



# THE NEW GERMANY AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS

## OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

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*Any deliberation on nuclear deterrence and on its future role for Germany first and foremost has to proceed from the fact that the new security landscape in Europe also is, and will be, significantly shaped by the very existence of nuclear weapons.*

—Enders, Mey, and Ruehle  
*Nuclear Weapons in the Changing World*



ALMOST SIX years have passed since the end of the cold war and the fall of the Berlin Wall, yet active debate over European security policy and security architecture continues. One of the more sensitive aspects of this discussion deals with the issue of whether German motivations for obtaining nuclear weapons in the future ex-

ist or may develop. This issue is particularly relevant in light of the ongoing withdrawal of US forces from Europe in general and from Germany in particular. Moreover, the transformed European security environment reflects the changed nature of military threats on the one hand, while it also highlights the apparent reemergence of a more assertive German political community on the other. In short, this study argues that as a result of these massive sea changes in the international system, combined with the continued integration of the two sides of Germany, there may be new, perhaps stronger, German motivations for obtaining some degree of unilateral nuclear capability, at least in certain scenarios. Importantly, these motivations include not only traditional security concerns but, perhaps, intensified

nonsecurity influences as Germans redefine what it means to be “German.”

First, this article explores this issue by discussing the historical background regarding German attitudes about nuclear policy—the past German motivations and resulting debates over obtaining nuclear weapons. Second, it examines possible motivations in terms of the changed security concerns brought by the end of the cold war. What are the various security scenarios and plausible options and, in turn, their related effects on German nuclear decisions? Third, this article analyzes the influence of nonsecurity motivations. These motivations may stem from German efforts at producing an integrated political and cultural identity (i.e., political community) as part of the ongoing unification process. Can these nonsecurity aspects also act as an impetus for German desires to become a nuclear power? Last, this article includes overall conclusions and possible policy implications for the United States and the US Air Force.

### Historical Perspectives: An Old Debate

The debate over possible German ownership of nuclear weapons is not new. The subject was discussed as early as the mid-1950s, a time when the *Bundeswehr*, the German military, was still in its infancy. In fact, over the subsequent decade it periodically “provided a central, continually provocative stimulus in all East-West discourse.”<sup>1</sup> Moreover, from the very beginning of German rearmament until the mid-1960s, the issue of nuclear weapons under German control was part and parcel of overall German defense policy-making. This was a fact even though the Germans were forced to forswear the production of atomic, biological, and chemical weapons as part of the Paris Treaties of 1955 (embodying the so-called Adenauer “nonnuclear pledge”), which cleared the way politically for West Germany to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Although nuclear weapons had been present in Germany since 1953, the most intense period of debate occurred between 1957 and 1961. During

this time, the nuclear issue arose primarily as part of the larger scrutiny of overall NATO nuclear defense doctrine. As a consequence of these discussions, NATO planners and leadership made it clear that they seriously intended to train German troops in the use of nuclear-capable systems; this in turn greatly affected the overall nature of German domestic politics. More specifically, West Germans debated the issue in the midst of high levels of misinformation and misperception, many believing that NATO planned to give direct control of nuclear-capable systems to the *Bundeswehr*. The result was a polarization of the German population relative to the nuclear issue, pitting conservative against socialist, communist against capitalist, and academic against layman.

In general, the debate over nuclear weapons and German armed forces was largely a consequence of the growing Western security concerns of the mid-1950s. These concerns were highlighted by growing perceptions of a marked inferiority of conventional forces vis-à-vis the East and served to frame the German debate over nuclear deterrence, specifically the debate over tactical nuclear weapons. At this time, many leaders (including German leaders) began to discuss tactical nuclear systems in terms of being merely other forms of conventional battlefield weapons, all useful and perhaps necessary in stopping any Soviet aggression.

Because of the perceived conventional imbalance between East and West during this period, NATO increasingly relied upon nuclear deterrence as embodied in the so-called New Look strategies. As a result, the Germans were also forced to accept the reality of decreased NATO conventional forces and thus the reality of an increased potential for implementing the nuclear option in case of war. Consequently, German soldiers were trained in the use of “multipurpose weaponry” in preparing for the likelihood of nuclear war but were denied actual control of nuclear warheads.

In addition, certain high-level German defense leaders did openly call for acquisition of nuclear weapons, specifically for the *Bundeswehr*. These included, among others, Defense Minister Franz Josef Strauss and, more importantly, Chancellor

Konrad Adenauer. Adenauer went so far as to tell the press in 1957 that the government planned to equip the German army with American-made tactical nuclear weapons if there were no alterations in the NATO policy of nuclear reliance:

Tactical atomic weapons are basically nothing but the further development of artillery. It goes without saying that, due to such a powerful development in weapons technique (which we unfortunately now have), we cannot dispense with having them for our troops. We must follow suit and have these new types—they are after all practically normal weapons.<sup>2</sup>

This attitude unleashed a furious response from the German scientific and religious communities, which served to further polarize German society over the issue. Led by the German Socialist party (SPD), this renewed opposition forced the more conservative Christian Socialist Union/Christian Democratic Union (CSU/CDU) coalition to back away from its nuclear stance. But with new election victories for the CSU/CDU later in 1957, the issue resurfaced. Then in 1958, there were particularly intense debates in the German Parliament over equipping the *Bundeswehr* with nuclear weapons, ending with the March Proposal, which called for a two-track policy of pursuing arms control initiatives and which would modernize nuclear forces were the initiatives to fail (a stance very similar to the “dual-track” strategies later adopted in the 1970s and 1980s). As a consequence, the next few years brought an increase in antinuclear sentiment in Germany with a related peace movement led by leaders of the nuclear-physics community, churches, and other dedicated antinuclear organizations.

Besides the security concerns evident in the nuclear debate during this time, there were also domestic aspects visible in the stark dialogue—a dialogue which reflected attitudes that went beyond the more straightforward concerns about a potential nuclear holocaust on German soil. Opponents of German access to nuclear weapons generally shared a fear of the resurrected *Bundeswehr*. Since a prodemocratic German army able and willing to subsume itself completely to civilian

authority had never existed, concerns arose over the specter of ex-Nazi generals with direct control of such powerful arms.

By contrast, nuclear proponents distrusted the increasing antinuclear agitation occurring outside of the parliament and the German polity, believing there was a danger of the return of those types of fanatical social forces that had brought Fascists to power during the Weimar Republic. Thus, during this period, both sides shared a healthy anxiety for how the nuclear issue would be solved; they did not want to repeat the horrors of past German experiences. Both sides also realized that in the case of nuclear weapons, the stakes were infinitely higher than ever before.

However, the intensity of the nuclear debate subsided with the advent of the “Flexible Response” doctrine of the early 1960s with its greater reliance on enhanced conventional forces and weapons, along with the emergence of the SPD into greater political power. By this time, it appeared as if the West Germans had learned to live more comfortably with the realities of the nuclear age in a divided Europe. Moreover, for the rest of the cold war era, the issue of *unilateral* German use of nuclear weapons would, for the most part, remain a nonissue, overshadowed instead by the larger debates over general NATO strategy and NATO-controlled basing of various nuclear weapons in Europe and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). These latter discussions were mainly about doctrinal issues and were discussed in terms of overall East-West relations and/or greater alliance politics.

In short, the debates toward the end of the East-West conflict generally did not include discussion about unilateral German possession of nuclear weapons nor about their uncontrolled use by German forces. But, although the issue faded away by the 1970s, the fact that it had been an important political issue earlier may also indicate that it has remained always just below the surface; and more importantly, the end of the cold war has introduced new security concerns and dilemmas that serve to bring this previous German “nuclear question” to the fore.

## Security-Related Motivations: The Uncertainty Factor

The end of the cold war brought with it rapid changes in the perceived nature of the threat. Naturally, the Soviet Union disappeared as the monolithic danger that had driven NATO and Western defense policy. Thus, with the crumbling of the Berlin Wall also crumbled much of the rationale for the current nuclear policy, especially relative to the continuation of the US nuclear umbrella. Consequently, any discussion of German attitudes and plans relating to nuclear weapons hinges upon the future of “extended deterrence” and “forward defense.” In sum, the future security equation to the Germans in many ways depends upon if and how American forces remain in Europe and what type of threat will most likely arise. In that regard, there are already fairly clear indications of what those threats will be.

### *The Changing Security Environment*

To many Germans, the *Soviet* cold war threat may simply have been traded for the traditional *Russian* threat, along with reemerging, historical, ethnonationalist conflict in Central/Eastern Europe and increased threats of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction from outside of Europe. The result is a growing anxiety among many Germans over the prospect of a decreasing American military involvement on the Continent, the uncertainty of future security mechanisms in Europe, reduced German military defense capabilities, and a relatively undetermined role for German forces in the “new world order.”

In addition, there appears to be an increasing economic disparity between East and West that brings with it mass population migration, especially into the Federal Republic. This is a new security problem that, generally, did not exist before the end of the cold war.

### *German Unification*

Then there are the problems directly related to the unification of Germany itself—some of which could also contribute to German decisions

to produce or buy national nuclear capabilities in the future. First, the new “reconstituted” *Deutschland* presents both fears and expectations to its neighbors, creating a security dilemma not easily solved—the so-called new German question. Simply put, how can Germany maintain its participation in a rapidly evolving (or perhaps devolving) European security structure while integrating diverse sociopolitical populations into a *unified* Germany, alleviating fears of a *resurgent* Germany, and developing legitimate defense strategies for a *secure* Germany? This creates a basic paradox, perhaps the primary security challenge facing the Germans. As Colin McInnes states,

On the one hand there are fears that Germany might become too strong and might once again attempt to secure supremacy in Europe. On the other hand there is the expectation that, precisely because of this strength, Germany should play a more active role in Europe than it has done up to now.<sup>3</sup>

Second, unification poses internal security challenges. There is the continuing task of integrating East and West Germans into one military, albeit a very successful program to date. However, several ongoing problems remain in the training and education of recruits from former German Democratic Republic (GDR) regions related to cultural and educational differences. In addition, the ongoing reduction of military forces in both personnel strength and weapons, as the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) process mandates, also poses challenges. Many Germans see this as undesirable because defense policy-makers must now do much more with less; that is, they must protect a much larger Germany with a significantly smaller force in the midst of a somewhat uncertain long-term future for NATO. Thus, the ending of the East-West discord, the transformed threat environment, and the ongoing German unification have brought into question the overall self-image of the Federal Republic as it relates to security. How can Germany resolve these security issues at a time when it must also mold a new self-image for a single and integrated German nation-state? And, more importantly, where do nuclear weapons and doctrine fit into the discussion?

In sum, the new security environment presents

challenges and dilemmas relative to the changed nature of the threat, uncertainty about future European security structures, neighboring countries' fear of a resurgent Germany, internal and external constraints on German defense force levels and weapons, and issues of German nationalism and sovereignty. In light of these, Germany has several options derived from future security scenarios.

## Future Options

Before detailing the major security options facing the Germans, it is first helpful to provide a short summary of two apparent points of consensus in Germany that will no doubt influence the decision process in future defense policy-making. These areas of agreement are evident in extant survey literature as well as in the opinions of German military and civilian academics and policy-makers.<sup>4</sup>

First, there appears broad consensus that a united Germany must stay tied to the West in general and NATO in particular. This was a major point in the Two-plus-Four negotiations that paved the way for German unification and the end of the East-West conflict. Apparently, this consensus continues today. In fact, the proportion of Germans who believe that NATO is important in preserving peace has risen significantly since the end of the cold war and even includes a majority of former East Germans. For example, in a survey the University of Bamberg conducted in 1992, over 80 percent of West Germans and 70 percent of East Germans acknowledged NATO's vital role in peacekeeping for Europe. Majorities from both groups also believed NATO important, especially in preventing military blackmail.<sup>5</sup>

The second area of consensus is that the United States and Germany share common national interests and thus should maintain close relationships in all areas, especially in the area of European security. However, German public opinion does not reflect as strong a support for continued stationing of US troops on German soil. Instead, Germans seem to understand the overall importance of the United States in the maintenance of NATO and the American role in nuclear deterrence for Europe. In the western portions of Germany in particular, over 75 per-

cent of survey respondents agreed that the US should play a continued role in the defense of Europe.<sup>6</sup>

Given these areas of agreement, what are the apparent options available to the Germans as they grapple with the new security environment? There seem at this time to exist five major alternatives, each of which provides a somewhat different influence on German nuclear motivations. These are discussed below, ranging from the option the Germans currently prefer most to the one they prefer least.

### *Option 1: Continue Current Nuclear and Defense Policy under NATO*

Various interviews and surveys suggest that German political leaders and the overall population alike believe that the uncertainty of the near future in Europe clearly dictates caution and that the West should remain extremely wary of forcing real changes within the current alliance structure. Advocates of this option assume that downsizing the existing German forces to meet new budgetary and political demands can be done while still relying on the traditional NATO model. The focus then is on making little change, but if needed, making change in small increments. In addition, this "continuity model" dictates that limited nuclear deterrents remain on German territory as both a sign of "trust" in the new Germany as well as a continued indication of US and NATO commitment to the defense of Germany.

This option then is predicated upon a continuation of a viable and robust NATO, able to cope with the changing security equations in Europe. To accomplish that, the United States must stay coupled to Europe and the alliance. In this situation, there is little to no German motivation for obtaining unilateral nuclear capability.

### *Option 2: Prepare for the End of NATO*

This option recognizes that NATO may decrease in importance as it tries to adapt to the new security environment in Europe or that it may even lose its *raison d'être* as a military entity. The alli-

ance may become more of a political consultative mechanism in the short-term and may fade away completely in the long-term. Reliance on American nuclear guarantees would remain as long as the Atlantic alliance endured. But with the first indications otherwise, the Germans would probably begin serious discussions about the future of nuclear deterrence based upon the threat environment at that time. The possibility of unilateral German nuclear forces would probably enter into these discussions. However, the rationale or justification for adopting this option would remain relatively benign as long as there were some chance that the alliance would continue. Thus, given this option, there is low to moderate motivation to actually obtain nuclear capability; in short, as an issue of discussion it may become more salient, but resulting actions would probably not occur.

**Option 3: “Europeanize” the Security Structure**

If it appears that NATO has clearly outlived its military usefulness or that it will in fact disappear (especially if the United States becomes less committed to European security), the Germans may consider the third option—that of Europeanizing the security arrangements either within a transformed NATO or some other organization such as the Western European Union (WEU) or the European Union (EU). To Germans, the transformation must take into account different threat assessments, new force structure requirements, and changed rules for operational cooperation, as well as, perhaps, an increased overall security role for a new, more responsible Germany.

Importantly, in this scenario Germany would probably feel more responsible for its own security—in the conventional sense. It would most likely insist on a more equally shared responsibility among new or remaining alliance members for providing training areas and would demand reciprocity in certain military relationships and responsibilities during training or combat operations.

From the nuclear standpoint, the absence of the United States as a major player is a given in this Europeanization model. Consequently, Ger-

many could no longer depend upon the American nuclear umbrella but would pursue nuclear guarantees with its remaining European allies, while trying to remain integrated into some type of alliance structure to alleviate its neighbors’ fears. The acceptance of this option would at least initially enhance the role of the French and British nuclear forces as they became the only basis for nuclear deterrence in a greater Europeanized alliance or organization. However, some scholars believe there would also exist some impetus for deploying certain types of sub-strategic/prestrategic weapons *throughout* the participating countries for a greater deterrent effect.<sup>7</sup> These weapons would act not only as deterrents against residual Russian nuclear threats but also against the new proliferation threats from outside the Continent.

In this option, Germans may decide that over the long term it would be advantageous to obtain their own nuclear weapons on an equal footing with the other “great powers” of Europe. This could be rationalized in terms of wanting to show a serious German commitment to the protection of Europe, while minimizing fears of a resurgent Germany by remaining well integrated into a European security arrangement. In fact, out of necessity, any nuclear capability would probably include a well-coordinated, routinized nuclear consultative group similar to the current Nuclear Planning Group of NATO.

The potential motivations for German nuclear weapons is thus greater in this option; however, domestic politics and growing fears from Germany’s neighbors would certainly constrain the debate as long as there was a clear likelihood of remaining within some form of alliance/organizational structure.

**Option 4: Pursue Bilateral Nuclear Cooperation**

In the event of failure to maintain an alliance structure of any type within Europe, the next option would reflect negotiation of some degree of bilateral cooperation with the remaining nuclear powers. In this case, Germany may attempt to first obtain nuclear guarantees with either the French or British while working towards its own nuclear capability. Moreover, this subject has already

been broached by the recent French offer to provide nuclear guarantees to Germany.<sup>8</sup> German responses to this offer have been lukewarm, mainly because NATO remains in operation. Initial German comments in the press indicate some suspicion of French motivations as well:

What does France really want? Since Charles de Gaulle, the Force de frappe has served as a symbol and seal of French sovereignty and independence. (Emphasis added)<sup>9</sup>

Germans also remember the past French pre-occupation with “keeping down Germany” or such quips as author François Mauriac’s “I love Germany so much that I prefer that there be two of them!”<sup>10</sup> Even as late as 1979, French leaders such as François Mitterand were articulating clear French desires to keep Germany divided for the security of Europe.<sup>11</sup>

From the conventional perspective, the Germans themselves seem to have kept the door open for this option by continued and energetic attempts at forming bilateral forces and corps (often called multinational formations). These include past negotiations over such units as a German-French corps, but also the more recent inauguration of the new Dutch-German Army Corps. In fact, according to the American Embassy in Bonn, the *Bundeswehr* now has only one corps that is not part of some bilateral or multinational formation. By pursuing these types of units, “Germany hopes this and other multinational formations will reassure other Europeans of its continued commitments to close defense and foreign policy cooperation.”<sup>12</sup>

Thus, there is some preparation to date for some type of bilateral conventional arrangement, but very little impetus for nuclear cooperation/agreements. One reason for this may be traditional national rivalries; another, a German hesitancy to trust the commitment of French or British guarantees of nuclear protection. Moreover, if this option does prove feasible in the absence of an alliance structure of any kind and there remains a rationale for nuclear deterrence, then there may develop a fairly strong motivation for German nuclear weapons down the road. Relying on the American nuclear guarantee is

one thing, but nuclear dependency upon old rivals such as Britain or France is quite another.

It is at this point, perhaps, that nonsecurity motivations begin to have greater effect. Thus, in this scenario, there may be strong motivation for obtaining an indigenous nuclear capability, especially if Germany feels it cannot truly count on its “partner” for nuclear commitment, or if it perceives it is being treated as an inferior power.

#### **Option 5: Pursue a Unilateral Defense Policy**

This option reflects a response to what Robbin Laird calls “disintegration or differentiation,” where “disintegration would emerge from an inability to construct a new European security order to replace the Western Alliance.”<sup>13</sup> It must also take into account the inability of bilateral arrangements to provide the necessary security guarantees for Germany, especially in a high-threat environment. Moreover, in the presence of credible perceived threats, particularly nuclear threats, the Germans would most likely pursue their own nuclear deterrent capability in a security environment best described as a “European anarchy.” In such an environment, each nation-state would become totally responsible for its own security in a world characterized by increasing weapons proliferation. Granted, this is rather remote but possible in the long-term. This option suggests strong security motivations for unilateral German nuclear weapons.

These five options consider broad and diverse sets of conditions; nevertheless, they seem to encompass most of the current analyses of and research on possible German security thinking. In summary, as the options proceed down the “ladder,” the apparent security-related motivations for unilateral nuclear capability increase (table 1). In that regard, the next section shows that as these security-related motivations increase, so do the nonsecurity motivations.

### **Nonsecurity Motivations: The Evolving German Political Community**

In addition to the more traditional security moti-

vations, there may also exist the potential contribution of certain nonsecurity motivations, arising primarily from the reemergence of a unified German national identity. As Colin McInnes put it,

The legitimization of German military power by reference to a threat of attack from the East no longer holds water. What legitimization can take its place? Or does the very fact of a changed situation offer the opportunity of creating a "Federal Republic without an Army" (FRWA)? Or is it perhaps time to recognize the existence of armies as "normal expressions" of sovereignty that do not need any concrete "threat" to justify them?<sup>14</sup>

In short, there may be latent motivations to acquire nuclear weapons as part of the new, evolving German "political community"—motivations that are different than those arising simply from perceived security or defense shortfalls.

The term *political community* encompasses several related concepts often used by scholars, including *nation*, *national identity*, and so forth. However, to overcome much of the ambiguity of some of these traditional terms, *political community* may describe more accurately the combination of culture and politics that serves to produce a discernible, homogeneous nation. Moreover, *political community* reflects three vital components: (1) a distinct, shared political identity (sometimes called political culture), (2) a distinct, shared cultural identity, and (3) an acceptance of

the sociopolitical structure (sociopolitical legitimization). Germany is slowly developing a single political community in all three respects.<sup>15</sup> From the perspective of a distinct, shared political and cultural identity, differences do indeed remain between East and West Germany—the result of over two generations of an ideologically divided country. However, there are indications that pride in being simply "German" in the political and cultural sense is also growing rapidly. There is an increasing tendency on the part of all Germans—and the rest of the world—to accept the current sociopolitical system as truly legitimate. Thus, perceptions of domestic as well as international legitimacy for a reunified Germany are on the rise. Consequently, a new, distinct German political community seems to be evolving.

The role of the military is also often seen as contributing to the three components of political community. Research shows that leaders in both cold war German states actively used their respective armed forces to create or transform the political community.<sup>16</sup> East Germany, in particular, used the military in numerous third world countries to enhance its international and domestic legitimacy. Similarly, in the post-cold-war world, the German military may continue in this role, as evidenced by recent constitutional rulings allowing the use of German military forces outside of Germany itself. Unimaginable a few years ago, German forces in Bosnia have now ac-

**Table 1**  
**Security-Related Motivations for Unilateral Nuclear Capability**

SECURITY OPTION	LEVEL OF SECURITY MOTIVATION FOR NUCLEAR WEAPONS
1. Continue Current Policy under NATO	Low-to-None
2. Prepare for the End of NATO	Low
3. Europeanize the Security Structure	Low-to-Medium
4. Pursue Bilateral Nuclear Cooperation	Medium
5. Pursue Unilateral Defense Policy	High

tually experienced combat in a foreign nation for the first time since 1945. What's more, the average German takes pride in this new role for the *Bundeswehr*, and the fact that there are no ex-Nazis remaining in the military contributes to that pride. These developments reflect a dramatically changed self-perception of the overall role of Germany in the new security equation in Europe. As Suchman and Eyre state, "Weapons, like flags, are emblems of full sovereign status."<sup>17</sup>

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***As the security motivations for the nuclear option increase, nonsecurity motivations may also increase.***

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Furthermore, as an extension of military power and the military institution, nuclear weapons might contribute to the military's role in supporting German attitudes about a now unified political community, especially relative to increasing perceptions of domestic and international legitimacy. Moreover, nuclear weapons enter the equation as potential symbols of a new, more assertive Germany finally taking its rightful place as a world power. Therefore, these weapons contribute, at least indirectly, to new feelings of German pride, prestige, and sovereignty, as well as being credible instruments for international influence. This may be particularly true when a dangerous security or threat environment provides further motivation and as security alliances either disappear or fail to develop. As Enders, Mey, and Ruehle write,

Should such a situation nevertheless occur, German decision makers might have to painfully rediscover the fact that nuclear weapons give states a special weight in international relations as far as vital interests are at stake.<sup>18</sup>

The fear is that Germany will not accept its identity as a state like others, with set territorial boundaries and recognized sovereignty only over the people within those boundaries without reviving past attempts at reunifying all of the German *Volk*. In that case, the real danger of German

nuclear weapons surfaces. As Tucker and Weltman inquire,

When, will it be asked, has a great power chosen to forego the possession of weapons that are not only seen as synonymous with great-power status but that are considered to be indispensable for the enjoyment of strategic independence?<sup>19</sup>

Given that viewpoint, the potential influence of such nonsecurity motivations is at first glance rather minuscule, almost ludicrous. But in light of options 4 and 5 (table 1) in particular, where there is a real lack of European defense cooperation and where there are credible threats, then the possible contribution of these nonsecurity motivations to the overall attainment of unilateral nuclear weapons takes on a whole other visage. Thus, as the security motivations for the nuclear option increase, nonsecurity motivations may also increase.

Research I conducted in Germany during April and May of 1995 supports this view. As part of a larger research project, I interviewed 91 Germans, including individuals in East and West Germany. When these people were asked if they thought it important to Germany's prestige and sovereignty to possess its own nuclear weapons in each of four scenarios, they gave interesting and varying responses. Given a scenario with NATO, the WEU, and an American presence in Europe, only 4 percent said that it would be important to pursue nuclear capability. In the case of no US involvement and no NATO presence, but with a European alliance of some kind that included the French and British, 11 percent answered yes. With only bilateral alliances and cooperation, 19 percent responded in the affirmative. However, when asked whether nuclear weapons would enhance German prestige and sovereignty in the case of no alliance structure and in the presence of some nuclear threats to Germany, almost 78 percent said yes.

In addition, when these scenarios and questions were addressed to other military and civilian leaders and academics, there were similar results. In short, "feelings" of national community, pride, prestige, and so forth do seem to enter the equation at certain levels, and those levels seem to correspond to the levels of security moti-

vations for nuclear weapons. To better illustrate this point, table 2 provides a simple overview of the five possible options and the corresponding levels of both security and nonsecurity motivations (as derived from both interviews and surveys).

The important question is why these motivations increase with security concerns. One explanation may be that these nonsecurity motivations are not true *motivations* at all but simply *rationale* in support of developing a unilateral nuclear capability in response to the security-related motivations. Whatever the ultimate answer, these nonsecurity motivations cannot be dismissed out of hand and must be considered at least as another possible factor in the nuclear debate. In short, it appears that attitudes about the political community will have an effect on any serious nuclear debate within the Federal Republic, depending upon the level of security concerns.

### Policy Recommendations

This research suggests that there are several options for German defense policy depending upon how the security and threat environment of Europe plays itself out. If Germany fails to remain integrated in a clear and robust alliance arrangement, without a dedicated American nuclear guarantee, there is a real danger that German decision makers will consider a unilateral nuclear capability. In addition, although the primary motivations will probably come from perceptions of security shortfalls, there are also corresponding nonsecurity motivations with the potential of adding important impetus to Germany's potential quest for nuclear capability. In light of these conclusions, what should American policy be?

If the assumption is that we do not want Germany to pursue a unilateral nuclear capability, then our primary policy should above all include a continued commitment to European security and especially to NATO. Not only is there consensus by the Germans themselves on this but a continued integration of Germany in the Transatlantic alliance would seem to negate any serious consideration of obtaining nuclear weapons. Moreover, this is predicated strongly on a continued American nuclear guarantee for Germany into the foreseeable future as buttressed by physi-

cal American troop presence of some sort in Europe and, hopefully, to some degree, in Germany.

In that regard, the German Ministry of Defense has consistently favored at least a minimum US nuclear presence in Germany, and there remains some agreement among both German military and civilian leaders alike that these weapons must stay for the near future as a sign of the American commitment to provide protection to Germany from nuclear blackmail and future nuclear threats. Since the only remaining nuclear weapons in Germany are air-deliverable gravity weapons under US Air Force control, this issue is also specifically related to Air Force policy as well. That is, the Air Force is the most visible, and perhaps credible, link to the American nuclear connection in Germany.

Second, continued US participation in NATO and Europe will go far in alleviating the fears of Germany's neighbors that it will resume its historical role as a dominating political and military power. This attitude was reflected during my interviews with several Central European military members and civilians from Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. Their fears are not only a primary reason for their insistence on the continuation of a US involvement in Europe, but also an important reason their governments have lobbied for inclusion in NATO.

Third, the United States must at every turn support German participation in any type of greater security/alliance structure developed for Europe; the more the better. As long as Germany is integrated into this type of arrangement, the less her motivation for nuclear weapons. Current research indicates that nuclear policies have to be a major issue in any of these structures.

From the policy perspective, America must remain coupled to Europe, to NATO, and to Germany. This may call for recognition that a new form of NATO is needed to better adapt to Europe's new realities. Some of this may have occurred already as evidenced by the relatively successful NATO operations recently in Bosnia (including the new "out-of-area" missions for German combat forces). Nonetheless, NATO will have to better prepare itself for unexpected

**Table 2**  
**Security and Nonsecurity Motivations for the Nuclear Option**

SECURITY OPTION	LEVEL OF SECURITY MOTIVATION	LEVEL OF NONSECURITY MOTIVATION
1. Continue Current Policy under NATO	Low-to-None	Low-to-None
2. Prepare for the End of NATO	Low	Low-to-None
3. Europeanize the Security Structure	Low-to-Medium	Low
4. Pursue Bilateral Nuclear Cooperation	Medium	Low-to-Medium
5. Pursue Unilateral Defense Policy	High	High

missions ranging from small peacekeeping jaunts to large major combat operations up to, and including, potential nuclear operations. As Ron Asmus, Richard Kugler, and F. Stephen Larabee state, for this managed transformation to be successful it will require the need for “will and vision.” However, “a new transatlantic bargain is essential lest Europe fall back into its old rivalries and patterns of conflict.”<sup>20</sup>

Thus, this research concludes that it is the American connection in Europe that holds the alliance together. It is the American presence on

the Continent that allays most of Germany’s fears. It is American nuclear weapons in Germany (under the control of the Air Force) that provide her with guarantees against nuclear threats and blackmail. And it is the continued overall American commitment to Germany, NATO, and Europe as a whole that provides the foundations for stability—stability, which above all else is the key for diluting both security and nonsecurity motivations for Germany to become a nuclear power. □

#### Notes

1. Catherine McArdle Kelleher, *Germany and the Politics of Nuclear Weapons* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975), 1.

2. Quoted in Mark Cioc, *Pax Atomica: The Nuclear Defense Debate in West Germany during the Adenauer Era* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 42-43.

3. See Colin McInnes, ed., *Security and Strategy in the New Europe* (London: Routledge, 1992), 218.

4. These included interviews with military and civilian academics at the Social Science Institute of the *Bundeswehr* in Strasberg, the Fuehrungs Akademie in Hamburg, the Zentrum fuer Innere Fuehrung in Koblenz, the Federal Ministry of Defense in Bonn, the German Luftwaffe Akademie, the Institute for Military History in Potsdam, several offices in the Pentagon, and numerous other military and

civilian officers, academics, and policymakers in both Germany and the United States (summer 1991 and spring 1995).

5. Zoltan Juhasz and Hans Rattinger, “German Attitudes on Foreign Policy and Defense Two Years after Unification,” *Bamberger Politikwissenschaftliche Beitrage* (Germany: University of Bamberg, September 1992), 14.

6. *Ibid.*, 12.

7. See, for example, Robbin Laird, *The Europeanization of the Alliance* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1991), 89.

8. See, for example, *Die Zeit*, 22 September 1995, 1; and *Bundeswehr Aktuell*, 12 September 1995, 1.

9. See *Die Zeit*, 22 September 1995, 1.

10. See B. Terrance Hoppmann, “French Perspectives on International Relations after the Cold War,” in *International Studies*

Association, *Mershon International Studies Review* (Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, April 1994), 78.

11. Ibid.

12. American Embassy, Bonn, "The Bundeswehr: Inauguration of Dutch-German Corps," in unclassified information message 110808Z SEP 95, to US Forces in Europe, 11 September 1995.

13. Laird, 89.

14. McInnes, 223.

15. See Mark N. Gose, "The Role of the Military in Building Political Community: The Case of the Two German States" (PhD diss., University of Colorado, 1995).

16. Ibid., 31–50.

17. Mark Suchman and Dana Eyre, "Military Procurement as Rational Myth: Notes on the Social Construction of Weapons Proliferation," *Sociological Forum* 7, no. 1 (1992): 137–61.

18. Thomas Enders, Holger May, and Michael Ruehle, "The New Germany and Nuclear Weapons," in Patrick Garrity and Steven Maaranen, *Nuclear Weapons in the Changing World: Perspectives from Europe, Asia, and North America* (New York: Plenum Press, 1992), 137–38.

19. Robert J. Tucker and John J. Weltman, "The Nuclear Future," in Garrity and Maaranen, 252.

20. Ronald Asmus, Richard Kugler, and F. Stephen Larrabee, *Building a New NATO*, RAND Report RP-241 (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 1994), 39.

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