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What are European Objectives in the Two-Plus-Four Process?

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Summary

West Europeans now agree that Germany will unite perhaps even before a two-plus-four ministerial meeting can be convened and that the Four Powers will have little influence over unification itself. France and the UK are still determined, however to try to anchor a united Germany in the Western security system, including maintaining German membership in NATO and Allied--predominantly US--troops on German soil.

- They both can live with the "Genscher model," limiting NATO troops to West Germany, but they part company with each other on what concessions the West should make if the Soviets continued to reject full German membership in NATO.
- The West Germans, meanwhile, will try to work out the details of alliance membership and troop standing through bilateral contacts--especially with the Soviet Union--and can present them for ratification by the two-plus-four meeting.
- Differences between the German and French/UK approaches will ensure a dynamic tension. CIA Statute

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Discussion

France and the UK both seem to feel that they are now struggling for an interim security solution that will last maybe five years--enough breathing room to sort out an entirely new security arrangement for Europe. Both know that achieving their optimal goal--full membership of at least the FRG portion of Germany in NATO--will require German cooperation and resolution in the face of Soviet opposition. Thatcher, in particular, is convinced that only a united Western stand will prevail; both France and Britain worry that the United States will prove too accommodating to Germany's drive to achieve unification at virtually any cost. Thatcher may hope that playing bad cop to the US good cop will help keep Bonn on the straight and narrow, but we see a possibility that she could refuse to compromise at the eleventh hour. If it becomes clear that keeping Germany in NATO is simply not on, we believe the French and other Allies will regroup and consider alternative security forums that would still tie Germany to the West. CIA Statute

The WEU lacks sinews and wherewithal, but might conceivably be transformed into a security home for Germany. The EC would be another option, but there are a number of the obstacles, including the neutrality of Ireland and several prospective members. Should these multilateral efforts unravel, France and the Allies would probably fall back increasingly on bilateral defense agreements, with each other, with the United States, with the Soviet Union, and with Germany. This kind of inchoate situation would heighten worries about a resurgent Germany unfettered by alliances, enhancing the perceived need for a US presence and for good relations with Washington. CIA Statute

Goals and Strategies of Key Players

West German strategy in the two-plus-four process reflects Chancellor Kohl's new determination to achieve German unification at the earliest possible date. CIA Statute

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Kohl sees the Germans themselves as deciding--and the four powers merely ratifying--the shape of the new Germany. Kohl seems convinced, moreover, that the Four Powers themselves recognize they have no veto power over unification or the design of the expanded state. CIA Statute

The West Germans do recognize a need for Four-Power agreement on international aspects of unity such as alliance membership and troop stationing. 25X1

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Kohl is almost certainly convinced that Germany's economic and political weight will provide him a strong hand, especially in bilateral talks. 25X1

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it is also important to Kohl politically to show German opinion that the Germanys (or the new Germany) are inviting the

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Four Powers to a conference, rather than being summoned by the Powers. ~~CIA Statute~~

Kohl and Genscher probably see the main goal of the two-plus-four exercise as a German-Soviet bargain, and we believe they are already hard at work on this. Although they see possibilities for change in the US and NATO relationship in the medium term, they would like Six-Power agreement to allow the new Germany to assume the FRG's NATO membership. To reconcile the Soviets to this, they are already dangling several inducements:

- Economic help, such as food aid, along with a continuation by the New Germany of the substantial East German industrial exports and other trade with the USSR.
- A proposal that no NATO forces would be stationed in what is now East German territory.
- The possibility that the next CFE round could consider a reduction in German troop strength as well as further US/NATO reductions.
- Assurance that Bonn will begin work to transform NATO into an essentially political organization. ~~CIA Statute~~

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In our view, Kohl believes Moscow in the end will accept both German NATO membership and NATO troop presence in West Germany, and thus he will drive a hard bargain with the Soviets. If Moscow digs in, however, Bonn almost certainly has some fallback positions. One approach might be to help defray the costs of Soviet troop presence in the GDR, at least for a transitional period. ~~CIA Statute~~

Only persistent Soviet obduracy might, in our view, lead Bonn to introduce at two-plus-four meetings its currently vague ideas for transforming Germany's role in NATO. ~~CIA Statute~~

~~CIA Statute~~ Bonn was considering a "French model" for Germany's relationship with the Alliance.

- This could mean simply that a united Germany would not be in NATO's integrated military command.
- It could also mean, however, that it would not allow Allied troops to be stationed on German soil.

Although the West Germans almost certainly will try to avoid taking "the French position" in the near term, Kohl and Genscher probably believe that such an arrangement would be appropriate for Germany in a few years. ~~CIA Statute~~

We also calculate that if the Soviets push hard there is about a one-in-four chance that Germany would agree to sever NATO ties. This could come in the context of a worst-case scenario in which an

East German referendum favoring unity and neutrality passed, and the FRG was forced to negotiate with, rather than absorb, the GDR.
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France's goals at the two-plus-four meetings will be to:

- Keep a united Germany tied to the West and actively engaged in European integration.
- Foster a united front among the United States, the UK, and the Soviet Union to ensure post-unification stability in Europe.
- Maintain US troops on German soil. France's greatest fear is that internal political pressures might impel the Germans toward accepting a Soviet ultimatum of demilitarized neutrality as the price of unification. This would mean that Germany would no longer be a member of any Western security organization--though it would remain a member of the EC and clearly Western in its orientation. Neutrality, in the French view, would create a dangerous power vacuum in the core of Europe. CIA Statute

? Paris would be willing to make concessions on the strength of Germany's ties to NATO--especially if it seemed that this was the only way to keep Gorbachev in power. As a last resort, French officials could even agree to a united Germany outside of NATO as long as Germany maintained a firm grounding in the EC--which France would then expect to take on a larger role in security affairs in closer consultation with the United States--and preferably some other Western security organization, like the WEU. Paris would expect a continuing US presence in Europe--perhaps in a truncated NATO--and might even host some US forces if that were the only way to prevent them from returning to the United States. France hopes that the more difficult issues surrounding the German Question--especially Germany's future security role and recognition of existing borders--can be resolved during the two-plus-four process, but will also maneuver to ensure that the concerns of non-German Europeans are addressed. Mitterrand has agreed, in effect, that a CSCE summit could serve to ratify the two-plus-four agreements and involve the rest of Europe. CIA Statute } |

British goals are more narrowly focused. Thatcher hopes to use the two-plus-four process to ensure that Germany remains fully integrated into NATO and to preserve the fiction of Four-Power control over the outcome. Worried that any loosening of NATO ties would eventually lead to German neutrality and a withdrawal of US troops from Europe, she will probably continue to voice adamant opposition to any alternative security arrangements. Although she shares French concerns about Gorbachev's prospects, she would probably argue that Moscow's weakened state ensures that the Soviets will back down if confronted with a united Western stance. Her determined support for NATO creates a decided risk that a US good

decision to withdraw most of its troops, for example, could undermine her domestic position, tipping the balance in favor of those--in her own party as well as in the opposition--who want an end to the "special relationship" and Britain's strong defense posture. [REDACTED]

Looking ahead to how the process will play out, Thatcher has accepted the fast pace of developments and is prepared to go along with a CSCE summit to ratify the results of a two-plus-four agreement. Like Mitterrand, she probably hopes that a 35-nation review will put pressure on Kohl to accept publicly the Oder-Neisse border with Poland. Not only is London concerned about assuaging Polish anxieties, but the British believe that resolution of this border question would discourage other countries and ethnic groups from attempting to re-draw World War II borders. Aside from the border issue, the British, unlike the French, would probably prefer to avoid institutionalizing the CSCE's role for fear that the pan-European organization could undermine NATO's role. [REDACTED]

Other West European Allies have few illusions about their ability to affect the course of reunification, and they generally acknowledge the legal basis of the two-plus-four forum for working out the modalities of unification. Many, however, particularly those with troops in West Germany, are angry that they are not being consulted and could press for a NATO summit on the issue, which would complicate the two-plus-four process. They expect that any German unification agreement will be discussed and "ratified" within CSCE. ~~CIA Statute~~ [REDACTED]

Most Allies strongly oppose the concept of German neutrality and regard a continued US presence in Germany as providing continuity and stability in a period of rapid, unsettling change. They also believe a US presence ensures some control over the stronger, more assertive Germany that is bound to emerge. They prefer that Germany remain a fully integrated member of the Alliance but, like the French, they will show some flexibility on this issue if Moscow digs in its heels. The countries that border Germany or that consider themselves substantial contributors to NATO--notably Italy and Benelux--will expect to be consulted prior to any final agreement. They will look to Bonn for signs that Germany will actively involve its fellow EC members in the process rather than simply presenting them with a fait accompli.

- Italy, already irritated at Kohl's uncoordinated monetary union proposal to the GDR on the eve of the Italian EC presidency, will maintain that unification should first be discussed by the EC, then by NATO, and finally by CSCE.
- Rome may also argue that it deserves special consultation because Italy will soon host one of the largest US presences in the world and should have a greater say in matters bearing on European security.

-- The Dutch, too, continue to stress the importance of NATO and will call for consensus in the Alliance on reunification before final approval in the two-plus-four forum. ~~CIA Statute~~

East Europeans also harbor few illusions that they will be able to have much influence over the outcome of the two-plus-four talks, and there is nothing resembling a common East European position. Nevertheless, the East Europeans undoubtedly hope that the process will lead to a Germany embedded in a stable European security system. The Poles, who fear that future German leaders will advance revanchist claims on Polish territory, want above all for the results of the process to include firm guarantees of their borders. Other East European countries less directly exposed than the Poles to the potential threat of a united Germany have been less outspoken. In general, they share an unease about the possible implications of a united Germany free of the ties that have bound the Germans, both East and West, to their respective alliance systems. ~~CIA Statute~~

One likely reaction is that East European discussions of possible regional political and economic combinations that could serve as a counterweight to German influence will take on new urgency. Several possible variants--such as a middle European arrangement linking Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary--have already surfaced. ~~CIA Statute~~