The Divided Nation

A History of Germany 19181990

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Six
Occupation and Division, 19459

When Germany was defeated in May 1945, a demoralized population was living among ruins. The big cities that had suffered bombardment from the air were reduced to piles of rubble between gaunt, hollow shells of bombed out buildings, lone walls with empty windows forming a jagged skyline, the occasional intact building standing out starkly amidst the ruins. People eked out an uncomfortable existence in cellars. In towns and villages which had escaped the worst attacks of the Allies, conditions were nevertheless comparably demoralizing, as women worried about husbands and sons at the front, and about the need for food and clothing for the children and old people at home. Enthusiasm for Hitler, and for his war, had been waning steadily since the turn of the war's fortunes with the Russian campaign, and faith in the omnipotent Führer had given way to weariness and a longing for the end of war. Yet there was no knowing exactly what the post-war period would bring. Some Germans longed for 'liberation' and the possibility of a radical transformation of Germany; others felt fear and ambivalence about future retribution. When hostilities ceased in May 1945, few could have predicted what the future would bring. Yet in the following four years patterns were developed and set which were to stamp their mark on the next four decades of German and international history.

The Allies and the Framework of Political Life

Initially the Allies themselves were not at all certain what to do with post-war Germany. There were differences of opinion

both between the Allies particularly between the Soviet Union and the Western powers and within each Allied regime. In practice, the developments following the defeat of Germany laid the foundations for the double transformation that subsequently occurred: the establishment of a divided nation, with a relatively conservative, arguably 'restorationist' state in the West, and a hardline communist state in the East. In neither Germany was the 'Third Way' taken, for which many democratic, anti-fascist Germans had hoped the transformation which would combine democracy and socialism, while also permitting German unity and neutrality. While the division and remilitarization of the two Germanies and their relative 'conservatism', although of differing political complexions only became crystallized in the course of the 1950s, the initial steps in this bifurcation can be seen even in the very early stages of the occupation period.

During the war, a range of options for the future of Germany pending what all agreed should be an unconditional surrender were mooted. Some advocated relatively mild treatment, others harsh and punitive handling; some sought the retention of a relatively centralized, if federal, state, others radical dismemberment and division into a number of smaller countries which could pose no threat to the balance of power in central Europe. There were differences of opinion between, for example, American President Roosevelt and his State Department; British Prime Minister Churchill and the British Military and the British Foreign Office; as well as, more obviously, between the Soviet Union, the Americans and the British. One of the few decisions which emerged from wartime planning which was however to have decisive long-term significance was the agreement on zones of occupation. A map (emanating from the Post-Hostilities Planning Subcommittee in September 1943) was put before the European

Advisory Committee in London in January 1944, and accepted by the Soviets in February 1944. This proposed three zones of occupation and in the event drew the line of what was subsequently to become the East-West division of Europe and the international system. In September 1944 it was agreed that Berlin should be under four-power control, and a little later a Control Commission
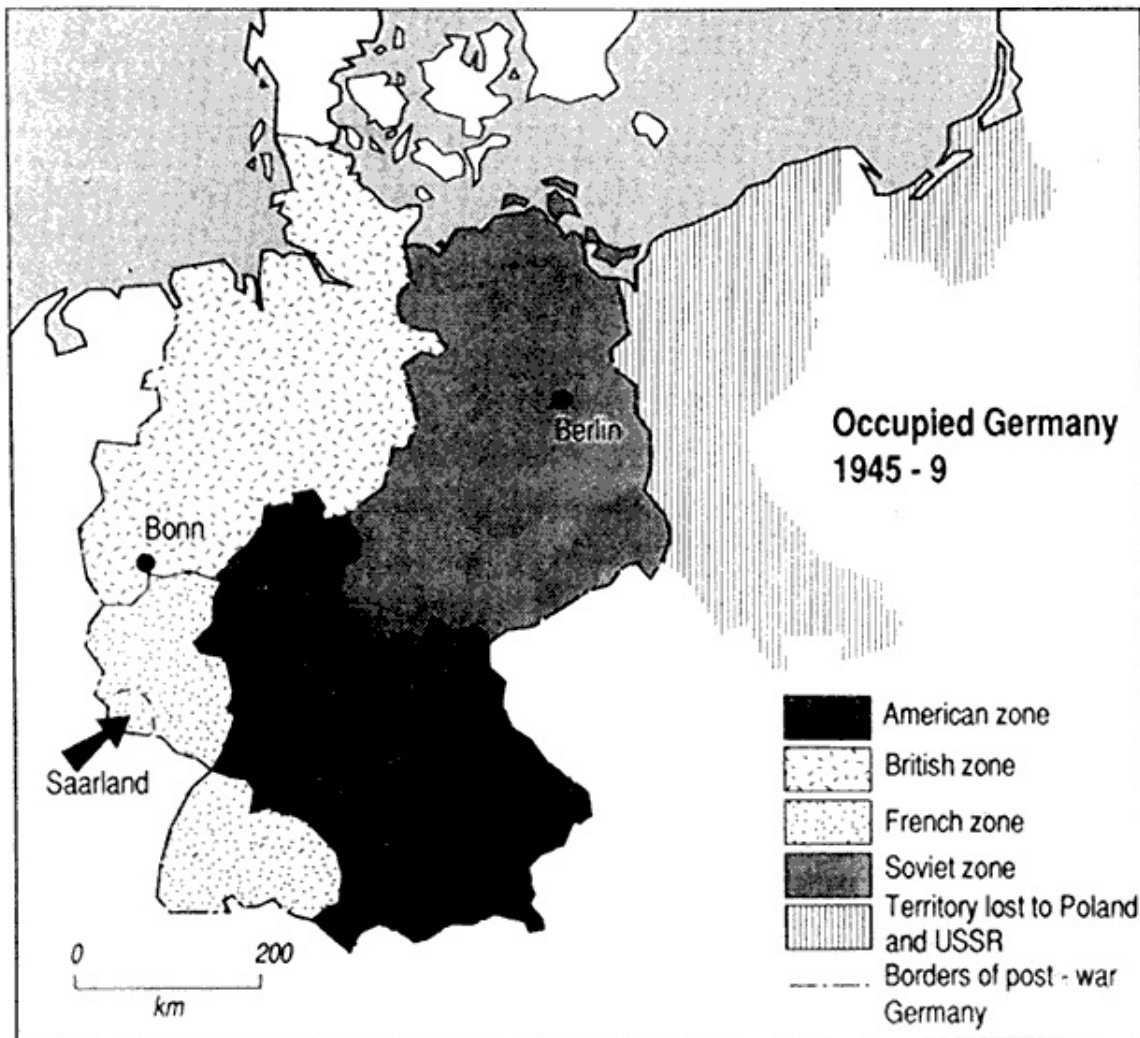
The division of Germany after 1945

for the co-ordination of Allied occupation policies was decided upon.

At Teheran (28 November 1 December 1943) and Yalta (411 February 1945) there was vague and general agreement in principle on the need to demilitarize, denazify and democractize Germany. It was also agreed at Yalta that France should have a zone of occupation. There was by now some friction and unease over this question: the original zones had been drawn to give rough parity of population numbers in each of the British, American and Soviet zones thus in

effect giving the Soviets a much larger land area, since much of their zone was less densely populated agricultural land. The early agreement over zones had

been facilitated by Western fears that the Red Army might in fact have overrun most or all of Germany by the end of the war, and would then be committed or forced to retreat to its previously determined occupation zone. However, in fact by the war's end it was the western allies who had advanced deeper into Germany than they had expected; and it was western troops who eventually had to withdraw from areas that were to form part of the Soviet zone. By the spring of 1945, this position had become clearer, and the western powers hoped that France would gain her zone at the expense of the Soviets. This was however opposed, and France's zone was carved out of western territory in south-west Germany. Disagreements between the Allies also continued over questions concerning the form and level reparations should take, the eastern boundaries of Germany with Poland, and the future shape of Germany itself.

These problems continued to bedevil the Potsdam Conference of 17 July2 August 1945. Although the war was over, with the surrender of German troops to the Allies on 78 May 1945, there could be no Peace Treaty since there was no German government with which to conclude one. The eventual Protocol of Proceedings emanating from the Potsdam Conference was a vaguely worded compromise again assenting to broad and laudable aims, such as demilitarization, denazification, and democratization which left many areas open to a variety of interpretations.

Most potent sources of friction were again the questions of reparations and Polish-German frontiers. The western Allies refused Stalin's demands on reparations, and an agreement was reached by which each power would take its own reparations from its own zone. In addition, the USSR was to get ten per cent from the western Allies, and a further fifteen per cent was to be provided by way of exchanges for food supplies and the like. The reparations agreement both

consolidated the relative independence of the zonal administrations, despite the mouthing of assent to the notion of central co-ordination of policy, and provided the basis for subsequent disagreements and divisions between East and West. As the British put it at the time, 'It is inconceivable that a Germany which is not treated as an

economic unit could very long be treated as a political unit.' [1]

On the Polish boundary question, a decision had been largely pre-empted by the de facto Soviet interpretation of Poland's western boundary as lying along the western, rather than eastern Neisse river. Poland was to be compensated with additional former German land on the west for losses in the east to the Soviet Union, which expanded westwards, and retained territory (including the Baltic states) taken under the Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939. While British and American leaders agreed with the moving of Poland's borders in principle, they had understood the eastern Neisse river to be the limit. But under Stalin's interpretation, German inhabitants of the relatively rich Silesian territory between the two branches of the Neisse had already been expelled and Poles settled on the contested land. Given this circumstance, the Oder and western Neisse rivers were provisionally agreed as Poland's western border; but a final decision in principle (rather than simply a *de facto* movement of population) was postponed until a peace conference which in the event never occurred. (It was only with the unification of the two Germanies in 1990 that the western border of Poland was officially confirmed.) Some commentators have suggested that the bargaining power of the western powers in relation to Stalin was weakened by the fact that Churchill was replaced by Attlee in the course of the Conference, as the results of the British General Election were made known and a Labour administration replaced the Churchill government. A further problem lay in the fact that France, although it was granted a zone of occupation, did not attend the Potsdam Conference and made little subsequent attempt to co-ordinate French occupation policies with those of the British and Americans.

In practice, after the end of hostilities the four zones of occupation were treated in very different ways, with even British and American

policies diverging in certain respects. Moreover, there were not necessarily clear or consistent lines of policy within any one zone of occupation. Not only were there differences of opinion among different factions and agencies within (or influencing) the governments of each power; there were also major shifts of policy as the military governments

experienced unforeseen difficulties and constraints on policy on the ground; and there was the wider question of changing priorities in the context of changing international relations. In the American zone, for example, the initial policy document the so-called JCS 1067 represented the hybrid outcome of a number of divergent policy directions. It retained elements of the brief influence of Morgenthau's draconian proposals for a 'pastoralization' of Germany as well as reflecting other sources of opinion. General Lucius Clay found it open to a wide latitude of interpretation in practice in the American zone, and some of its measures, particularly concerning economic policy, were in any case overtaken by the Potsdam Agreement. JCS 1067 was finally formally jettisoned after major shifts in subsequent American policies (described further below). There were comparable ambiguities and changes in British policy. While American views constituted a major influence on British policy, on many matters of purely British concern the views of the British military government on the ground tended to prevail over those of British politicians at home. 2 In any event, in the period from defeat and occupation in 1945 to the division of Germany in 1949, the aims and practices of all the occupying powers shifted dramatically. While the French were somewhat unwillingly brought to toe the western line, the Soviets initiated quite distinctive policies in their zone. In the unfolding story of transformation and division, it can perhaps be suggested that the attitude of the western powers to western Germany changed more markedly, with 1947 representing a key turning-point. It is time to explore certain aspects of this crucial period of transition in more detail.

The Democratization of German Politics?

What did the reorganization of German domestic politics look like in the early months after the end of the war? The war's end had been

greeted with a range of responses among Germans. On the whole, the political attitudes of most Germans may be characterized in terms of apathy, a weariness in relation to

'politics' and what it brought with it, and an overriding concern with sheer physical survival from day to day. Only a minority at either end of the political spectrum were ideologically committed and active. Certain Nazi diehards were determined to follow Hitler's 'scorched earth' policies and defend their strongholds to the last; other Germans, equally loyal to the defence of their fatherland, felt that it was better served by an orderly handover to the Allied forces, thus protecting life and property. Some feared the consequences of German defeat; others welcomed the prospect of release from oppression and the chance of making a new beginning. A wide spectrum of political tendencies started to emerge from the silence of the Third Reich, with varied hopes for a possible future. In the different zones of occupation, the aspirations of these groups were suppressed, subverted, facilitated or transformed in different ways, as the politics of occupiers and occupied began to interact.

In the closing months of the war, a number of anti-fascist groups had emerged, determined finally to oust the Nazis and take control of local government in order to facilitate what they perceived as their liberation, rather than defeat, by the Allies. The 'non-defence committees' (*Nichtverteidigungs-komitees*) had varying degrees of success in different areas. In some, they were captured and summarily shot by the SS. In others, they were able to have some impact on the course of events. In Bavaria, for example, the *Freiheitsaktion Bayern* (FAB) was a military resistance group linked with conservative resistance circles, with the *Demokratische Bewegung Deutschlands*, and with the Bavarian separatist movement *Bayerische Freiheitsbewegung*, (BFB) as well as with cells in industrial concerns in Munich. Although ultimately unsuccessful in its Munich uprising of 28 April 1945, the FAB was able to avert late Allied bombings of the city and while in control of the local radio station sent out the order of

the 'pheasant chase' (*Fasanenjagd*). As a result, the BFB in other areas of Bavaria chased the Nazi 'gold pheasants' (*Goldfasanen*), and although the SS retaliated in some instances, in others the hunt was successful. [3] Such actions were to be important in the formation of a post-war democratic identity, as indicated by the celebration of the FAB by the *Süddeutsche*

Zeitung in the winter and spring of 1945 and 1946; but despite the anti-Nazi credentials of these spontaneous movements the western Allies were to treat them with considerable caution and to suppress their organizational forms while co-opting certain individuals into service under the Military Government.

This disbanding of' antifas', or indigenous German democratic groups, was symptomatic in both the western and Soviet zones of the way in which the Allies sought to impose their own, differing, conceptions of the reorganization of German political life. There has been considerable debate subsequently about notions of 'missed opportunities', suppressed historical alternatives, and avoidable 'restoration'. On some views, the anti-fascist groups, if given appropriate encouragement and support, might have provided the basis for a democratic socialist transformation. Against this, some historians (such as Rolf Steininger) have argued that these groups were insufficiently strong or united to have achieved much by way of positive policies. 4 In any event, the question remains hypothetical, since such organizations were suppressed and disbanded by the Allies, in both west and east. This was a source of considerable disillusionment and disaffection among members of these groups, a disaffection which was later compounded by the political climates of both East and West Germany in the 1950S.

The impact of the occupying power on the reorganization of German political life was most marked in the Soviet zone. Already before the end of the war, in April 1945, a group of Moscow-trained German Communists under the leadership of Walter Ulbricht had been flown in to the area which was to be under Soviet occupation. One of the first measures of the Soviet Military Administration (SMAD) was the licensing of political parties, in order to legitimize the existence and activities of the KPD. The KPD, under Soviet direction, rapidly

sought to take control of all key positions in local administration often choosing a non-Communist, such as a respected member of the local community with impeccable 'non-political', 'bourgeois' or moderate credentials, for the formal figurehead position (such as mayor), while a Communist wielded the real power in a

secondary post. This is not to suggest that the KPD did not encounter problems. There were tensions and differences of view both between the German Communists and their Soviet masters, as well as within the KPD itself. Those members of the KPD who had weathered the Third Reich in exile in the west, or underground in Germany, or who re-emerged from imprisonment, often subscribed to a humanistic version of communism which differed considerably from the Stalinist variant propagated by the Moscow faction. Nevertheless, the KPD certainly enjoyed a privileged position in the emerging political life of the Soviet zone, and at first felt strong enough to resist overtures towards unification from the Social Democratic Party (SPD), which had lost little time in re-founding itself.

Other parties soon founded in the Soviet zone included the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), a German-wide party of former Catholic Centre party members and former conservative and nationalist Protestants thus seeking to form a conservative party with a wider constituency of support than the narrow confessional basis of the earlier Centre party. Similarly, the liberal LDPD sought to bring together a variety of liberal views. Initially, these parties were independent; in the event, their members and leaders were subjected very soon to immense pressures, such that by the time of the foundation of the GDR in 1949 they had become more or less puppets of the Communists. Two further parties in the Soviet zone were actually founded as Communist puppet parties: the NDPD to encompass people of right-wing, nationalist sympathies, and the DBD as the peasants' party.

In the course of the summer and autumn of 1945, particularly as the results of local elections came in, it became clear to the KPD that they could never win mass electoral support in competition with an independent SPD. Even though the KPD was unfairly advantaged in

the provision of such materials as paper, election posters, the availability of rooms for meetings and even electricity for lighting those meetings the Communists simply did not win enough votes to convince anyone of their democratic right to rule. Accordingly, in the winter of 19456 immense pressure was put on a now less than willing SPD to

enter into a merger with the KPD. Many Social Democrats now chose to leave for the western zones rather than continue in what they saw as the dictated political circumstances of the Soviet zone. A forced merger with the rump of the SPD, hammered out in a deal still not fully understood, was finally ratified at a unification meeting in April 1946. [5] The KPD and SPD merged to become the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED), with formal parity between former Communists and Social Democrats. Over subsequent years, the latter were increasingly pressurized and purged, so much so that the Communists came to exert clear control in the SED. Under Soviet occupation, the SED was to spearhead Soviet policies in its zone of Germany, and the 'democratization' of East German politics became increasingly predicated on the Marxist Leninist interpretation of democracy as 'democratic centralism'.

The impact of the western powers' political views on the reorganization of West German political life was more muted, but nonetheless important. The decision to license the re-foundation of political parties was taken later, in response to the Soviet initiative and the energetic activities of the Communists. The western Allies believed in a grass-roots approach, with the foundation of political parties first at a local level. Groups of individuals wishing to form new political parties were invited to apply for licenses in the autumn of 1945. Licensing was strictly controlled to ensure the democratic character of the new parties.

The re-founded SPD in the west, under its leader Kurt Schumacher, was bitterly hostile to the activities of the Communists. Despite the merger to form the SED in the Soviet zone, in the west the SPD and KPD remained very firmly separate and opposed organizations. As in the east, a new conservative grouping of both Catholics and Protestants formed the CDU; in Bavaria, this retained a separate

identity as the Christian Social Union (CSU). With the 1947 Ahlen programme, the CDU/CSU initially adopted a relatively radical or at least progressive social programme as part of official party policy. This was later downplayed and replaced by the more conservative views of the individual who was to dominate the CDU and West Germany

for the next decade and a half: Konrad Adenauer. Several liberal parties sprang up over the western zones of Germany, which eventually merged to become the Free Democratic Party (FDP). This grouping had a strong, right-wing, pro-business emphasis, in addition to more obviously 'liberal', individualist elements. There also existed a large number of very small parties, some never transcending the level of local politics, others laying more serious claim to wider representation of regional or special group interests (such as the *Bund der Heimatvertriebenen und Entrechteten* representing refugees and persons expelled from their eastern homelands). Many of these were separatist in aims; some were quite right-wing. In the occupation period and even at the beginning of the 1950s the party system in the western zones looked very like that of the Weimar Republic, with a relatively large number of small parties which under a system of proportional representation might bedevil attempts to find stable governmental coalitions. It was only in the course of the 1950S that the configuration of two main parties with a third small party holding the balance of power began to emerge.

The British and Americans were determined to give the Germans an experience of democracy working in practice at the level of local government. They wanted to install a basic framework, including rules of fair play, but encountered a number of difficulties in the process. Local studies have indicated that some obstacles were of the Allies' own making: Barbara Marshall's detailed study of Hanover, for example, has indicated that the British Military Government tended to favour and give unfair advantages to conservative groups rather than Social Democrats. The traditional penumbra of SPD youth, sporting and special interest groups was forbidden, depriving the SPD of one of its main organizational means of gaining and sustaining support. [6] Other studies, such as that by Rainer Schulze of the Chambers of

Commerce and Industry, have shown how British support of these employers' organizations allowed them to secure advantages in influencing the policies of, and placing individuals within, emerging right-wing political parties.7

There were also more politically neutral difficulties: the British, for example, set great store by the attempt to separate 'politics' from 'administration', politicians from civil servants, which in German traditions of local government had been conflated (as in the office which combined the functions of chief executive and mayor). There were also attempts in the British zone to replace the proportional representation voting system with the British system of 'first past the post', resulting in the hybrid compromise found in the later voting system of the Federal Republic (which combines both, as discussed further in Chapter Seven). Unforeseen problems were encountered with some of the aspects of democracy in post-Nazi Germany in practice. The Americans were somewhat taken aback when in one town a former Nazi mayor was re-elected, by democratic majority vote, as the new mayor. It was not immediately clear whether the most 'democratic' thing to do would be to reject the democratic vote for an undemocratic person, or to install, undemocratically, a democratic candidate against the wishes of the majority. What was clear, however, was that many Germans had little conception of what was meant by 'democracy': it was associated for those who were old enough to have experienced it as adults in the Weimar Republic with national defeat and humiliation, economic crisis, and political chaos. Now it was associated for many with the undemocratic imposition by victors on vanquished, and again with national defeat, humiliation and economic devastation. Concerted efforts had to be made to try to convince Germans that the ruins around them were the harvest of the Nazi tyranny and its consequences, rather than the necessary concomitants of political democracy. Many saw the occupation by the Allies as a 'Fourth Reich', no better than the Third. Even despite all these factors, however, in the course of the spring of 1946 local governments were formed in the western zones, and local German politicians who had been elected by Germans, rather than appointed by the Military

Governments, were able to start co-operating with their erstwhile enemies in the rebuilding of post-war Germany. They played what was certainly a subordinate, but

by no means unimportant, role in the reconstruction of German life.

Denazification and Re-Education

The problems facing the Allies in 1945 were immensely complex. They had to administer a war-torn country, attempt to get basic transport and communications functioning again, feed and house the hundreds of thousands eventually millions of refugees fleeing or expelled from former eastern homelands, and combat problems of homelessness, malnutrition and disease among the native population. At the same time, they had to be extremely suspicious of those Germans who were in a position to help administer affairs; they had to deal with the problem of taking over a society which had been run by Nazis and immersed in Nazism for over a decade.

Along with democratization, denazification was an agreed aim of all the occupying powers. It was generally accepted that in some way Germany must be cleansed of Nazis, that those guilty of sustaining Nazi rule must be punished, and that it was essential, if future peace was to be secured, that Germans should be convinced of the error of Nazi views and persuaded to assent to more democratic and peaceful values. Yet it was not at all clear how these various goals should be effected. In practice, the Allies in different ways stumbled through a series of changing conceptualizations and policies which produced their own quite curious and frequently wayward effects. Neither the negative tasks relating to denazification, nor the more positive programmes of re-education, could be said to amount to a straightforward success story in either the western or eastern zones.

The only part of these processes in which all the Allies collaborated was that of the Nuremberg Trials of the major war criminals. These lasted from 20 November 1945 to 1 October 1946. The war guilt of individuals was investigated, as well as that of the German

government, the General Staff of the Army, the SA, the SS, the SD, the Gestapo, and leaders of the NSDAP. The government and the Army General Staff were

cleared in general terms, but the other organizations mentioned were declared to be criminal. Three individuals were acquitted of charges of war crimes: Franz von Papen, Hjalmar Schacht, and Hans Fritzsche. Death sentences were pronounced on, among others, Joachim von Ribbentrop, Generals Keitel and Jodl, and Gauleiter Julius Streicher and (in his absence) on Martin Bormann. Goering committed suicide after being sentenced; Rudolf Hess was sentenced to life imprisonment, and remained in Spandau prison until his death in 1987; Walther Funk and Admiral Raeder also received life sentences but were released early because of ill-health. Others received shorter sentences: Admiral von Dönitz was released in 1956, Baron von Neurath in 1954, Baldur von Schirach in 1966, and Albert Speer also in 1966.

The Nuremberg trials raised a host of questions, legal, moral and political. To what extent could people be punished for actions which were not at the time a crime? Had war atrocities only been committed on the German side, and was it not simply a case of 'might makes right', with the victors claiming a spurious moral superiority over the vanquished? Would the German public not simply gain sympathy with their leaders who were on trial, and not really believe or become immune to the evidence of the atrocities that had been committed in their name? Despite initial war-time discussions about possible vengeance on a mass scale, the Allies finally agreed that it was important to restore a sense of the rule of law and justice in Germany; but in some respects the Nuremberg trials did not adequately fulfil these tasks. Nevertheless, these and succeeding war crimes trials did serve to raise a host of questions about the nature of guilt in Nazi Germany, such as that concerning the relative importance of giving orders from behind a desk far removed from the actual scene of the crime, or the implications of following orders and committing acts of

the utmost inhumanity under threat and duress.

Individuals continued to be investigated and tried for alleged war crimes by the Germans and other affected governments for decades after the end of the war. The German statute of limitations, which set a limit of twenty years in prosecutions for

murder, was lifted in 1969 to allow continued prosecutions for war crimes. Many criticisms have been raised about the Nazi war crimes trials. At first, it seemed that the Germans were less than energetic in pursuing prosecutions. A Central Office of *Land* Justice Departments was established at Ludwigsburg, near Stuttgart, in 1958 to co-ordinate investigations. By the end of 1964 two decades after the end of the war it had just over seven hundred cases in hand, leading to the trials of the later 1960s. Much of the credit for tracking down former Nazis must be given to the Simon Wiesenthal Centre, set up by a Jew who was determined neither to let the perpetrators of atrocities retire into happy civilian life nor to leave the nature of their crimes unrecorded. In the process of acquiring testimonies and accumulating evidence of the post-war fates and whereabouts of former Nazis, uncomfortable facts were discovered about the Allies' own treatment of some of them after the war. In particular, certain Nazis had been found very useful by the US government in its efforts to combat Communism in the Cold War, and had therefore been protected and aided in their disappearance in the post-war period. But despite both this sort of revelation, and the mounting and perpetually disturbing evidence of Nazi atrocities, later war trials gave rise to a range of criticisms. Elderly, pathetic figures were being brought to account for deeds committed in their youth, and while it could be fairly said that the disturbance to their health, reputation, tranquil retirement or family life was totally incommensurable with the appalling deeds for which they were being tried, legal aspects of some of the trials gave rise to concern. War crimes trials were increasingly hampered, too, by such problems as the reliability and availability of eye-witness testimony and of other evidence, decades after the events which were alleged to have occurred. They could however be justified in a number of ways, including the importance of educating a younger generation.

In the immediate post-war period, trials of individual war criminals could hardly help to deal with the far broader question of what to do with, and how to transform, a society which had been imbued with Nazism at all sorts of levels and in a variety of ways. At the more general level, that of the transformation of

German society, what denazification meant in detail depended on a variety of factors: on theories of the nature and roots of Nazism as a sociopolitical system; on assumptions about German society, about the bases of certain beliefs and behaviour, and the social determination or social location of political guilt; and on considerations about the exigencies of post-war reconstruction. The major difference was between the Soviet interpretation of Nazism as rooted in certain socio-economic conditions, with the correlate that the eradication of Nazism required major structural change, and the more individualistic, psychological western interpretations of the problem.

Even within the western camp there were considerable differences of interpretation. Some held the extreme view that all Germans were bad Germans, and endorsed the notion of 'collective guilt' which initially informed at least American policy in Germany. Others wished to distinguish between real Nazis, nominal Nazis, and non and anti-Nazi Germans. Once the principle of distinction was accepted, the problem arose of the criteria by which people could be thus classified. Left-wing and Marxist-influenced intellectuals in Britain and America held the view that certain prominent social groups bore a greater burden of responsibility than others. But, in practice, after the initial period when automatic arrest categories were employed (for example, for SS personnel), the question was refocused at the individual level, and the task became one of trying to find appropriate external indices or evidence for internal predispositions and states of mind. The complications proved to be immense. For example, Party membership might indicate commitment to Nazi ideals; it might indicate (as for those joining after it became compulsory for certain professional groups in 1937) a desire to support one's family by retaining one's job; it might even indicate a desire to work against Nazism from within, or to fill a position for fear of replacement by someone worse. More

problematic, membership could subsequently be represented as having been motivated by the highest ideals, there being no real means of checking claims about inner state against ambiguous external evidence. Most people could in any case persuade themselves of the acceptability and justifiability

of their actions, and produce appropriate testimonies to their character, forgetting the ambivalence, the compromises, and the baser considerations of the past. Important, too, were the practical problems of implementation, the unintended effects, and the other considerations which arose to alter the subsequent course of denazification. In no zone did denazification present a simple, clear, consistent story.

In the Soviet zone, given the primarily structural and socio-economic interpretation of Nazism which prevailed, major efforts were devoted to the radical transformation of social and economic organization. Apart from the land reform which served to abolish the Junker class, the resources of certain Nazi industrialists were expropriated, and there were reforms of industry and finance which had not merely reparations as their aim. The Soviets were concerned also to oust individual Nazis from important positions. They carried out purges not only in the political and administrative spheres, but also in the teaching profession and the judiciary. The degrees of thoroughness varied in different areas. By October 1945, only 26% of remaining teachers in Mecklenburg and 24% in Brandenburg had been members of the NSDAP, while in Saxony and Thuringia the figures were 67% and 68% respectively. 8 The office of the US High Commissioner for Germany produced a report on the 'Sovietization of the Public School System in East Germany' in 1951 which estimated that by 1949 over 80% of lower school staff in the Soviet zone were new teachers, and that in 1948 two-thirds of schoolteachers were under thirty-five years of age.9 The Soviet purge of the *Land* bureaucracies produced comparably variable results, with Thuringia again notably lagging behind. More lenient attitudes appear to have been adopted in relation to the medical profession, given the concern about public health.10 Distinctions had been made between 'nominal' and 'activist' Nazis as

early as November 1945, and from 1947, there was something of an amnesty for 'small Nazis' who were prepared to join in the building of a new society. Restrictions on the activities and rights of former Nazis were removed in stages in 1948 and 1949, and in 1952 full rights as citizens of the GDR were granted to all former Nazis insofar as they were not war criminals.[11] On the

positive side of re-education, strenuous efforts were devoted to changing the content of education in schools, to the production of newspapers proclaiming the Soviet line, and to evening classes and Party schools expounding the tenets of Marxism Leninism as currently interpreted.

Denazification lurched along in curious ways in the western zones. It was not quite clear whether the aim was to punish or to rehabilitate former Nazis; and whether the intention was to cleanse the political, administrative and economic spheres of their presence, or to cleanse former Nazis of the taint of Nazism in order to reinstate them in their former areas of expertise. In contrast to the Soviet zone, which effected a major restructuring of society, along with a replacement of old elites by new personnel, as well as permitting individual rehabilitation, the western zones tended towards rehabilitation rather than transformation. In this respect, the charge of certain radical critics that West German history represents a case of missed opportunities, and restoration rather than transformation, may with qualifications be upheld.

By the early summer of 1945, there were at least four directives, partially mutually contradictory, concerning denazification in the American zone. These gave way to the directive of 7 July 1945, which decided on the notion of 'guilt-by-officeholding', with 136 mandatory removal categories. [12] This was followed by General Lucius Clay's Law no. 8 of 26 September 1945, which extended denazification into the economic sphere, decreeing that Nazis should be employed only in menial positions. (This gave rise to considerable re-labelling of jobs, to make elevated jobs appear more mundane.) Law no. 8 marked the first shift away from an emphasis on structural location and towards a focus on individual beliefs and private predispositions. This shift was consolidated when on 5 March 1946 the compromise Law for

Liberation from National Socialism (*Befreiungsgesetz*) came into force. The automatic arrests of the previous year had produced, by the winter of 1945 6, full internment camps and empty offices (in Niethammer's formulation), with associated problems both of injustice to individuals and loss of expertise

in administrative and public life. Under the new law, individual cases were to be considered in detail by tribunals, staffed by Germans but supervised by the Allies, on the basis of previously completed detailed questionnaires (*Fragebögen*) with 131 questions on all aspects of political orientation and activity during the Third Reich. The information provided in these questionnaires was intended to permit the classification of individuals into one of five categories: (I) major offenders; (2) offenders; (3) lesser offenders; (4) followers or fellow-travellers; (5) exonerated. Appeals could be made to the tribunals, on production of appropriate evidence, to achieve an amelioration of classification. On the basis of final classification, individuals might be imprisoned, or fined, or restricted in their activities and employment, or given a clean bill of political health and permitted to return into the community as free citizens. The whole procedure was immensely cumbersome, producing vast and unmanageable quantities of paperwork and ever-increasing backlogs of unprocessed cases. 'Easy' cases were dealt with first, with the result that those who were more compromised by their political past were left until later, when greater lenience prevailed, or even managed to escape the net altogether. There were gross differences in implementation across the zones: while in the British zone nearly ninety per cent emerged as 'exonerated', only just over a third were similarly exculpated in the American zone and just over a half in the French zone. Equally, only one-tenth were deemed to be 'followers' in the British zone, compared with over half in the US zone and a little under a half in the French zone. [13]

The denazification process involved manifest injustice, giving rise to assorted criticisms from different sections of society. In Bremen, for example, it was reported that while the middle classes were maintaining that denazification was too severe, and bemoaning the

loss of expertise because of the penalization of purely nominal and professionally necessary party membership, the working classes were by contrast complaining of lack of sufficient severity and that, as usual, the really big Nazis were getting away free.14 Many felt that the 'small fry' were being caught and punished while the 'big fry' escaped the net. The

need for paper credentials led to the mass production of' Persil certificates' (*Persilscheine*), as people sought testimonials from worthy and respected members of the community, such as priests and pastors, affirming that they had always been good Christians and only nominal Nazis. The tribunals soon came to be likened to laundries: one entered wearing a brown shirt and left with a clean starched white shirt instead. Denazification had finally become, not the cleansing of German economy, administration and society of Nazis, but rather the cleansing and rehabilitation of individuals. Gradually, as practical problems mounted and other preoccupations began to take precedence, denazification processes were wound up, at different dates in the different *Länder*, such that by the early 1950s they were all terminated. There was even a swing in the other direction; under a law based on Article 131 of the Basic Law, former civil servants were granted their jobs back, or retired on full pensions.

The actual effects of denazification procedures appear to have been somewhat wayward. Apart from the failure to effect a general purge or a far-reaching replacement of old by new elites, the ultimately rehabilitative focus of western denazification efforts did not even appear to provoke much serious soul-searching or confrontation with one's past on the part of most Germans who went through it. The major concern was for individual survival: for self-justification, a whitewashing of the past, the production of testimonials reinterpreting former activities in a favourable light. Most Germans now attempted to represent themselves as always having been (at least secretly, whatever their outward behaviour) 'against it' (*immer dagegen*), and as having had the best of motives for having done, or belonged to, whatever they did. Some observers bitterly commented that, the way Germans were talking now, Hitler must have been the only Nazi in Germany. Moreover, the manifest discrepancies in the treatment of

different individuals, and the general sense of injustice at the crudities of Allied conceptualization and approaches to denazification, arguably served to create a 'community of the aggrieved', a sense among Germans of a common fate and a common hostility against the occupying powers. These were hardly appropriate conditions

in which to attempt to transform German political attitudes in democratic directions.

Denazification was the negative aspect of the attempted transformation process; re-education represented the more positive side. Yet the story of re-education attempts is similarly one of policy confusion, difficulties in implementation, and minimal, irrelevant, or wayward effects. At school level, the western Allies failed to restructure the education system in any radical manner, giving way to German conservative and Christian insistence on retaining the tripartite selective system and the confessional schools. Within the old, pre-Nazi school structure, the main problems were those of adequate staffing, the provision of politically acceptable textbooks, and the finding of suitable accommodation among the ruins. That the schools functioned at all, and kept ill-clad and hungry children off the streets, is in itself something of an achievement. But there is little evidence to suggest that at this most direct of levels, the education system managed to inculcate much in the way of democratic attitudes. In higher education, there were persistent complaints of collusion among senior university administrators and academics to protect former Nazis, and accusations that these institutions had failed to denazify themselves adequately. There was also considerable evidence of the persistence of right-wing and racialist attitudes among students. 15 The impact of explicitly propagandist films, like *Todesmühlen*, on concentration camps, is hard to ascertain; but it appears not to have been very deep or widespread. Perhaps the most successful organ of re-education was the licensed press: newspapers produced by politically acceptable Germans do appear to have had a wide and receptive readership and may arguably have played a notable role in some transformation of attitudes in the early post-war years. In the Soviet zone, however, the overtly propagandistic and ideological line

of the newspapers was so patently belied by personal experience that it is likely they had little impact.16

Probably more important than the explicit denazification and re-education programmes in the remoulding of German society in the eastern and western zones were the social and economic transformations of the occupation period. In the

west, the change from the initial punitive measures to a focus on economic recovery set West Germany on the path to becoming a flourishing capitalist economy; in the east, the radical socio-economic reforms in agriculture, industry and finance started the process of transformation into a Soviet-style society. In each case, such measures played a major role in the reshaping of the political attitudes and perceptions of the population. But the fact that West Germany ultimately developed into a stable democracy, to a considerable degree as a result of post-war economic success, should not serve to obscure the shortcomings of the denazification and re-education processes of the occupation period. 'Nazism' may not have survived, for other reasons; but the effects of the western Allies' policies were to feed the collective amnesia evident in much of post-war West German history and to compound the difficulties many West Germans experienced in coming to terms with their past, just as surely as the Communists' failure to confront the German legacy together with their assumption of a clean bill of political health formed part of the historical distortions and difficulties which hampered the creation of a new national identity in the truncated state of East Germany.

Economic Revival and Transformation

The economy was the key arena for the transformation of Germany into a divided state and diverging societies. Differences in economic policy between the occupying powers both precipitated and symbolized their wider political dissimilarities; and differences in economic policy in the different zones set the pattern for long-term contrasts in the social and political structures of the two Germanies. In the east, despite no initial Soviet commitment to staying in Germany, the measures taken nevertheless radically altered East German socio-economic structure and were consistent with the subsequent sovietization of the zone; in the west, the initial fairly draconian

attitude gave way to a focus on reconstruction, under the broad aegis of the Marshall Plan, which facilitated West Germany's renowned

economic growth, material prosperity, political conservatism and western integration. On both sides, economic circumstances were probably far more important than directly political measures (such as re-education) in affecting the political attitudes of the people.

The beginnings were scarcely promising: a devastated, war-torn country, with few functioning means of communication, little fuel, food or resources, appalling housing conditions particularly in the cities, and, by the winter of 19467, the serious danger of famine. An additional problem was the mass movement and resettlement of around ten million people. Apart from the problem of returning prisoners of war, there was the massive problem of refugees. Those from the eastern provinces who had not joined the treks westwards fleeing before the advances of the Red Army in the closing months of the war now found themselves being expelled from their homelands as a result of Germany's changed boundaries agreed at the Potsdam Conference. Taking what few possessions they could carry, they were herded onto trains for the west; in the course of the journey, frequent ambushes plundering the trains meant that many arrived only with the clothes in which they were dressed. Although some settled in the Soviet zone, others saw this as only a transitional stop on the way to resettlement in the western zones. Agricultural and less populated areas which had escaped the bombing inflicted on the towns and cities bore the brunt of housing the refugee population. In some areas in north Germany, refugees formed as much as fifty per cent of the population, and there were inevitably frictions between natives and refugees. Conflicts were based not only, and obviously, on resentment over differential distribution of scarce resources (food and fuel), but were rooted also in differences of culture, religion, dialect and life-style. Furthermore, it was not only refugees who were facing immense problems of adaptation to changed circumstances: natives as well had

to come to terms with the radically changed conditions of post-war, occupied Germany. [17]

Social and cultural problems compounded the more purely economic and material sources of stress. Overcrowded, cramped living conditions, with several families sharing rooms, cooking

and washing facilities, and widespread exhaustion and illness in addition to psychological disorientation, were exacerbated by prejudices and misunderstandings. For both natives and refugees, there were breakdowns of 'normal' family life, with the loss of many husbands and fathers, and women bearing the brunt of what has been called 'survival work' in the 'hour of the women'. 18 Women took a large share, not only in feeding and caring for their own families, but also in the hard physical labour of rebuilding from the rubble and ruins of post-war Germany. The concept of *Trümmerfrauen*, bands of women passing stones and bricks from one to the next in the reconstruction of ruined buildings, encapsulates and symbolizes the circumstances of the time (*see* plate 12). In what was barely a subsistence economy, money became almost meaningless. The severely restricted calories nominally available on ration cards had to be supplemented with the products of bartering, 'hamstering', and the exchange of goods and services on the black market. It was more profitable to go out foraging in the countryside, or to engage in 'trading upwards' through a succession of goods, cigarettes, drink, chocolate, and services (including prostitution), than to labour in a paid, full-time job precluding such activities. Archbishop Frings unwittingly gave his name to a new activity, fringsen, when in a sermon he implied that stealing coal to keep one's family warm was not a heinous offence in these circumstances. Many took this to legitimize their or their children's activities. The black market became an essential sector of the economy, and one which had eventually to be conquered in order to restore more orthodox life.

The Allies were torn between, on the one hand, concerns for both punishment of the Germans and reparations for themselves, and, on the other, the desire to avert widespread starvation and associated social unrest. Particularly in the west, it was feared that Communism

would spread rapidly if economic conditions were bad. Moreover, each of the Allies was also attempting, in however confused and tentative a fashion, to reshape its part of Germany in a new image, appropriate to varying visions of a future political and economic order in Europe. Hence there were inconsistencies and changes

in policy, although Soviet policies can perhaps be seen as the most consistent combination: the exaction of maximum reparations alongside maximal restructuring, throughout the occupation period.

The Soviet zone of occupied Germany had certain initial economic advantages. Although its population was about 40% of that of the western zones, its fixed industrial capital was about 48% of that of the western zones. The northern parts of the area were largely agricultural, but in the south, particularly in Saxony and Thuringia, there were major industrial centres. The Soviet zone had been less badly affected by war damage and bombing than the western zones (with notable individual exceptions, such as Dresden): its loss of productive capacity through war damage has been estimated at approximately 15%, compared with 2 % in the west. However, it did suffer from certain disadvantages. The area covered by the Soviet zone had been a rather specialized, non-self-sufficient economy: in particular, it was dependent on the west for raw materials. It had, for example, produced only 2% of the Reich's hard coal and pig iron, and 7% of the Reich's steel, by the end of the war. It was also to some extent dependent on lost provinces further to the east for agricultural imports and some coal. Thus, while it was intrinsically a highly productive area, it was dependent on a particular network of trade links in the former Reich, and would suffer particularly adverse consequences from a severance of these links. Furthermore, it had a relatively unfavourable demographic structure. Partly owing to the war losses of young males, there was a preponderance of the old and of females. Initially there was an influx of refugees fleeing from territories further east, and exacerbating shortages of food and housing; before the advantages of the increased labour force could be realized, however, there were subsequent losses of population through further movements to the western zones. [19]

Whatever the initial disadvantages and advantages of the economic situation in the Soviet zone, matters were undoubtedly worsened by Soviet occupation policies. Soviet dismantling reduced the productive capacity of the zone by about 26%, compared with a figure of 12% for the western zones. By the

spring of 1948, the Soviets had dismantled over 1900 plants, almost 1700 of them completely. Including war damage, the total loss of productive capacity was about 50% compared to 1939 (although according to some economists, productive capacity was still greater in the late 1940s than in the mid-1930s, due to the increased productivity of the last pre-war years). The scale of dismantling was one indication that the Soviets had no initial firm intention to remain on German soil in the long term; they at this time appeared to want to get in, take what they could, and get out although only on certain terms. However, even from this point of view, their dismantling policies which were obviously detrimental to the economy of the area proved problematic. Much of the equipment became rusty or was damaged during its transportation to the Soviet Union; and more complex equipment, once dismantled, could not be successfully reassembled in the USSR. One solution was to ship out German experts along with their machinery, in order to reassemble and operate it in the USSR. Another was to leave equipment in Germany but appropriate the product. In June 1946 twenty-five Soviet joint-stock companies (SAGs) were formed, with 213 firms, producing thirty-two per cent of the total production of the Soviet zone, taken over into Soviet ownership. These were gradually phased back into German state ownership in the period 194954. The Soviets also exacted considerable reparations and occupation costs. Up to 1953, about one quarter of the zone's national product was spent on occupation costs and reparations payments (compared with a figure for the west of perhaps 1115% in the period up to 1949). It has been estimated although precise calculations are highly contested that by 1955 the total value of goods and services taken by the Soviets was in the order of $30 billion, as against an agreed figure of $10 billion.

Quite apart from their attempts to gain some form of compensation for

the enormous material and human losses imposed on them by German aggression, the Soviets implemented certain economic policies designed so to transform the socio-economic structure of their zone that there could never again, in the Soviet view, be the material basis for a

Nazi/capitalist militarism. They sought to eradicate the Junker class and the large capitalists in a stroke.

In September 1945, about seven thousand large estates (those over 100 hectares, approximately 250 acres) and those belonging to former 'Nazi activists' were expropriated. This amounted to about thirty per cent of the agriculturally fruitful area of the zone. Some of the land was redistributed to form peasant smallholdings; the rest was taken into state-owned farms (*Volkseigene Güter*). The small peasant land-holdings were too small to be economically viable, and lacked adequate equipment to be farmed properly. This cunningly produced a situation in which those in receipt of land might be both grateful for what they had been given, and yet dependent on state support to make any use of it. [20] This strategy aided the later development of co-operative forms of organization (such as the introduction of tractor-lending stations) and facilitated the first collectivization of agriculture in 1952.

In July 1945 there was a move from private to centralized state banking, and private insurance companies were merged into five public insurance corporations, one for each *Land*. In industry, there were comparable moves. Thuringia started transferring mines and minerals into state ownership in September 1945, followed by other states in the next two years. In October 1945 ten thousand individual enterprises owned by 'Nazi activists' were sequestered. In June 1946 there was a plebiscite on expropriation in Saxony. This produced a high turnout, with an overwhelming majority in favour of expropriation. (There was a 93.7% turnout; 77.6% voted in favour, 16.5% against, with 5 8% of the votes cast invalid.) It is notable that some of the economic measures of the Soviet occupation were at least initially welcomed by sizeable numbers of the populace, despite their hostility towards Soviet politics. This was taken as a general mandate

legitimizing expropriations in other *Länder* in the zone without prior plebiscite. In April 1948 expropriated enterprises became *Volkseigene Betriebe* (VEBs). Along with the Soviet-owned SAGs they accounted for about 60% of industry's gross product. Between 1949 and 1955 remaining private enterprises suffered detrimental tax, price and planning measures. By 1955, the

private sector accounted for about 15 % of industrial production; by 1970, as little as 2%, frequently in the form of part ownership with the state.

The western Allies were not initially clear about their economic plans for post-war Germany. Just as in the sphere of denazification there was a switch from drastic notions of collective guilt to an eventual policy of rehabilitation, so in the sphere of economic policy there was a radical change in approach. It was obvious that a primary aim of the Allies must be to prevent a resurgence of German militarism as a threat to peace, but it was not clear as to how best this was to be achieved. The early Morgenthau plan for the deindustrialization of Germany, despite its mixed reception, found some echoes in the economic proposals in the Potsdam Agreement, as well as in the Level-of-Industry Plan of March 1946. According to this, Germany's standard of living was to be reduced to the 1932 level, and was not to exceed that of other European countries; industrial capacity was to be reduced to about 5055% of the 1938 level; about 1546 plants were to be dismantled in the western zones; and there were limits on the output of almost all industries, with some (armaments and war-related) banned entirely. Only coal output was to expand. This plan was related to reparations agreements which, because of the deterioration of East-West relations, were not in practice effected; in particular, after a couple of months the agreement on partial exchange of food and raw materials from the Soviet zone for products of western dismantling was terminated. While opinion in the USA had been divided, Britain was always strongly conscious of the problems that a deindustrialization of Germany would bring, particularly with respect to feeding the German population. However, it was not only for practical reasons (the attempt to prevent mass starvation) but also because of the developing Cold War, that western approaches to the

German economy changed.

The change was signalled in the speech by US Secretary of State James Byrnes in Stuttgart on 6 September 1946, when the German public learned for the first time explicitly that it was to receive more lenient treatment. In the spring and summer of 1947 the shift in policy was confirmed. On 1 January

1947 the Bizone was created out of the British and American zones, ostensibly to allow for a more efficient joint economic administration, but to all intents and purposes actually creating a new, West German political unit in which the Economic Council acted as quasi-government. In March April 1947 the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers saw a breakdown in East-West relations and the Truman doctrine enunciated the American policy of containing the advance of Communism. Associated with this shift in priorities, away from anti-Nazism and towards anti-Communism, was a major shift in economic policy. On 5 June 1947 US Secretary of State George Marshall, in a speech at a Harvard graduation ceremony, called for a European Recovery Programme. This was rejected in July by the USSR and by the East European states, because it was predicated on a market (rather than state-controlled and centrally directed) economy which would benefit American exports. Effectively the USA was now to support the economic recovery of western Europe, and in particular of western Germany, both for the economic benefits it would bring to the American economy which was seeking overseas markets, and for the political motive of seeking a bulwark against the expansion of communism in central Europe. The USA now officially supported the view that 'an orderly and prosperous Europe requires the economic contributions of a stable and prosperous Germany'. [21] In late August 1947, the revised Level-of-Industry Plan permitted increased production in the American and British zones to approximately 7075% of the 1938 level.

Subsequent developments in economic policy in the western zones were closely linked with the political division of Germany. Both to facilitate the introduction of Marshall Aid, and to combat the problems of the black market, a currency reform was introduced in the western zones on 20 June 1948, in which the new Deutschmark

accomplished an effective devaluation of the old Reichsmark and achieved, in conjunction with the lifting of price controls on many items, a stabilization of the economy in the western zones and a return to money as the unit of currency (rather than cigarettes or direct barter and exchange of goods and services). The currency reform in the west was

soon followed by both a comparable currency reform in the Soviet zone, and by an attempt by the Soviet Union to cut Berlin off from communications with the western zones. The 'Berlin Blockade' lasted from 24 June 1948 to 12 May 1949, when the road, rail and water routes to Berlin were blockaded, and the western powers flew supplies into Berlin by air routes, dropping food to Berliners from so-called 'raisin bombers'. As Grosser has pointed out, this transformed Berlin overnight from being perceived as a bastion of Nazism and Prussian militarism to being the symbolic last outpost of freedom and democracy in the western sense, to be protected at all costs. [22] The end of the airlift which amounted to 277,000 flights came when the political division of Germany was effectively accomplished, as will be seen below.

It is notable that, in contrast to the Soviet zone, there were no radical transformations in economic structure in the western zones of occupation. In the case of land reform, the argument could be made that there were in any event few large estates to be divided in the west. The Soviets had in their zone the main areas of the Junker estates. Nevertheless, what land reform there might have been in the west was deflected, partly by the representations of interested German land-owners, partly because of lack of clarity and forcefulness in Allied policy-making in this area. In some areas, there were moves for a serious restructuring of the German economy moves which were often met with considerable German resistance, and which did not always achieve lasting changes. In banking and industry, attempts were made to break up trusts and cartels. The Deutsche Bank, Dresdner Bank and Commerzbank were to be split into thirty successor institutions with geographic limits; I. G. Farben was broken up into four successor companies in 1953; the twelve largest coal and steel concerns were turned into twenty-eight independent successor

companies, and the links between coal and iron were broken. But despite Allied pressures for decartelization, and the eventual passing of a watered-down decartelization law in 1957, the concentration of the West German economy continued in the post-war period.

Nevertheless, it can be argued that in more subtle, less immediately obvious ways, there was in fact a major socio-economic reorientation taking place in the western zones of Germany. In the immediate post-war period, many people thought the way was open for a socialist transformation of Germany. The Allies' decision to suppress indigenous anti-fascist groups and support moderate and conservative political parties was paralleled in the sphere of economic policy. Indigenous demands, for example, for the socialization of mines, were peremptorily dealt with by the Americans. Socialization measures proposed by the *Land* governments of Hesse and North-Rhine Westphalia were suppressed by the Americans and under American pressure the British respectively. Subtle pressures were exerted by the Americans to split communist and socialist trade unions, to isolate the former and moderate the latter. A frequently overlooked aspect of the Marshall Plan was its influence on what might be called the political culture of the economy. Beyond the giving of Marshall Aid with attached conditions and constraints, there was a great emphasis on exporting a notion of an 'American way of life'. This stressed the importance of enhanced productivity and the reduction of political disputes to technical problems of producing a greater shared abundance. [23] A potential 'Third Way', to which many Germans had looked with hope in the later 1940s, was as much suppressed in the West channelled into an American-influenced mould as it was in the East by the obviously and visibly radical sovietization of the economy.

This is not to suggest that American views were simply imprinted on West Germany. The so-called 'social market economy' which emerged under the guidance of Ludwig Erhard a former Professor of Economics who became West Germany's first Economics Minister, and eventually Chancellor from 1963 to 1966 was a complex product

of American influence and German interest group pressures, on the part of both employers and employees. There was considerable resistance and opposition by German political and economic elites, as well as by trade unionists, to different aspects of American economic policies. Initial measures by the Americans such

as those relating to decartelization were met with hostility, and subsequent developments tended to reverse, water down, or amend certain aspects so as to deflect their impact from original intentions. It can also be argued that the strength of radicalism in late 1940s Germany was not as great as some interpretations of 'missed chances' suggest: for example, the depoliticization of strikes which narrowed their goals to purely economic demands on wages and conditions was evident already in 1947. Yet, however difficult to quantify, a certain weight must be given particularly to American influence in setting West Germany on the course of a moderate, liberal-conservative form of western capitalism. And the importance of the economic success of that form of capitalism for the subsequent political stability of West Germany can scarcely be overrated.

The Cold War and the Division of Germany

In 1949, two German states were founded, dividing German soil. Between them lay the border that Winston Churchill, in a famous speech in Fulton, Missouri, on 5 March 1946, had dubbed an 'iron curtain' dividing west from east, the free world and democracy from dictatorship and communism. West Germans and the western allies effectively jettisoned the Germans living in the Soviet zone in the east, in favour of integrating a partial state into a new order in western Europe.

Who was responsible for the division? Debates continue over interpretations of the Cold War more generally was it the Soviet Union or the USA which was the primary aggressor? Did the Americans misjudge and exaggerate Soviet expansionism, or did they simply act appropriately to contain a real Soviet threat? These wider debates obviously have relevance to attempts to understand the division of Germany, but further factors are also of importance here.

For example, whatever the origins of the Cold War, it is conceivable that Germany could have remained united, as a neutral power (as was in the end the case with Austria), with the Iron Curtain running along a different frontier. Moreover, in asking who was responsible for the division of Germany, one must focus not only on the superpowers, but

also on the role played by the Germans themselves. While the chronological stages of division may relatively easily be recounted with the west appearing to take the initiative at almost every turn the balance of interpretation must remain somewhat more tentative.

Elements of a post-war division into 'spheres of influence' had already been mooted in informal 'friendly agreements' between Churchill and Stalin in 1944. But while recognizing the legitimacy of spheres of influence in an informal way, no decisions had been reached on Germany in particular before the end of the war. An important factor after the cessation of hostilities was the zonal, rather than central, level of effective administration, as we have seen above. This inevitably led to the *defacto* divergence of socio-economic and political conditions in each zone. But a major factor was the increasing concern of the Americans with a perceived Soviet threat.

It was the British who first seriously considered, not the dismemberment of Germany into a number of small states (as had been mooted in some wartime plans) but rather division with a western partial state corresponding to the western zones of occupation. In April 1946, amidst growing fears about Soviet intentions, the British Foreign Office decided that the West German *Länder* would have to be strengthened and made able to resist any communist dominated central government; and that if it were to come to a division of Germany, the Soviet Union would have to be made to look responsible. 24 The dissolution of the former province of Prussia, and the founding of North-Rhine Westphalia as a large state encompassing the industrially important and politically contentious Ruhr district, must be seen in this context. So must the discussions between the Americans and the British which led to the fusing of their two zones into the Bizone, coming into effect in January 1947. The

British had quite pragmatic considerations: their economy was suffering badly after the war, with bread rationing being introduced for the first time in July 1946, and the British having to borrow American dollars to feed the Germans while their own people who had 'won' the war were suffering economic hardships in peacetime. For a range of different reasons the Americans came round to

the view that German economic recovery was to be encouraged. The Stuttgart speech by James Byrnes in September 1946 was the first official signal that the punitive approach to post-war Germany had finally been dropped.

In 1947 the Cold War became public. On 12 March 1947 American President Harry Truman made his famous speech to the American Congress enunciating what became known as the Truman Doctrine. Initially arising as a specific response to a specific crisis the situation in Greece Truman's emphasis on the 'containment of communism' was generally interpreted as having wider, indeed universal, implications. America was formally committed to a world policy of stemming what it saw as the tide of Soviet expansionism, wherever it might occur. With the failure of the Foreign Ministers Conference in Moscow, the British and Americans set in train moves to transform the economic administration of their new Bizone into a quasi-political structure, providing the embryo of a new western state. The new Economic Council of the Bizone prefigured the immediate political future of the Federal Republic in more than purely formal respects. The SPD delegates, failing to obtain the position of *Wirtschaftsdirektor* for their party, opted to sit in 'constructive opposition', renouncing the chance of fundamentally affecting economic policy and foreshadowing their role in the best part of the next twenty years of West Germany's history. In June 1947, the Marshall Plan for the recovery of post-war Europe was announced on terms which made it impossible for Soviet-occupied East European states to accept. As the economic division of Germany became more apparent, so the political division the need for political institutions to administer economic policies in the west became more inevitable. It was clear even before it began that the Foreign Ministers Conference in London of November December 1947 was doomed to fail. France

still proved a recalcitrant partner for the British and Americans, having designs on the coal-rich Saarland (which was in fact administered separately from the Federal Republic until it rejoined West Germany after a plebiscite in 1957) and disagreeing with British and American policies on the Ruhr. But in 1948 the latter pair went ahead with their plans for

the political reorganization of the Bizone into a shadow state; and finally, recognizing the inevitable, France joined to form a 'Trizonia' in the spring of 1949.

By the summer of 1948, with the currency reform and the Berlin blockade in full effect, the division of Germany appeared more or less a fait accompli. There was one last-minute attempt to consider alternatives, in a plan put forward in May 1948 by the British Military Governor in Germany, Sir Brian Robertson; but this was rejected by a sceptical British Foreign Office. In the West German zones, a Parliamentary Council formed of representatives from the West German *Land* parliaments met to draw up a new constitution for a West German state. This, a document deemed to be sufficiently impermanent and committed to reunification to warrant the term 'Basic Law' (*Grundgesetz*) rather than 'constitution', was formally approved on 8 May 1949 and, with the signature of the Allies, came into effect on 23 May 1949, four years to the day after German capitulation and the dissolution of the government of the German Reich. On 14 August 1949 the first national elections were held in the new Federal Republic of Germany; and, after some bargaining with the FDP, Konrad Adenauer of the CDU became West Germany's first Chancellor four weeks later. The Federal Republic had been launched onto a particular course; and, under Adenauer's leadership, it was to set its face firmly towards the west in the coming decade, suppressing both memories of the past and concern for the lost Germans in the east.

In response to, and lagging behind, developments in the west were the steps towards the establishment of an East German state in the Soviet zone. The radical socio-economic measures in the Soviet zone had been paralleled by increasing Communist control of political life, with the Stalinization of the SED and increasing coercion by the SED of

the other parties. Given what was occurring under Soviet influence elsewhere in Eastern Europe (particularly Poland and Czechoslovakia), there was good reason for the western powers to fear Stalin's ultimate designs in respect of the Soviet zone of Germany. Attempts at co-operation between the former war-time allies had clearly broken

down. Yet the formal stages in the foundation of the GDR arose as responses to western initiatives. On 14 June 1947 the Soviets founded the German Economic Commission (*Deutsche Wirtschaftskommission*) in response to the western foundation of the Economic Council. The German Economic Commission took over central administration of the economy in the Soviet zone in March 1948. The German Democratic Republic was formally founded on 7 October 1949, after the foundation of the FRG. The first constitution of the GDR was in principle very similar to that of the FRG, so as not to prejudice the possibility of reunification; as we shall see, it was subsequently amended in 1968 and 1974 to conform somewhat more accurately to the realities of East German political life. Wilhelm Pieck was elected first (and only) President of the GDR, with Otto Grotewohl as Prime Minister; the real power, however, lay with the SED and its leader, the Moscow-trained Walter Ulbricht, who was to consolidate his power in the coming decade.

Who, then, was primarily responsible for this division of Germany? The most obvious first answer to this question must be one which is in fact frequently overlooked: the Germans themselves. Had they not unleashed a World War, had they not declared war on the Soviet Union and the USA, and involved these powers in the affairs of central Europe, there would have been no post-war reorganization of the international system. This simple fact should not be forgotten and particularly not by self-pitying Germans who want to place the blame on one or the other superpower. However, even beyond this obvious point, there is a further degree of responsibility to be apportioned to the post-war Germans themselves, particularly in the west. West German political elites, whatever their lip service to the goal of unity, were prepared to contemplate with some equanimity the prospect of material prosperity and political and military security at the price of

jettisoning their East German relatives. They participated actively, and co-operated efficiently, in the establishment of a new economic order and a new political framework for a partial nation, a western state, and did remarkably little to attempt to hinder or alter the course of division. Even on the one occasion when it appeared that all German politicians were hoping to

discuss frankly among themselves the consequences of Allied policies the meeting of German Prime Ministers in Munich in June 1947 the western politicians were not prepared to keep open channels of communication between themselves and their eastern counterparts, or explore the extent to which the latter really were dominated by Moscow. They showed intransigence in refusing even to let the East German politicians read out a prepared statement prior to the start of proceedings. As will be seen in the next chapter, the determination of certain West German politicians to achieve western unity at the expense of the east was even more apparent in 1952, when reunification for a moment appeared a possibility. So while many Germans might have been longing for unity, certain West German politicians in key positions were acting to undermine whatever formal noises they were making about national reunification.

In relation to the respective contributions of the superpowers, analyses of Soviet policy must remain partly a matter of guesswork. It does however seem clear that western integration of part of a divided Germany, and the reconstruction of the West German economy in the wider framework of West European economic recovery, was very much in both the political and the economic interests of the USA. Politically, a strong, well-integrated, materially prosperous western Europe would provide an effective military defence against communist aggression, while also being less susceptible to communist infiltration or subversion from within. Economically, American capitalism required the sort of international market which a flourishing western Europe could provide. So it was clearly a realignment of the international system which would operate to America's advantage. Whether the American perception of the Soviet threat was exaggerated must remain an open question. The Soviet Union, with its war-ravaged economy, and its experience of invasion

by western powers in 1919 and in 1941 was clearly concerned to have a defensive belt of compliant satellite states between itself and the west. The extent to which it wanted to have an East Germany as one of these satellites is however another matter, and it seems likely that for a considerable period of time Stalin was keeping his options open on this. It might have suited Soviet

interests just as well to have taken what was possible by way of reparations, and then left a united, neutral Germany in central Europe, in a position rather like that of Austria. The British and French were influenced by consideration of possible future alignments of a united Germany: the 'Rapallo complex', or fear of an arrangement between Germany and Russia, undoubtedly played a large role, particularly in French thinking. In any event, both superpowers made the best of the final outcome; and the communist bloc certainly benefited from the inclusion of industrialized, productive East Germany in its economic camp.

What then did Germany look like in the year of the foundation of the new Republics? In the West, an economic upswing was already becoming evident: the black market had disappeared almost overnight after the currency reform and a return to, or a development of, 'normal' life seemed to be possible even for the many refugees who were beginning to find jobs and new lives in what was essentially a new country. Moreover, the people of West Germany were beginning to be valued by the western powers as good democrats, partners in the international freedom fight against the evils of communism. With the foundation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in April 1949, following the Organization for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) one year earlier, the western world was becoming reorganized militarily and economically. At first, West Germany's western neighbours particularly France treated her with some caution, and measures such as international control of steel and coal production in the Ruhr were designed to contain any future German threat. In the longer term, these developments were to feed into closer West European economic co-operation and in particular into the European Community even in 1990 seen as a means of binding a by then powerful and wealthy Germany into a wider set of containing

structures. In 1949, many West Germans saw a potential new role in a new Europe. They could set their sights forward, and try to forget or repress the traumas of the recent past. In the East, things did not appear nearly so rosy. Economic conditions were by no means as favourable as in the West; and political repression was increasingly evident, particularly after 1948. Yet even in the East

it had been made clear to former 'small Nazis' that they could find a role for themselves in the new state if they were prepared to participate and help in the new tasks of building socialism. In the East as well as in the West, many Germans wished simply to forget the past, and lived day-to-day, seeking to make the best of current circumstances and harbouring their respective hopes for the future. Yet the foundations which had been laid by 1949 set the pattern for paths followed in the future: diverging paths which shattered the hopes of many for another kind of new Germany after the defeat of Hitler's Reich.

Seven
Crystallization and Consolidation, 194961

The period from the foundation of two separate states in 1949 to the erection of the Berlin Wall in 1961 is one in which the division of Germany was confirmed, and in which the peculiar characters of the two new states were consolidated. While in 1949 much still appeared open, by the beginning of the 1960s patterns had been laid which were to shape the next quarter of a century of German history.

Before considering the historical development of East and West Germany in this crucial decade, we must briefly consider certain features of their constitutions and political systems. The very different political systems liberal democracy in the West and a 'democratic centralism' based on Marxist Leninist theory in the East provided the framework for the very different patterns of political, social and economic development in the two German states which succeeded the Third Reich.

The Constitution and Political System of the Federal Republic

The Federal Republic of Germany represented Germany's second attempt at a liberal parliamentary democracy in the twentieth century. The writers of the constitution in 19489 had an ever-present regard for the failures of the Weimar Republic, and although the Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*) was the result of many positive considerations, it was also a document written with an eye to perceived weaknesses in the Weimar