Hans Dietrich Genscher and the CSCE Process

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Hans Dietrich Genscher and the CSCE Process

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Master of Arts

by

Christopher Thanner
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This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of
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Master of Arts

Christopher Thanner

Approved, May 1994

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Anne Henderson
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ABSTRACT

This study argues that former West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher's use of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe to promote pan-European unity formed a primary and consistent tenet of his foreign policy that he rarely subordinated for pragmatic reasons. The paper examines three case studies: the aftermath of the 1980-87 INF debate in West Germany, Genscher's initial reaction to Mikhail Gorbachev, and the reunification of Germany. The study examines the role the CSCE played in each of the aforementioned instances and compares Genscher's actions with his official rhetoric. The study then assesses the extent to which Genscher used the CSCE to foster his vision of a unified Europe and whether he consistently stuck to his goal. The examination suggests that Genscher used the CSCE to actively pursue pan-European unity without compromising German interests and his role as Foreign Minister of West Germany.
HANS-DIETRICH GENSCHER AND THE CSCE PROCESS
Introduction

On May 17, 1992 Hans-Dietrich Genscher retired from his position as Germany's foreign minister. Genscher had held this post for eighteen years, a term of office that spanned both Christian Democratic and Social Democratic German governments and all of West Germany's membership in the United Nations. Despite the length of Genscher's term of office and the changing philosophies of the governing coalitions under which he served, Genscher's foreign policy exhibited remarkable continuity. Appointed foreign minister on May 17, 1974, Genscher's ascension to power coincided with the negotiation and conclusion of the Helsinki accords, a series of agreements designed to foster peaceful change in Europe through better relations between the two superpowers and their allies, and the creation of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), a multilateral forum designed to help close the rift between eastern and western Europe. Both of these foreign policy experiences profoundly affected Genscher and his view of European unity. From that point on, Genscher made the pursuit of pan-European unity one of his primary foreign policy objectives. Genscher defined his vision of pan-European unity as the bringing together of East and West Europe despite its post-war division by the superpowers.

To what extent was the use of the CSCE to foster a pan-Europeanism a main tenet of Genscher's actual foreign policy? His critics have said that his principled evocation of a new Europe was somewhat lacking. His political generosity towards eastern Europe has been derided as appeasement.
Genscher himself has often been described as a master tactician, a label that has haunted him throughout his career, and he was never able to throw off a reputation for “putting tactics before principles.”¹ Genscher’s politics were at times described as “above all - some say at any cost - about compromise.” Helmut Schmidt, the former Chancellor of West Germany, whom Genscher helped depose by switching his small, centrist, Free Democratic Party’s allegiance to Helmut Kohl’s CDU-CSU, described him as a “tactician without a strategy.” Genscher has often been accused of paying lip service to his ideals while remaining secure in his policies by avoiding hard choices.² This pragmatism is often seen as a reflection of the FDP’s effort to play “kingmaker” in the German party system, providing the CDU-CSU or the SPD with a coalition partner, yet winning votes by acting as a “corrective” to these larger parties.

Genscher’s supporters reject the accusation that his policies lacked principle. They point to the success his determination to keep open a dialogue with the east and the Soviet Union has engendered: a more democratic eastern Europe and the reunification of Germany.³ Which view is correct? Did Genscher the master tactician hold sway over Genscher the utopian? Did the foreign minister compromise his pan-European vision in order to achieve a consensus on his policies and avoid controversy?

This paper argues that foreign minister Genscher used the CSCE to foster his pan-European vision, and furthermore, this pan-European vision formed a primary and consistent tenet of his foreign policy that he rarely, if ever,

² “Genscher’s last act,” The Economist, May 2, 1992, p.58.
³ Ibid., p.58.
subordinated for pragmatic reasons. The paper will proceed by examining three case studies: the aftermath of the 1980-87 INF debate in West Germany, Genscher's initial reaction to Mikhail Gorbachev, and the reunification of Germany. The paper will examine the role the CSCE played in each of the cases and compare foreign minister Genscher's actions with his official rhetoric. The paper will then assess the extent to which Genscher used the CSCE to foster his vision of a unified Europe and whether or not he consistently stuck to his goal.
CHAPTER I
Genscher's Pan-European Foreign Policy and the CSCE Process

Genscher has stated on dozens, possibly hundreds, of occasions the importance he attaches to bringing eastern and western Europe closer together. In a 1982 article published in *Foreign Affairs*, Genscher described the central elements of his foreign policy towards eastern Europe:

The central element of the...German policy toward the east, is the aim to establish and preserve a modus vivendi in a divided Europe-one which casts aside the basic conflict between East and West that cannot be resolved within the foreseeable future and which permits bridges of dialogue and cooperation to be spanned over the rifts formed by different philosophies and long-term goals. In this way it is intended, in the short term, to mitigate the effects of the division of Europe and, in the long term, to foster an evolutionary process in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union itself, leading to greater freedom for people in the East and to a genuine peace order in Europe.4

Genscher's ultimate plan for Europe was its transformation into a cooperative entity with common goals, a concept he often referred to as a "common European house." Genscher emphasized that his favorite vehicle for pursuing his pan-European vision was the CSCE. Consistently, throughout his term in office, Genscher stressed the importance of the CSCE as an absolutely necessary and effective device for achieving European unity:

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...the CSCE final act has given the West an important instrument for a dynamic policy of détente.... it gives us political legitimization for the realization of human rights, for peaceful change and for the gradual overcoming of the division of Europe.\(^5\)

For Genscher, the CSCE was an instrument for reshaping Europe that provided a "dramatic, comprehensive forum which does not take the east-west confrontation for granted, but seeks to break it down."\(^6\) Every nation participating in the CSCE process has an equal voice in its proceedings. Consequently, through its process of consensus building and constant deliberation, the CSCE appeared to provide Genscher with an ideal vehicle with which to pursue his vision of European unity.

The CSCE process has its roots in the Helsinki Final Act. The original Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe took place in Geneva from 1973 to 1975. The document that ultimately arose out of this conference became known as the "Helsinki Accords." Originally slated to take place only through 1973-75, the Geneva meetings gradually grew into a series of diplomatic roundtables which became known as the CSCE process. The process included, and continues to include, the U.S., Canada, and the countries of eastern and western Europe.

Immediately after its founding the CSCE became both an instrument of détente and a forum for East-West confrontation. It was dominated by conflicting objectives. The East, namely the Soviet Union, sought to use the CSCE to legitimize its presence in Europe, whereas the West attempted to use the conference to wrangle commitments on human rights, and freedom of

\(^5\) Ibid., p.57.

movement, people and ideas out of the East. The end result of two years of
difficult and complex negotiations between East and West was the Helsinki
Final Act. This document was not legally binding beyond the fact that the
participating nations stated their determination to implement its provisions. The
Final Act consisted of four sections or "baskets" which dealt with various fields of
cooperation between the two blocs. The first basket contained a subsection
entitled the Declaration on Principles. It was this section of the document which
proved to be the most important in later years. The declaration included ten
principles:

1. Sovereign equality, respect for the rights inherent in sovereignty;
2. Refraining from the threat or use of force;
3. Inviolability of frontiers;
4. Territorial integrity of states;
5. Peaceful settlement of disputes;
6. Nonintervention in internal affairs;
7. Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom
   of thought, conscience, religion, or belief;
8. Equal rights and self-determination of peoples;
9. Cooperation among states; and
10. Fulfillment in good faith of obligations under international law.7

Critics of the CSCE process saw it simply as an ersatz peace treaty for
World War II. The Helsinki Agreement was derided as a non-binding document
that served only to legitimate Soviet domination of eastern Europe. President
Gerald Ford was criticized heavily in the United States for signing a document
many considered to be without substance. John J. Moresca, a member of the
U.S. delegation in Geneva and Helsinki, held the following point of view about
the CSCE process:

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The signing of the Final Act...resolved very little in any specific sense; rather, it preserved more or less intact the various territorial and ideological disagreements, contradictions, and inconsistencies that have made up the postwar equilibrium in Europe.8

Despite such skepticism on the part of some participants and observers, the ten principles outlined in Basket I formed the basis for Genscher’s argument that the CSCE could be a dynamic tool to foster his pan-European vision. In particular, principles seven through ten formed the core of his plan for an active western détente policy.

It was intended that it [the declaration of principles] would contribute to increasing the personal liberty of the individual in the East, and to help make it possible for people on both sides of the border between East and West to come together again.9

The mere fact that the East was a signatory to these principles demonstrated to Genscher the East's belief that these topics should be an essential part of the East-West cooperative dialogue. This dialogue “gives us the political legitimization to call for...peaceful change and for the gradual overcoming of the division of Europe.”10 After Helsinki, Genscher contended that the discussion of peaceful change in the East was now a permanent part of East-West relations.

Genscher thus saw the CSCE as serving broader purposes than the realization of human rights in the East. The CSCE came to represent for Genscher a chance to institutionalize détente. It offered an important vehicle for keeping East-West détente intact while Genscher was forced to make difficult and unpopular (for the East) foreign and domestic policy decisions. The CSCE

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10 Ibid., p.57.
could play an important role in Genscher's diplomacy during the INF missile debate in West Germany (a potential disaster for East-West relations), Genscher’s initial overtures towards Mikhail Gorbachev (Genscher was the first to actively encourage trusting the Soviet General Secretary), and the process of German reunification (a potentially destabilizing occurrence for both East and West).
CHAPTER II
The INF Debate

From its inception, the FRG’s approach to security policy had been one of reliance on American nuclear forces as a deterrent against possible Soviet aggression. Despite some initial protest, this unwavering dependence upon the American nuclear deterrent enjoyed widespread societal and governmental approval. However, after NATO’s 1967 Harmel Report reliance upon deterrence became increasingly coupled with the policy of détente towards the East.1

The inherent tension between a policy that emphasizes preparedness for devastating war (deterrence) and one that emphasizes arms control dialogue, increasing East-West openness and confidence-building activities (détente) did not tangibly come to the forefront of German politics until Helmut Schmidt’s Chancellorship (1974-1982). Reliance on the two track security policy (deterrence + détente = security) outlined in NATO’s 1967 Harmel Report began to unravel during the INF12 (Intermediate Nuclear Forces) debate that occurred during Schmidt’s Chancellorship.13

Helmut Schmidt began to create a more assertive role for the FRG in the

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11 The Harmel Report was a strategy paper issued by the NATO organization in December of 1967. This report defined a long lasting NATO consensus: diplomacy and negotiations (détente) were a necessary complement to a policy of deterrence based on nuclear weapons.

12 INF forces are medium-range nuclear weapons based in Western Europe that are able to strike targets in the western parts of the Soviet Union. The INF debate centered around the deployment of 108 single-warhead Pershing II missiles in West Germany.

late 1970's. Disenchanted with the tenor of American leadership and upset by what he perceived to be a U.S. lack of concern for West Germany's strategic position, Schmidt began to draw attention to the disparity between the INF forces of the Warsaw Pact and those of NATO. Schmidt suggested that decisive steps be taken to remedy the growing imbalance of forces. NATO's response was the so called "double-track" decision of 1979. This decision presupposed negotiation with the Soviet Union to persuade them to remove their SS-20 intermediate range nuclear missiles from Eastern Europe. Coupled with these actions was the threat that if the Soviet negotiations failed, NATO would deploy similar intermediate range missiles in Western Europe (most notably West Germany).14

By pursuing these nuclear weapons initiatives Helmut Schmidt had given primacy to two central goals of West German security policy: fostering and maintaining a credible deterrent based on an alliance with the West and the prevention of American "decoupling." During Helmut Schmidt's tenure, these goals appeared to take precedence over the pursuit of détente. Schmidt's prominent leadership role did not give Genscher much room for maneuver with his détente policies, certainly not on the scale he began to enjoy from 1983 onwards.15 However, Genscher and Schmidt were both proponents of the stationing of NATO missiles on German soil.

The initial NATO twin track INF proposal was met with silence by the Soviet Union. The primary stumbling block to the early negotiations had been NATO insistence on the "zero option": the notion of forgoing deployment of Pershing II and cruise missiles altogether in return for acceptable Soviet


15 Emil J. Kirchner, "Genscher and What Lies Behind Genscherism," West European Politics, Volume 13, April 1990 #2, p.163.
concessions. The zero option had been debated both within Germany and NATO and differing zero options had been proposed. Chancellor Schmidt favored a European zero option, i.e., the West would agree not to deploy any INF missiles provided the Soviet Union withdrew all of its SS-20 missiles that were within striking distance of Western Europe.16

Genscher's FDP had also committed itself to a zero option at its party conference in Freiburg in June 1980. The party program stated:

The FDP will do everything in its power to ensure that the negotiation offer made to the Warsaw Pact and coupled to NATO's modernization decision receives vigorous support. Our aim must be total renunciation of the production and basing of medium-range nuclear weapons on both sides.17

Unlike Schmidt, the FDP favored a global zero option: the total elimination of Soviet INF's in return for Western non-deployment. The global zero option was supported strongly by Genscher and later became the U.S. and NATO's negotiating position in the INF talks.

By presenting a global zero option proposal that many westerners felt was essentially unacceptable to the Soviets, NATO was able to balance its avowed goals of deterrence and arms control.18 However, the zero option proposal also served to highlight the tension inherent in the FRG's appeal for nuclear arms on German soil to strengthen deterrence, and its simultaneous appeal for arms control to make deterrence more palatable to the German public.19

16 Thomas Risse-Kappen, p.80.

17 Wahlprogram der Freien Demokratischen Partei fur die Bundestagswahlen am 5.10.1980, Freiburg, June 7, 1980, p.12.

18 Michael R. Lucas, p.10.

In early Winter 1983, after much debate within the German Bundestag, the Pershing II missiles were installed in West Germany. The Soviet reaction to their deployment was frigid. The day after the German Bundestag passed the resolution supporting deployment, Soviet diplomats walked out of INF negotiations in Geneva. Soviet pronouncements aimed at the Kohl-Genscher government were very hostile. Moscow described Bonn's leaders in caustic terms as German revanchists. Soviet relations with West Germany and the West entered a second "ice age" with the USSR attempting to isolate the Federal Republic internationally.

Yet with Mikhail Gorbachev's rise to power and subsequent foreign policy "peace offensive" towards the West, the zero option, much to the dismay of the CDU-CSU leaders, gained credibility as a realistic arms control option. Gorbachev broke the impasse that existed under the Brezhnev regime with his January 15, 1986 proposal to free the world of nuclear weapons by the year 2000. The details of this proposal came very close to the Western zero option. Gorbachev offered to trade away all the SS-20 missiles based in Europe for the removal of the Pershing II and cruise missiles. For the first time a Soviet leader had proposed a nuclear balance in Europe that meant parity between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, not a balance seen as unfairly weighted towards the USSR.20

The Reykjavik summit meeting between Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev represented a breakthrough for INF. While the summit meeting brought no concrete achievements, both Reagan and Gorbachev had negotiated far beyond their previous stances. In particular, Ronald Reagan had gone far beyond what had been previously agreed upon by NATO alliance

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20 Thomas Risse-Kappen, p.110.
The new developments caused a general sense of panic within the CDU-CSU. The potential elimination of nuclear weapons from the theater of Europe threatened the CDU-CSU's long standing position on the need for long-range nuclear missiles to strengthen the coupling of Europe's defense to the U.S.. As the broad outlines of the INF treaty became more apparent, so did the fears of the conservative CDU-CSU members. Franz-Josef Strauss of the CSU criticized the impending double-zero proposal by saying it would "naturally mean a decoupling of America from Europe." Strauss's stance epitomized the fears of many of the governing coalition's members.

Genscher's Role

In 1980 Genscher supported NATO's twin-track INF policy. Members of Genscher's political party, the FDP, challenged his security policies a number of times in the early 1980's. During the FDP's 1981 party congress in Cologne there was considerable resistance to Genscher's support for the twin-track decision and he was forced to threaten to resign if the party refused to support him on INF. At the same time many FDP members found their coalition partner, the SPD, to be drifting towards a position of anti-American, anti-NATO neutralism. The neutralist tendencies of the SPD were even more unpalatable to many FDP members than Genscher's support for the twin-track decision. On August 21, 1981, Genscher spoke before the Free Democrats of the West German state of Hessen. During that speech Genscher laid out his rationale for supporting the deployment of INF. Genscher's rationale struck the chords of

21 Ibid., p. 116.
23 Thomas Risse-Kappen, p. 76
arms control, cooperation in the European Community, and the special German responsibility for peace in Europe.\textsuperscript{24} In his speech, Genscher stressed the importance of German support for NATO's double-track decision. Genscher stated that German support, or lack of support, for NATO's double-track decision would indicate to the world whether Germany was allied with the West or was drifting towards a dangerous neutralism. He stated:

\begin{quote}
We will not forget, who our friend and ally is, and who is not our friend and ally. We do not stand equally distant from the USA and the Soviet Union. Like the USA, we are a part of the West. One must say to those whose talk arouses another impression: American troops are in West Germany in order that free trade unions exist and Soviet troops are in Poland to see to it that free trade unions there do not exist. That is the difference.\textsuperscript{25}
\end{quote}

The debate over the INF issue began to undermine the FDP's partnership with the SPD severely in 1981. The FDP-SPD governing coalition fell apart in 1982 when Genscher orchestrated the FDP's switch to the CDU-CSU. Genscher felt that this switch was necessary in order to guarantee continuity in his foreign policy.\textsuperscript{26} While in power with the SPD, Genscher had portrayed his party as a curb on the neutralist excesses of the Social Democrats. After the switch in October of 1982 to a Christian-Liberal coalition, Genscher and his party portrayed themselves as the liberal check on the encroachment of the right-wing of the CDU-CSU. Ironically, it was during the FDP's partnership with the more conservative CDU-CSU coalition that the détente aspect of the dual track policy became more prominent. While in power with the CDU-CSU Genscher began to voice his concerns over the long-term

\textsuperscript{24} Jeffrey Herf, p.158.


\textsuperscript{26} Jeffrey Herf, p.159.
viability of nuclear deterrence and strongly stated his desire to replace deterrence with arms control and confidence building measures.

Throughout the INF debate Genscher continued the FRG's participation in the CSCE process despite the fact that between 1983 and 1986 the Soviet Union sought to punish West Germany by isolating it internationally and bypassing it in developing relations with the rest of Western Europe27. Genscher emphasized the role of the CSCE in an attempt to keep East-West détente from collapsing during this difficult period.

This year, as in the past, the federal government has demonstrated its interest in developing relations between East and West in Europe by holding regular contacts with all its neighbors in the East. We realize that special importance attaches to our relations with the Soviet Union...The political dialogue...needs to be further strengthened, particularly where differences of opinion exist...both sides know that German-Soviet relations must not be allowed to stagnate if developments between East and West Europe are to proceed favorably.28

As an outgrowth of the CSCE process, the Conference on Confidence-and-Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe (CDE) held in Stockholm, Sweden provided Genscher with an opportunity to pursue his new détente thrust. The CDE grew out of a French proposal for a disarmament conference at the 1984 CSCE meeting in Madrid. As superpower relations deteriorated in the mid-1980's, the prospect of a CDE conference became increasingly desirable for both the West Europeans and the Soviets. Increased Soviet deployment of SS-20 missiles, coupled with NATO's double-track response of further deploying INF while simultaneously attempting to engage in


arms negotiations to eliminate them, created an increasingly tenuous situation.

The Soviets welcomed the CDE conference as a chance to further denounce NATO deployment of INF. Many NATO members, including West Germany, were panic-stricken at the thought of a Soviet walkout from current arms control talks. Consequently, West European NATO members desperately wanted a forum to show that East-West détente could continue in spite of NATO’s deployment of INF forces.

The end result of the CDE conference was a set of five confidence-and security-building measures intended to lessen the chance of military confrontation in Europe resulting from misperception or miscalculation; to bring more openness to European military activities; and inhibit surprise attack and the use of force for threat or intimidation. Among these measures were: requirements that all CDE signatories be notified in advance of certain military activities conducted in Europe; to exchange annual schedules of military activities; to invite observers from all participating states to certain military activities; and provisions for verification of compliance, including an unprecedented measure for on-site inspection on demand.\(^\text{29}\)

At the CDE conference Genscher illustrated his renewed détente offensive:

\[\text{The confidence and security building measures which are the subject of our negotiations here in Stockholm should not merely be the preliminary stage of disarmament measures...They should also lay the foundations for cooperative security arrangements which remove the incentive for the use of force as well as the fear of such force.....The aim is to strengthen confidence and security by means of a set of politically binding, militarily significant and verifiable measures which will have to be applied throughout Europe. All involved have become increasingly aware that confidence building is an indispensable element of a policy aimed at détente and cooperation. Only on the basis of growing confidence}\]

founded on concrete measures will it be possible to make progress in mutual cooperation and toward an accommodation in the field of security among the participating states. Our aim is to effectively and visibly reduce the danger of the use of military power by means of cooperative confidence-building measures.³⁰

When the INF debate was raging in West Germany in 1987 Genscher again made his stance on the issue quite clear. In direct opposition to the conservative members of the governing coalition Genscher repeatedly announced his unqualified support for the proposals. Genscher’s FDP applied pressure on the CDU-CSU by tacitly linking the governing coalition’s survival to greater CDU flexibility on the INF issue.³¹ The position of the federal government soon became untenable. Isolated by its allies and by public opinion, as well as by its coalition partner, the FDP, the CDU-CSU indicated its agreement with the INF proposals. Genscher and the FDP had prevailed over its larger coalition partner. Genscher welcomed the early 1988 INF agreement as a “Soviet-American contribution to détente and as the late fruits of the twin-track policy which had been intended to secure the removal of the SS-20s from Eastern Europe.”³²

**Genscher’s Foreign Policy**

The INF issue demonstrated the increasing inseparability of arms control and eastern diplomacy.³³ Genscher illustrated this point in a September 2,

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³¹ Clay Clemens, "West Germany's centre-right and arms control," p.60.


³³ Ibid.,p.61.
1987 speech to the German Bundestag.

European peace policy in this nuclear age necessitates comprehensive cooperation between East and West. It requires peaceful reconciliation of interests as the outcome of an intensive, continuous dialogue. Comparing military arsenals with each other leads us along the wrong path, that of an arms race, if there is no comprehensive political and security concept pointing the way from confrontation to cooperation.34

Genscher’s concept of a future cooperative security net was a broad one grounded in his pan-European vision. It encompassed economic, political, psychological and cultural aspects while purposefully attempting to downgrade the necessity of a military component.

As a result of increasing cooperation, of genuine détente and of disarmament, the military elements will lose significance in the West-East relationship, whereas others—political, economic, cultural cooperation—will gain in importance.35

The threat of force, he argued, should eventually be replaced with cooperation, trust, interdependence, confidence-building measures and other aspects of cooperative security. The use of force to intimidate or threaten, and the striving for military superiority, foster mutual insecurity, not cooperative security. The primary vehicle for building this cooperation and interdependence between East and West was to be the CSCE. Genscher saw the INF Treaty as a vital step to a CSCE-based process of overcoming the East-West division:

Progress in nuclear disarmament makes the establishment of conventional stability in Europe all the more important. We seek to establish this stability at a low level of weapons by means of disarmament. No state should be capable of attacking; each should be


able only to defend. The strategy proposed by the West for this purpose will strengthen security in every single part of Europe... It is time to draw up the blueprint for a peaceful order in Europe. That requires more than just disarmament. To prevent any kind of war in Europe forever and to secure lasting peace, to gain more stability through political dialogue and cooperation in all fields, to bring people closer together again in divided Europe, and hence in divided Germany, too, by means of unhindered contacts and free exchanges of opinion and information, to implement human rights - these aims are the core of the political philosophy underlying the Helsinki Final Act.36

Genscher pushed for both the INF Treaty and CSCE as parts of a cooperative security structure that would incorporate all of Europe.

Genscher's foreign policy often consisted of balancing several overlapping and inconsistent policies. The NATO double-track decision presented such a situation. Initially, Genscher was forced to sacrifice détente for defense policy. The necessity of preserving the Western alliance took precedence over the pursuit of détente. However, even in the face of deteriorating superpower relations and a poor international climate, Genscher did not forsake the CSCE process. Coupled with the CDE process, Genscher used the CSCE to fill the gap in East-West dialogue created by the INF debate. The CSCE process was not simply a token effort during this period. It produced the CDE agreement on confidence and security building measures which sought to lessen the chances for military mishaps between East and West. While Genscher was forced to downplay the détente track of his foreign policy, he nevertheless was able to pursue his vision of pan-European cooperation through the CSCE process.

Genscher's vision of a pan-European cooperative security arrangement began to take definitive shape with the 1985 ascension to power of Mikhail

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Gorbachev in the Soviet Union. Genscher saw quite early on that Gorbachev's "new thinking" offered the prospect of fulfilling his concept of cooperative security and that this in turn might allow for the division of Europe to be overcome peacefully.
CHAPTER III
Genscher and Gorbachev

With the ascension of Mikhail Gorbachev as General Secretary of the Soviet Union, Genscher found the perfect partner with whom to bring his pan-European vision to fruition. However, the new General Secretary was not a willing partner from the start of his tenure in office. Gorbachev needed to consolidate his power at home before projecting radical change abroad. Gorbachev did not assume office feeling strong domestic pressure to alter the USSR's international situation. He tended to stress domestic improvement to achieve foreign policy success, not the opposite, and initially he continued the same foreign policies as his predecessor Leonid Brezhnev.37

During his first year in office Gorbachev thus also continued Brezhnev's policy of isolating the Federal Republic in international relations. However, as early as the spring of 1985 Gorbachev began calling for renewed momentum in détente. In a speech marking the fortieth anniversary of the Soviet victory over Germany, Gorbachev stated:

We believe that the process of détente should be revived. This does not mean, however, a simple return to what was achieved in the 1970's. It is necessary to strive for something much greater. From our point of view, détente is not an end goal of politics. It is needed, but only as a transitional stage from a world cluttered with arms to a reliable and

comprehensive system of international security.38

Throughout the period of cool West German-Soviet relations, Genscher had attempted to ease the relationship through endless diplomatic visits to the Soviet Union in addition to repeated calls for renewed détente. Genscher’s attempts at reconciliation with the Soviets were met with skepticism by both German and NATO leaders. Genscher’s famous call for Western leaders to “take Gorbachev at his word” was almost universally seen as premature and misguided. However, subsequent events were to prove Genscher’s gesture prescient. The late 1980’s saw the Soviet Union begin to place a high priority on improving West German-Soviet relations. The conclusion of the INF agreement and the re-establishment of cordial relations between the superpowers removed the final obstacles for renewed good relations between the FRG and the Soviet Union.

Genscher's Foreign Policy

A major contributing factor to the improvement in relations was Genscher’s attempt to define a new Western policy towards Gorbachev and the USSR. Following the reelection of the CDU-CSU-FDP coalition and Gorbachev’s performance at the January 1987 Central Committee plenum in Moscow, Genscher distinguished himself as one of the first western diplomats to advocate “taking Gorbachev at his word” and test the Soviet leader’s willingness to pursue new East-West agreements.39 Genscher outlined this new policy on February 1, 1987 in his oft-quoted speech in Davos, Switzerland.

38 Pravda, May 9, 1985

In Davos, Genscher described his policy prescription for western relations with Gorbachev. He argued that Gorbachev's "new thinking" represented a recognition that the policies of military buildup pursued by Brezhnev had only resulted in a ruinous arms race. The end results of these policies had been the rearming of the West and the neglect of the Soviet economy. As a consequence of these actions the Soviets were making no headway in the development of modern technologies. The Soviets were "in danger of remaining bogged down in the industrial age as the world around advances into the information age." In order to modernize the economy, Gorbachev needed to promote peaceful external relations to end the arms race, and open up Soviet society to the world.40

In the Davos speech, Genscher offered some proof of his assertions concerning the new Soviet General Secretary. In the area of arms control, he noted that the Soviet leader had stated that he was ready to accept drastic cuts in strategic nuclear systems and a zero option for INF forces in Europe. Genscher further noted that at the Stockholm Conference on Confidence and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe that Gorbachev had "broken with the principle, hitherto sacrosanct to the Soviet Union, that on-site inspections for the purpose of verifying compliance with arms-control agreements would not be tolerated."

In addition, Genscher pointed out the shift in ideological tone of the Gorbachev regime, a shift that he took pains to point out "is consistent with responsible Western policies:"

Whereas Mr. Brezhnev still maintained that the correlation of forces in the world was constantly shifting in favor of Moscow, Mr. Gorbachev has

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made no link between the concept of peaceful coexistence of states on the one hand and the class struggle and ideological challenge to the West on the other. Mr. Gorbachev has shifted the emphasis onto new subjects. He refers time and time again to the interdependence of nations, he speaks of environmental problems and other global issues which make the world dependent upon cooperation for survival.41

Gorbachev’s “new thinking” offered Genscher the prospect of a radically new concept of security in Europe, a cooperative structure that meant that the division of Europe might finally be overcome peacefully. Genscher quoted Gorbachev with approval on the question of international security in the Davos speech:

The nature of modern weapons is such that no single country can hope to protect itself by means of military technology, by building up a defensive shield, no matter how powerful. The task of maintaining security assumes more and more a political character. Hence it can only be accomplished by political means....With regard to relations between the Soviet Union and the United States, security can only be a mutual state, and with regard to international relations as a whole, it can only be of a general nature. The ultimate wisdom lies not in thinking solely of oneself, and worse still to the detriment of the other side. All must feel they have the same degree of security.42

Throughout the speech Genscher argued for a new, more flexible Western approach to the Soviet Union that sought to evaluate Gorbachev without prejudice.

If there should be a chance today that, after 40 years of East-West confrontation, there could be a turning point in East-West relations, it would be a mistake of historic dimensions for the West to let this chance slip just because it cannot escape from a way of thinking which invariably expects the worst from the Soviet Union.43

41 Ibid., p.3.
42 Mikhail Gorbachev, as quoted in Hans-Dietrich Genscher, “Taking Gorbachev at his Word,” p.3.
Genscher went on to provide the broad outlines of a Western policy that would take Gorbachev and his "new policy" seriously. This approach consisted of three tracks which would seek to "influence, expedite and shape" developments in the Soviet Union. The first policy initiative entailed setting up cooperative security structures in order to provide equal security for all countries of Europe and the world. Part and parcel of the creation of these structures would be the initiation of a comprehensive process of disarmament.

The second track consisted of economic cooperation with the East to assist the Soviet Union in the process of modernizing its economy. The third track consisted of the West embracing the concept of "a common European edifice" and working with the Soviets to make all of Europe a "common home" whose inhabitants coexist peacefully and where "the division between East and West is increasingly overcome and where human rights are respected."44

A major theme in the Davos speech is the role Genscher accorded the CSCE in Western dealings with the Soviet Union. After outlining his recommendations for a three-tiered Western approach to the Soviet Union he had this to say about the CSCE:

Disarmament aimed at stability, economic cooperation and improvement of the human rights situation - these are the three main aspects of the CSCE process. All these aspects are inseparably linked. Progress in one area encourages progress in the others. A stalemate in one blocks progress in the others, too. In full awareness of this link, the participating states covered all three aspects in the Helsinki Final Act. It has thus become a guide outlining the course towards a peaceful order in Europe, in which nations with differing social and political systems can develop in peaceful competition without fear of each other.45

Genscher had become convinced that Gorbachev's foreign policy

44 Ibid., p.5.
represented a fundamental shift in Soviet strategy and that Gorbachev’s description of a “common European house” corresponded with his desire to create a new European cooperative security structure.

**Genscher’s Role**

A few weeks after the Davos speech Genscher took the lead in sternly reprimanding the U.S. for its apparent attempt to circumvent the 1972 U.S.-Soviet Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM). The U.S. was perceived as attempting to loosen the scope of the treaty in order to test elements of the controversial Strategic Defense Initiative. In a discussion with the U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defense, Richard N. Perle, Genscher stated that without prior negotiations with the Soviets, Washington should not unilaterally broaden its interpretation of the ABM treaty.\(^\text{46}\) After the meeting, Genscher asserted that the tone of his discussion with Perle “underscored the need to submit to careful examination among the alliance partners the consequences of any possible unilateral decision for...East-West relations as a whole.”\(^\text{47}\)

During the INF debate in West Germany, Genscher risked an open confrontation with Chancellor Helmut Kohl by publicly arguing the merits of Gorbachev’s proposals for the abolition of both medium and short range missile in Europe.\(^\text{48}\) More conservative members of the governing FDP-CDU-CSU coalition were very reluctant to remove all short range missiles from Germany for reasons of deterrence. By virtue of his public proclamations, Genscher succeeded in forcing the hand of his coalition partners into adopting his pro-

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\(^\text{47}\) Ibid., p.8.

In January of the following year Genscher undertook a four day visit to Poland to underscore the “new dynamism” of Bonn’s relations with the Communist nations of Eastern Europe.49 After meeting with Polish leader General Wojciech Jaruzelski, Genscher said that the two governments had agreed to set up working groups that would undertake to resolve differences on security questions, financial and economic issues, and proposed treaties on scientific, cultural and consular affairs. Genscher told reporters after his meeting with General Jaruzelski that “never have conditions [for East-West relations] been so favorable as they are today.”50

In June of 1988, during a U.S.-Soviet summit in Moscow, Gorbachev presented Ronald Reagan with the outlines of a plan for sharp reductions in conventional forces in Europe. U.S. officials curtailed rebuffed the plan as “propaganda that did not deserve serious consideration.”51 In contrast to the U.S. response, Genscher warmly welcomed the Soviet proposal. Genscher stated that the proposal was “very important” and that it would serve as “a good foundation” for further discussions between the two blocs on reducing nonnuclear forces.52 He further asserted that “Western policy must now recognize and use the historic opportunity inherent in the Soviet Union’s new thinking. This calls for self-confidence and the ability to recognize and use new developments.”53 Genscher’s statements, which were made at a conference

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50 Ibid., p.7.


52 Ibid., p.A29.

sponsored by the Institute for East-West studies, were seen by conference participants as a "clear bid to expand his influence in managing the relationship between...Eastern and Western Europe." In fact, by making these statements Genscher became the first Western leader to welcome the Soviet plan.

In October of 1988, Helmut Kohl met with Gorbachev in Moscow. The meeting represented a major step for Genscher "in his efforts to carve the special role he claims for West Germany in bridging the division of Europe."

In an article published in Die Zeit on the night of Chancellor Kohl's departure, Genscher stated "It is the awareness of our historical duty that prompts us Germans to acknowledge a special responsibility for confidence building between West and East. We shall not evade this responsibility, and nobody can relieve us of it." The main thrust of the Die Zeit article was that Gorbachev represented the best hope to date for a reunited Europe. Genscher described Gorbachev's reforms as "impressively dynamic" and further argued that the West should make a special effort to help the Soviet leader: "The more the Soviet reforms advance, the more the Soviet Union will be able to cooperate with Western democracies in every respect."

Genscher's pro-Gorbachev stance attracted quite a bit of criticism from NATO allies and, in particular, the U.S. The term "Genscherism" was coined initially in response to Genscher's enthusiasm for Gorbachev's arms proposal, but it came to stand for an uncritical enthusiasm for the Soviet leader and a willingness to help him. Genscher's initial overtures to Gorbachev and the East

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54 Ibid., p.A29.


56 Ibid., p.8.

57 Ibid., p.8.
met with mixed reactions from Western diplomats. West Germany's attempts to strengthen Soviet and Eastern Bloc relations were seen as economically and pragmatically motivated. Following Genscher's visit to Poland in early 1988 Western officials expressed ambivalence about his intentions. One diplomat noted "The West Germans have a pragmatic foreign policy, they see that there is much to be gained by strengthening their relations with the Eastern European countries."58

As Genscher's overtures toward Gorbachev became more concrete, criticism of his actions grew on several levels. The most common criticism was that he attempted to "be all things to all people" and therefore could not be trusted. Jim Hoagland, a journalist for The Washington Post, argued that the most pressing question facing NATO was not whether to trust Gorbachev, "but whether to trust the politically ambidextrous Genscher."59 Critics within NATO began to fear that Genscher, because of his foreign policy successes with the Soviets, might be in effect a mole for the Soviets. European members of NATO projected their fears about Germany in general onto Genscher's actions. Talk about Genscher's "unreliability" within NATO circles soon led to a fear of a German deal with the Soviets that would result in the reuniting of Germany as Europe's new great power.60 Helmut Kohl's Moscow meeting with Gorbachev was watched closely by West Germany's allies. One diplomatic observer noted that "The allies are always a little worried that Germans might stray off the reservation. They know that German reunification is ultimately in the hands of Moscow."61

60 Ibid., p.A23.
61 William Tuohy, "Hopes High For Accords During Kohl's Trip To Moscow", Los Angeles Times, October 22, 1988, part 1, p.5.
In response to these growing criticisms Genscher sought to allay any fears that Germany had ulterior political motives in its relationship with the Soviet Union. In October of 1988 Genscher stated:

Progress in bilateral relations will not only be to the benefit of further improvement of cooperation all over Europe but also to the benefit of East-West Relations. The far-reaching projects to restructure and modernize the Soviet economy offer many opportunities for West Germany as the most important Soviet trade partner.\(^6^2\)

The onslaught of criticism leveled at Genscher was swept aside in the wake of Gorbachev’s late 1988 announcement to the United Nations that the Soviet Union would unilaterally reduce troops in Eastern Europe, some six divisions and 5,000 tanks. After the speech, Genscher declared his early acceptance of the Soviet leader justified: “I personally feel vindicated in my long-held view that the Soviet General Secretary is serious about a far-reaching change in East-West relations through cooperation and disarmament.”\(^6^3\)

Genscher sought to link Gorbachev’s pledge to reduce conventional forces to the ongoing CSCE meeting in Vienna. The CSCE had been meeting in Vienna for two years in order to set an agenda for the 1989 “conventional stability” negotiations.\(^6^4\) Genscher praised Gorbachev’s initiative as a “new chapter in the history of disarmament” that would give “new impetus” to the Vienna talks.\(^6^5\) In a deliberate attempt to force NATO’s allies to adopt his line of

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\(^{62}\) ibid., p.5.


\(^{64}\) The negotiations on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) began on March 6, 1989. They were designed to negotiate a level of parity in the conventional forces of NATO and the Warsaw Pact as a compliment to the reduction in nuclear forces agreed to under the INF treaty. The goal was to achieve “conventional stability” between the two blocs once the counterweight of nuclear deterrence was removed from the balance-of-power equation.

\(^{65}\) ibid., p.5.
thinking Genscher publicly pronounced that "progress [in Vienna] will depend on a courageous use of the opportunities and on discarding the faintheartedness that normally prevails among many Western observers."66 Through his statements and actions Genscher had largely succeeded in setting the tone of the West's relations with the East.

Genscher's Davos speech and subsequent actions were followed by dramatic improvements in East-West relations. The signing of the INF Treaty in late 1987, Gorbachev's consolidation of power at the Nineteenth CPSU party conference in July 1988, the Soviet pledge to reduce conventional forces in Eastern Europe, and the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan all served to bolster Genscher's conviction that Gorbachev was responsible for a fundamental reorientation of Soviet policy that was unlikely to be reversed.67 Genscher had become increasingly convinced that Gorbachev's evocation of a "common European house" corresponded with his desire to create a new European cooperative security structure.

Genscher's enthusiastic support for Gorbachev demonstrated his belief that Gorbachev represented the prospect of a dramatic enhancement of ties between the divided halves of Europe. The accelerating pace of reform in Eastern Europe and the rise to power of non-communist governments further justified Genscher's approach and offered definitive proof that Gorbachev was serious in his support for self-determination in Europe. The eventual spillover of these events into the German Democratic Republic in 1989 and 1990 made German unification a possibility for the first time in over forty years.

66 Ibid., p.5.

67 Ronald D. Asmus, "Bonn's Ostpolitik in the Age of Gorbachev," p.84.
CHAPTER IV
German Reunification

For over forty years the reunification of Germany was perceived only as a distant possibility. So distant, in fact, that the opposition party in the German Bundestag, the Social Democrats, ceased even to speak of reunification as a rhetorical goal of German foreign policy during the 1980’s. In less than twelve months German reunification was transformed from a distant concept to a concrete reality.

The German Democratic Republic (GDR) was long considered the most economically and politically stable of the communist bloc countries; therefore, the rapid disintegration of the hard-line communist government took the West by surprise. The crumbling of the communist regime in the GDR occurred because of several interlocking factors. Above all, massive street demonstrations and mass emigration to the West brought the collapse of Erich Honecker’s hard-line government in October of 1989.

Several events preceded this crisis. In August of 1989, encouraged by Gorbachev’s policies of *perestroika* and *glašnost*, the reformist faction of the Hungarian Communist Party dismantled its border fences with Austria. East Germans vacationing in Hungary used the border opening to flee to West Germany. By the end of September 1989 approximately 30,000 East Germans had fled to the Federal

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Republic of Germany through Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

On October 7, 1989 Mikhail Gorbachev visited East Germany for the fortieth anniversary of the communist regime. During his visit Gorbachev implied that the Soviets had adopted a position of non-interference in East Germany's internal affairs. Gorbachev intimated that the Soviet soldiers stationed in East Germany would remain in their barracks as long as any public demonstrations were directed towards the policies of East Germany and not the Soviet Union. The subsequent street demonstrations, coupled with massive emigration to West Germany, forced the removal of Erich Honecker as the East German head of state.

Attempts by the communist regime to prop up the government failed miserably. The population's long-building dissatisfaction with the socialist model of government had come to a head. The government collapsed in a matter of months, in part due to the leadership's reluctance to disband the much-reviled Stasi or secret police and in part due to a series of scandals involving corruption of former high-level government officials which contributed to deepening public mistrust.

Perhaps the final straw that broke the back of the East German regime was the leadership's decision to open the Berlin Wall on November 9. At seven p.m. that day East German Politburo member Gunter Schabowski told a group of stunned reporters that East Germans could henceforth cross the border into West Germany.69 This statement led to utter confusion within East Germany. Civilians began massing at the Wall in central Berlin just minutes after the announcement. Not having received any official instructions, the East German border guards initially refused to open the border crossing. As

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tensions mounted at the Wall, border officials made the fateful decision to open
the border at around ten-thirty p.m. Thousands of East Germans spilled through
the border and at eleven o’clock the East German government issued the
official order to open the Berlin Wall.

With the opening of the border, East Germans began to see firsthand the
tremendous difference in living standards between the two Germanys. The
political climate in East Germany quickly shifted from how to reform the East
German government to how to unify with West Germany. Talk of unification
abounded. The constant flow of East Germans westward forced the East
German government to move elections scheduled for May to March 1990. The
results of the first free elections in March underlined the overwhelming East
German desire for unity. In May 1990, West and East Germany agreed to a
treaty of economic, social and monetary union. It provided for East Germany to
adopt West German currency and to remove all existing customs barriers
between the two countries.

Economic union led to calls for rapid political union. This sentiment was
strengthened by upheaval within the East German governing coalition and by
the rapid economic downturn that occurred in East Germany following the
economic union. The date for German reunification was set for October 3, 1990
with all-German elections to be held on December 2, 1990. Between October
third and December second, the administration of the former East Germany was
assumed by officials from Bonn, and the members of the East German
parliament sat as full members of the West German Bundestag.

The initial West German response to the 1989 events in East Germany
was Chancellor Helmut Kohl’s Ten Point Plan for Reunification, which he
announced to the Bundestag on November 28, 1989. While the plan itself was
a relatively modest proposal, it elicited quite an outcry from the other nations of
Europe. The plan called for the creation of a number of joint economic and environmental commissions and it pointed to the potential of a federation between the two states. According to the plan, federation would only have been possible once a democratically elected government was in place in East Germany.

Kohl saw the ten-point plan as an attempt to give the increasingly restless East Germans the prospect of an orderly process towards reunification while subtly putting the brakes on the situation. During his speech to the Bundestag Kohl had also sought to reassure the rest of the European nations as to the Federal Republic of Germany's ongoing commitment to European integration. Unfortunately, Kohl's actions were almost universally misinterpreted abroad as a purposeful acceleration rather than deceleration of events. Kohl's mistake lay in the fact that he had not given any of his European neighbors any prior diplomatic briefing of his ten-point plan. Consequently, they were taken by surprise by the West German proclamation. Chancellor Kohl's rationale for his unusual secrecy lay in the vagaries of German domestic politics. The Chancellor wished to seize the issue of reunification for his party in order to bolster its flagging political fortunes. Unfortunately, Kohl's actions backfired somewhat in the international arena.

Having the most to lose, in terms of prestige and security, the Soviets' response to the ten-point plan was the most negative. Official Soviet rhetoric immediately after the opening of the wall made it clear that reunification was not part of the Soviet agenda:

Bonn should take into account that any policies considering changes in borders would not be suitable to any government in Europe and would cause deep distrust. A new regime has started on the East German side.

—Pond, After the Wall, p.22.
of the border, but the border does remain.\footnote{David Remnick, "Soviets Accept Wall's Fall, Not Reunification," \textit{Washington Post}, November 11, 1989, p.24.}

Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's response to Kohl's plan was to criticize it as an attempt by West Germany to gain "selfish benefits" from the process of change sweeping Eastern Europe. Gorbachev and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnaze warned that the subject of reunification was not an issue for current policy. Gorbachev stated his opinion of Germany's actions flatly: "Let us not push or force the issue. History will decide this question."\footnote{"Gorbachev Rejects Changes in Europe's Post-War Borders," \textit{Washington Post}, December 2, 1989.}

Soviet spokesman Gennadi Gerasimov crystallized the Soviet reaction to the ten-point plan by stating the following: "There is not one country in Europe today that would thirst for German Reunification because of the questions it raises for stability. It is not on the agenda."\footnote{David Remnick, "Soviets Attack West German Proposal on Reunification," \textit{Washington Post}, November 30, 1989, p.53.}

British officials were not as blunt as the Soviets, but Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher made no secret of the British desire to see unification postponed for as long as possible. The Prime Minister envisioned a waiting period of some ten or fifteen years.\footnote{Stephen F. Szabo, \textit{The Diplomacy of German Unification} (St. Martin's Press:New York, 1992), p.47.} The British government was particularly concerned about the new Germany's membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and felt that a slower pace for unification was more likely to ensure that Germany remained secured within the Western alliance. Both Britain and France seized the opportunity presented by the Soviets to remind the Germans that the victors of World War II still held residual four-power rights and that
German reunification would not occur without their assent.75

The French response to unification was stronger than Britain's as France had the most difficult time adjusting to the new realities presented by German unification. In addition to the psychological scars caused by its historical relationship with Germany, France was worried that the changes brought by a new, unified Germany would, "sweep away their Gaullist dreams of French rather than German leadership of Europe and their comfortable assumption that Paris could stay aloof from NATO's military command indefinitely and still enjoy the alliance's protection."76 In the face of these prospects the French leaders were unsure of what to do. France attempted to slow down the pace of German unification by stabilizing the GDR government and, in a reversion to nineteenth century power politics, by reviving their ties with the Soviet Union.

The Bonn government found itself having to fend off criticism from Poland, the Soviet Union, and France because of Kohl's failure to include an explicit guarantee of the Polish western boundary within the ten-point plan. The Polish western boundary, the so-called Oder-Neisse line, is drawn through what had been part of prewar Germany. Some members of the right wing of Kohl's political party, the Christian Democrats, have long refused to close the border issue until after a formal World War II peace treaty.77 Kohl's conspicuous silence on the border issue caused public worry throughout Europe about the aftermath of German reunification.

Of all the Federal Republic's most important allies and neighbors, only the United States endorsed the prospect of German reunification from the start.

75 Pond, After the Wall, p.24.
76 Ibid., p.25
The U.S. was most able to call for democratic unification because of its geographical isolation and lack of historical baggage concerning Germany.

As noted earlier, the pressure for German unification increased almost exponentially between November 1989 and May 1990. The Germans were fond of saying “the train of unification has left the station and there was no point in lying down in front of the locomotive.” Indeed, since unification had developed a momentum all its own, the question had become “when” and “how” and was no longer “if.” The dilemma facing the German government became: How were the Germans, in the face of widespread international uncertainty, going to make unification palatable for the Europeans?

The most important actor in Europe was obviously the Soviet Union. If Mikhail Gorbachev were to allow reunification, he would need to be able to sell the loss of East Germany to the hard-line conservatives within the Soviet Congress. In addition, the West, throughout the unification process, wanted to take the interests of the Soviet Union into account so Moscow would not feel insecure in post-unification Europe. Furthermore, the West wished to help Gorbachev as much as possible so that he could continue the domestic liberalizing reforms that were then in progress. Western diplomats referred to their willingness to work with the Soviet Union’s security and domestic concerns as “giving cover” to the Soviets on German unification.78

The West had a strong desire that united Germany be a member of the NATO alliance. However, German membership of NATO was a Soviet sticking point throughout the process of negotiation. Both sides wanted Germany “tied down” to a greater alliance, but the Soviets preferred that United Germany be either neutral or part of some sort of pan-European structure. The West felt that

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78 Szabo, The Diplomacy of German Unification, p.54.
NATO was the only structure capable of "handling" the new Germany and preventing a resurgence in German nationalism.

**Genscher's Foreign Policy**

Throughout his tenure as Foreign Minister, Genscher always sought to place the goal of German reunification within the context of pan-European cooperation. During discussions of the future of the two Germanys, Genscher often stated that his official policy was equivalent to that which was stated in the "Letter on German Unity." The letter, which was presented to the Soviets by the Federal Government of West Germany after the signing of the Treaty of Moscow in 1971, stated that the long-term goal of Germany is and always will be "to work for a state of peace in Europe in which the German nation will regain its unity through free self-determination." Writing in 1982, Genscher restated the Federal Republic's commitment to the principles of the "Letter on German Unity" while reaffirming West Germany's commitment to pursuing that unity within a broader European context.

It should be obvious to all our allies that no responsible politician in the Federal Republic cherishes the illusion that it could seek to attain the indelible long-term goal of regaining German unity by pursuing a national policy of going it alone. Rather, the Alliance and a joint Alliance policy for a peace order encompassing the whole of Europe are the prerequisites for attaining this goal.

During the events of 1989 in Eastern Europe, when German reunification first became a real possibility, Genscher maintained his stance that German unity would have to be embedded in a process of European integration. During an interview with *Der Spiegel* in September of 1989, Genscher was queried

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79 Genscher, "Toward an Overall Western Strategy," p.44.

80 Ibid., p.44.
about the possibility of German unification taking place within the European
development process. Genscher responded:

...our national interests are embedded in European interests. Any attempt to go it alone would lead us very quickly into dangerous isolation. It would create new instabilities in Europe, and we would thus neglect our responsibility to help maintain peace in Europe.\textsuperscript{81}

Genscher also sought to reconcile the German commitment to further integration of the European Community with his commitment to greater pan-European cooperation through the CSCE. To Genscher, German membership in the EC served to promote both the German reunification process and the CSCE process. In an article published in \textit{Die Zeit} in October, 1988, Genscher referred to the complementarity of the EC, CSCE and possible German reunification by stating, "Everything that brings Europeans closer together does the same thing for Germans - that is the whole of Europe."\textsuperscript{82} Genscher went on to elaborate upon the role of the EC in the context of greater pan-European cooperation:

The European Community is at present the most advanced form of coexistence of sovereign countries...This European Community is not the whole of Europe, but it is a central element of Europe's present and future structure. The dynamic development of the European community holds out great prospects for East-West relations.

As the pace of unification quickened Genscher repeated his call for unification embedded within a European framework. In a February 1990 speech at a conference in Potsdam, Genscher presented his method of fitting

\textsuperscript{81} Hans-Dietrich Genscher, "Genscher on Europe and German Reunification," \textit{Statements and Speeches}, Volume XII, No.19, October 3, 1989, p.3-4.

the process of German unification to the requirements of the European community through the institutionalization of the CSCE process.

The two German states are called upon to provide not only a German, but also a European answer to the quest for national unity. The aim is to create a European framework in which the Germans can come together. The breathtaking pace of developments everywhere in Europe, but especially in the GDR, prompts many people to ask what is the foundation and framework for those developments. It is the Helsinki Final Act. The CSCE process must now come fully to bear. This requires that the signatories of the Final Act achieve a partnership for stability throughout Europe in political, economic and security terms. The basis for such a partnership for stability is also in the Helsinki Final Act and the CSCE process.

The CSCE process must become the Magna Carta of a stable European order, based on human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Helsinki Final Act gave the participating states a binding code of conduct for peaceful relations among them. It made the East-West conflict manageable and mitigated its consequences for the people. Today the CSCE is acquiring a new dimension: it must chart the course for overcoming the unnatural division of our continent. Following antagonism and then a modus vivendi, the third phase is now beginning, in which Europe will find its unity.83

In addition to his proclamations concerning the role of the CSCE in a new Europe, Genscher outlined ten new pan-European institutions and structures at the Potsdam conference which he considered necessary for cooperation and security reasons:

- An institution to co-ordinate East-West economic co-operation. The European Development Bank must also be seen in this context.
- A pan-European institution for the protection of human rights. The application of the Council of Europe’s Human Rights Convention to the whole of Europe suggests itself.
- A centre for the creation of a European legal area aimed at legal harmonization.
- A European environmental agency.
- Extension of European Scientific Co-operation Project (EUREKA) co-

operation to the whole of Europe.
--Collaboration between the European Space Agency (ESA) and corresponding Eastern institutions.
--A centre to develop European telecommunications.
--A centre to develop European transport infrastructure and policy.
--A European verification centre.
--A European conflict management centre.

To keep the CSCE process moving, one might also set up a council of foreign ministers of the CSCE countries, which would meet at regular intervals....It is essential that by deepening and reinforcing the CSCE process, all participating states are prepared to create a framework of stability and network of security for foreseeable and unforeseeable developments in Europe.84

Genscher kept the concepts of the “Europeanization” of Germany and the institutionalization of the CSCE process at the forefront of his rhetoric during the process of reunification. Genscher had considerable success in realizing these aims.

Genscher’s Role

During the events of 1989 in Eastern Europe Genscher’s policies of rapprochement and cooperation towards the East began to pay dividends. On September 30, 1989, East Germans who had been occupying the West German embassies in Prague and Warsaw were allowed to emigrate to West Germany. East Germany had previously refused to allow the emigration of some 3,500 refugees who had been living on the embassy grounds for as long as eleven weeks. East Germany’s shift in position was attributed to a face-saving solution Genscher offered to the East Germans.

While attending the United Nations General Assembly meeting in late September, Genscher met with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnaze and East German Foreign Minister Oskar Fischer. In his meeting with Fischer,

84 Ibid., p.26-27.
Genscher discussed his proposal to send the refugees out of the embassies via East Germany, thereby allowing the East Germans to expel their citizens formally and to claim that their laws against "fleeing the republic" were unbroken. In his meeting with Shevardnaze, Genscher pressed his concerns with his Soviet counterpart who agreed that "something must happen" and consented to exert his influence on Genscher's behalf. Later that day, the East German government announced its decision to allow the departure of the refugees.

After the November 9 opening and subsequent dismantling of the Berlin Wall, Genscher flew to the U.S. on November 21 and presented President Bush with a piece of the Berlin wall. Genscher took the opportunity to discuss with Bush the U.S. position towards the upcoming Malta meetings with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. After the meeting Genscher made three basic points which he indicated were shared by President Bush:

--It is in the western interest that the reform process in Eastern Europe succeed, without any interference from outside.
--The Soviets should be assured solemnly and clearly that "we will not draw advantages out of problems or difficulties which may even turn into crises" during the course of the East European reform efforts.
--The West accepts "the security interests of the Soviet Union" and shares an interest with the Soviet Union in maintaining stability as the reform process proceeds.

Additionally, Genscher used the occasion of his meeting with Bush as an opportunity to declare his views on German unity. When asked about the

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demonstrations for reunification in East Germany Genscher responded by emphasizing four preconditions he felt were necessary to achieve unity:

---German unity could only come about after free elections are conducted in East Germany;
---an actual union could only take place in a context in which Eastern and Western Europe also drew together;
---if Germany would be reunified it would only be on the basis of Western values, and;
---there was no question of altering the two Germany's international boundaries established in 1945 at the close of World War II.88

Whereas Kohl had created international concern by presenting his ten-point plan, Genscher sought to calm the international community by offering some broad outlines for German unification. As noted above Kohl's ten point plan caught the international community off-guard and elicited quite a few negative responses from Germany's European neighbors. While Kohl made his pronouncement without Genscher's knowledge, it was up to Genscher to handle the international fallout. On December fifth, 1989, Genscher flew to Moscow in an attempt to reassure the Soviets about the prospect of German reunification. Genscher assured Mikhail Gorbachev that Bonn considered the issue of German reunification as inseparably linked to the ending of the East-West division in Europe.89 In conversations with Eduard Shevardnaze, Genscher was asked whether German unification was more important to his government than European stability. Genscher replied that the Germans were well aware of their "special responsibility for stability in Europe." Genscher added, "Our national fate is incorporated into the fate of Europe. It means there is not going to be a single separate German course. Only the growing together


of Europe can lead to a growing together of the two German states."\(^90\)

Genscher also took the opportunity to calm the fears of Poland that a unified Germany would be bent on expansion of its borders. While in Moscow Genscher insisted that Bonn recognized Germany's eastern border with Poland. The next day, in a radio interview, Genscher declared that West Germany would never attempt to regain territory it lost Poland. He stated: "It is completely clear that the Germans do not question the Polish western border--now or in the future."\(^91\) Genscher's proclamations served to defuse but not to resolve the issue. The Polish border question continued to be an irritant during ensuing negotiations over German reunification. When Kohl's stubbornness threatened to cast a cloud over negotiations, Genscher broke publicly with his coalition partner over the Chancellor's refusal to explicitly guarantee Poland's postwar boundary. In March of 1990 Genscher accused Kohl of domestic posturing over the border issue and urged him to agree to an immediate joint East and West German guarantee of the border.\(^92\) Kohl had maintained that a united Germany would not seek to change Poland's borders, but that only the parliament of a united Germany could guarantee those borders. This distinction was enough to cause considerable nervousness for Poland. Genscher stated that Kohl's recalcitrance was endangering unification by spreading doubts about, "the sincerity of German intentions to convince others that...we don't want a German Europe, but rather a European Germany."\(^93\) The issue was eventually resolved in July of 1990 when East and West Germany promised to guarantee the

\(^{90}\) Ibid., p. A20.


\(^{93}\) Ibid., p.A17.
postwar German-Polish border.

The Polish agreement was worked out during a one day meeting of the “two plus four” group. The “two plus four” talks became the forum for hammering out the external aspects of German unification. Originating with the Americans and agreed to at an East-West conference of Foreign Ministers in Ottawa on February 13, the formula stood for the four occupying powers after World War II and the two Germanys. At Genscher’s insistence, “Two” preceded “four” in the formula to stress that the Germans were on equal footing with the four powers and were not being dictated to during the talks.

The purpose of these rotating conferences of Foreign Ministers was to manage the concerns of all the parties involved in unification. It was decided beforehand that the only business of the talks would be the restoration of full sovereignty to Germany and the termination of the four powers’ “rights and responsibilities” in Germany which were left over from the Potsdam Conference held at the close of World War II. Genscher accepted the approach of using only the smaller forum of “two plus four” instead of the thirty-five member CSCE to manage reunification because it avoided a large peace conference leading to a World War II peace treaty. In that scenario, Germany could have been subject to claims for war reparations and other complications which would have hindered the unification process. The final results of the talks would be reported to the thirty-five nation summit meeting of the CSCE planned for late 1990.

With the preclusion of a large role for the CSCE in the negotiation of German unification, Genscher strove to prevent the "two plus four" talks from

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94 Pond, After the Wall, p.47.
95 Szabo, The Diplomacy of German Unification, p.60.
usurping any more of the CSCE's bailiwick. In early April, 1990, despite the need to ease Soviet military concerns over unification, Genscher stated that the "two plus four" talks were not the proper forum to determine the future strength of the German army or of NATO forces on German territory. In the statement Genscher acknowledged that the Soviets had legitimate security concerns and that those concerns would have to be answered. However, Genscher argued, discussing troop deployments in the "two plus four" talks would upset the Vienna negotiations on reducing conventional military forces in Europe. During the negotiations on the creation of the "two plus four" talks, Genscher had been the most vocal proponent of a 35 nation CSCE summit. Genscher had argued that the CSCE should meet in 1990 to give "the dramatic developments in East and Central Europe a stable framework." Genscher used the opportunity provided by his support for the Vienna negotiations to promote the CSCE as "the framework for creating new institutions to accommodate the political changes sweeping Europe." He stated that this framework might include regular meetings of the foreign ministers of the CSCE countries, expanding the Council of Europe's Court of Human Rights to include all CSCE signatories, and creating new organizations for the protection of minority rights and for crisis management of political disputes in Europe.

As noted above, the Soviet domestic situation required "giving cover" to Moscow. The "two plus four" talks were threatened by the Soviet insistence that united Germany not be a member of NATO. The first Western official to strike a workable balance between "giving cover" to the Soviets and NATO membership


was Genscher. The idea that Genscher proposed was soon adopted as NATO's official position and became universally known as the “Genscher Plan.”

Genscher believed Gorbachev needed to avoid the appearance of having lost the Cold War. Concurrently, Genscher believed that unification had to occur within the framework of European integration without compromising NATO and the Americans. To that end Genscher sought to alter NATO's function so that it would be less threatening to the Soviets. On May 31, 1990 Genscher declared that full NATO membership for a reunified Germany was not a cause for worry for the USSR because the Alliance would “appear in a new light” in which it would no longer confront the Warsaw Pact, but rather cooperate on issues of security.\(^{99}\) In effect, Genscher urged Gorbachev to be patient while the U.S. and Europe brought NATO into line with a dramatically restructured Europe. With the metamorphosis of the NATO alliance, Genscher argued, German membership would be much less of a strategic setback for the Soviets.

The Genscher Plan was an attempt to balance the Soviets' domestic and international concerns with the interests of Germany and the Western alliance. Specifically, the plan stipulated that NATO would agree not to advance its troops or nuclear weapons onto the territory of the German Democratic Republic. For a period of several years the FRG also would not station its forces assigned to NATO to that area. Further, the USSR, which was having difficulty housing soldiers returning from Eastern Europe, would be able to keep its troops stationed in the GDR for a transitional period of three to four years.\(^{100}\) Additionally, as noted above, Genscher’s compromise included a “kinder, gentler” NATO that would change from being a military adversary to a vehicle


\(^{100}\) Pond, After the Wall, p.44.
Genscher strongly repeated his commitment to developing German unity within a European framework. He stated that unity would be a declaration that guaranteed, not threatened, the borders of all of Germany's neighbors. Genscher clearly gave priority to the European Community and the CSCE as the framework for a new European security order.

On July 6 Genscher's counsel of patience to the Soviets on the issue of NATO membership came to fruition. A NATO summit held in London declared that the USSR was no longer an adversary and invited Gorbachev to address the meeting. The London Declaration, the final document of that summit, spelled out the new definition of NATO's role as a guarantor of peace and stability in Europe. The declaration reflected the new, more political role that Genscher had outlined in the Genscher Plan. The principles for the new "kinder, gentler" NATO outlined in the London Declaration included the following elements:

--transform the East-West relationship from one of confrontation to one of cooperation;
--transform the character of NATO's conventional defense both through CFE (conventional forces in Europe) reduction and through a new strategy of "reduced forward presence" to replace that of forward defense; this would include reorganizing NATO troops into multinational corps, limiting their offensive capability and setting limits on the number of German forces;
--modify NATO nuclear strategy away from flexible response to a view of nuclear weapons as a last resort; offer to negotiate on SNF (short range nuclear forces) and to eliminate all nuclear artillery shells from Europe if the Soviets do the same;
--support the strengthening and institutionalization of the CSCE.

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102 Ibid., p.57.
103 Ibid., p.92.
With the pledge to transform NATO, one of the last stumbling blocks to Soviet acquiescence was removed. Kohl had agreed to a limit on the size of the unified Germany's armed forces at the London Declaration. Prior to the NATO summit Gorbachev had scored a decisive victory over his hard-line conservative opponents at the Party Congress in early July. Additionally, in mid-June Gorbachev had demonstrated new flexibility on the issue of German troops remaining in NATO. German assurances of economic assistance and the promise of a general treaty of German-Soviet economic cooperation all served to foster a general environment of cooperation between the two states. This state of affairs proved amenable to Gorbachev who extended an invitation on July 11 to meet with Kohl at his private dacha in the Caucasus mountains. It was during this meeting that Gorbachev negotiated with Kohl the broad outlines of German membership in NATO. Additionally, they negotiated the departure of the 360,000 Soviet troops in the GDR. The Soviet troops were to gradually withdraw over a period of a few years. Gorbachev had accepted the Genscher Plan.

Genscher's commitment to the CSCE process helped pave the way for Soviet acquiescence in the conditions of German unification. For years he had sought to dispel any potential fear of German unification present among West Germany's European neighbors. When queried in 1989 about the prospects for reunification Genscher responded by stating that if unification were ever to occur, "any German attempt to go it alone would create a dangerous situation."104 Furthermore, Genscher played an extremely important role in generating an image of a "European Germany instead of a German Europe." Genscher argued again and again that a gain for Germany was a gain for

Europe as a whole because of Germany's commitment to European integration and the CSCE process.

It is only in this historic dimension that German unification will become possible - without German neutralization: with united Germany as a member of the European Community and of the changing Western alliance, and through our active part in building a European system of peace in the context of the CSCE.105

Throughout the diplomacy of unification process, Genscher reiterated his belief that the Helsinki Final Act had given participant states a code of conduct for their peaceful coexistence. Germany wished only to reinforce the principles of the Final Act by strengthening the CSCE process. Through this approach Genscher sought to create a European framework in which to embed German unification and thereby assure Bonn's European neighbors of their security interests. To this end Genscher forcefully lobbied the United States and the other members of NATO to offer to the Soviets a pan-European security council that would assure them a voice in European affairs even after their troops had left Eastern Europe.106

The U.S. initially adopted a wary approach to Genscher's entreaties for the strengthening of the CSCE. The U.S. had often interpreted Genscher's enthusiasm for CSCE as an attempt to replace the NATO alliance with some vague notion of collective security. In addition, the Helsinki Final Act in 1975 had originally been a topic of heated ideological debate in the United States. However, by 1990 the U.S. administration had come to recognize the accomplishments of the CSCE process on the issues of borders and human rights, although the administration was still skeptical about its potential in the


106 Pond, After the Wall, p.52.
realm of European security. Elizabeth Pond demonstrates the change in the U.S. government's attitude toward the CSCE by detailing the role the CSCE process played in the liberalization of Eastern Europe:

The minimal statement on human rights inserted into the Helsinki agreement at the insistence of the West Europeans stimulated astonishing ferment inside the closed East European regimes. A series of ad hoc review conferences kept the spotlight on repression of dissidents, and governments that acknowledged the legitimacy of foreign state's interest in their human rights performance kept releasing political prisoners on order to avoid international criticism. This, in turn, emboldened more citizens to discover and speak their minds.

The fateful Hungarian decisions to dismantle the barbed wire on the Austrian border in May and not to force East German emigrants to return to the GDR in August could be traced to the moral suasion of CSCE. More broadly, Western assurances at Helsinki that the East-West borders were "inviolable" (though not "unchangeable if peaceful means were used) had allowed Solidarity to spring up and demand domestic change in Poland without fearing exploitation of any resulting Polish crisis by German "revanchists." Helsinki - and the rise of the unorthodox Mikhail Gorbachev to lead the Soviet Union - paved the way for the peaceful revolutions of 1989 throughout Eastern Europe.

In retrospect, the Americans acknowledged the political virtues of CSCE.107

Genscher took pains to voice his support for the continuing leading role for NATO in Europe's security system. Speaking before the German Bundestag concerning the role of the CSCE in German reunification, he reaffirmed Germany's commitment to NATO. "We are aware that this larger, whole [post-unification] Europe can only preserve its stability through the continuing membership of the United States and Canada in the Western Alliance and through their participation in the CSCE process."108

107 Ibid., p.52-53.
Once the Americans were assured that Genscher intended CSCE to supplement and not supplant NATO they agreed to the strengthening and institutionalization of CSCE. At Moscow's request a CSCE summit was scheduled at the end of 1990 following the completion of the two plus four talks. The CSCE conferences were given a regular schedule and a permanent secretariat was established. Institutionalizing the CSCE process in this manner helped both to fulfill Genscher's hopes for CSCE and allowed Gorbachev to sell the loss of the GDR and Eastern Europe to his domestic skeptics.

On September 12, the last "two plus four" meeting was held in Moscow to tie up the diplomatic loose ends. On October 3 unified Germany became a sovereign state. On November 19, the CSCE summit in Paris met to give its blessing to the peaceful reunification of Germany and, more broadly, Europe.

A few days prior to the Paris CSCE Summit Genscher was queried about the role CSCE played in the unification process. The questioner pointed out that ironically, Helsinki had originally been seen by the Soviets as a way to cement the division of Europe and Germany. Responding to this assertion Genscher quipped "if there hadn't been a CSCE, we would have had to invent it now." On a more serious note Genscher stated that "the task was to create a basis for change in Europe. Our expectations have been fulfilled, we are now living in a fundamentally changed Europe."109

Judged by his actions, Hans-Dietrich Genscher was in many respects purely a pragmatist. Genscher's support for the stationing of INF missiles on German soil and his fervent pursuit of German reunification are both examples of a statesman acting according to the primacy of his state's interest. However, despite Genscher's preoccupation with these pragmatic and state-centric concerns, he did evolve a set of basic foreign policy precepts that went beyond purely German interests. Genscher repeatedly and consistently voiced his support for multilateral solutions to international problems. In various coalitions and international bodies he asserted the superiority of cooperative actions that sought to increase the number of participants in diplomatic negotiations and cooperative security arrangements in Europe. Genscher's favorite vehicle for the promotion of multilateralism was the CSCE.

During the early years of the INF debate, Genscher was a strong proponent of the stationing of missiles on German soil. Despite the damage such a move would inflict upon East-West relations, Genscher accepted the necessity of fostering a credible nuclear deterrent in the face of an expansionist Soviet Union:

A realistic détente policy is one that is very clear as to its limits. Détente demands security as its foundation, and there can be no security for us without the [NATO] Alliance and its, and therefore also our, defensive readiness. Anyone that thinks that he can safeguard his security through his own efforts and détente alone, would be a dangerous dreamer.¹¹⁰

Throughout the often tense German-Soviet relationship that characterized the period of the INF debate, Genscher always kept the lines of communication open through the CSCE. Although forced to sacrifice détente for defense policy, Genscher did not forsake the CSCE process. He used the CSCE process to fill the gap in East-West relations created by the deployment of INF missiles in West Germany. Additionally, the CSCE process produced the CDE agreement on confidence and security building measures that lessened the chances for military mishaps between East and West. Genscher used the CSCE to sustain East-West relations despite the often acrimonious negotiations that accompanied the early years of the INF debate.

Although Genscher adopted a defensive stance during the Brezhnev era, he quickly altered his position on West German deployment of INF when Mikhail Gorbachev rose to power in the Soviet Union. As noted above, Genscher was the first Western official to advocate "taking Gorbachev at his word." Beyond a purely rhetorical call for cooperation with the Soviet Premier, Genscher backed up his assertions by publicly breaking with his conservative coalition partner, the CDU-CSU, on the issue of the merits of Gorbachev's proposal to abolish both medium and short range missiles in Europe. For this stance, Genscher received much criticism both at home and abroad. When Gorbachev announced that the Soviet Union would unilaterally reduce troops in Eastern Europe, Genscher's faith in Gorbachev was rewarded. It is this stance that provides insight into Genscher's motivation. By calling for the West to trust Gorbachev, Genscher was making a clear bid to manage the upcoming phase of East-West relations. Genscher took a significant risk by supporting the Soviet leader. The only gains he stood to receive in 1987 were improvements in Europe's security situation and improvements in East-West relations; both of these gains were the primary foci of the CSCE process.
German reunification presents the most telling example of state-interest. Obviously, reunification was of primary benefit to the West German state. However, Genscher made it palatable for other Europeans by placing it within the context of pan-European unification. Genscher's insistence that Germany remain rooted in the EC and NATO, and his insistence that the CSCE play a role in German and European unification, lent credence to his stated desire for a "European Germany, not a German Europe." Genscher declared in May, 1990,

Rather than creating new problems for Europe, German Unification will play a part in ensuring a new and lasting stability. We consider the transformation of this insight of European history into a policy for Germany and for a gradually uniting Europe to be Germany's European mission as we approach the end of the century.\footnote{Hans-Dietrich Genscher, "Opening Remarks at the 'two-plus-four' conference in Bonn, May 5, 1990," in Statements and Speeches, Volume 13, No.11, May 8, 1990, p.2.}

This statement was not simply rhetoric. German reunification was potentially a diplomatic nightmare for both East and West. The Soviets, as noted above, worried about their security interests in post-unification Europe. Likewise, the West's concerns centered on the destabilizing effect a large, economically powerful, independent Germany would have upon Europe. Genscher was able to satisfy both of these conflicting concerns. As noted above, Genscher saw the broadening and deepening of the EC as a necessary step toward greater pan-European cooperation. Genscher held up the EC as the most advanced form of coexistence of sovereign countries anywhere in the world. For him, the EC was to become the model for relations of all of Europe and Germany was to be the driving force at its center. Additionally, Genscher addressed the West's security concerns by flatly stating that a reunited Germany would remain a member of NATO. For the Soviets, the transformation of the CSCE into a durable and
effective, pan-European, collective security organization would provide the Soviets a permanent voice in European affairs. Together, Genscher saw the deepening and broadening of the EC and the institutionalization of the CSCE process as the intermediate steps towards the creation of a common democratic area throughout all of Europe. Genscher was able to satisfy the security interests of both the East and West and bring Europe closer to his vision of unity by embedding German unification within the CSCE process and the European Community.

The evidence presented by these case studies points to a depiction of Genscher as a statesman who was committed to preserving his state's interests while maintaining a basic set of beliefs that European relations could best be served in multilateral frameworks. During the course of his tenure in office, Genscher transformed Germany's relationship with Eastern Europe from one of détente and defense to an active policy of pan-European entente. Genscher was able to pursue pan-European unity without compromising German interests and his role as Foreign Minister of Germany. The CSCE process provided Genscher with the perfect vehicle to accomplish both of these potentially conflicting goals.


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