the soldiers' conscience. . . . July 20th thus is a significant part of the tradition of the German armed forces."

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<sup>27</sup> Volker R uhe, "Ethos des deutschen Widerstandes als moralisches Fundament der Bundeswehr," Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung, Bulletin, Nr. 2 (6 January 1995), p. 5.

<sup>28</sup> The Week in Germany, 17 November 1995, p. 6.

Interestingly, Rühle at the same time used the occasion to lecture his listeners that the leaders of the erstwhile German Democratic Republic had no place in that tradition. He thereby reiterated his earlier stance that the "tradition" of the GDR's National Peoples' Army, "due to its nature as a party and class army of a Communist system," could not offer "any tradition for the Bundeswehr."

Unfortunately for both Rühle and Bonn, much of this positive work was destroyed in December 1997 by revelations of right-wing extremism in the Bundeswehr. Specifically, both the print and the electronic media revealed that Manfred Roeder, a self-proclaimed neo-Nazi, Holocaust denier, and convicted felon, in January 1995 had been invited by Colonel Norbert Schwarzer, head of staff of the elite Führungsakademie of the Bundeswehr in Hamburg, to lecture on the subject of "officer continuing education." His topic: "The Resettlement of Russian-Germans in the Area of Königsberg." Additionally, it turned out that the Bundeswehr had made available to Roeder jeeps and trucks from its arsenal for the purpose of "resettling" former Germans, now living in Kazakhstan, to what Roeder termed "North-East Prussia," that is, Russian Kaliningrad.

What Defence Minister Rühle initially tried to slough off as "stupidity" and "lack of tact" on the part of a few isolated military officials, in fact revealed a moral crisis behind the Bundeswehr's officer education initiatives. Wolfgang Vogt, a sociologist at the Führungsakademie, allowed that "education and innere Führung" had been "lost along the road" of recent transformation under Rühle. Concentration almost exclusively on the nuts and bolts of military hardware--what the late German military historian Gerhard Ritter termed Kriegshandwerk--had caused the failure rate of captains and senior lieutenants in courses in the area of "Security Policies and the Armed Forces" to leap to 40 percent. Only 35 percent of the applicants

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<sup>29</sup> Volker Rühle, "'Aufstand des Gewissens'--Gedenken an den militärischen Widerstand," Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung, Bulletin, Nr. 68 (22 July 1994), p. 648.

<sup>30</sup> Ministry of Defence, ZDv 10/1, "Innere Führung," February 1993.

<sup>31</sup> Der Spiegel, Nr. 51/15.12.97, pp. 22-8.

to the Führungsakademie possess formal education--in contrast to 70 percent just a few years ago. And in what has been described by an insider at the Führungsakademie as a process of "unintellectualism," that institution for the first time in its history is being led by non-academics. Similarly, the previously mentioned Military History Research Office at Potsdam likewise for the first time in its history has an Amtschef without a Ph.D. Under severe fire by the media, Rühle, after years of sandbagging the issue, has finally agreed that a sociological study of the Bundeswehr's officer corps might be of value!

### **Project Outcome**

The first, and most immediate, outcome of my NATO Research Fellowship came in the unexpected form of an invitation by the United States Information Agency (USIA), working through the United States Embassy in Ottawa and the United States Consulate-General in Calgary (Ms. Betty Rice), to undertake a ten-day whirlwind "NATO Enlargement Tour" to Brussels, Bucharest, Budapest, and Prague, in September 1997.

At NATO Headquarters in Brussels, I joined a dozen delegates from other NATO countries (Denmark, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Holland, Iceland, and Italy) for a full day of briefings at the U.S. Mission. These included presentations by Lieutenant General Nicholas B. Kehoe, USAF, Deputy Chairman, International Military Committee, and by two Permanent Representatives to NATO (Giovanni Januzzi of Italy; Sir John Goulden of the U.K.) as well as by the American Chargé D'Affaires (Douglas McElhaney). Thereafter, I departed for on-site visits to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defence, and the Presidential Palace at Bucharest; next came the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Defence at Budapest; and finally, the Ministry of Defence as well as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at Prague. Most of the discussions were with government officials at the levels of Deputy Ministers of Defence and Finance. The "NATO Enlargement Tour" was a magnificent learning experience, as I was able to connect my academic research with contemporary issues and actors. Once back in Calgary, I used the opportunity to lecture to both my strategy undergraduate

class and to a graduate seminar, as well as to the larger University community and to downtown business leaders on the new reformed and reshaped NATO and its "Partnership for Peace" initiative.

Along more traditional and academic lines, I have written three articles on the basis of my "NATO Research Fellowship" work. The first, an analysis of the German military system and the current penchant by contemporary American armed forces to use it as a model ("The German Military: A Model for all Seasons?") has been accepted for publication by the Joint Forces Quarterly, published by the National War College at Fort McNair, Washington, D.C. The second article, entitled "Old Wine in New Skins? The Birth of German Rearmament, 1950," has been submitted to the popular journal Atlantic Monthly, Boston, for consideration for publication. And the third piece, dealing with the "Bundeswehr Plan '94 and German Global Missions," has been sent to the editors of the scholarly journal International Security at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, for consideration for publication.

### Conclusions

During my two years of work on "Aggression Contained? The Federal Republic of Germany and International Security," a number of colleagues, both in Canada and in Germany, questioned whether this work should not more properly have fallen under the jurisdiction of political scientists. Put differently, *Why a Historian?* I was not deterred by such comments. For, the project has convinced me of the need, stated in my original application, to imbed current Bundeswehr policy firmly within the parameters of the peculiar German military culture, so rooted in the events of the not-too-distant past.

Much of the debate concerning the future role of the Bundeswehr has been left almost by default to political scientists and international systems analysts. Even special editions in 1991 and 1995 of the German Studies Review the flagship journal of professors of German history and literature in North America, while featuring contributions on German elections, foreign policy, NATO and EU membership and possible expansion, as well as the economics of reunification, have omitted any analysis of the instrument with which Germany seeks to

assume a more global posture within the framework of United Nations Peace Operations--namely, the Bundeswehr. On the basis of my work under the auspices of the "NATO Research Fellowship," I have set out to fill that glaring void. I answer my academic colleagues by suggesting that the originality of my work lies in combining the political and military components of Germany's security policy.

The crying need for such a historical perspective almost daily has been evidenced, as briefly alluded to above, by the public reaction--shock and confusion--to Hannes Heer's traveling exhibition, Vernichtungskrieg. Verbrecher der Wehrmacht 1941 bis 1944 Demonstrations and counter-demonstrations. Riots in the streets of Munich. Nightly vitriolic television debates. All climaxed by a grisly drawing on the 10 March 1997 cover of the popular magazine Der Spiegel, showing a Wehrmacht officer executing civilians in former Yugoslavia during the Second World War--and an eight-page editorial by the magazine's editor, Rudolf Augstein. For, Heer's explosive thesis that the Wehrmacht did not fight a "clean war" in the East, but rather joined the Schutzstaffel (SS) in the war of annihilation under the banner of partisan warfare (Partisanenkampf), has called into question the role of military force--both past and present--in the modern German state. In fact, an impassioned debate on the exhibition in the Bundestag on 20 March 1997 showed how close to the surface the debate over the role of Germany's armed forces in the nation's recent past truly lies--especially among the general populace. Needless to say, the December 1997 revelations about the Bundeswehr's "brown taint" (Der Spiegel) has done nothing to allay that shock and confusion.

It can only be hoped that the recent revelations of neo-Nazi activity in the Bundeswehr, as stated above, will prompt Chancellor Helmut Kohl's government to treat education about the military historical past seriously. For, the debate is no longer restricted to academics; rather, it reaches German society as a whole. It demands answers that are firmly rooted in the German past--answers that I set out in part to provide. My intellectual journey, then, has launched me

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<sup>32</sup> Der Spiegel, Nr. 11/10.3.97, pp. 92-9.

**on a broadly-conceived Euro-Atlantic project, one that has confronted me with new issues, new research, and new perspectives.**

