

บทคัดย่อ
ความจริงเบื้องหลังการรวมประเทศเยอรมันใน ค.ศ.1990
โรมัส คอนเฮาเซอร์

การรวมตัวกันของเยอรมนีตะวันตกและเยอรมนีตะวันออกใน ค.ศ.1990 นั้น นับได้ว่าเป็นเหตุการณ์สำคัญครั้งหนึ่งนับตั้งแต่หลังสงครามโลกครั้งที่สอง ซึ่งในการรวมเยอรมนีในครั้งนั้นมหาประเทศต่างก็มีท่าทีที่แตกต่างกันออกไป สำหรับสหภาพโซเวียต ในเวลานั้นได้เกิดความเปลี่ยนแปลงครั้งสำคัญขึ้น ได้แก่ การขึ้นสู่อำนาจของมิกฮาอิล กอร์บาชอฟในค.ศ.1985 ซึ่งกอร์บาชอฟได้สร้างความเปลี่ยนแปลงมากมายในสหภาพโซเวียตและยังทำให้ท่าทีของสหภาพ โซเวียต ต่อโลกภายนอกก็ยังเปลี่ยนแปลงไปอีกด้วย อย่างไรก็ตามกอร์บาชอฟก็ยังคงปฏิเสธแนวความคิดในการรวมเยอรมนี เนื่องจากเยอรมนีตะวันออกนั้นเปรียบเสมือนสัญลักษณ์แห่งชัยชนะในสงครามของชาวโซเวียต ส่วนฝรั่งเศสในขณะนั้น นั้นก็ยังมีท่าทีไม่เห็นด้วยเช่นกันทั้งนี้เนื่องจากความห่วงเกรงที่ว่า การรวมเยอรมนี จะทำให้กอร์บาชอฟอ่อนแอ ซึ่งนั่นอาจนำมาซึ่งการรัฐประหารภายในสหภาพโซเวียต นอกจากนี้ฝรั่งเศสยังห่วงเกรงว่าเหตุการณ์นี้จะทำให้การบูรณาการยุโรป ต้องล่าช้าไป

ไม่เพียงแต่ฝรั่งเศสเท่านั้นที่มีท่าทีไม่สนับสนุนการรวมเยอรมนี อังกฤษก็มีท่าทีเช่นเดียวกัน ด้วยเกรงว่ากอร์บาชอฟจะอ่อนแอและจะเกิดรัฐประหารในสหภาพโซเวียต นอกจากนี้ผู้นำอังกฤษยังห่วงเกรงว่าความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างสหรัฐอเมริกา กับเยอรมนีที่รวมตัวกันแล้วนั้นจะทำให้ความสำคัญของอังกฤษในสายตาของสหรัฐอเมริกาลดลง ในทางตรงกันข้าม สหรัฐอเมริกาก็กลับมีท่าทีสนับสนุนการ

รวมเยอรมนีเพราะสหรัฐอเมริกาเห็นว่าควรที่จะดึงเอาเยอรมนีทั้งหมดมาอยู่ในมือ
ของฝ่ายตะวันตก

ในค.ศ.1989 เหตุการณ์ทางการเมืองในยุโรปตะวันออกก็ได้ส่งผลให้
สถานการณ์ดีขึ้นเห็นได้จากการที่ฝ่ายประชาธิปไตยชนะการเลือกตั้งในโปแลนด์
ได้ทำให้ม่านเหล็กซึ่งแบ่งยุโรปสองฟากออกจากกันเริ่มที่จะพังทลายลงอย่างช้าๆ
อย่างไรก็ตาม ปัญหายังคงมีอยู่ให้เห็นในเยอรมนีตะวันออกนั้นคือผู้นำของพรรค
คอมมิวนิสต์เยอรมนียังคงยึดมั่นในระบบสังคมนิยมอย่างเหนียวแน่น ซึ่งระบบ
การปกครองที่แตกต่างนี้เอง เป็นสิ่งที่เยอรมนีตะวันออกยกขึ้นมาเป็นเหตุผลหลัก
ที่ทำให้ต้องแยกเยอรมนีออกเป็นสองประเทศ ดังนั้นหากความเป็นสังคมนิยมของ
เยอรมนีตะวันออกลดลงก็เท่ากับเป็นการลดความสำคัญของการแยกประเทศลง
ด้วย

ส่วนสถานการณ์ในเยอรมนีตะวันตกในค.ศ.1989นั้น ก็เริ่มที่จะมีท่าที
ยอมรับและมีความสัมพันธ์ที่ดีระหว่างเยอรมนีสองประเทศมากขึ้น โดยผู้ที่มียบ
บาทสำคัญในการรวมเยอรมนีนั่นได้แก่นายกรัฐมนตรี เฮลมุท โคล และรัฐมนตรี
ต่างประเทศ ฮันส์ ดีทริช เกนเซอร์ แห่งเยอรมนีตะวันตก ในช่วงแรกนั้นแม้ว่าทั้งคู่
จะยังไม่เชื่อว่าการรวมเยอรมนีจะเกิดขึ้นได้ภายในเวลาอันสั้น แต่ก็ได้ตั้งเป้า
หมายที่จะดำเนินการเช่น พยายามลดความตึงเครียดระหว่างสองค่าย สนับสนุน
และส่งเสริมประชาธิปไตยในโปแลนด์และฮังการี รักษาไว้ซึ่งการสนับสนุนจาก
สหรัฐอเมริกา และสร้างความสัมพันธ์อันดีกับกอร์บาเชฟ

ปัญหาต่อมาระหว่างสองเยอรมนีก็คือประเด็นปัญหาเรื่องผู้อพยพชาว
เยอรมันตะวันออกที่หลบหนีเข้ามาอยู่ในสถานทูตเยอรมันตะวันตกในกรุงวอร์ซอ
บูดาเปสต์ ปრაเกและเบอร์ลินตะวันออก ซึ่งในการนี้ผู้นำเยอรมนีตะวันออกได้กล่าว

โทษว่าเยอรมนีตะวันตกแทรกแซงกิจการภายในแล้วขอให้ขับไล่ผู้อพยพออกจาก
สถานทูตพร้อมทั้งย้ำว่าห้ามผู้ใดเดินทางออกจากเยอรมนีตะวันออกโดยไม่ได้รับ
อนุญาตจากรัฐบาล นายกรัฐมนตรีโคห์ลไม่ต้องการให้สหภาพโซเวียตช่วยโอกาส
เข้ามาแทรกแซงเหตุการณ์นี้ จึงได้เปิดการเจรจาสุดยอดระหว่างผู้นำของสอง
เยอรมนี ผลของการเจรจานั้นสรุปได้ว่าผู้อพยพจะได้รับการยกเว้นโทษ และผู้
อพยพสามารถยื่นขอวีซ่าเพื่อออกนอกประเทศได้ อย่างไรก็ตามเยอรมนีตะวันตก
ต้องพยายามสนับสนุนให้ผู้อพยพเดินทางกลับแต่ไม่จำเป็นต้องขับไล่ การอพยพ
นี้ยังได้รับความร่วมมือจากฮังการีอีกด้วย โดยฮังการีได้เปิดพรมแดนให้ผู้อพยพ
เดินทางเข้าสู่เยอรมนีตะวันตก ทั้งนี้เพื่อแลกเปลี่ยนกับความช่วยเหลือทาง
เศรษฐกิจจากเยอรมนีตะวันตก และต้องการให้โคห์ลเป็นปากเป็นเสียงให้กับ ฮังการี
ในเรื่องผลประโยชน์ต่างๆ ซึ่งโคห์ลก็ยินยอมตามที่ร้องขอ ซึ่งในกรณีนี้กอร์บาเชฟ
ก็ไม่ได้ขัดขวางแต่อย่างใด อาจกล่าวได้ว่าสหภาพโซเวียตประณามฮังการีในทาง
สังคมเท่านั้น ฝ่ายเยอรมนีตะวันออกนั้นประณามการกระทำของฮังการีและ
พยายามที่จะขอให้มีการประชุมกลุ่มประเทศในกลุ่มกติกาสัญญาวอร์ซอเพื่อ
ยับยั้งการกระทำของฮังการีแต่ก็ล้มเหลว นับได้ว่าการเปิดพรมแดนของฮังการีครั้ง
นี้เป็นจุดเริ่มต้นของการสิ้นสุดของเยอรมนีตะวันออก

ขั้นต่อไปก็คือการพังทลายของกำแพงเบอร์ลิน หลังจากการเปิด
พรมแดนของฮังการี การแสดงความคิดเห็นทางการเมืองในเยอรมนีตะวันออกก็
เริ่มเปลี่ยนแปลงไป โดยเริ่มมีการเรียกร้องให้มีการนำนโยบายเปเรสตรอยกา
และกราสโนสมาใช้ นอกจากนี้ยังเรียกร้องประชาธิปไตยแบบรัฐสภา โดยมีการ
ชุมนุมของประชาชนอย่างต่อเนื่องแม้แต่ในวันครบรอบ 40 ปีของประเทศเยอรมนี
ตะวันออกก็ยังมีชุมนุมประท้วง ไม่เพียงเท่านั้นกลุ่มผู้ชุมนุมยังตะโกนขอให้

กอร์บาซอฟยื่นมือเข้ามาช่วยเหลืออีกด้วย ปรากฏว่ากอร์บาซอฟเองก็ได้ออกมา
วิจารณ์รัฐบาลเยอรมนีตะวันออกที่ยังคงใช้นโยบายเข้มงวด ดังนั้นชาวเยอรมัน
ตะวันออกเชื่อว่ากอร์บาซอฟนั้นพร้อมที่จะช่วยเหลือพวกเขาอย่างเต็มที่ จำนวนผู้
ชุมนุมจึงเพิ่มขึ้นอย่างมากจนกระทั่งผู้นำเยอรมนีตะวันออกต้องพยายามอย่าง
มากที่จะเรียกความเชื่อถือของประชาชนกลับมา

ดังนั้นรัฐบาลเยอรมนีตะวันออกจึงยอมเปลี่ยนนโยบายเกี่ยวกับการเดิน
ทางออกนอกประเทศ โดยยอมให้ประชาชนทุกคนสามารถของอนุญาตเดินทาง
ออกนอกประเทศได้อย่างไม่มีเงื่อนไขใดๆทั้งสิ้น นอกจากนี้ยังจะออกวีซ่าให้กับทุก
คนที่ต้องการออกจากประเทศอย่างถาวร อย่างไรก็ตามนโยบายใหม่นี้ก็ยังไม่ได้มี
จุดประสงค์ที่จะเปิดกำแพงเบอร์ลิน นอกจากนี้ชาวเยอรมันตะวันออกที่ต้องการ
เดินทางออกนอกประเทศเพียงชั่วคราวก็ยังไม่สามารถทำได้อีกด้วย

แต่แล้วในที่สุดกำแพงเบอร์ลินก็ต้องพังทลายลงอย่างเหนือความคาด
หมายจากการถล่มซ้ำของชาโบลสกี โฆษกของพรรคคอมมิวนิสต์ที่ว่าเยอรมนี
ตะวันออกจะเพิกถอนการจำกัดการเดินทางข้ามพรมแดนเยอรมนีสองประเทศ
ทันทีที่ชาวเยอรมนีตะวันออกทราบข่าวก็รีบเดินทางไปยังบริเวณกำแพง ในขณะที่
นั้นเหตุการณ์นั้นได้ลุกลามเกินกว่าจะยับยั้งได้รัฐบาลเยอรมนีจึงได้ออกประกาศ
เปิดพรมแดน ท่ามกลางความประหลาดใจของทั่วโลก ซึ่งเหตุการณ์นี้นับว่าเป็น
จุดเริ่มต้นของการรวมประเทศเยอรมนีนั่นเอง โดยในเวลานั้นกอร์บาซอฟพยายาม
อย่างยิ่งที่จะขอให้มีการประชุมประเทศชนะสงครามทั้งสิ้น ได้แก่สหรัฐอเมริกา
สหราชอาณาจักร ฝรั่งเศสและสหภาพโซเวียต ในขณะที่โคโลก็พยายามอย่างเต็มที่
ที่จะชักจูงว่าการประชุมนั้นเป็นสิ่งที่จำเป็น ซึ่งโคโลได้รับการสนับสนุนจากสหรัฐ
อเมริกาเพียงชาติเดียว อย่างไรก็ตามโคโลก็ยังพยายามที่จะรักษาความสัมพันธ์

กับกอร์บาซอฟได้ด้วย เพื่อป้องกันไม่ให้สหภาพโซเวียตเข้าแทรกแซง ซึ่งอาจจะเป็น
ปัญหากับการรวมประเทศได้ในอนาคต

ระหว่างนั้นความตึงเครียดในเยอรมนีตะวันออกก็เพิ่มขึ้น การเปิด
พรมแดนไม่ได้ทำให้การชุมนุมเรียกร้องลดลงแต่อย่างใด ผู้ชุมนุมเรียกร้องให้มีการ
เลือกตั้งและร้องขอประชาธิปไตยมากขึ้นเรื่อยๆ ซึ่งโคลนันั้นแสดงท่าทีอย่าง
ชาญฉลาดโดยไม่เรียกร้องเกี่ยวกับการรวมประเทศ แต่กลับเน้นถึงสิทธิของชาว
เยอรมันตะวันออกเอง เหตุการณ์ดำเนินไปจนกระทั่งวันที่ 21 พฤศจิกายน 1989
จึงเกิดเหตุการณ์ที่เป็นจุดเปลี่ยนที่สำคัญ นั่นคือการที่สหภาพโซเวียตส่งจดหมาย
ซึ่งแสดงท่าทียอมรับการรวมประเทศเยอรมนี เมื่อเป็นเช่นนั้นโคลนัเริ่มดำเนินการ
ขึ้นถัดไปโดยการเปิดประเด็นเกี่ยวกับการรวมประเทศในระดับสากล อย่างไรก็ตาม
ตามท่าทีของนานาประเทศนั้นไม่สนับสนุนแผนการของโคลนั มีเพียงสหรัฐอเมริกา
เท่านั้นที่แสดงท่าทีสนับสนุน ทางด้านเยอรมนีตะวันออกก็ประณามแผนการนี้เช่น
กัน แต่อำนาจของพรรคสังคมนิยมในเยอรมนีตะวันออกกำลังลดลง ประชา
ชนเรียกร้องมาตรฐานการดำรงชีพที่เท่าเทียมกับฝั่งตะวันตก รวมถึงเรียกร้องขอ
สิทธิทางประชาธิปไตยที่เท่าเทียมอีกด้วย ทำให้พรรคการเมืองในเยอรมนีตะวัน
ออกต้องปรับตัวอย่างมาก และจากการเรียกร้องนี้เองทำให้เกิดการเลือกตั้งขึ้นใน
เยอรมนีตะวันออกในที่สุด

สหรัฐอเมริกานั้นสนับสนุนการรวมประเทศเยอรมนีอย่างเต็มที่ โดยใน
การประชุมประเทศผู้ชนะสงครามนั้น สหรัฐอเมริกากดดันอังกฤษและฝรั่งเศสจน
กระทั่งทั้งสองประเทศไม่ต่อต้านการรวมประเทศ ในเวลานั้นสหภาพโซเวียต
ตระหนักได้ว่าซีกโลกตะวันตกนั้นสนับสนุนการรวมประเทศเยอรมนี ทำให้สหภาพ
โซเวียตมีทางเลือกอยู่เพียงสองทางเท่านั้น ได้แก่เข้าแทรกแซงเยอรมนีตะวันออก

หรือยอมให้เกิดการรวมประเทศ และนี่ก็เป็นอีกครั้งที่โคลใช้แผนการอันยอดเยี่ยม โดยเขียนจดหมายถึงกอร์บาชอฟ ซึ่งให้เห็นปัญหาเศรษฐกิจในสหภาพโซเวียต พร้อมทั้งเสนอความช่วยเหลือทางการเงิน และเมื่อเยอรมนีตะวันออกประสบปัญหาเศรษฐกิจ โคลก็ยังคงใช้วิธีการเดิม นั่นคือเสนอว่าจะไม่ให้ความช่วยเหลือทางการเงิน นอกเสียจากว่าเยอรมนีตะวันออกจะยอมอ่อนข้อมากกว่าที่เป็นอยู่ในเวลานั้น กอร์บาชอฟตระหนักแล้วว่าการรวมประเทศเยอรมนีนั้นต้องเกิดขึ้นอย่างแน่นอน สิ่งสหภาพโซเวียตและเยอรมนีตะวันออกที่ทำได้ในตอนนั้นมีแค่พยายามชะลอการรวมประเทศไว้ให้มากที่สุด

ต่อมาในการประชุมออกตาวา นับว่าเป็นครั้งแรกที่เยอรมนีตะวันออกเรียกร้องขอการรวมประเทศ โดยการประกาศแผนการของไมโครวที่เรียกร้องการรวมประเทศอย่างค่อยเป็นค่อยไป แต่โคลปฏิเสธ เนื่องจากในเวลานั้นโคลได้ตัดสินใจร่วมกับผู้นำสหรัฐอเมริกาแล้วว่าจะเร่งขั้นตอนการรวมประเทศให้เร็วขึ้น แต่ไม่ว่าจะพยายามอย่างไร สหภาพโซเวียตก็ยังคงมีท่าทีต่อต้านการรวมประเทศเยอรมนี ทำให้สหรัฐอเมริกาและเยอรมนีตะวันออกต้องปรับเปลี่ยนกลยุทธ์ใหม่ โดยโคลได้เจรจากับกอร์บาชอฟ เกี่ยวกับการทำสนธิสัญญาทวิภาคีในเรื่องความร่วมมือทางวัฒนธรรมและเศรษฐกิจ และยังได้ทำจดหมายถึงกอร์บาชอฟเพื่อเน้นถึงความช่วยเหลือด้านการเงินจากเยอรมนีตะวันตกอีกด้วย ส่วนบุชนั้นก็พยายามสร้างความพอใจให้กับสหภาพโซเวียตเกี่ยวกับความมั่นคงปลอดภัย

ในที่สุดการรวมประเทศเยอรมนีก็มาถึงขั้นตอนสุดท้าย นั่นก็คือการลงนามร่วมกันในสนธิสัญญา ซึ่งสนธิสัญญานี้มีผลบังคับใช้วันที่ 3 ตุลาคม 1990 ซึ่งนับว่าเป็นวันที่เยอรมนีรวมเป็นประเทศเดียวอีกครั้งหนึ่ง

Hidden Fact Behind the German Unification in 1990

Thomas Konhäuser

Thank you for the great interest to join my seminar about the German unification. Especially, I want to thank Professor Charit Thingsabath, Mr Surat and the entire team at the Center of European Studies for the invitation.

The German unification was one of the most important events after World War II: It was followed by the end of the cold war, the end of the Pact of Warsaw and finally the end of the Soviet Union.

We have to notice that in the beginning of the 1980^s the cold war reached a new peak with the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and in the United States, president Jimmy Carter introduced a linkage between the obeying of the human rights and US foreign policy. In a speech in 1983 Ronald Reagan called the Soviet Union an "Evil Empire" and announced the development of the SDI project¹. So it was hardly to believe that the 80^s would have a happy end.

Nevertheless, everything changed in 1985, when Michael Gorbachev became the new political leader of the Soviet Union.

¹ SDI (StateGic Defence Initiative), commonly called "Star Wars" Project. It is a project to install nuclear ballistic missiles in space-based stations to protect United States from attack by Soviet Union.

Gorbachev quickly started to replace people holding key positions in the administration: in 1989 nearly 80% of the Soviet ambassadors were replaced. Gorbachev was not an idealist. He believed in "Realpolitik". He understood that the Soviet Union had lost the arms race against the West for economic reasons. The only possibility to overcome the Soviet economic crisis consisted in a change of Soviet domestic and foreign policies called "Glasnost" and "Perestroika". Gorbachev needed to make up with the West: he wanted to cut down Soviet expenses for weapons and to use the money to put the Soviet Union back on an even keel. In 1986, the Soviet Union surprised the West for the first time with a proposal of disarmament. One year later the two super powers signed the disarmament treaty, INF. Until 1989, Gorbachev speeded up the domestic reorganization of the Soviet Union and gave up an aggressive foreign policy. Gorbachev agreed to a fundamental principle: no Soviet intervention in the domestic affairs of the allied nations in Eastern Europe. This did not mean that Gorbachev accepted the dissolution of the Eastern bloc. He believed that the communist system would be a competitive system, if Glasnost and Perestroika were introduced. Gorbachev believed in the creation of a European House, including the United States and Canada. This meant a peaceful cooperation between the two social and economic blocs. Nevertheless, for a long time Gorbachev refused the idea of a German unification. He emphasized the

necessity to accept the post war reality and refused a German right of self-determination. The reasons were obvious: the geopolitical importance of East Germany for the Pact of Warsaw and the economic importance of East Germany for the Soviet Union. East Germany was in a way the engine of the economic growth in Eastern Europe and it was not clear who would form the economic relationship with a unified Germany. Last but not least you have to understand that for the Soviet people the German division and especially the socialist system in East Germany was a symbol of the victory of war. Gorbachev was aware that the hardliners in the Kremlin would never forgive him if he gave up that symbol in return for nothing from the West.

Let us talk about the other global players during the unification process. In France, President François Mitterrand had a very good relationship with the West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl. Together they were during these days the engines of the European integration process. Nevertheless, France also refused for a long time to reopen the German question. The core of French foreign policy resided on a guarantee of political stability and security in Europe. Mitterrand was convinced that the Soviet Union would never allow a German unification and that a reopening of the German question would put the European security to the test. Moreover, the French government was worried that the German question or a too rapid political change in the Soviet satellite

states could weaken the position of Gorbachev and provoke a putsch in the Soviet Union. On the other hand, Mitterrand feared that the reopening of the German question would slow down the European integration process. Moreover, nobody knew just how powerful a unified Germany would become and it seemed that Mitterrand was concerned about the future of the special Franco-German relationship regarding European community policies. Kohl fought to eliminate these worries during the European Councils in Madrid, Strasbourg and Dublin, giving his consent to a rapid institution of an Economic and Monetary Union and being in favor of a European Union.

The British government, and especially Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, did not support a German unification for a long time either. Like in France, the British government was worried that the reopening of the German question would weaken Gorbachev and provoke a putsch in the Soviet Union. Even in September 1989, after the fall down of the Berlin Wall, Thatcher said to Gorbachev that the change in Germany went too fast and that it would be better to slow down the progress in order to have the time to exam the possible effects.² Compared to

² Michael R. Beschloss/Strobe Talbott, Auf höchster Ebene. Das Ende des kalten Krieges und die Geheimdiplomatie der Supermächte 1989-1991, ECON Taschenbuch Verlag GmbH, Düsseldorf 1994, pag.180

France, Great Britain was not concerned about a negative linkage between a German unification process and the European integration process. Thatcher was more worried that a potential special relationship between the United States and a unified Germany would weaken the British influence on the United States in the future. You have to take into consideration the traditional British policy of balance of power in Europe and the fact that it was unclear just how powerful a unified Germany would be.

In the United States George Bush became president in 1989. He was already vice-president during the Reagan administration and therefore well informed about the situation in Eastern Europe. Apart from Bush, important politicians were the Secretary of State, Baker, the National Security Counselor, Scowcroft, and the chief of the Policy Planning Staff, Ross, and Zoellik, specialized on the German question.

In the beginning of 1989, Washington was very skeptical about Gorbachev and his reform project in the Soviet Union. Consequently the main request of the United States remained a disarmament treaty for short distance missiles and a Soviet troop withdrawal from Afghanistan. Regarding the reform process in Eastern Europe, the United States did not seem to be prepared for Glasnost and Perestroika after 40 years of cold war. On the one hand the United States were worried about a putsch against Gorbachev. Therefore it was urgent to conclude as many

treaties as possible with the Soviet Union Gorbachev was still in power. On the other hand the United States took into consideration a possible ending of the cold war, including the reopening of the German question. The question was: "What will be happen if Gorbachev remains in power?" In May 1989, James Baker, US Secretay of State, said in a speech at the Center for Strategic and International Studies that the US should put the new Soviet political style in foreign policies to the test. The answer from the Soviet Union came quickly: A few days later Gorbachev surprised the West, announcing that the Soviet Union would reduce its short distance missiles unilaterally. In this political climate the director of the Nation Security Council (NSC), Robert Blackwill, went to the president and pressed for a reopening of the German question. Blackwill emphasized the risk that Gorbachev would reopen the German question first.³ The problem was, what would happen if Gorbachev said: the cold war is over; I asked for a European House; the Soviet Union has announced a unilateral reduction of short distance missiles; the Soviet Union has accepted a process of democratization in Eastern Europe. And then: why is it not possible that a unified Germany will have a neutral military status? On May 20 Baker said to Bush that the United

³ Zelikow, Philip; Rice, Condoleezza, Sternstunde der Diplomatie: Die deutsche Einheit und das Ende der Spaltung Europas, Berlin, 1997, pag.58-59

States have "to take into its own hands to carry out a German Unification. It's important to anchor a possible German unification in the hands of the West!"⁴

So, in the beginning of 1989 only the United States took into consideration the reopening of the German question. The political climate in Eastern Europe looked promising: in April 1989 the first semi-democratic parliamentary elections took place in Poland and the Polish government legalized Lech Walesa's Solidarnosc. The Czechoslovakian government suspended the penalty of Vaclav Havel. In March, the Hungarian communist party started negotiations about the institutionalization of an actual parliamentary democracy and in May, Hungary started to demolish the fortifications at the Austrian border. The iron curtain, symbol of the European division, began slowly to fall down.

Nevertheless, it was only the silence before the storm. The most difficult situation was maybe taking place in East Germany. The political leader, Erich Honecker, refused categorically the notions of Glasnost and Perestroika and he seemed to be the last defender of pure socialism. Already in 1987, the Central Committee stressed that East Germany could go its own way which meant not following the Soviet

⁴ Baker, James A., *Drei Jahre, die die Welt veränderten*, Berlin, 1996, pag.150

example. In 1989, Honecker even banned the selling of the Soviet journal "Sputnik" to prevent a discussion about Glasnost and Perestroika.

The panic in East Germany was caused by a crisis of identity: for years the East German propaganda emphasized that the legitimate reason for the existence of two German States was their different political systems. If socialism in East Germany was reduced, so was the legitimate reason for its existence. A process of democratization in East Germany would mean a first step towards unification, which Honecker tried to prevent by all means.

Let us now examine the situation in West Germany at the beginning of the process of unification. The preamble of the West German constitution stressed that every West German government had to work towards unification. Thus, the West German position was already laid out in the constitution.

Second point: there was no federal recognition of the East German state. Until 1972, West Germany refused to have diplomatic relations with states that recognized East Germany. Even after 1972, West Germany recognized only the sovereignty of the East German government, but not the existence of an East German state. West Germany insisted on the existence of one entire German nationality. Consequently, West Germany was entitled to give a federal passport to

East Germans. After 1972, a permanent federal delegation in East Berlin and an East German delegation in Bonn were created. Since 1974, the director of the West German delegation was by law the chief of the Office of the Chancellor. The Office of the Chancellor organized all the German-German diplomatic meetings. If East Berlin wanted to get in contact with West Germany, it had to turn to the Office. Therefore, Helmut Kohl had the strongest influence on the relationship with East Germany.

I want to point out the special position of Helmut Kohl and his foreign minister Hans Dietrich Genscher: both were the indisputable leaders of their political parties. They were able to act without regarding too many their own political parties, CDU and FDP. So they were the actual West German actors during the process of German unification.

In the beginning of 1989, even Helmut Kohl and Genscher did not believe in unification within 20 months. Priorities until July 1989 were to contribute to the easing of tension between the blocs, to support the democratization process in Poland and Hungary, to secure Bush's support regarding a reopening of the German question and to have good relations with Gorbachev.

First success for Kohl was at the NATO summit in Brussels. Having the consent of the United States, he could block a decision

regarding a modernization of the German short-range missiles. This was an important condition for a carefree meeting with Gorbachev in July.

Regarding Poland and Hungary, Kohl believed that a successful democratization process in these countries would result in the beginning of a reform process in East Germany, which would reopen the German question.

In June, Bush visited West Germany and Kohl convinced him to support these countries. When Bush visited Poland and Hungary in July, the chancellor even phoned Bush the night before the state visit to once again emphasize the necessity to help these countries. Kohl's diplomacy seemed successful: the president raised the hopes of these countries to receive financial help. Bush also promised to stand up for these countries in the World Bank and at the G7.

In June, Kohl also met with Mitterrand. During the meeting the two leaders harmonized their positions on the European Monetary Union and Kohl used the opportunity to explain why France also should be interested in helping Poland and Hungary. The Kohl government wanted to secure Mitterrand's support during the G7 summit in Paris on July 14. Again Kohl seemed to be successful: in the Communiqué the G7 praised the reform process in Eastern Europe, offered economic cooperation and gave the order to work out an economic plan to help Poland and Hungary.

Next priority for the chancellor was to secure Bush's support regarding the reopening of the German question. I told you already that the presidential counselors tried to convince Bush to move into first place regarding the German question. The United States wanted to support Kohl in order to make sure that a possible German unification would be in the hands of the West and getting ahead of Gorbachev. In July, Bush visited West Germany and Kohl informed the president about the situation in East Germany. Kohl said that East Germany had no national identity and that the East Germans identified themselves with the values of West Germany. In a certain way the chancellor predicted the end of the socialist system in a near future. Kohl promised Bush that the political change in Eastern Europe would not effect the relations with the United States and he emphasized the importance of having a strong relationship between the two countries. Kohl added that after the institution of a European Monetary Union, he would do everything to prevent an economic conflict between the European Union and the United States.⁵ So Kohl gave a clear message to Bush: West Germany will not try to obtain unification by itself or to strike a deal with the Soviet Union. But between the lines Kohl asked for Bush's support regarding

⁵ See: Dokumente zur Deutschlandpolitik, Deutsche Einheit, Sonderedition aus den Akten des Bundeskanzleramtes 1989/90, Oldenbourg, München, 1998, DzG Nr.1

the German question. The day after, Bush made a speech in Mainz and without having informed Kohl, the president toughed upon the German question. Bush said: "The United States and West Germany were always friends and alienates. But today we are partners in leadership (...) In the same way like the fortifications at the Hungarian border fall down; the fortifications have to fall down all over Eastern Europe. Let Berlin be next! Let Berlin be next! That cruel Wall separates neighbors and brothers. The Wall has to fall down!"⁶ So the president underlined in public the importance of West Germany for the United States: partners in leadership. West Germany belongs to the West and a German unification would not change anything. On the other hand, the president reopened the German question in public by asking for the fall down of the Berlin wall. All in all the state visit of Bush was a success for the West German government.

Third priority was to have good relations with Gorbachev, who visited West Germany on July 10. Kohl and Gorbachev signed a final Communiqué that in a certain way anticipated the future course of the events. The most important points of the Communiqué were: the supremacy of the international law, the overcoming of the European division, creation of a European House, the respect of the territorial

⁶ Bush, George, in: Internet: <http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/>

integrity of any state, the right of any state to choose its own political and social system and the right of the population of any state to choose independently its own future. This was very important. Later on, when Gorbachev denied an East German right of self-determination, Kohl replied that Gorbachev himself had recognized this right: the population of any state has the right to choose independently its own future.

During the entire visit in West Germany, Gorbachev tried not to touch on the German question. Only it was not until the last evening, when Gorbachev stayed at Kohl's private house that the two leaders were talking in private about the German future. Kohl writes in his biography that he said to Gorbachev: "Over there you can see the river Rhine. Let us compare that river with history. It is not static. You are able to block up the river, but nevertheless the river will overflow and will find its way to the sea. It's the same with the German division. You are able to block a German unification. But as it is certain that the river Rhine will arrive at the sea, it is also certain that the German unification will come. It is only the question, if our generation will handle it or if we will wait, burdened by our problems." Kohl writes in his biography that Gorbachev did not give him an answer, but that he had got the feeling that from that

moment Gorbachev had changed his position regarding the German question.⁷

Before going back to the Soviet Union the two leaders signed eleven bilateral treaties and Gorbachev said in public that the cold war between the Soviet Union and West Germany was forever over.

I want to underline the special relationship between Kohl and Gorbachev. Also later on, you see a mutual respectful and confidential behavior between the two political leaders. Kohl himself writes in his biography that this was an important condition for carrying out a peaceful unification. After Gorbachoev's state visit, Kohl suddenly phoned Bush to inform him about the meeting. Kohl did not stop putting his hope on the United States and the chancellor wanted to prevent the president from believing in a German-Soviet deal regarding the German question. Gorbachev, on his part, never stopped trying to convince the West that the Soviet Union had changed. On June 18, he accepted the formation of a democratic Polish government, on July 6, in a speech in the European Parliament, he asked for the creation of a European House and on July 7, the Pact of Warsaw revoked the doctrine Brezhnev.

⁷ Kohl, Helmut: Helmut Kohl: »Ich wollte Deutschlands Einheit« / dargest. von Kai Diekmann und Ralf Georg Reuth., Berlin: Propyläen, 1996, pag.39-49

Next step towards unification was the drama of the East German refugees, which took place between July and September 1989. On July 15, East German refugees started to occupy the West German embassies in Warsaw, Budapest, Prague and East Berlin. The reaction of Honecker was very harsh. The East German leader accused West Germany of interfering in the domestic affairs of East Germany. He asked for all East Germans to be expelled from the embassies and underlined that nobody could leave East Germany without permission from the East German state. The Kohl government countered that the East Germans had a right to stay in the embassies in accordance with the human rights convention of the CSCE. Nevertheless, West Germany got into difficulties. Kohl and Genscher did not want to risk the new and good relationship with the Soviet Union and they were afraid that Gorbachev would interfere in the situation. Consequently, West Germany had to negotiate with Honecker about the future of the refugees in the federal embassies.

After long negotiations the two German states came to an agreement: East Germany guaranteed the refugees impunity, no reprisals, a legal adviser free of charge and the possibility to application for an exit visa. In return, West Germany had to encourage the refugees to leave the embassies, but it was not obliged to expel them. Nevertheless, only in East Berlin did the refugees leave the embassy

while the situation in Budapest, Prague and Warsaw did not change. Day by day, more and more East German refugees also stayed outside the embassies. Hungary was even forced to build refugee camps. Kohl refused to talk with East Germany about the refugees staying outside the embassies. West Germany did not want to stop the dynamics of the events and the world press did not report on the situation until there was a massive number of a refugee Kohl and Genscher prepared the ground for diplomatic missions with the Hungarian government, watching carefully the signals coming from the Soviet Union.

In Poland, Lech Walesa became the new leader of the cabinet on August 16, breaking an agreement with Jaruzelski. Gorbachev did not interfere in the Polish situation, respecting the taboo imposed by him not to intervene in foreign domestic affairs. Gorbachev's reaction to the Polish formation of the cabinet encouraged Hungary and West Germany to go forward. The day after that Lech Walesa became the leader of the Polish cabinet, Genscher gave the order to issue passports to the East German refugees in Hungary. The Kohl government emphasized that this was not a violation of international law, but a right of West Germany, which only recognized the existence of one German nationality. Two days later, 661 East Germans surmounted the fortifications at the Hungarian-Austrian border during the so-called "Picnic Paneuropea", organized by a Swiss NGO. The Hungarian border guards did not even

try to stop the refugees and in that way the Hungarian government gave a clear signal to West Germany: we will help you and you should help us. The day after the Picnic Paneuropea, the Hungarian Prime Minister, Miklos Nemeth, and his foreign Minister, Gyula Horn, asked Kohl and Genscher for a secret meeting in Bonn. At the time everything seemed possible. The meeting took place on August 25. The night before the meeting, Hungary again send a clear signal to Kohl: the Hungarian government allowed the departure of the embassy refugees by planes, chartered by the Red Cross, which gave the refugees an identity card, recognized by international law. During the meeting the Hungarian leaders asked Kohl for economic support and proposed that West German companies also could buy Hungarian state-owned companies. Further on, Nemeth asked Kohl if he could organize a meeting with the president of the European Commission, Jacques Delors. At the end of the meeting, Nemeth finally said, to Kohl and Genscher's surprise, that his government intends to open the border for all East Germans. This was shocking news. Kohl asked Nemeth several times what he wanted in exchange and every time the Hungarian leader answered "nothing".⁸ Nemeth and Horn were not only trying to obtain West German economic

⁸ Kohl, Helmut: Helmut Kohl: »Ich wollte Deutschlands Einheit« /dargest. von Kai Diekmann und Ralf Georg Reuth, Berlin, 1996, pag. 74

support for their country. They wanted Kohl to speak up for the Hungarian interests in the West and also the chancellor's everlasting gratitude! Kohl understood the message: the chancellor promised that West Germany would support Hungarian interests in the European Community and Kohl gave Hungary an immediate credit of 500 million Deutsch Mark. The day after the meeting, Kohl phoned Gorbachev to inform him about the Hungarian intention to open its border. Gorbachev's reaction to the news was amazing. He only said: "The Hungarian people are very good people!"⁹ Gorbachev's statement showed that he was already informed and that he would not prevent the opening of the Hungarian border.

On the other hand, East Germany and especially Honecker were horrified. East Germany sent a diplomatic note of protest to Hungary and a copy to all members of the Pact of Warsaw. Honecker asked for an extraordinary reunion of the Pact of Warsaw to prevent the Hungarian plan, but without success. Most Eastern European states refused such a reunion, fearing a reintroduction of the Brezhnev-doctrine, which would bring Glasnost and Perestroika to a standstill. On September 11,

⁹ Kohl, Helmut: Helmut Kohl: »Ich wollte Deutschlands Einheit« /dargest. von Kai Diekmann und Ralf Georg Reuth, Berlin, 1996, pag. 75

Hungary opened its borders and within two weeks 30,000 East Germans crossed the border.

The Soviet Union condemned only in public the opening of the Hungarian border. At diplomatic level the Soviet reaction was quiet different: a diplomatic note, given to the West German government was very moderate. This showed that Gorbachev would not sacrifice Glasnost and Perestroika for the sake of the hardliners in the Kremlin or for the Soviet position of power in the East.

From September 11, Kohl changed his cautious Deutschlandpolitik (German-German policy): he emphasized that it was possible to influence the events in East Germany in a way to obtain unification. An example of his wills to influence the events was his persistence regarding the refugees who remained at the embassies in Prague and Warsaw. The chancellor forced East Germany to its knees: on October 1st Honecker allowed their departure to West Germany by trains, crossing the territory of East Germany. The opening of the Hungarian border was the beginning of the end of East Germany and probably even the chancellor was astounded to see how fast the German question made a leap forward.

During the whole struggle about the departure of the refugees, West Germany did not fail to take Poland into account. After World War II no peace treaty was signed with Germany and a big part of the

German territory came under Polish administration. Consequently, there was a linkage between a German unification and the German-Polish borderline, Oder-Neisse. At this point the Kohl government started to defeat the Polish fears that a unified Germany would have territorial demands and Kohl prepared the ground for diplomatic missions with Poland.

Next step toward unification was the fall down of the Berlin Wall. During the drama about the East German refugees, the formation of an extra-parliamentary opposition in East Germany started to take form: the beginning of the demonstrations. The demonstrators mainly asked for unlimited right to travel abroad. After the opening of the Hungarian-Austrian border the character of the demonstrations changed. The demonstrators asked for Glasnost, Perestroika and for a real parliamentary democracy. The Kohl government did not support the opposition actively, fearing a violent East German reaction regarding the demonstrations. The television reports on the demonstrations and the West German persistence on one German nationality were the principal ways to support the opposition and to destabilize East Germany.

The center of the demonstrations was the city of Leipzig, where people started to demonstrate every Monday after going to the Nikolai church. On October 2, 10,000 demonstrators went out into the streets of Leipzig. Nevertheless, again it was only the silence before the storm. On

October 7, the celebrations for the 40th anniversary of East Germany took place and Gorbachev was present. The East German government could not prevent demonstrations on this special day. A lot of demonstrators were screaming: "Gorbi, Hilf uns!" which means "Gorbi, help us!" Gorbachev writes in his biography that the Polish Prime Minister said to him: "Mikhail, do you understand what is going on? This is the end!"¹⁰ And Gorbachev adds: "He was right. If today somebody writes that the fall down of the Berlin Wall was a surprise for me and for the Soviet leadership it is not the truth. We were well prepared."¹¹ It is no coincidence that Gorbachev during the celebrations answered a journalist asking him how he valued the situation in East Germany, with the famous words: "Who comes too late, will be punished by the future".

During his visit to East Berlin Gorbachev made an important speech in front of the leaders of the socialist party. Gorbachev used the opportunity to harshly criticize the East German government and specially Honecker. He emphasized that East Germans wanted to leave the country or demonstrate because of Honecker's neglect to introduce Glasnost and Perestroika in East Germany. The speech of Gorbachev

¹⁰ Gorbatschow, Michail, *Wie es war: die deutsche Wiedervereinigung*, Berlin, Ullstein, 1999, pag. 85-86

¹¹ *ibidem*

had a big influence on the socialist leadership, who understood that the Kremlin did not tolerate Honecker and his displeasure to introduce reforms any longer. It was obvious that the Soviet Union would not intervene in favor of the socialist party, if the East German government would not introduce Glasnost and Perestroika.

After Gorbachev's speech Egon Krenz tried to convince the other members of the Politburo to replace Honecker. Ten days later, on October 17, the Politburo put the skids under Honecker and Krenz became general secretary of the socialist party and thereby the new leader of East Germany. The behavior of Gorbachev had also effects on the East German population, who believed the Soviet leader to be on their side. At this time the demonstrators did not ask for unification, but for Glasnost, Perestroika and for the freedom to travel. In a way Gorbachev encouraged the demonstrators to fight for these rights. On October 2, one week before Gorbachev attended the 40th anniversary of East Germany, only 10,000 demonstrators were present in Leipzig. On October 9, two days after the anniversary 70,000 attended the demonstration in Leipzig and hereafter every Monday, the number of participants at the demonstrations increased. The high number of participants at the demonstrations was the most important reason that Krenz could give Honecker the chop.

After Honecker's resignation, Kohl did not change his tune. The Office of the Chancellor valued the situation in the following way: the demonstrations would not stop, Krenz did not intend to introduce actual reforms, the pressure on the East German government would increase because of the demonstrations, Krenz would not remain in power for a long time and a West German financial help to East Germany would slow down the dynamics of the events instead of speeding up the process of unification.¹² As a consequence, the Kohl government did not reduce the pressure on East Germany, but continued its strategy: West Germany offered economic help in exchange for political reforms. The assessment of the Office of the Chancellor was right. The replacement of Honecker had no effect on the demonstrations. On the contrary, the demonstrators now asked for a replacement of Krenz and for the end of the constitutional right of the SED to lead the country. East Germans had no confidence in Krenz who for years was Honecker's crown prince.

The population regained political consciousness and asked for democracy and for a political fresh start without the old leadership. On October 4, 500,000 East Germans demonstrated in East Berlin and on October 6, another 500,000 came together in Leipzig. This was not the

¹² Dokumente zur Deutschlandpolitik, Deutsche Einheit, Sonderedition aus den Akten des Bundeskanzleramtes 1989/90, Oldenbourg, München, 1998, DzG Nr.63

silence before the storm any longer. This was the storm. World public was looking on East Germany and Krenz had to stop the dynamics to block a discussion on the German question. He had to regain the confidence of the population and the only way of reaching that goal seemed to be the lifting of the traveling regulation.

While Krenz and the Politburo was working out a plan for lifting restrictions on crossing the German-German border, the Kohl government kept an eye on the signals coming from Washington and Paris. To Kohl's dismay, on October 23, Baker said in a speech that it was better to talk about a German reconciliation, instead of a German unification. The chancellor reacted immediately by phoning Bush to clarify the situation. The day after, Bush again used the word reconciliation instead of reunification in an interview with the New York Times (NY Times). Bush said to the NY Times that he was not afraid of a unified Germany, that it was important to harmonize the western position, and that he did not believe that Germany would ask for a neutral military status.¹³

On November 2, Kohl met with Mitterrand in Paris. Also at that opportunity, the chancellor tried to convince the French president that the situation in East Germany would get worse in the sense that a

¹³ New York Times, Nr.48034, 25.10.1989, in: DzG, Nr.67

reopening of the German question was inevitable. For the first time, Kohl indicated to Mitterrand that France should reflect upon its position regarding the German question, if France still wanted to strengthen the European Community. The chancellor said, that his government wanted to speed up the European integration process, but at the same time he emphasized the strong opposition that existed in West Germany against the European Monetary Union.¹⁴ This was obviously more than a simple statement. At the following press conference Mitterrand also said that he was not afraid of a unified Germany, but Mitterrand still refused to reopen the German question in public.¹⁵ Nevertheless, for Kohl it was a step forward in the right direction.

On November 9, Kohl started his state visit in Poland without knowing that on the same day the Central Committee in East Germany would make its most important decision after World War II. Krenz informed the Central Committee, that the Politburo and the cabinet had worked out a plan to change the traveling regulations in the following way: everybody could ask for permission to travel abroad without any conditions. The permission would be denied only in exceptional cases.

¹⁴ Dokumente zur Deutschlandpolitik, Deutsche Einheit, Sonderedition aus den Akten des Bundeskanzleramtes 1989/90, Oldenbourg, München, 1998, DzG Nr.63

¹⁵ See: Zelikow, Philip;Rice, Condoleezza, Sternstunde der Diplomatie: Die deutsche Einheit und das Ende der Spaltung Europas, Berlin, Propyläen, 1997, pag.147

Moreover, the registry office had the order to issue a visa to everybody who wanted to leave the country forever. The new regulations were to be in force until the Parliament approved a new traveling law, which was to come into force the following day, on November 10. The Central Committee agreed to Krenz's plan. Nevertheless, the new regulations were not intended to open the Wall. East Germans still needed a permission to cross the border or to leave the country forever.

The Wall was brought down by the offhand remark of Guenther Schabowski, the Politburo's spokesman, at a news conference while the reunion of the Central Committee was still going on. Schabowski announced that East Germany was lifting restrictions on crossing the German-German border. Asked by a reporter when the new regulations would take effect, Schabowski fumbled, then at 17.45 said: "immediately, without delay." Suddenly after the press conference the first East Berliners arrived at the Wall to put it to the test. At 21.00 Krenz was informed about Schabowski's mistake and that hundreds of Berliners went up to the Wall. Under pressure, Krenz gave the order that everybody with a valid passport could cross the border to leave East Germany forever. East Berliners who wanted to cross the border only for some hours still could not go to West Berlin. Every hour more and more East Berliners arrived at the Wall and the tension at the frontier posts increased equally. It seemed that the masses would storm the frontier

posts at every moment. Under pressure, at about 23.45, Colonel Goerliz and Commander Jaeger gave the order to open their frontier post at Bornholmer Strasse. The East German government had to save face. At least Krenz wanted to say that he gave the order to open the Wall. Krenz gave the order to open all frontier post and the Wall was falling down.¹⁶ No politician anywhere in the world could probably believe what was happening in Berlin. The Berlin Wall was the symbol of the cold war and it seemed unimaginable that this symbol would not exist anymore. The cold war started in Berlin and the cold war was about to end in Berlin. Asked by a reporter if the German unification would now become reality, Kohl answered: "In these hours world history is being written and world history is speeding up!"¹⁷ Everybody understood that the fall down of the Berlin Wall had reopened the German question.

Next step towards unification was Kohl's so-called "10 Punkte Plan." On November 10, the West Berlin Christian Democratic Party organized a public reunion in front of the West Berlin town hall, Schoeneberg. Kohl, Genscher and a lot of West German politicians were present. Kohl writes in his biography that he was against such a reunion.

¹⁶ See: Lindner, Bernd, Die demokratische Revolution in der DDR 1989/90, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, Bonn, 1998, pag.108

¹⁷ Kohl, Helmut: »Ich wollte Deutschlands Einheit« /dargest. von Kai Diekmann und Ralf Georg Reuth, Berlin, 1996, pag.128

He was worried about a negative reaction of Gorbachev and he was right. During the speech of Willy Brand, Kohl got a diplomatic message from Gorbachev. The Soviet leader condemned the public reunion and emphasized that the fall down of the Wall would not change post war reality. The existence of two German states was not to be questioned. Gorbachev expected that Kohl would do everything to prevent an increase of the instability of East Germany and of the tension in Berlin. The Soviet Union sent a copy of the diplomatic note to Bush, Mitterrand and Thatcher and in addition asked for a reunion of the four winners of war, which meant a revival of the Allied Control Council. Kohl understood Gorbachev's message. His speech in front of the town hall Schoeneberg was very moderate. A Soviet intervention in East Germany would block the unification process and a reunion of the four winners of war would remove West Germany from an active part.

The day after, on November 11, Kohl phoned Thatcher, Mitterrand and Bush to inform them about the situation in Berlin.¹⁸ Kohl tried to play down the situation in East Germany and assured the western leaders that the situation in Berlin was under control. Between the lines Kohl tried to convince them that a reunion of the four winners of

¹⁸ See: Dokumente zur Deutschlandpolitik, Deutsche Einheit, Sonderedition aus den Akten des Bundeskanzleramtes 1989/90, Oldenbourg, München, 1998, DzG Nr.81; 82; 85

war was not necessary. Thatcher and Mitterrand did not approach Kohl about a possible unification, remaining true to their predominant negative position regarding the German question. Again, only Bush voiced support for the Kohl government and refused a reunion of the four winners of war. Before phoning Gorbachev, Kohl called Krenz. The chancellor did not want to talk with Gorbachev empty-handed. Kohl agreed that the chancellery minister Seiders would meet with Krenz on November 20 and that Kohl himself would meet with Krenz thereafter. This was the moment to phone Gorbachev. Kohl quickly informed Gorbachev about the planned meeting between Seiders and Krenz and about his intention to visit East Germany. After that, he emphasized his non-acceptance of a radicalization of the situation in East Germany. Again, Kohl played down the situation in East Germany assuring Gorbachev that he would not make the most of the situation and evoked their positive relationship. To enjoy Gorbachev's favor, Kohl offered economic help to the Soviet Union. The reaction of Gorbachev was amazing: he did not threaten, reprimand or talk about a reunion of the four winners of war.¹⁹ The federal secretary Horst Teltschik writes in his biography that after that phone call Kohl said to him: "The dice is cast;

¹⁹ See: Dokumente zur Deutschlandpolitik, Deutsche Einheit, Sonderedition aus den Akten des Bundeskanzleramtes 1989/90, Oldenbourg, München, 1998, DzG Nr.87

now it's sure that the Soviet Union will not interfere in the domestic affairs of East Germany.²⁰ The Kohl government seemed to be encouraged: financial help for East Germany depended on a reform process and every time when Krenz introduced a reform, West Germany asked for another reform. The pressure on the East German government increased daily. The opening of the border did not stop the demonstrations in East Germany. On the contrary: before the opening of the border the demonstrators asked predominantly for Glasnost and Perestroika and they were screaming: "We are the Nation." After the fall down of the Wall the demonstrators asked for a parliamentary democracy, for free elections and daily more and more demonstrators were screaming, "We are one Nation" instead of "We are the Nation."

On international level the reaction of Kohl was very clever. He did not ask for unification, only for the right of the East German population to pronounce itself in favor or against unification. Kohl was convinced that pretty soon the whole East German population and a future democratic government would be on his side asking for its right of self-determination. East Germany had to react to the dynamics and open up for its own debate about unification. On November 17, the neo-elected Prime Minister Hans Modrow proposed a so-called

²⁰ Teltschik, Horst, 329 Tage, Taschenbuchausgabe, Goldmann Verlag, 1993, pag.29

“Vertragsgemeinschaft” between the two German states. Modrow suggested that the two German States should be forced by treaties to cooperate in any field. The West German government understood the risk that this plan would be discussed among the western leaders. Only two hours after Modrow's proposal, Kohl phoned Bush. The chancellor professed again the crush down of the socialist system in East Germany and underlined the desire of the East German population to unify the country. Bush did not seem to take into consideration the plan of Modrow and answered only by saying that it would not be advisable to fix a timetable for unification at the time. To Kohl's delight, Bush proposed a meeting before the NATO summit in Brussels to agree on the course of action.²¹ Now it was important for West Germany also to influence the outcome of the European Council in Paris on November 18. Kohl could obstruct a discussion about the Modrow plan and block the proposal of Thatcher to involve the entire European Community into the handling of the German question.²²

While Kohl was following the European Council, Genscher met with Bush and Brent Scowcroft, US National Security Advisor. For the

²¹ See: Dokumente zur Deutschlandpolitik, Deutsche Einheit, Sonderedition aus den Akten des Bundeskanzleramtes 1989/90, Oldenbourg, München, 1998, DzG Nr.93

²² See: DzG, Nr.94A and Weidenfeld, Werner, Außenpolitik für die deutsche Einheit: Die Entscheidungsjahre 1989/90, Stuttgart, 1998, pag.88-93

first time they were talking about formal aspects of a German unification. Asked by Scowcroft if Kohl would prefer a peace treaty with Germany or a conference between the four winners of war to carry out the unification, Genscher answered that his government preferred the proposal of Condoleezza Rice of an equal conference between the two German states and the four winners of war. This was the birth of the idea of 2+4 conferences.²³

Three days later, on November 21, the unification process arrived at a turning point. On this day, Portogalov, counselor of Falin, who controlled the activities of the Soviet ministry of foreign affairs for the Soviet Central Committee, met with the federal secretary Teltschik. Portogalov handed over a letter to Kohl. Teltschik writes in his biography that the letter had two parts. The first official part was talking directly to Kohl and contained the following questions: was a system of peace in Europe still Kohl's highest priority over the German question? Were the Soviet-West German treaties still valid? Would Kohl agree to a "modus vivendi" between the two German states on the basis of Modrow's plan?

The first part of the letter showed that the Soviet Union already had reopened the German question. Teltschik writes in his biography that the second part had no official character and was based on the

²³ See: Genscher, Hans-Dietrich, *Erinnerungen*, Berlin, 1995, pag.664-668

personal considerations of Falin. Hypothetically, Falin examined questions linked to a unification, to a East German admission to the European Community, to a future military status of the two German states and finally to a peace treaty with a unified Germany.²⁴ Teltschik writes that Portogalow said to him: "You can see that we take into consideration a lot of alternatives and we also take into consideration what seems to be impossible. I believe that the Soviet Union would even accept a German Confederation."²⁵ The meeting between Teltschik and Portogalow aroused Kohl's enthusiasm, because even the Soviet Union did not seem to exclude a reopening of the German question anymore. Nevertheless, the timetable did not work in the chancellor's favor anymore. Kohl had to work out a plan for unification before Gorbachev could ask in public for a German Confederation with a neutral military status.

During the following four days, Kohl and some of his confidants worked out a plan to unify Germany. Kohl's so-called "10 Punkte Plan" did not ask for an immediate unification. He proposed a gradual process

²⁴ See: Teltschik, Horst, 329 Tage, Taschenbuchausgabe, Goldmann Verlag, 1993, pag.42-45

²⁵ Teltschik, Horst, 329 Tage, Taschenbuchausgabe, Goldmann Verlag, 1993, pag.44

of unification without recommending a timetable. Step by step the cooperation between the two German states should increase to carry out a "Vertragsgemeinschaft" and the institution of cofederal structures, like common parliamentary or governmental commissions. Not until later, when a new European peace system was in place could the two German states eventually be free to unify and to create a federation.

Without informing anybody, Kohl launched his unification plan on November 28 in front of the West German Parliament. The majority of the members of the Parliament agreed to Kohl's plan and applauded the chancellor. For the first time Kohl acted offensively and demanded West Germany's right to reopen the German question it.

Next step toward unification was the reopening of the German question on international level where the reaction to Kohl's plan was different from that of the German Parliament. Thatcher made in public no secret that she did not change her position and the French foreign minister, Dumas, said that Kohl's plan had to be linked to the European integration process. For the first time France made no secret that its position regarding the German question would depend on West German policies regarding the European Monetary Union and the creation of a

European Union.²⁶ The Soviet Union condemned in public Kohl's plan, but Gorbachev himself did not give any statement. Shevardnadze refused to support the idea of a German confederation or federation in public, but he did not exclude confederal structures. The Office of the Chancellor evaluated the Soviet reaction in the following way: the comments of the Soviet government spokesman served to calm down the hardliners in the Kremlin, but they did not express the position of the Soviet Union. The comments of Shevardnadze showed that the Soviet Union was ready to discuss the German question.²⁷ In the United States the reaction of Bush was predominantly positive. Baker emphasized four points in order to carry out a unification: the two German states should be independent to decide in favor or against a unification, a unified Germany had to become member of NATO and the European Community, a unification would be carried out in a gradual process and the European frontiers could only be changed peacefully in accordance with the final Communiqué of Helsinki.

East Germany condemned Kohl's plan, but daily the power of the socialist party, SED, decreased. At the end of November, the

²⁶ See: Dokumente zur Deutschlandpolitik, Deutsche Einheit, Sonderedition aus den Akten des Bundeskanzleramtes 1989/90, Oldenbourg, München, 1998, DzG Nr.102

²⁷ Ibidem

population asked for the same living standards and for the same democratic rights as in West Germany. The demonstrators increasingly demanded unification and the political parties began to adapt themselves to their counterpart in West Germany. Forced by the demonstrations, the Politburo decided on November 28 that free parliamentary elections were to be held on March 18. Three days later the East German Parliament regained its powers and on the December 1 the Parliament abolished the constitutional right of the SED to lead the country. Two days later, the entire Politburo and the Central Committee resigned. The socialist party became leaderless.

The situation of the Soviet Union was more than difficult: Gorbachev knew that in March a new East German Parliament was to be elected and it was more than certain that a democratic government would make common cause with Kohl. The only possibility of stopping the dynamics was to sacrifice Glasnost and Perestroika and to intervene with armed forces. The process of democratization all over Eastern Europe made this reaction impossible. Gorbachev changed his tune on 2 December, when he met with Bush at Malta: the Soviet leader did not exclude unification, but he still believed in unification in a distant future.²⁸

²⁸ See: Gorbatschow, Michail, Gipfelgespräche, Geheime Protokolle aus meiner Amtszeit, Berlin, 1993, pag.93-129

Bush did not stop to work towards unification: on December 4, during the NATO summit at Brussels, the president came out in favor of a unification and announced four principles: German right of self-determination, full NATO and EC membership for a unified Germany, gradual process to guarantee the security in Europe and no forced modification of the frontier lines. The NATO approved these principles²⁹ and it did not take Kohl long time to convince the European Community to officially recognize a German right of self-determination: the chancellor reached that aim during the European Council in Strasbourg on December 9.³⁰

It seemed that for the first time Gorbachev became nervous. During the visit of Genscher in Moscow, Gorbachev harshly criticized Kohl's plan and the chancellor could not prevent a diplomatic reunion of the four winners of war in Berlin. The Soviet Union noticed that France and Great Britain were very cautious regarding the German question. It seemed that Gorbachev believed that he could use that cautious behavior for his own benefits. An agreement between the four winners of war could stop the unification process once and for all. Nevertheless, the

²⁹ See: Dokumente zur Deutschlandpolitik, Deutsche Einheit, Sonderedition aus den Akten des Bundeskanzleramtes 1989/90, Oldenbourg, München, 1998, DzG Nr.109

³⁰ See: Dokumente zur Deutschlandpolitik, Deutsche Einheit, Sonderedition aus den Akten des Bundeskanzleramtes 1989/90, Oldenbourg, München, 1998, DzG Nr.117

reunion became a success for Kohl: the United States put pressure on France and Great Britain and therefore the Western leaders refused unanimously to talk about the German question. The outcome of the reunion showed Gorbachev that the West was on Kohl's side and once more the Soviet Union only had two possibilities: a military intervention in East Germany or a Soviet permission to unify Germany. Again, Kohl was encouraged by the development and he wrote a letter to Gorbachev, in which he emphasized that his plan was to serve to stabilize the situation in East Germany. Kohl was also well informed about the economic crisis in the Soviet Union and it seemed that the chancellor wanted to make it easier for Gorbachev to change his position: in his letter Kohl again offered the Soviet Union financial support.³¹

In December the economic crises in East Germany increased and Kohl did not change his strategy: he denied any financial help, unless East Germany would make more concessions. On December 19, when Kohl arrived in Dresden, he could celebrate his success. The citizens' of Dresden greeted Kohl enthusiastically and gave in that way a clear message to the world public: we are one nation. Modrow accepted to increase the cooperation and gradually to create a

³¹ See: Dokumente zur Deutschlandpolitik, Deutsche Einheit, Sonderedition aus den Akten des Bundeskanzleramtes 1989/90, Oldenbourg, München, 1998, DzG Nr.123

“Vertragsgemeinschaft”. West Germany announced the transference of 13 billion Deutsch Mark to built up the East German infrastructures.

After the East German consent to create a “Vertragsgemeinschaft”, the Soviet Union again asked for a diplomatic meeting between the four winners of war. This time the West refused and Gorbachev had to notice that the unification process was irreversible. From that moment the Soviet Union and East Germany tried to slow down the unification process and Gorbachev tried to defend the political powers of the Soviet Union in Europe as much as possible.

Next step toward unification was the new plan of Modrow and the breakthrough at Ottawa. At the end of January 1990 Gorbachev and Modrow realized that a German unification was inevitable. Having the consent of Gorbachev, Modrow announced on February 3 his own plan for a gradual and slow unification, following predominantly Kohl’s plan: “Vertragsgemeinschaft” – Confederation – Federation or German Union. The same day Gorbachev wrote a letter to Kohl, in which he agreed to Modrow’s plan and invited Kohl to visit him within the same month. The Modrow plan came as a total surprise. For the first time in history East Germany asked for unification. Nevertheless, behind closed doors Kohl refused Modrow’s plan because he already together with Bush had decided to speed up the unification process. The United States was in favor of a 2+4 conference to guarantee not only a German right of self-

determination, but also to guarantee a full German NATO membership! Kohl accepted a 2+4 conference and Bush also convinced Mitterrand and Thatcher to support this mechanism.

In February 1990, Baker visited Gorbachev in Moscow and prepared the ground for the unification. Gorbachev accepted not only to separate the internal aspects from the exterior aspects of a unification process, he also agreed to Baker's plan to discuss the exterior aspects at 2+4 conferences. Nevertheless, Gorbachev did not accept NATO membership for a unified Germany.³² Before Kohl and Genscher's state visit to the Soviet Union, the German leaders discussed the tactic during the negotiations with Bush who informed Kohl about the visit of Baker in the Soviet Union.

On February 14 Kohl and Genscher arrived in the Soviet Union. The state visit was a clear success: Gorbachev recognized a German right of self-determination and gave his consent to unification along two different lines: the two German states could solve independently all the internal aspects, whereas a 2+4 conference would solve the exterior aspects. Only when all exterior aspects were solved, could Germany

³² See: Zelikow, Philip; Rice, Condoleezza, *Sternstunde der Diplomatie: Die deutsche Einheit und das Ende der Spaltung Europas*, Berlin, 1997, pag.256-263

unify itself.³³ On February 13, the summit between the NATO and the Pact of Warsaw took place in Ottawa. In spite of the criticism of some NATO members, the 2+4 mechanism was made official. Only three months after the fall down of the Berlin Wall, the iron curtain in Europe fell down again: this time at an international level.

Next step toward unification was characterized by the persistence of the Soviet Union and by the "double track strategy", pursued by Bush and Kohl.

After the Ottawa summit, Kohl speeded up the "timetable" to solve the internal aspects of unification and he started negotiations about a Monetary, Economic and Social Union. Nevertheless, the West German government did not intend to sign the Union treaty before the elections in East Germany. Kohl was convinced that the center-right would win the elections and that this would guarantee East German support to carry out the internal aspects of Kohl's' direction. For the same reason Kohl wanted the 2+4 conferences to start after the Election Day. The chancellor wanted to be sure that the two German states would share the same position during the conferences, which meant that West Germany would be the spokesman for German interests.

³³ See: Dokumente zur Deutschlandpolitik, Deutsche Einheit, Sonderedition aus den Akten des Bundeskanzleramtes 1989/90, Oldenbourg, München, 1998, DzG Nr.174/175

Kohl took a considerable part in the election campaign. The chancellor enjoyed the confidence of a lot of East Germans and it seemed that thanks to him one month later the center-right won the elections. All the previous opinion polls predicted an electoral victory for the Social Democratic Party.

Regarding the exterior aspects, Kohl came to an agreement with Bush at Camp David on February 25 regarding an acceleration of the unification process through full German membership of NATO and a special military status for the former East German territory and non-involvement of third states in the 2+4 conferences except consultations with Poland.³⁴ Kohl insisted that a frontier line treaty with Poland first be signed after German unification, taking into account the West German constitution and his own conservative electorate. Moreover, Kohl refused that the final 2+4 document would be called "peace treaty", taking into account demands on war compensations.

The first preliminary 2+4 meeting, on March 14, was a disaster for the West: the Soviet Union asked for Polish participation, insisted on a peace treaty and tried to slow down the unification process by asking for a synchronization between the unification process and the entire

³⁴ See: Dokumente zur Deutschlandpolitik, Deutsche Einheit, Sonderedition aus den Akten des Bundeskanzleramtes 1989/90, Oldenbourg, München, 1998, DzG Nr.192

European integration process. Moreover, France and Great Britain did not seem to refuse wholeheartedly the Soviet position.³⁵ The situation turned to Kohl's advantage on March 18. The center-right won the political elections in East Germany and West Germany again speeded up the preparations for the Monetary, Economic and Social Union and as indicated by Kohl, East Germany began to follow the chancellor's direction.

The center-right victory also had effects on the 2+4 participating countries: France and Great Britain did not obstruct the preliminary 2+4 meetings any more and on April 28 the European Council in Dublin decided on a gradual admission of East Germany into the European Community. Also the Soviet Union became more moderate after the election day: during the second preliminary 2+4 meeting, the Soviet Union did not insist any longer on a peace treaty. Nevertheless, the first 2+4 conference between the foreign ministers on May 5 was a great disappointment for the West: the Soviet Union still persisted on a neutral military status for Germany and Shevardnadze proposed to separate a decision on the exterior aspects from the internal process of unification which, the Western leaders refused. A separation of the exterior aspects

³⁵ See: Dokumente zur Deutschlandpolitik, Deutsche Einheit, Sonderedition aus den Akten des Bundeskanzleramtes 1989/90, Oldenbourg, München, 1998, DzG Nr.220

would mean that a unified Germany probably could not enjoy its full sovereignty for many years. Furthermore, the Soviet Union would be in a position to adjourn a decision about the German military status for an unforeseeable time.

As a consequence of the Soviet behavior, West Germany and the United States started a "double track strategy". On the one hand, Kohl tried to convince Gorbachev of German NATO-membership by offering West German credit and proposing to conclude bilateral treaties regarding cultural and economic cooperation. Nevertheless, on May 25 Kohl wrote a letter to Gorbachev in which, he emphasized a linkage between West German financial support for the Soviet Union and the Soviet position at the 2+4 conferences.³⁶

On the other hand, Bush tried to satisfy the Soviet security interests. Important milestone toward the unification was the state visit of Gorbachev in the United States on May 31. Bush led Gorbachev understand that the United States would satisfy the Soviet security interests, also outside the 2+4 process and Gorbachev did not a priori exclude NATO membership for a unified Germany anymore.

³⁶ See: Dokumente zur Deutschlandpolitik, Deutsche Einheit, Sonderedition aus den Akten des Bundeskanzleramtes 1989/90, Oldenbourg, München, 1998, DzG Nr.284

One week later Bush put his promise to the test: during the NATO reunion in Turnberry on June 7, Baker made nine suggestions to guarantee the security of the Soviet Union, if Germany became a NATO member. The double track strategy seemed to be successful: during the second 2+4 conference on June 22, the Soviet Union did not exclude German NATO membership anymore. Instead Shevardnadze proposed an interim of 5 years whereafter Germany could choose independently its military status, but it would have to renounce from ABC weapons and to accept a large demilitarized zone. The West refused again. A large demilitarized zone would make full German NATO membership useless and the West was also uneasy about a future independent German choice. One has to know that the Social Democratic Party in Germany was much more in favor of a German neutral military status and nobody knew who would win the first all-German parliamentary elections.

After the second 2+4 conference, Kohl again speeded up the internal unification process: on July 1, the Monetary, Economic and Social Union came into force and on July 6, the two German governments decided to work out a unification treaty before August 27. The message to the Soviet Union was obvious: soon after the third 2+4 conference all the internal aspects would be solved and the Soviet Union should make a move.

Kohl and Bush continued their “double track strategy” and Kohl tried to allocate the money for the Soviet Union. On June 26, the European Council in Dublin decided to work out a plan for financial support to the Soviet Union. Two weeks later, on July 11, the G7 summit gave the IMF, the World Bank and the European Bank, together with the European Commission, the responsibility of drafting a commentary on the Soviet economic situation and to consider economic help.

In the meantime the United States tried to satisfy the Soviet security interests even more. The outcome of the NATO summit in London on July 5 finally helped to change the Soviet position. The NATO members announced that they no longer considered the Soviet Union as an enemy, they proposed a German strength limit and they offered to reinforce the role of the CSCE and to institute diplomatic delegations to the NATO for the members of the Pact of Warsaw. Kohl and Bush agreed that the chancellor could offer Gorbachev a German strength limit of 375,000 soldiers in exchange for German NATO membership. Furthermore, West Germany also reached an agreement with Poland regarding a frontier line treaty that was to be signed after the German unification.

Everything seemed to be in place, when Kohl and Genscher arrived in the Soviet Union on July 15 to meet with Gorbatschow. In Moscow Gorbachev gave his consent to full German NATO membership,

but he wanted to separate a bilateral withdrawal treaty regarding the Soviet forces in East Germany from the final 2+4 document. This was a trap set by Gorbachev. In that case, the Soviet Union could slow down the signing of a withdrawal treaty for years and again make German NATO membership useless. Kohl writes in his biography that he said to Gorbachev that maybe it would be better to fly back to Bonn instead of flying to Caucasus the next day. According to Kohl, Gorbachev answered: "We have to fly to Caucasus." Kohl writes that in this moment he was convinced that they would carry out the German unification.³⁷

The meeting in Caucasus was a success and it seemed to be due to the "double track strategy": Gorbachev accepted full NATO membership and complete German sovereignty. A unified Germany would definitely consist of the two German states and Berlin and would never have additional territorial demands. The Soviet Union undertook the signing of a bilateral withdrawal treaty to guarantee the return of the Soviet soldiers within 3 or 4 years and West Germany handled the costs of the Soviet withdrawal. A unified Germany would reduce its forced arms to 375,000 soldiers and would abstain from ABC weapons. After

³⁷ Kohl, Helmut, »Ich wollte Deutschlands Einheit« /dargest. von Kai Diekmann und Ralf Georg Reuth, Berlin, 2000, pag.379

the Soviet withdrawal it would be allowed to station only German armed forces, but never nuclear weapons on the former East German territory. Moreover, West Germany undertook to work out bilateral treaties, useful for the reinforcement of the German-Soviet relationship.³⁸

On July 17, the third 2+4 conference approved the results reached in Caucasus and gave the order to work out the final 2+4 document.

Last step toward the German unification was to remove the last obstacles. Kohl did not loose any time: on August 31, the two German States signed the unification treaty, which was to come into force on October 3. West Germany and the Soviet Union worked out a bilateral friendship and cooperation treaty ("Generalvertrag"/"Wirtschaftsvertrag") without any problems. The treaty was signed on October 9. West Germany and the Soviet Union also came to a quick agreement regarding the provisions for the Soviet withdrawal: the Soviet armed forces should return before 1994.

The treaty was signed on September 27. Regarding the costs for the Soviet withdrawal Kohl had to pay for the unification: West Germany

³⁸ See: Dokumente zur Deutschlandpolitik, Deutsche Einheit, Sonderedition aus den Akten des Bundeskanzleramtes 1989/90, Oldenbourg, München, 1998, DzG Nr.353

paid 12 billion Deutsch Mark and gave a zero interest credits over 3 billion Deutsch Mark.

On September 12, the four winners of war and the two German states signed the final 2+4 document. The only limitation regarding the military status of the former East German territory was a ban of stationed foreign soldiers and of nuclear weapons. To make sure that foreign NATO soldiers could go on maneuvers in that territory, the final 2+4 document emphasized an exclusive German right to define the meaning of the words: "to station foreign troupes". On October 1, the four winners of war resigned from their rights regarding Germany and in that way gave Germany its full sovereignty back, even before the ratification of the 2+4 document by the Parliaments. On October 3 1990, Germany again was one nation.

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