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## NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE

# GERMAN ATTITUDES ON REARMAMENT

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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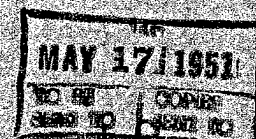
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The intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and the Joint Staff participated in the preparation of this estimate. All members of the Intelligence Advisory Committee concurred in this estimate on 10 May (however, see footnotes on pages 2, 4, and 7).

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## GERMAN ATTITUDES ON REARMAMENT

### THE PROBLEM

To estimate the factors underlying West German attitudes toward rearmament; the conditions under which rearmament can be obtained in association with the NATO powers; and the effects of such rearmament on West German foreign policies and objectives.

### CONCLUSIONS

1. The West German people, despite strong anti-Soviet feelings, are not now in favor of rearmament, primarily because of three factors: (a) their fear that it will provoke the USSR to make war, and that the ruin of Germany will be completed by war; this fear is intensified by the conviction that the Western Powers at present lack the military capability of successfully defending West German territory against Soviet aggression; (b) their dislike of the implications of remilitarization—a dislike shared by other Western peoples, but stronger in the Germans because they are asked to rearm before recovering national independence and equality; and (c) their feeling that West German rearmament in association with the NATO powers would indefinitely postpone a peaceful reunification of the German nation.

2. The two main political party leaders of West Germany are both firmly anti-Communist, and neither has fundamental objections to rearmament on grounds of political principle or pacifism. The difference between them on the subject is one of tactics and timing. The Adenauer Government favors rearmament, provid-

ing certain conditions are met, and it is willing to negotiate these conditions with the Western Powers. The leader of the Socialist opposition, Kurt Schumacher, maintains on the contrary that rearmament is not even a subject for negotiation as long as West Germany is an occupied territory and exposed to a Soviet invasion which the West has no power to repel. Schumacher has put himself at the head of non-Communist opposition to the measure. If rearmament is viewed as less dangerous and more advantageous to West Germany than is now the case, public opinion will become less averse to it, and Schumacher will then probably change his position.

3. We believe that the West Germans will not support a program of rearmament unless substantial concessions are granted under the four following heads: (a) "equality" for the German military contingent; (b) virtual independence for the West German state; (c) enough additional Allied forces stationed in or near the Federal Republic to give the Germans an increased sense of security during the period of rearmament; and (d) financial assistance.

4. Assuming that an agreement with the Western Powers is reached, West Germany is likely to be primarily concerned, during the first years after rearmament begins, with recovering complete independence, and with strengthening its initially weak position within the NATO grouping. It will seek to become the dominant continental European member of NATO.

5. As West German power and influence grow, the policies of the government are likely to be increasingly directed toward objectives not shared by all members of the Western alliance. Foremost among such aims will probably be the reunification of Germany and the recovery of lost territories, including the Saar. The West Germans will probably try to use NATO as an instrument for achieving their eastern territorial objectives. If they are unsuccessful in this respect, or if progress seems unduly slow, they may contemplate a deal with the USSR to accomplish their ends. In any event they will probably

use the threat of such a deal to try to bring pressure on the NATO powers.

6. Whether a rearmed and sovereign West Germany might at some future time make a deal with the USSR or attain an "independent" status between East and West cannot be predicted with certainty because the factors which now appear to control the situation may change. It now seems clear that for the predictable future West Germany may be expected to see its security principally threatened from the East, and must therefore be inclined to continue its alliance with the Western Powers. Should it feel it might achieve its primary foreign policy objectives outside the Western alliance without being drawn under Soviet control, it might seek an independent position between the East and West. However, we believe that the maintenance of such a position would depend upon an increase of West German military and economic strength of such magnitude as to be unlikely within the calculable future.\*

## DISCUSSION

### Main Factors Underlying West German Attitudes Toward Rearmament

7. Contrary to the policy of the present West German Government, the majority of the West German people are not yet in favor of rearmament. This popular reluctance certainly does not spring from pro-Soviet leanings, for the West Germans are strongly anti-Russian and

very few of them have any disposition toward Communism. For reasons to be discussed below their aversion to rearmament may eventually be overcome; for the time being, however, it is unmistakable. It arises primarily from three factors which together outweigh hostility to the USSR.

a. The first and currently most important factor influencing the West German people

\* The Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, Department of the Army prefers the following version of this paragraph:

6. A rearmed and sovereign West Germany may remain aligned with the West, but there is no assurance that it will. There is no evidence to justify ruling out the possibility that at any time a West German Government may reach an understanding with the USSR which would nullify in fact if not in form the West German alignment with the Western Powers. While progress in integration with NATO may well act to restrain West Germany from abandoning the connection, such restraint would be only relative and not decisive. Should West Germany decide to modify her position between East and West to a degree that would render her previous alignment with the West meaningless, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to prevent her by force from taking such action.

against rearmament is their belief that it may provoke the USSR to war, and that the ruin of Germany would be completed by war. Fear of Soviet military retaliation is sedulously fostered by Communist propaganda, and finds firmer basis in the various official Soviet pronouncements against German remilitarization. The West Germans are acutely conscious of their weak and exposed position and of the present inability of the Western Powers to defend them against Soviet invasion.

b. The second important factor is sheer disinclination to accept the burden of military commitments; it is in part a revulsion from the idea of remilitarization. Such a feeling is of course not peculiar to Germans; indeed it may be more superficial among them than in the populations of some NATO powers. Strong pacifist and neutralist elements exist in West Germany; again, however, they are no more decisive than in many other Western countries. It is possible that the shock of defeat bred a particular aversion, for the time being, to new military endeavors. Several million Germans who had been genuinely relieved to be rid of the military caste and system, and who agreed with Allied opinions as to its menacing features, felt that the suggestion to rearm conjured up the ghost of the military state. These genuinely anti-militaristic Germans have little belief in their ability to establish firm democratic civilian control over a resurrected military caste. What gives unusual strength to the popular feeling, however, is that West Germany has been asked to take up the burdens and risks of rearmament not as a sovereign state, contending for its own national interests in equal association with allies, but as a dependent and inferior member of an alliance consisting of former enemies. The Germans fear the Soviet Union, but they also feel strong resentment against the Western occupying powers. Hence the first reply of many, when asked to rearm against the USSR, was to cry "ohne mich" ("count me out"). This attitude may be expected to diminish as German nationalism increases and the West German state recovers political and economic health. It will hardly disappear, however, before the na-

tion is given sovereign independence and equality.

c. The third factor influencing the West German people against rearmament is their feeling that it would indefinitely postpone a reunification of Germany. Desire for national unification is perhaps the strongest positive political emotion in Germany. The people recognize that, for the present at least, unification can be accomplished only with the consent of the USSR, and such consent would plainly be out of the question if West Germany were to be rearmed and firmly allied with the Western Powers. The USSR understands German sentiments in this respect, and has exploited them skillfully by invitations to unity which have impressed the West German people, leading many to believe that at least for a while the door should not be slammed shut by adoption of a program of rearmament.

8. Although West German public opinion is permeated with the feelings described, it is not unalterably fixed against rearmament and the two main political party leaders are in a strong position to influence the final decision. Both Chancellor Adenauer and Dr. Schumacher, leader of the Socialist opposition, are firmly anti-Communist and believe that the interests of Germany will in the long-run be better served by cooperation with the Western Powers than by "neutrality" or accommodation with the USSR. Neither believes that the USSR will offer any acceptable proposal for the peaceful reunification of Germany, with or without continued disarmament as a condition. Neither has fundamental objections to rearmament on grounds of political principle or pacifism; the difference between them which undoubtedly exists, is one of tactics and timing.

9. Adenauer and his colleagues have publicly signified that they favor rearmament, providing certain conditions are met, and they are willing to negotiate with the Western Powers concerning these conditions. But Adenauer's Government rests upon a small majority, both in Parliament and in the country, and the Chancellor considers this majority an insuffi-



cient basis for the momentous decisions leading to rearmament.\*

10. Schumacher maintains that, as long as West Germany continues in the status of an occupied territory and is exposed to a Soviet invasion which the Western allies would be powerless to repel, rearmament is not even a subject for serious negotiation. He has therefore put himself at the head of a large body of non-Communist popular opposition to rearmament. His position has been politically rewarding; it has appealed not only to those segments of German opinion which are still war-weary and averse to new military commitments, but also to the rising nationalism which demands that if Germany is to help the West it do so as an equal and sovereign power. Schumacher has almost certainly caused Adenauer to demand a higher price in political concessions from the Western Powers than the Chancellor would otherwise have posed in return for German military assistance. Finally, though Schumacher has expressed the opinion that little or nothing is to be expected from negotiations with the USSR, his general attitude has in fact reinforced popular sentiment in West Germany that no decision should be taken on rearmament until at least one more attempt has been made to achieve a peaceful reunification of Germany, by agreement with the USSR.

11. Proposals for rearmament are unlikely to obtain popular acquiescence, much less popular support, until rearmament seems less dangerous and more advantageous than is now the case, and, so long as German opinion is averse to rearmament, Schumacher will continue to exploit this reluctance. Certainly Schumacher will not feel it expedient to change his position before the possibilities of peaceful German reunification have been thoroughly explored and until the Western Powers have

granted the minimum German demands for "freedom," "equality," and "security." When the possibility of peaceful German reunification fades, and if the Western Powers substantially meet the German demands outlined below, we believe that German opinion will no longer be strongly averse to rearmament. Then it is probable that Schumacher will give his support to, or at least acquiesce in, a policy of rearmament and a Western alliance.

### Probable Conditions of West German Agreement to Rearmament

12. The conditions under which West Germany would agree to rearm in association with the NATO powers cannot be stated with precision; they can at best be indicated within limits, and a few set forth as minimum requirements. German public opinion on the subject will plainly depend not solely on the merits of various proposals considered in a vacuum, but also on concurrent developments in the world situation—the growing or lessening fear of war; the status of other problems between Germany and the Western Powers, especially France; the development of the domestic German economic situation, and so on. Moreover, the responsible German politicians, in part leading and in part reflecting public opinion, retain much flexibility of decision; they could hold out for conditions attractive to their constituents, they could agree to rearmament under conditions acceptable but not attractive, or they might even authorize a modest beginning of rearmament on a scale not calling for much public notice. Finally, since the agreement would be negotiated with the Western Powers, its details would doubtless take various forms in accord with the progress of discussions.

13. It is noteworthy that the Germans themselves have refrained from precise definition of their conditions. Both Adenauer and Schumacher have left themselves wide freedom for maneuver. What appear to be the essential conditions of rearmament have been publicized throughout Germany in three or four phrases, each of which is left studiously imprecise. These phrases are: (a) equality for

\* The Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, Department of the Army, believes this sentence should read: "But Adenauer's Government rests upon a small majority, both in Parliament and in the country, and the Chancellor considers this majority an insufficient basis for the momentous decisions leading to rearmament and a military alliance with the Western Powers."

the German military contingent; (b) independence for the West German state; (c) protection against a Soviet invasion during rearmament; and (d) financial assistance.

a. "Equality" for the West German military contingent appears to mean, in general, that there must be no obvious and invidious discrimination against it in equipment, organization, command, sector assignment and deployment in general. On the one extreme, however, it is clear that the Germans do not interpret this to mean that they are to use atomic weapons, for example, or have a strategic air force. But they make strong demands on other matters, especially that their units be at least of divisional size, and not limited to infantry; on these particular points they are unlikely to give way. Some formula of "equality" in the agreement will be an essential condition of its acceptance by the West Germans, but this will certainly be something less than complete equality with the forces of the US, for instance. We believe that the details of this problem can be settled by negotiation, to the reasonable satisfaction both of the Germans and of the Western Powers.

b. The Occupation must be based on contractual agreements which will leave West Germany largely independent. We believe that the Germans will be satisfied with something less than complete sovereignty, but, on the other hand, that the obvious signs of dependent and subjugated status must be removed. The West German people, if they are to support rearmament, must have a sense that in every important particular they are masters of their own destiny, as far as the citizens of any state can be said to be so.

c. It is plainly impossible to provide the Germans with complete protection against Soviet invasion; nevertheless German leaders have in effect posed this demand as a precondition of rearmament. They have not stated, in numbers of allied divisions, the amount of protection they would consider adequate. We interpret this position to be a maneuver of negotiation. But the German fear of invasion is genuine, as is their feeling that rearmament might provoke the USSR to invade. Accordingly, enough allied land and air forces must be stationed in or near the Federal Re-

public to give the Germans an increased sense of security while rearmament is in progress. Doubtless the real protection from invasion, such as it is, will consist in factors other than the allied forces on German soil. For psychological reasons, however, a considerable reinforcement of the present occupation forces is essential.

d. Financial assistance must be provided the West German state to aid it in carrying out rearmament. This is a demand specifically stated by Adenauer. The exact amount and method of financial assistance is a question of the greatest complexity.

14. If the West Germans are to give active support to a program of rearmament, we believe that the Western Powers will have to give them substantial satisfaction within each of the four categories described in the preceding paragraph. Doubtless the Germans will aggressively press their demands in the negotiations. Doubtless also they will accept less than they will demand; they are aware that once the first step is taken and the process of rearmament gets under way, subsequent improvements in the power and status of West Germany will be relatively easy to achieve. In arriving at the minimum terms of agreement, moreover, the influence of the West German political leaders, and especially perhaps of Schumacher, will assume great importance. Neither Schumacher nor Adenauer, of course, will attempt to carry through a program of rearmament on terms manifestly unacceptable to German public opinion. But if negotiations reach the marginal areas where a concession, one way or another, seems just sufficient to tip the balance, the views of the politicians become commanding, and their influence on public opinion decisive. As such a point Schumacher's terms would doubtless be stiffer than Adenauer's; if Schumacher should be in power he would be harder to deal with.

15. In the broader sense, it is clear that forces outside Germany will largely determine whether West Germany does or does not rearm in association with the NATO powers. For example, the USSR could undoubtedly prevent or postponed German rearmament by



making a firm offer of German reunification, with genuinely free elections, upon condition of continued demilitarization; to such an offer German public opinion would probably respond favorably. Or the Western Powers could prevent German rearmament by failing to grant the minimum demands of the Germans under the headings described. It is conceivable that the USSR might issue a threat of ultimatum of such grave character as to bring about at least a postponement of West German rearmament. To estimate what courses of action the USSR or other powers will follow with respect to West German rearmament is outside the scope of this paper. If they or any of them do not act in a manner and on the scale necessary to prevent it, however, we believe that West Germany will eventually agree to rearm and to contribute a sizeable contingent to the military forces of the Western alliance.

#### **Probable Development of West German Foreign Policies Assuming That Rearmament Takes Place**

16. Certain facts about a rearming and rearmed West Germany appear almost axiomatic. It will strive to increase its power and extend its influence as rapidly and as far as possible. The West German people, if they are to support rearmament, will have to see it as a symbol of the end of their subjugated status, and as the beginning of a long road leading their nation eventually to a position of primacy in Western Europe. During the first years after rearmament commences, West German foreign policy will doubtless be concerned mainly with attaining complete independence and gradually increasing German influence and power in the councils of the Western alliance. We assume that West Germany, shortly after rearmament commences, will become a full member of NATO.

17. While the basic Western German desire to remain free of Soviet domination will continue to be paramount, the attitudes and policies of the West German Government and people will be increasingly influenced by certain other and more specific objectives, foremost among which will be to reunite East and

West Germany under a government completely independent of Soviet or any other foreign control, and to recover lost territories, including the Saar. It is safe to assume that as soon as the minimum requirements of national independence and security have been met, whatever power and influence the West German state is able to command in foreign affairs will be largely directed toward these goals.

18. Broadly speaking, two courses of action will be open to the rearmed Federal Republic in order to remain independent, to unify Germany, and to recover lost territories: (a) it can remain allied to the Western Powers, depending upon the power of the alliance to maintain its security and possibly to produce concessions from the USSR either by diplomatic or by military coercion; and (b) it can try to make a deal with the USSR.

a. As the military capabilities of NATO increase and the German influence within the organization becomes stronger, the West Germans may be expected to argue that the objectives of the alliance should not be confined to defense of Western Europe at the present line of demarcation, but should extend to a reunification of Germany and a recovery of its lost lands. This does not necessarily mean that the West Germans would urge the NATO armies forthwith into an eastward invasion; more probably they would try to have the armed strength of NATO built up to a point well beyond that required for defense, and to use it as an instrument of power supporting a diplomacy directed towards special German objectives.

b. If the NATO alliance should fail to bring results as quickly or as completely as they would like, the West Germans may contemplate a deal with the USSR to accomplish their objectives. Such a deal might be an alliance, or more likely a non-aggression pact, calling for the detachment of Germany from NATO in return for territorial concessions from the USSR. The Germans would not contemplate such a deal if they believed it would involve their acceptance of Satellite status. Whether such an arrangement could ever in fact be made would depend upon the course of world affairs in general, and upon the development

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of Soviet and Western policies as well as upon the attitudes of the West Germans themselves.

19. The fact that West Germany will be the only member of the Western alliance whose anti-Soviet objectives are not merely defensive but irredentist will prove troublesome to other NATO powers. France, for example, will hardly give back the Saar willingly, nor will the French wish to employ their military and diplomatic power for the sake of reunifying Germany. Because of its eastern territorial objectives, West Germany would probably remain unreconciled to any settlement or *modus vivendi* with the USSR which did not satisfy those aims, however much such an arrangement might be desired by other Western Powers. Within NATO the West Germans will be likely to think of themselves as militarily indispensable. They may attempt to treat the organization as in effect a tripartite alliance between the US, the UK, and Germany, thus irritating other powers. Finally, whether or not the West Germans ever come to the point of making a deal with the USSR in order to achieve their territorial aspirations, they will use the threat of such a deal to try to put pressure on their NATO partners.

20. Whether a rearmed and sovereign West Germany might at some future time make a deal with the USSR, or attain an "independent" status between East and West, cannot be predicted with certainty. The factors which now seem to weigh so heavily against these courses of action may in the course of years lose their weight, or other factors may intervene to alter present calculations. It now seems clear that the threat to West German security presented by the USSR must for the predictable future overbalance the

pull of German eastward interests. The power of Germany relative to that of the USSR has greatly diminished; with it has diminished West German ability to renounce Western connections without falling prey to the USSR. Moreover, West German chances of achieving eventual primacy among continental Western European nations appear promising. We do not doubt that West Germany will seek, in pursuit of its policy objectives, to exploit its central position between East and West. It is apt to be an exacting and difficult member of the Western alliance. Nevertheless, we believe that the West Germans will continue, for a considerable time after rearmament is accomplished, to find that their national security imperatively requires the maintenance of close association or alliance with the Western Powers, and that the achievement of an "independent" position between East and West would call for such an increase of their economic and military strength as to be beyond reasonable possibility.\*

\* The Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, Department of the Army prefers the following version of this paragraph:

20. A rearmed and sovereign West Germany may remain aligned with the West, but there is no assurance that it will. There is no evidence to justify ruling out the possibility that at any time a West German Government may reach an understanding with the USSR which would nullify in fact if not in form the West German alignment with the Western Powers. While progress in integration with NATO may well act to restrain West Germany from abandoning the connection, such restraint would be only relative and not decisive. Should West Germany decide to modify her position between East and West to a degree that would render her previous alignment with the West meaningless, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to prevent her by force from taking such action.

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