The Allied Museum
Berlin

The Windsor Park Seminar
Berlin: The British Perspective 1945-1990
1-2 September 2009
Cumberland Lodge, Windsor Park, London

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AMBASSADORS' NOTES

September 2011 marks the fortieth anniversary of the Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin. The publication "Berlin: The British Perspective 1945-1990" therefore could not come at a more timely moment. Eminent officials, scholars and journalists – most of whom were closely involved in the unfolding of events recorded in this book – have shared their valuable recollections and insights. I trust their contributions will give us a deeper understanding of this important period in the common history of our two countries.
With great pleasure I see this online publication going into the hands of a wider audience and becoming another signpost of a living and growing relationship between the United Kingdom and Germany.

Georg Boomgarden
German Ambassador to the Court of St. James's
London, September 2011

The British Embassy is delighted to welcome the publication of the papers from the seminar 'Berlin: The British Perspective 1945-1990', which was held at Cumberland Lodge in 2009. In the Foreign Office, we are particularly proud of the role that FCO historians played in helping determine the agenda for the event and that so many former officials were able to take an active role in the discussions themselves. This special publication, which will bring important materials into the historical record of this crucial period, is a fitting tribute to September's 40th Anniversary of the signing of the historic Quadripartite Agreement in Berlin.

Simon McDonald
HM Ambassador to Germany
Berlin, September 2011

FOREWORD

The construction of the Berlin Wall 50 years ago was a turning point in the Cold War. An unforeseen consequence of the second Berlin crisis, the Wall constituted the European line of demarcation between the two superpowers until German reunification. International policymakers were forced to respond to the consolidation of the political status quo and the division of the city. One such milestone was the "Treaty on Berlin", signed forty years ago in Berlin, on September 1971, by the four victorious powers from World War II.

The commemoration of both historical moments – the construction of the Berlin Wall and the Quadripartite Agreement – provides the occasion for this publication from the Allied Museum, which is based on the transcript of a witness seminar, entitled "Berlin: The British Perspective 1945-1990", that took place in September 2009 in Cumberland Lodge in Windsor Park near London.

Thanks to the initiative of Patrick Salmon, Chief Historian of the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, and Dr. Helmut Trotnow, former Director of the Allied Museum, high-ranking diplomats and ministerial officials came together at the conference to discuss German-British relations during the Cold War era. The results of this unique witness seminar testify to the intensive and often remarkably open atmosphere of the discussion in Windsor Park.

The passages on the Quadripartite Agreement reveal the complicated calculations behind international policy during the Cold War and provide insights into the diplomatic struggles behind the scenes. This treaty, negotiated under the auspices of Prime Minister Edward Heath's government, constituted a new phase of détente. Another important part of the Seminar was dedicated to German-British relations during reunification. Testimony from Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's closest advisors illuminates the history leading up to reunification and illustrates how sensitive nuances and interpersonal relationships are critical elements of diplomacy.

The United Kingdom is a founding member of the Allied Museum. As a federal institution, the Allied Museum is responsible for documenting the history of the Western powers in West Berlin during the Cold War era, thereby serving the important cultural function of keeping the memory alive of an important chapter in contemporary British history. One such piece of evidence is the British Hastings aircraft from the Berlin Airlift, which has become museum's foremost symbol and most beloved exhibit.

I am therefore very pleased to present this electronic publication, which I hope will interest a broad circle of readers. I would like to express my profound thanks to all of those who were involved in making this project a success.

Dr. Gundula Bavendamm
Director of the Allied Museum

Berlin, September 2011

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS – WINDSOR PARK SEMINAR

Panel moderators

Sir Nicholas Bayne, KCMG
Fellow at the International Trade Policy Unit of the London School of Economics and Political Science

Prof. Dr. Rainer Hudemann
University of the Saarland

Dr. Jackson Janes
Executive Director of the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, Johns Hopkins University

Dr. Patrick Salmon
Chief Historian, Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Dr. Helmut Trotnow OBE
Director of the Allied Museum in Berlin

Panel speakers (with their positions relevant to the Seminar)

Sir Christopher Audland KCMG DL
Foreign Office, Negotiator of the Bonn Convention (1950-52) and the Quadripartite Agreement (1970-72)

Sir Michael Burton KCVO, CMG
Minister, British Military Government, Berlin (1985-1990)

Professor Fritz Caspari, KCVO
Ambassador to the Court of St James's (United Kingdom) (1958-1963)

Professor Marianne Howarth
Nottingham Trent University

Jürgen Krönig OBE
British correspondent of the German weekly *Die Zeit*

Sir Christopher Mallaby, GCMG
Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany (1988-1992)

David Marsh CBE
Chief German correspondent, *Financial Times* (1986-1991)

Colin Munro, CMG
Deputy Head of Mission, East Berlin (1987-1990)

Baroness Neville-Jones, DCMG
Minister, British Embassy, Bonn (1988-1991)

Rt Hon Sir Michael Palliser, GCMG, PC
Permanent Under-Secretary of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (1975-1982)

Lord Powell of Bayswater, KCMG
Private Secretary for Foreign Affairs to Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (1983-1991)

Dr. Hermann Freiherr von Richthofen
Member of the Bonn Group for the negotiation of the Quadripartite Agreement (1971-1972);
Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the United Kingdom (1989-1993)

Audience members identified in the transcript

Dr. David Barclay, Director of the German Studies Association, USA

Sir Frank Berman, KCMG, QC

Dr. Dominik Geppert, Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn

Cord Meier Klodt, German Embassy

Johannes Leithäuser, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*

Eckhard Lübkemeier**,** Deputy Head of the German Mission in London

Professor Anthony Nicholls, St Antony's College, Oxford

THE TRANSCRIPT OF THE WINDSOR PARK SEMINAR

Berlin: The British Perspective 1945-1990
1-2 September 2009
Cumberland Lodge, Windsor Park, London

NOTES OF WELCOME

Sir Michael Arthur, British Ambassador to Germany
1 September 2009

This is a year of anniversaries for us in Berlin. Today marks 70 years since the start of World War II. Sixty years of Germany's Basic Law, the *Grundgesetz*. Sixty years since the end of the Berlin Airlift. And soon, 20 years since the fall of the Wall, with all its symbolism.

But Britain has two other anniversaries with Germany. Two hundred and fifty years since the Battle of Minden, when the Prussians kindly helped us beat the French (not the only time in history). And 250 years since the death of Händel, our shared and wonderful composer. Händel was an early European who himself threw off his umlaut when he naturalised as a British subject.

This conference is largely about a key short period in history. I found it fascinating to read again about the events we all lived through. But this conference is special. It is living history, not just in the sense that we look at the consequences of those key months as they affected today's Berlin and Germany, but because in this distinguished audience we have many of the real players who made it happen. Living history in both senses.

Britain's perspective on the "German question" from 1945 to 1990 has had its moments. It is sometimes caricatured as being a tad negative. Prime Minister Thatcher made no secret of her own views, which indeed evolved over that crucial winter of 1988/89. But this overall message of British reluctance is wrong, and needs to be corrected in the German folklore.

Leaving aside Britain's fundamental support for Germany, from the Airlift right through to the construction of NATO and British Forces Germany, we had a longstanding UK commitment to unity and the principle of self-determination. See Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin's declaration to Parliament in 1948: "We stand for a united Germany, not a dismembered or divided Germany." Or the Bonn Conventions of 1955, which affirmed Britain's "aim of a reunified Germany enjoying a liberal democratic constitution."

This commitment to German unity was maintained during the decades to come. Lord Carrington, for example, described this goal in 1980 as a "state of peace in Europe in which the German people can recover their unity in free determination." This language is very close to Chancellor Kohl's Ten-Point Plan: "... with this comprehensive policy we are working for a state of peace in Europe in which the German nation can recover its unity in free self-determination."

Two things struck me while I was reading about some of the debates at the time. First, how the balance of arguments swayed back and forth between prioritising the "unity" element of that equation, and prioritising the "freedom and self-determination" element. Second, and irrespective of what people said later, how the tectonic shift we all experienced in 1988/89, and the events that then unfolded, were all totally unexpected. Egon Bahr once told me that he always knew that Germany would be reunited, but that he never expected it in his lifetime. Even Egon Bahr.

I was privileged to be a bit involved too. I spent the mid 1980s in Bonn dealing with security policy issues. This meant taking forward the INF dual-track decision – the Pershing and Cruise missile debates across Germany. It meant handling the low-flying requirements of British forces. And analysing, and arguing with, the West German approach to *Ostpolitik* and the Soviet Union.

When I left in 1988, I remember saying to Christopher Mallaby that it was time I went because I found myself making the same analysis in early 1988 that I had made in 1987 – time for a fresh brain!

I was also sort of present on 9 November 1989. That morning I happened to be with a delegation in the Kanzleramt in Bonn to discuss the EU. Funnily enough, no one wanted to talk to us that day! And then in the weeks that followed I remember working, in quite a lot of secrecy, on the various options for achieving integration of the ex-GDR into the European Union. It was exhilarating, and intellectually challenging, and had that real sense of – felt much more by most of you here – of making history.

Working today in Britain and across Germany, I am constantly reminded of what a dramatic success story post-war Germany is – a success story in which Britain and Germany have been partners. It has been a long journey from the rubble of Berlin and the Ruhrgebiet and Dresden, through the creation of the distinctive West German economic and social model, to a united Germany that is now the world's third biggest economy, and has been the world's export champion for six years in a row. That is a sensational path. And for all the criticism (by some Germans) about integrating West and East Germany – in effect absorbing an economically and politically bankrupted country – unification has been a huge success. South Koreans I know shudder at the scale of the challenge of doing anything similar. But Germany did it.

Today's conference is not really about the closeness of Britain and Germany today. That we are immensely close sort of goes without saying. For the UK, Germany is second only to the United States as a destination for our exports, and as a source of inward investment. More than 3000 German companies are active in the UK, supporting almost 400,000 British jobs, and similarly Britain for Germany. But we co-operate closely too in science and even music (think of Sir Simon Rattle and Daniel Barenboim). Whether within the EU, G8 or G20, there is hardly ever an issue where we are not working together.

The challenges of the past tackled in this conference are in some sense issues and solutions that have a nineteenth- and twentieth-century character to them. They were about national identity and national territory. They were Westphalian state issues transcribed into the second half of the twentieth century. But they were also twentieth-century issues in the sense of being about inter-bloc relationships of power. The NATO-Warsaw Pact confrontation. The clash of ideas about how best to run a society and economy. The Quadripartite negotiators were not talking in those terms, but these were the parameters within which their painstakingly detailed work was based.

Today's shared challenges are altogether different. They are global, trans-national, even trans-societal. They require supra-national co-ordination and solutions for which these Westphalian building blocks are necessary but not sufficient. Most of the half-dozen top issues in which our two governments are most active are of this nature. Fighting climate change in its global dimensions, and with that, energy security. Getting the global economy moving again, which is not just about recession, but also about restructuring in the face of continental shifts underway. Fighting global terrorism. Working out how we create lively new communities with huge, permanent immigrant components.

There are modern-day traces of our 1980s debates. Is it prudent for Germany to be so dependent for oil and gas on Russia? And how far does that affect their wider negotiating approach with Moscow? But fundamentally, we are in a different era, one devoid of the comfortable simplicities of Cold War confrontation, but nevertheless a more comfortable era, however complex and volatile.

That epochal change would not have come about were it not for the momentous historical changes which people in this room helped bring about in the 1980s and 1990s. It was the end

of the Cold War, symbolised and perhaps expedited by the unification of Germany, which turned the page on the twentieth century and ushered in a totally new era of international relations and international balance.

When we look forward to the second half of this century, when Europe will have only 5% of the world's population, we realise how far the world will have moved from the Eurocentric focus of the second half of the twentieth century.

The world has changed so radically, and so fast, that our children risk consigning our work of the 1980s and early 1990s to a short chapter in the history books. The risk is greater in Britain than in Germany. But even there, a generation votes for the first time on 27 September that was born into united Germany. Without the work of the living history in this room, they would not be where they are.

So today's seminar, and similar events this autumn, have an important public messaging function too: even when the wheels of history turns as fast as today, we must keep in mind the lessons of these vital, and in fact very recent, experiences.

Georg Boomgaarden, German Ambassador to the Court of St James's
1 September 2009

It is indeed a pleasure for me to welcome you all this evening to the start of this seminar. We are particularly privileged to have amongst us today and tomorrow a number of eminent men and women who have lived through the events that ultimately led to Germany's reunification – persons who have personal memories of these events or who have shaped history by actively participating in some of the political processes behind the Allied presence in West Berlin and West Germany, or in the negotiations that lead to the Two Plus Four Treaty and the reunification of Germany.

German unification was brought about 20 years ago by a peaceful movement within the GDR that voiced demands for change and freedom. Although we may have assessed the prospects of German reunification differently at times, Britain played a very constructive role during the Two Plus Four negotiations.

What is more, reunification would not have been possible without the support which Germany's Western allies have given us over the past 60 years. Reunification formally ended the post-war era, and the Two Plus Four Treaty, paving the way for reunification, had the character of a peace treaty amongst former World War II adversaries. But the Western Allies have been regarded as protectors and friends since 1949 by the population both of West Berlin and of West Germany as a whole.

2009 also marks the sixtieth anniversary of the end of the Soviet blockade of Berlin, which the Western Allies answered with the remarkable and unprecedented event of the Berlin Airlift. The Berlin Airlift stands as a turning point in the relationship between Germans and the three Western Allies: former enemies and occupiers had indeed become friends and partners for West Germany. For West Berlin in particular, they became real lifesavers.

Over decades, the Western Allies guaranteed freedom, democracy and economic prosperity – values and objectives that inspired the peaceful protest movement in East Germany and that ultimately brought about the fall of the Wall and the collapse of communism. I am grateful to the Allied Museum in Berlin for co-organising the seminar and for doing such a great job in documenting this extraordinary transformation. Its educational mission is pivotal, especially the invaluable services it provides to German school classes.

The Allied Museum serves as a reminder of the grounds and values on which the British-German friendship is based, especially to younger generations. And it highlights the

enormous contribution Britain has made to a prosperous, free and ultimately unified Germany.

Britain's role in the Airlift cannot be overemphasised. A Hastings aircraft displayed in the museum symbolises "Operation Plainfare", which saw the RAF deliver 1,340 tons of food every day during the operation. It also delivered clothing, fuel and supplies. The RAF alone delivered 17% of the total material which reached the city during the blockade. Both British and American aircraft were maintained in Britain. This contribution assured the survival of Berlin – at the heights of the Airlift, the Allies transported more goods into Berlin than before the start of the Soviet blockade.

The Allied presence in Berlin came to an end with the completion of the German reunification process, and in 1994 the population of West Berlin cheered the farewell parade of the Western Allies' troops. However, the role of the Western Allies in safeguarding our freedom, and especially the role of Britain, will never be forgotten. Berlin will always remember those extraordinary men and women, the brave RAF pilots, some of whom gave their lives, and the tireless staff on the ground, that enabled this extraordinary city to survive. Today's excellent British-German relations would have not been possible were it not for the role Britain played in those times.

Let's raise our glasses to H.M. the Queen, to Federal President Köhler and to British-German friendship.

INTRODUCTORY SESSION

THE GERMAN PROBLEM AND THE BALANCE OF POWER
PRIME MINISTER MARGARET THATCHER, 1987-1989

Helmut Trotnow

If it had not been for the Second World War, we would not be sitting here. Modern German history cannot claim too many happy moments, especially in the twentieth century. Yet the historical period we will be dealing with is different; after all of that drama, pain and hard work, there was a happy and peaceful ending.

I take it that most of our guests this afternoon have no detailed knowledge of the Allied Museum, so please allow me a few words to explain how this truly unique institution came about; this story will explain why we are here today. As probably all of you have guessed, the Allied Museum was one of the results of the turbulent events in Eastern and Central Europe during 1989-1990. With the breakdown of the communist empire and the Soviet leadership, post-war history in Berlin, in Germany and in the whole of Europe came to an end. Those historians who, like myself, worked in a history museum, immediately realised that an entire historical epoch was coming to an end. The question was, how are we going to deal with this period in the future? And what is more important when you work for a museum: where do you find those precious, urgently needed three-dimensional objects, documents, pictures etc. to show this part of history in the future? From a German and Berlin-centred perspective, these questions were not easy to answer and certainly not from a German point of view alone. After all, after the end of World War II, German history was no longer just a German issue. Adolf Hitler and his Nazis had challenged the world and literally the entire world settled down in the German capital after the military defeat. We still don't know how many states really had missions in Berlin apart from the four major victorious powers. From the very beginning there was a consensus in German society that without the presence of the Western Allies – Great Britain, the United States and France – Germans would never have had the opportunity to build a democratic society with a right of self-determination and human rights. Without the support of the Western Allies, there would have been no German unification. As a member of the task force to establish the German Historical Museum, which the federal government under Chancellor Helmut Kohl donated to the people of Berlin on the occasion of the 750th jubilee of the city, I put forward the idea of developing an exhibition to explain the engagement of the Western Allies for Berlin and Germany as a whole from 1945 until 1994. Chancellor Kohl immediately grasped the importance of that proposal and agreed to sponsor the project. However, his agreement was based on two conditions. First, the Western Allies had to be incorporated and become active members of the museum. Second, there had to be a special exhibition in 1994 when the Western troops would finally leave Berlin.

I have to tell you it was one of my most emotional experiences to see how these people, representing the Western Allies, were committed to finding and securing historical artefacts for future exhibitions, thereby starting a museum's collection. It does not require a lot of imagination to imagine, for example, how many American museums would have loved to acquire the guard shed of the world-famous Checkpoint Charlie crossing point. The British Hastings aircraft is another example. There are only three surviving planes from the Berlin Airlift, and the Hastings was really brought into service too early, but its tonnage capability was badly needed in the Lift. Yes, it was a very special gift of the British government to establish the Allied Museum, and it is now one of the most attractive artefacts of the museum, especially since visitors can now get into the plane and watch historical film clips of the Airlift. Honestly, you should see those young kids, ten, twelve years old, sitting there,

fully concentrated, watching the film clips in a genuine historical environment. They will never forget this experience, even if they don't become future historians.

Almost exactly to this day, it is fifteen years ago that this first exhibition opened, on 6 September 1994, in the presence of Chancellor Kohl and the three ambassadors. 'More than a Suitcase Stays Behind' was the telling title. The official opening of the museum took place four years later to coincide with the fiftieth anniversary of the Berlin Airlift. Today the museum is an integrated part of Berlin's cultural landscape; almost 70,000 people visit the museum every year. In 2006 we broke the barrier of half a million visitors, which is not bad for a small museum whose location is in the southern outskirts of the city. Recently there have been discussions about moving the museum to the former central airport of Berlin Tempelhof. Experience has shown that the present location is less and less able to cope with the growing collection and the demands of extension activities. As I mentioned earlier on, the Allied Museum is indeed a unique institution. Four nations joined forces to work out and present their common history. Let us not forget that Britain, France and the United States had been Germany's enemies, and if you had asked a contemporary in 1945 how he or she would see the future, I bet nobody would have been able to foresee this outcome. At times – to be quite honest – I have wished that our younger generations would really appreciate these tremendous achievements. After all they were made possible by human beings like yourselves. It is no wonder that Chancellor Kohl talked about the museum as a sign of gratitude to the peoples of the Western Allies. At the same time – and we should not forget this either – the Allies found the right partners on the German side. The German politician Egon Bahr wrote in his memoirs that it was during the Soviet Blockade and the Airlift that the nations of the free world realised that the Germans too believed in the power of freedom and democracy.

Now let us turn to the subject of our seminar. Years ago, the members of the museum's international advisory board decided that their annual meeting should take place occasionally in the capitals of the three Western Allies, combining the meetings with little conferences where eyewitnesses and local experts discuss bilateral relations in the framework of the history of the Western Allies in Berlin between 1945 and 1994. The first such meeting took place in Paris, followed by Washington, D.C.; now it is London's turn. For quite some time, we at the museum realised that the British engagement in Berlin has always been a little bit overshadowed by the American presence. Nobody would seriously argue that the role of the United States was not crucial; still, at times, the British contribution was very important, if not decisive. Take the Berlin Airlift, for example; I don't want to go into details, but if it had not been for Ernest Bevin or Air Commodore Rex Waite of the Royal Air Force, there may not have been a Berlin Airlift. That is why we wanted to bring as many British eyewitnesses, or veterans as we call them at the museum, around the table to talk about their experiences in the field of Anglo-German relations. I think we should all be very grateful to those veterans who have given their time and energy to share their memories and insights with us. Thank you very much indeed.

At the same time, I would like to express our gratitude to the historians of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office like Dr. Patrick Salmon. Without their support we probably wouldn't be sitting here either. Patrick, please pass that message on to your colleagues who have been involved in preparing the seminar. The museum – and we are still a small museum – is proud to have such a good working relationship with the FCO. I am also delighted that we could incorporate two German veterans. Most of you probably know Freiherr von Richthofen; after all, he was the German ambassador to London in 1989. However, what some may not know is that he was also heavily involved in the so-called Four Power negotiations, which brought some sort of security for the Germans for the first time in the early 1970s, and of course for the Western Allies travelling to and from Berlin. *Herr von Richthofen, danke dass Sie da sind*. The second German veteran is Jürgen Krönig, the long-time

correspondent of the German weekly, *Die Zeit*. I am not quite sure whether he is already here or whether he will be coming tomorrow. Both of them deserve a round of applause.

Last, but not least, I would like to thank Professor Howarth of Nottingham Trent University and David Marsh of the London and Oxford Group. David in particular will turn our historical perspective to the present time, talking about the financial and economic implications of the events in 1989. Finally, I would like to thank those board members who took over the role of moderators for the panels.

Before I hand the microphone over to Patrick Salmon, please allow me to finish on a personal note. Some of you enquired about Cumberland Lodge. How did we come to choose this place far outside of London? Well, the immediate response is that it is a wonderful place in an even better environment, apart from the fact that the location reduces the risk of being tempted by London's nightlife. No, the real reasons are very personal indeed, as at the end of this year I will retire from my position as director of the Allied Museum, and it was here at Cumberland Lodge, forty years ago, that I started my career as an historian, taking part in a post-graduate seminar at the London School of Economics. The title of the seminar was "German War Guilt and the First World War." Come to think of it, the circle has come round; it is not far-fetched to say that the First World War started all those developments – or some of those developments – which brought us here today. Without the support of the British people and the British institutions I was privileged to enjoy, whether as a student or later as a lecturer, my career may have gone in a completely different direction, and I would like to express my gratitude for that. It was wonderful to work and live with the British people and I gained many friends. It was a privilege to learn how fruitful international cooperation can be. And now I hand the proceedings over to Patrick Salmon. Thank you.

Patrick Salmon

Thank you, Helmut. It is indeed a great pleasure to welcome our first speaker, Lord Powell. As probably everyone here knows, he had a very distinguished diplomatic career, serving successfully in Helsinki, Washington, Bonn and Brussels and playing a leading role in the Rhodesian negotiations. He became Private Secretary of Foreign Affairs to the Prime Minister in 1984, a position he held until 1991, serving therefore both Margaret Thatcher and John Major. Since then he has pursued a career as an international businessman and was created a life peer in 2000. I think he is ideally qualified to open our seminar because he can offer both a long-term perspective on the British-German relationship, having served in Bonn in the 1970s, and a unique insight into the challenges and opportunities faced by Margaret Thatcher in the later years of her premiership. He has said that he is happy to take questions and comments after his talk and I am therefore very pleased to invite Lord Powell to speak on "The German Problem and the Balance of Power: Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, 1987 to 1989."

Lord Powell

Patrick, thank you very much for that introduction. Thank you, too, Herr Trotnow. First of all, apologies for sitting down to address you; I am afraid I did something dreadful to my back over the weekend and I just can't stand up long enough to deliver my remarks. I would like you to believe I hurt my back lifting weighty research volumes on Germany and Berlin, but I'm afraid it wasn't that at all. Indeed I have no papers whatsoever. Patrick kindly sent me some, but they arrived after I left the UK in early August to go to the United States and I haven't read them. I rely very much on memory; I have no personal papers.

Patrick asked me to talk about was Margaret Thatcher and Germany. He decided to wrap it up in a rather more tasteful title, rather like putting a lump of sugar in coffee, and I understand that. To be honest, it struck me as a bit curious to be asked to speak about Margaret Thatcher and the German problem just before dinner. Then I remembered of course that for many people it is a subject to be mentioned only after dark when the curtains are drawn and the children are safely in bed. As she herself said, it sometimes seemed to be a subject that well brought-up politicians should not really discuss.

Margaret Thatcher has always been totally open about her view of Germany and about the failure of her preferred policy on German unification, and some of you will recall that in her memoir she writes: "if there is one instance in which a foreign policy I pursued met with unambiguous failure, it was my policy on German unification." You can't really have it stated more clearly than that. So my starting point is that we don't really need to argue whether or not she got herself on the wrong side of history in this case, because she certainly did.

But it was not from ignorant prejudice, as is rather too often alleged. Her views were rooted in history; they were based on a serious analysis of where Britain's and, she thought, Europe's best interests lay and were in the initial stages of the progress towards unification widely shared by most European governments, even if they were less stridently articulated. Her mistakes were, first of all, to hold on to those views for too long – but then she was never exactly known for changing her mind. You'll remember the slogan, "the lady is not for turning." And her second mistake was to believe that others who apparently shared these views would also act on them; after eleven years as Prime Minister, she should have known better.

But let me first wind back the tape a bit and start with Margaret Thatcher's views on Germany. They didn't suddenly emerge in 1989; they were deep-rooted, long-standing, and had several different strands. One element of her outlook on Germany was as a chemist. She studied the work of German chemists at Oxford. Indeed, she taught herself enough German to read some of their works and this gave her a life-long respect for German science. She's actually rather well read in German history and she deduced from her reading a view about the continuity of that history from 1870 through the First World War and up to 1945 – at least. She believes quite strongly in national characteristics as an enduring feature of countries. And this made it harder for her than for some others to accept that there was a complete change of gear in Germany after 1945. This feeling was amplified by living her most impressionable years in the 1930s and the Second World War, the years she was growing up. And she is not exactly alone in being marked by those impressions; they are very common in her generation and they left a lingering suspicion among them that an over-large and over-mighty Germany could be a threat once more.

I first met Margaret Thatcher when she came to Bonn, where I was in the embassy in 1977, as leader of the opposition, and we sat up late in the night, because she was waiting for the results of a by-election back in Britain, and much of the time she spent arguing with my Italian wife, who is not famous for her reticence, about almost everything from shop prices to fashion. But we talked enough about Germany for me to recognise that she already had a strong view. How did this view manifest itself in her early days as Prime Minister after 1979? The answer to that question is: not particularly strongly. I would put this down primarily to a relentless focus on Britain's relationship with the United States and with President Reagan, but also to a very considerable personal admiration for Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and his grasp of economics. This seemed to overlay in her mind her deeper, and at that time unspoken, concerns about Germany.

The picture changed with the arrival of Chancellor Helmut Kohl. This was a relationship that really ought to have worked. A Christian Democrat Chancellor in Germany and a

conservative Prime Minister in Britain. The truth is that it never did work, despite the very considerable effort made by Helmut Kohl, for which I think he deserves great credit, for bringing her personally-chosen little gifts every time they met, down to a very famous invitation to spend a weekend with him in his home territory in the Rhineland-Palatinate and feed her his favourite dish of pig stomach – which as you can imagine had a great impact on the relationship. Indeed it was upon this occasion – I remember and I have told the story before, and I hope I don't bore you with it – he showed her proudly round his constituency and its famous landmarks and towns, and we ended up in the crypt of the famous cathedral in Speyer, where so many early Holy Roman Emperors are buried. And while she was gravely viewing these tombs, Kohl took me to one side behind a pillar and said, "now that she has seen me in my home territory, right here in the heart of Europe, next to France, amidst all this history, surely she will understand now that I am not German; I'm European. And it is your task to convince her of that." Well I said, all right, Federal Chancellor, I'll do my best. We then rejoined her and drove off to the airport and climbed up the little steps of the aircraft she flew around in; it was a little five-seater, not the jumbo jets that current Prime Ministers have. And she threw herself into her seat, kicked off her shoes, leaned back and said to me, "Charles, that man is so German." And I'm afraid that at that moment I aborted the mission that Chancellor Kohl gave me; it was clearly never going to work.

Now I put the problem between Margaret Thatcher and Helmut Kohl, the problems between them, down to two causes. First, there was simply an incompatibility of character. The Chancellor's rather loud and expansive, occasionally blustering diplomatic style, particularly his tendency to bang on in European Union meetings, which Margaret Thatcher characterised as, "Germany pays, so Germany must have its way." Helmut Kohl for his part must have found her very trying, particularly on the subject of Britain's European budget contribution. Secondly, they held of course widely and increasingly different views of Europe's future. It was during these years that she became increasingly concerned, some would say obsessed, with the prospect of Germany dominating the European Union, which ran strongly counter to her traditional balance-of-power instincts. And she saw that threatening domination principally in economic and trade terms, but potentially extending to political leadership too. There was perhaps a third element in this concern from 1989 onwards, and that was a suspicion on her part which, under President Bush senior, Germany might replace the UK as the United States' main partner in Europe. Now that worry frankly only lasted until Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait and we approached the first Gulf War, which restored the Anglo-American relationship to first place. But for a while it was a concern.

I say all that by way of prelude to Margaret Thatcher's approach to German unification. Unification was not an issue she had to address really for much of her premiership. She endorsed all the usual NATO communiqués and similar declarations paying lip service to German unification, without any real sense that it was ever likely to happen. One has to remember that she remarked as late as 1989 that she did not expect to see the end of communism in her lifetime, let alone German unification. Unification simply did not occupy her thoughts or indeed most other people's until the events of 1989 in East Germany. Instead, the two dominant issues for her in relation to Germany were first its drive for European integration, so much at odds with her own approach as set out in her Bruges speech. She felt badly let down by Helmut Kohl over the single currency, believing his earlier assurance that he wanted to dispatch that issue into the long grass with the setting up of a group of wise men. Secondly, she was concerned with Helmut Kohl's determination to rid Germany of short-range nuclear weapons in the wake of the INF agreement – the so-called double zero – which she saw as a fundamental weakening of Europe's defence and of its bond with the United States.

Fast-forwarding the tape to 1989, what was the political and strategic mindset with which she approached the extraordinary events in Eastern Europe leading to the fall of the Wall? Well, first, we must remember that she had a number of domestic political issues jostling for her attention by 1989, which the former ambassador will remember very well: the return of inflation to the UK economy, the poll tax, membership of the European Exchange Rate mechanism, which led to the resignation of two of her most senior Cabinet members, Nigel Lawson and Geoffrey Howe. Some of the triumphalism, some of the overweening self-confidence of the earlier Thatcher years, was eroding by 1989, being replaced with a more defensive, more recalcitrant and defiant mindset, which became evident in the discussion of German unification. I have to say there was a definite sense in No. 10 Downing Street, and more widely, of a government beginning to come apart at the seams, which personally I date to the resignation on health grounds of Willie Whitelaw as Deputy Prime Minister in December 1988. He was the essential calming influence on the Cabinet and within the Conservative party who decoupled the more alarming and unpredictable aspects of Margaret Thatcher's leadership style from day-to-day life in government and politics. With his departure, an essential safety valve was lost and not replaced, and the gap between Margaret Thatcher and her own government, to which she often referred as “them”, widened.

My point is that Margaret Thatcher approached the events of 1989 weighed down with a lot of domestic baggage and with preoccupations and an increasingly stressed attitude. It's not an excuse; it's simply a statement of fact. More important are her foreign policy preoccupations at the time. Of course some of these were far removed from European security or German unification. There was Tiananmen Square, which called into question for a time the whole question of a joint declaration on Hong Kong's future. There were stirring events in South Africa, and within Europe there was the growing divergence of the future direction of the European Union, on which she was becoming ever more isolated, which of course worried her not one little bit. But by far the most important objective for her at this time was to build on her relationship with Gorbachev, to encourage him to tolerate the spread of democracy throughout Eastern Europe, of which to be fair she had been a notable champion since her visit to Hungary in 1984 and Poland in 1988. At the same time, her aim was to preserve the basic Western institutions, above all NATO, a strong presence of American troops in Europe, and a full range of defence capabilities. These were the broad themes on which she was focused, within which German unification became an important, but in her eyes fundamentally subsidiary and potentially destabilising, element.

Now it is worth considering, just for a moment, Margaret Thatcher's relationship with Gorbachev. There is no doubt that she felt a strong proprietary interest in him. She had been the first to discover him, so to speak, in December 1984, when he came to meet her at Chequers, the Prime Minister's country residence and later the site of a famous or infamous Chequers seminar on Germany. They held a series of meetings between then and 1990 in which they explored with frankly extraordinary candour the nature of the respective communist and Western systems and how their relationship should develop. She paid a groundbreaking visit to the Soviet Union in 1987 at which she was given unprecedented latitude to mix with crowds, to state her views publicly on television – famously demolishing three Soviet journalists in the process – and to visit Georgia. She saw in Gorbachev a man she could do business with, and she passed on this conviction to Ronald Reagan, who came to embrace it just as fervently, indeed a bit too fervently in her eyes, when he came within an ace of agreeing to abolish nuclear weapons at the Reykjavik summit. Did she exaggerate the importance of the personal relationship with Gorbachev? Yes, to some degree she did; what politician would not? But the essential point is that she saw herself as having a considerable personal stake in Gorbachev and his survival, as the

instrument for securing the pre-eminent goal of peaceful transition to democracy in Eastern Europe.

Now that's the basic intellectual and policy framework within which she approached the events of 1989 and a gathering unrest in East Germany. She saw at once the scale of the opportunity suddenly open to the West to end the division of Europe on its terms. But the first stirrings of talk about unification set off both her atavistic concerns about a greater Germany and a consuming worry that too rapid progress towards German reunification would undermine Gorbachev, possibly lead to his removal, and most importantly put in jeopardy the process of democratisation in Eastern Europe. She was not against German unification; she couldn't be, given that she and other leaders had subscribed endless declarations of the subject. But she did believe that history taught us that the breakup of great empires is a dangerous moment and calls for great caution, particularly in defence and security. She wanted a breathing space in which a new architecture of Europe could be devised before rushing ahead with unification. This explains her preference for seeing democracy established in East Germany first, followed by some sort of confederation leading eventually to unification, once all related issues, borders, and the future of NATO were settled. She feared that pressing ahead precipitately with unification would be selfish and would put the other goals at risk. As well as destabilising Gorbachev, it might lead the Federal Republic, she feared, to make injudicious concessions about abandoning NATO and establishing a neutral united Germany. Now it is as well to remember that much of this was pretty standard thinking at the time, shared by many other European governments, including at least parts of the German government. And George Bush noted in his memoirs that at the time no one outside Germany was in favour of reunification. For most countries, it was a subject to be approached cautiously avoiding any particular upset to the CSCE principle of no changes to borders in Europe except by peaceful negotiation. And that view initially seemed to be shared widely in the Federal Republic. My friend Horst Teltschik hastened over from Bonn for a couple of private meetings in No. 10 to assure us there would be no haste towards unification. And my recollection is that Hans-Dietrich Genscher frequently told us in this period that unification was not on the agenda. The rather reassuring effect was always diluted when it was followed by Helmut Kohl upping the ante, culminating in the famous Ten Points.

So Margaret Thatcher's caution was not unique or exceptional, if sometimes rather less than tactfully expressed. And her misgivings were very strongly fuelled by meetings that she held with President Gorbachev and with President Mitterrand starting in the late summer of 1989 and continuing with President Mitterrand through the Strasbourg summit in December that year, and into the early weeks of 1990. Now since my records of those meetings are now presumably available for the first time, or are about to be as documents of British foreign policy, I won't go into them in detail here. Suffice it to say the meetings did provide very ample evidence, first of Gorbachev's apprehension about the prospect of unification, but of Mitterrand's outright funk. In both cases she was frank and they were frank about how to accommodate a reunified Germany in Europe without upsetting Europe's internal balance. I wouldn't say it was a traditional balance-of-power concern, because of course their fears were more focused on the impact of the balance within the European Union rather than in Europe as a whole; it did not stretch to invoking the new world to adjust the balance of the old, because the new world was already there in NATO. And I have to say it was President Mitterrand more than Margaret Thatcher who initiated discussion of the need for France and Britain to draw closer together in response to unification, though she certainly responded readily enough. It is sometimes asserted by Monsieur Jacques Delors that it was the other way around. Well, I was there, and he wasn't. Overall the conversations stoked up her conviction that the key was to secure a democratic East Germany, with unification a separate

issue to be discussed later. Like everyone else she underestimated the strength of German national feeling in East Germany.

So how then did she become identified as the sole opponent of German unification, when initially she was part of a broader consensus? I think there were several reasons for that. First, like many others, she was caught out by the speed of events. Helmut Kohl surfed the wave of German nationalism with remarkable skill to bring forward the issue of unification far more rapidly than he or anyone else initially expected. Like many others, Margaret Thatcher just got left behind. Second, others certainly adjusted more flexibly, either by a conscious decision to accept the inevitability and desirability of unification – this was the case with the United States – or as with some others, mute acceptance that nothing could be done to slow it down, let alone stop it, however much they might prefer that. President Bush had always been more at ease with Germany and most of its European allies. Though not initially a champion of German unification – as his joint memoir with Brent Scowcroft demonstrates – he was not disposed to hold it up. And other allies of Margaret Thatcher's way of thinking simply crumbled at the end of the day. And despite his frankly incendiary comments to the contrary in private about the need for France and Britain to draw closer to confront the danger of a united Germany, President Mitterrand gave precedence to preserving Franco-German access and European integration, believing that France still had sufficient muscle in the European institutions to contain Germany. And Gorbachev for his part came to realise that the process, which he had indirectly and unintentionally set in train, could not be stopped and opted instead to negotiate the best bargain he could.

And third, I would say that Margaret Thatcher's isolation was the downside of being an 'Iron Lady'. Her reputation, in which she gloried, made retreat difficult, while her outspokenness about her concerns was offensive to many, particularly in Germany but also to her own Foreign Secretary, who bawled me out for it several times at the time. But it was unrealistic frankly to expect a leopard to change its spots, especially after twelve years as Prime Minister.

Now judging by her memoirs alone you might think this was the point at which Margaret Thatcher lost interest in German unification. In practice, she switched her attention to trying to influence the framework in which it would come about, combining sufficient deference to Gorbachev's interest to ensure that he was not humiliated and destabilised with perpetuating a robust and well-armed NATO, which she saw as essential to retaining the U.S. presence and nuclear weapons in Europe. In defending Gorbachev's position, she didn't want to compel him to pull Soviet forces out of East Germany too rapidly, and she was determined to force Helmut Kohl to provide assurances to the Poles on the border, about which he was far too evasive for far too long. On Europe's future defence, she was determined to preserve as much as possible of the strategy of flexible response, and overall in these later months I believe she played a characteristically useful Thatcher role in NATO of being what is called in English an anchor to windward.

On the subject of Germany itself, she agreed to undergo voluntary therapy with the notorious Chequers seminar in March 1990. This is of interest for several reasons – quite apart from the fact that my summary note of it was and remains a good read! It demonstrated her admirable willingness to turn to a much wider community of academics, journalists and businessmen for views and ideas, rather than just the Foreign Office. You could not ask for more knowledge and experience of Germany than was gathered in Chequers for uninhibited discussion, although a few of the academics subsequently turned tail and fled when some of the more lurid language used in discussion was leaked. I'm the one that has the evidence.

Moreover, the seminar reached the right conclusions, which of course it was designed to do, namely that the weight of the evidence of the argument favoured those optimistic about life

with a united Germany, and that the only sensible policy was to be nice to the Germans. Unfortunately the advice came a bit late in the day; although she accepted it explicitly at the time, I'm not sure she has ever been truly converted. The seminar also, incidentally, demonstrated to me the growing danger in our government system of writing anything down, in particular a racy account of a vigorous discussion. The subsequent leak inquiry conducted by the Sherlock Holmeses of our Cabinet Office discovered that of the five people to whom I had originally sent a copy of my note, under strict security, some more than one hundred copies could be traced, which does say something about declining standards of security within the British government. They gave up at that point, but they should have given up much earlier, since everyone knew who leaked it. I might just interject by the way that by making all these remarks this evening I am not making any claim at all from my own role in all of this or indeed any other aspects of Margaret Thatcher's policies and leadership. I had an appropriately modest part, but as a matter of record I must say that I shared her views generally on unification and I recorded them faithfully in my notes of all her meetings with foreign leaders – which you can now read for a very modest price – to help to articulate and transmit her ideas and direct dealings with the White House, the Bundeskanzleramt, the Elysée Palace and so on. And I believe to this day that the misgivings which Margaret Thatcher had about the pace and the process of unification – though not about Germany itself, where I lived and worked very happily in the 1970s – I believe that those misgivings about pace and process were valid and deserved to be heard.

Let me come lastly to the question: was she right? Or was she wrong? Of course she was wrong in the sense that history took a course that she opposed. Germany was united without going through the intermediate stages and that's that. Who can tell whether the overall outcome for Germany, for Europe, for Russia, would have been better had matters progressed differently, had unification been achieved in somewhat slower time? One can really only speculate and there's not too much point in that. I have to say I largely discount Margaret Thatcher's fears about the consequences of unification for the balance of power in Europe. Even so, I think a number of points can reasonably be made.

First, unification was not cost-free for Germany or for the rest of us. Now that is fine for Germany because it was a conscious decision on Germany's part. But the wider economic consequences transmitted though the German economy included higher interest rates, slower growth and higher unemployment for the rest of Europe. Of course we have demonstrated quite recently that we can make a good mess of running our own economies in Europe without needing German unification to explain it. But it was a factor in the 1990s.

Second, the focus on unification led to a scandalous and cynical neglect of the interests of the East European countries throughout most of the rest of that decade by consciously delaying negotiations on their entry into the European Union when they most needed help. And the delay was caused by the basest of protectionist motives. And third, I also wonder whether the reversion to authoritarianism in Russia under Putin is not in part at least a consequence of Gorbachev's virtual rape in the process of unification and the perception in Russia that his reforms and tolerance for the democratisation of the East European countries were a result of Russian weakness which must not be allowed to recur. There was, I think, a price that we paid.

So overall: mad? No, she certainly wasn't mad. Bad? Not really. Overly influenced by history of a static perception of Germany? Yes. Unreasonable? No, not really. She had some valid concerns and who knows what will happen in the long term. But whatever the controversies about German unification, and Margaret Thatcher's hesitancy in coming to terms with it, the outcome of the international developments in the 1980s, in which she played a leading part, was overwhelmingly positive, in particular the defeat of communism, the end of the division of Europe – of which German unification was but one part – and the victories of our

values and our economic system. She had a wider vision to achieve all that, dating from her earliest days in office, and I doubt whether it would all have happened without her contribution.

Patrick Salmon

I was reminded actually as Lord Powell was speaking of a recent encounter I had in Berlin when I was there in April for your conference. And a very nice bright lady, a born and bred Berliner, I should think, came up to me and said, "You know, Thatcher let us down; she should have delayed unification for at least five years. Why did she give way so easily?" And I thought, that is a very interesting perspective, actually very much a Berlin perspective, I suspect. But it shows that even at the time, Mrs. Thatcher's views on Germany were by no means unique to her and many people felt that the unification process had been too rushed. Thank you Lord Powell, and now we will take questions from the floor.

Anthony Nicholls

Mrs. Thatcher may have been ambivalent about German reunification, but we should remember that she did have positive views on Germany. It seems to me you could possibly strengthen them by finding out that in her first book, in the volume of memoirs which covers the period before she became Prime Minister, she describes how one of her first trips was to Germany, where she participated in the CDU conference and made a famous statement about how she was in favour of '*Freiheit statt Sozialismus*'.[1] The thing that impressed her most was her tutorial, as she put it, with Ludwig Erhard, whom she greatly admired as somebody who had brought back the free price mechanism and the free market to Germany after the Second World War. She seemed to have felt that at that point there was going to be a possibility of working quite closely with the CDU, assuming that it would come to power fairly soon. It does seem to me, combined with your point about how she was an admirer of German science, that there was a positive side to her view of Germany as well as a negative one, and that it may have been as well as anything her experience of negotiating over Europe. That is to say, her meetings with all the heads of government of the EEC as it then was, which somehow put her off the Europeans. It seemed to me she was as much anti-European as she was anti-German, taking Europe to mean those people who wanted to create a genuine European Union.

Lord Powell

Firstly I think it is a very valid point; you're quite right to make the point about Ludwig Erhard and she later made a pilgrimage to see Hermann Abs when he was in his later years, for whom she also had a huge admiration. She admired the effective way, or effective results of the way, that the German economy was run. I'm not sure she wholly admired the actual way it was run; I think she thought the whole business of *Mitbestimmung*[2] was far removed from anything she could possibly contemplate. She admired the results more than the methods. Did she become anti-German because she became anti-European? The two were certainly intermingled. You do have to remember that in the referendum campaign of 1975, the leader of the Conservative campaign for the 'yes' vote was Margaret Thatcher. You can't

[1] 'Freedom instead of socialism'.

[2] Co-determination.

trace a long history of anti-Europeanism in her. Two things I think really ruined Europe for her. One was, as you rightly say, the endless squabble over Britain's budget contribution; in my mind she was wholly and absolutely right. But it was followed actually by a better period, when the focus actually moved to creating the single market, when she actually was pretty pro-Europe. What turned her against it again was when the debate moved on to the single currency, which she thought was going to be a step too far. It was Jacques Delors' hugely misjudged and frankly stupid appearance at the Trade Union Congress, in 1988 I think, where he announced that within a very short period, 80% of the decisions now taken in Britain would be taken in Europe, that sealed it for her.

David Marsh

I would like to ask you to say a few words about President Mitterrand, who plays an intriguing walk-on cameo part in the story. Intriguing, because you are saying that Mrs. Thatcher had all sorts of good ideas and that she was actually totally intellectually in command of what she was doing, and yet she was simply let down by not having realised that unification was going to happen, even though she had signed all sorts of documentation about this. The fact that Mitterrand was on record for having told a couple of German chancellors in the early 1980s that it was going to happen – he wasn't as you say very much in favour of that. Should there not have been that kind of current somewhere within the British government, not necessarily in her own mind, not necessarily in your mind, but somewhere in the British Foreign Office, or some part of the establishment, to prevent the Prime Minister from doing something that would look wrong in terms of history? After all, it is not right for a British Prime Minister to go out on a limb for whatever reason and to be seen to be, as you say, on the wrong side of history. The second thing is, if she was in favour of the Wall coming down or the communist divide ending, all those good things – which we agree have been good results – should she or should not somebody else wise in giving advice have foreseen that that would have actually led to the unification of Germany rather more quickly than many people had wanted? After all there were Marxist-Leninists in East Berlin who were saying that you could have a democratic Poland and a democratic Czechoslovakia, and those countries continued to exist. Bring in democracy into East Berlin, what do you get: a united Germany. It was fairly obvious; it wasn't rocket science really. I am just wondering if you could address those two issues.

Lord Powell

Well, skating over the issue of preventing Margaret Thatcher from doing things, which deserves a volume in itself. You're right in the sense that perhaps Mitterrand did predict this in the early 1980s; I have no recollection of that myself, but if you say so, I'll take your word for it. What I was saying was, it was not really an issue, neither a practical nor day-to-day issue; it was not discussed at European councils, and it was not discussed at NATO councils – it simply did not feature, and the agenda was full enough anyway. I'm sure there were people beavering away in the Foreign Office, there always are, and it’s very good that there were people who were aware of these trends. And that is where this volume is going to be so important, because it will show you at what stage people like the Foreign Office planners were thinking about German unification. My recollection is that not a great deal was being done about it until well into 1989. It wasn't on the menu; I can't really say more than that. Mitterrand was of course a very complex character. She got on much better with Mitterrand than she did with Helmut Kohl. Mitterrand knew how to handle her; he played the old-style French gentleman, kissing her hand, and she rather loved long philosophical discussions with him. But from July 1989 until about January 1990, if ever I saw a man in a state of panic,

it was Mitterrand, although, and I hope my records show this, he was the one that was more forward in bringing up the dangers of reunification. He talked about Germany as an historically very unstable nation – not a proper nation, he used to say – it was a people whose borders had moved constantly in Europe, and this was a factor for the instability. And he would recall that traditionally, when confronted by a threat, France and Britain drew together as in 1940. He was really the leader in that. Now, being Mitterrand, perhaps he was simply playing a game, perhaps all the time he had the great wisdom to see exactly how events were going to play out and knew exactly at which moment he needed to jump ship. Unfortunately she wasn't like that; she tended to take a position and tended to stick to it and regarded defection as disloyalty. She was slow to pick up the speed of events; she was overtaken and at least she has had the grace in her memoirs, unlike almost everyone else in that period, to admit that she got the thing wholly wrong.

Hermann Freiherr von Richthofen

Would you agree that Margaret Thatcher as British statesman, in a way, was an exception? No Prime Minister or Foreign Secretary after the War shared her prejudices against German reunification, nor would they have started from national characteristics as she did in Chequers. Many members of her Party thought along the lines that Douglas Hurd took in the process of unification. Moreover, I would like to point to the British positions taken in the Bonn Group over the years and in the annual Königswinter Conferences. She will go down as a great figure in European and British history, maybe in world history; I have a great admiration for her, because she is one of the best politicians I have ever met. One should really put her in the wider context of German-British relations in the post-war period.

My second question is, you say that the planners did not realise early enough in 1989 that the whole process of détente, of co-operation and dialogue, was picking up speed, particularly after what had happened in Poland in the early 1980s. For example, the re-actualisation of the responsibilities of the Four Powers in 1971 in the Quadripartite Agreement already hinted at the road to the solution, at a process which we all accepted and brought to a successful end.

Lord Powell

Well again an interesting perspective. You played a great role in these events at the time. First a couple of things. I think using the term prejudice is unfair; I don't think she had a prejudice at all. She made a rational calculation that rushing ahead to German unification would do more damage than good and put at risk what was being achieved in the rest of Eastern Europe, and put at risk Gorbachev's position. She was right about that, it just took longer than she expected; it was what killed him off politically in the end. Secondly, when you talk about Chequers, you do have to remember that the Chequers seminar took place after German unification was effectively signed and sealed. It dates from March 1990, when it was all over; the documents still had to be signed but nothing was going to be changed, so it wasn't relevant then to the process of unification itself; it was simply trying to persuade her that a policy of cooperation and being nice to Germany was the right way to go. But in effect that was our policy anyway. We had been cooperating closely with Germany throughout the time of her Prime Ministership, except on the budget contribution, on the pace of European integration and on short-range nuclear weapons. Three quite big issues, I grant you, but nonetheless that was the trend. And about Douglas Hurd having a different point of view: I think Douglas Hurd is coming here tomorrow, so he will speak for himself. I would only say that my recollection is that Douglas was on the same lines as her initially as

Foreign Secretary, but he was much quicker, as a good experienced diplomat, to adapt to the situation as it unfolded. But he was still urging caution both in Bonn and in Washington through December 1989 to January 1990. If you read the memoirs, which I did reread before coming here, of George Bush and Brent Scowcroft, that rather strange double book they wrote, you'll find Douglas making an appearance, pleading for caution and slowing things down. Perhaps he was just being loyal to his Prime Minister but he appeared to be doing it with some conviction. You can ask him tomorrow. On the processes, I really can't do better than to say that you've now got this great opportunity to read the original documents and see what it was. I think it is a very good thing that these documents are being published rather earlier than usual I think. They cover a very controversial period and they give rise to a lot of further controversy. I think this whole issue needs to be aired, and I have tried to be as frank as I can be from my memory. I don't have any access to documents. I may have got some things wrong one way or another. It's hard to remember sometimes even the chronology of the events. Certainly until early 1990, there was no great flag-waving going on by the Foreign Office, or even by Christopher Mallaby from Bonn. Certainly from early 1990 onwards, I would say, this definitely was happening. But I had been less conscious of it before then.

Johannes Leithäuser

I started my work for the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* 20 years ago in Berlin. I'm afraid I have to repeat David Marsh's question again. You used this nice metaphor from Kohl, "surfing the wave", and it's nice because it describes the wave that was behind him. My question is, how much or how little was the force of this wave recognised in Downing Street? I mean, there were a million people on Alexanderplatz on 4 November 1989. When the Wall fell five days later and these incredible scenes unfolded, this must have been the point at which everybody would have had to recognise that the German government was no longer master of the process by which it was being driven. Or did Margaret Thatcher have so much admiration for Kohl that she thought he would be able to steer this process in the following months and years, and delay a thing that was, to some extent, inevitable for the Germans by then?

Lord Powell

Surely you would realise that the immediacy of what was happening in East Germany was felt far more strongly in West Berlin and Bonn than it was going to be felt in London. We were aware of it, we could see it on television every night, and Helmut Kohl called Margaret Thatcher at least twice in that November to describe to her the events he had witnessed. But at the same time, he combined that with saying, we are not going to let things get out of control, we're going to keep a handle on this, unification is not the issue at the moment, we've got to sort out the situation in East Germany, free elections in East Germany are the first step, and she believed him. But with every new event he moved on more rapidly than he had said only a few days before. That of course was unsettling. I don't think you can blame her too much for not fully appreciating the pace at which the feeling for immediate unification was developing in East Germany. She would have seen it – a tremendous enthusiasm for freedom for getting rid of the old regime, becoming a democracy, having elections, but not until the process was quite a way down the road – as an unstoppable wave of support for early and immediate unification. Especially when she was being told by Chancellor Kohl, and even more so by Hans-Dietrich Genscher, that this was not actually going to happen. On the whole, people trust what they are told by allied heads of government and their Foreign Ministers. So you shouldn't be too harsh on her for that.

Colin Munro

I think that Kohl and Genscher said that unification was not on the agenda, and they too wanted an orderly process. They were being sincere at the time. They too were caught up in the wave of the revolution. Now I can remember very vividly the famous demonstration that was mentioned on 4 November 1989. This was the high point of the reformers, who said that we want to reform the GDR, we want to turn East Germany into a sort of German Sweden. The mood changed and the slogans changed very quickly after the fall of the Wall. The big slogan at the Leipzig demonstrations had been, "*Wir sind das Volk,*" or "We are the people." It was on 21st November that the dominant slogan at the demonstrations became "*Wir sind ein Volk,*" or "We are one people." And then shortly after that came Modrow, and he started talking about "*Deutschland einig Vaterland,*" or "Germany united Fatherland." So you can say that Kohl's Ten Points, including the famous tenth one, were an attempt to get out in front of events and to take some control over them. And there was a massive exodus going on, and one of the slogans was, "unless the Mark comes to us, we are going to the Mark." And so they were faced with a situation in which the country was collapsing, people were streaming out at a rate that had already reached levels predating the construction of the Wall, and they could see that something dramatic had to be done, and whether they wanted reunification or not, it was going to come. And of course Berlin had been reunified at a stroke by the fall of the Wall, which rendered some sort of Austrian solution impossible. And Kohl himself, as I think he reports in his memoirs, actually realised that East Germany was finished when he made his visit to Dresden on 19th December. He frantically arranged to get there one day ahead of Mitterrand. And when he was greeted, he said he realised, as Modrow was standing at the bottom of the stairs, that this was it. I think Kohl's greatest moment was actually when he stood in front of the Frauenkirche, before a massive crowd, and people were saying "*Helmut, Helmut, du bist unser Kanzler*," or "Helmut, Helmut, you are our chancellor." Of course Modrow was standing beside him. At that moment, Kohl, if he had been an irresponsible politician, would have tipped things over into chaos. But what did he do? He calmed people down, and said, you will get what you want and what we all want, it's got to be sorted out, you've got to be patient, you've got to trust me. The plans for German economic and monetary union were sort of drawn out on the back of an envelope on the plane home, because they realised this was the one move they had to make.

I've got three more points. One was that when the Hungarians opened the border on 10th September, shortly afterwards the chief of the Academy of Sciences of the GDR gave an interview to the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, and he asked what justification would a capitalist GDR have alongside a capitalist FRG. And the answer is no justification; this is an ideological state or it's no state. We at the embassy responded to all of this at the time. Many of the best brains in the Foreign Office did indeed begin to produce papers and submit advice and said that the whole post-war order is breaking up, and German reunification is likely to come sooner rather than later. And I think Percy Cradock put it rather nicely when he said, "We should embrace what we can't stop." We were actually rather cautious in the embassy about including references to these calls for unification in our telegrams and we self-censored ourselves for about ten days and then we decided it was pointless because it was all over the papers anyway.

One last question about personalities. What view did she have of von Weizsäcker? I remember his state visit in 1986: he made a rather good speech, a magnificent speech, to both houses of parliament, and I heard her say this was one of the best speeches we had heard in parliament since Churchill's time. Von Weizsäcker was always one of those who was committed to keeping this question of German unity on the agenda. He had a very interesting discussion with Geoffrey Howe during that state visit.

Lord Powell

She was extremely respectful of Herr von Weizsäcker and thought he was a very fine gentleman and gave a very fine speech. But I think that he was, in her eyes, not operational. She didn't deal with him; she dealt with Chancellor Kohl. He was the man running the country. His influence on her thinking was fairly limited. From your earlier comments I can only say that I thought I had skated over enough thin ice not to go into the question of the slogans and the demonstrations. And I would say that when the slogan did become '*ein Volk*' it did not have the best of effects on Margaret Thatcher's generation. That would send shivers up the spine.

Sir Michael Burton

I was in West Berlin during this time. I will tell you an anecdote if I may. I also had a late night conversation with Lady Thatcher about twenty years after your first conversation in 1997 in Prague. I was Ambassador and we sat up having a whisky. And finally I screwed up my courage and said, "Lady Thatcher, I feel there is something I have to tell you. I don't think you had Germany entirely in focus." Thunderbolts were striking all around me. And what I mean is, the reason why Chancellor Kohl was in favour of much closer European integration was not so that Germany would dominate integrated Europe, but precisely the opposite: so that Germany would be anchored in a European structure and not be able to go its own way. And she said 'grumpf' and went to bed. But I got my word in. And she said nobody had said that to her, although I am sure that's not true.

Lord Powell

I'm glad you lived to tell the tale. Yes, she was aware that that was the argument he used; she just couldn't accept it intellectually. It was so alien to the way she thought. If you were sufficiently powerful in terms of economic weight and political strength, then you would dominate an institution. She believed that political power was used to dominate institutions and didn't see it as something you voluntarily diluted, and I think historically you would have to say she was right. I mean I can't think of many associations that have been able over a very long term to depend on the self-restraint of their largest members. But I absolutely agree it always was Helmut Kohl's line and I remember going election campaigning with him in Germany in 1975 or 1976, whichever it was, and even then he was using that sort of language and I'm sure he meant it. I don't think she doubted he meant it, I just think she didn't think it was realistic in the wider chronology of history.

Georg Boomgaarden

I think, continuing on this idea for Kohl, that it was very, very important to anchor Germany because he feared a neutral Germany isolated inside Europe could get into temptations of domination. So he was also a realist in politics, but the difference is he thought more dynamically. He thought in terms of cooperation, of building institutions, and Margaret Thatcher was not very institutionally minded as far as Europe was concerned. Therefore maybe she was overtaken by history because her views were static, and she was on the wrong side of history because history moved. She stood at the same place but history moved. That is what revolutions mean. It was a real revolution and there was a big dynamic in it. And Kohl was very aware of the dangers of that and he always thought about this in the same way that Margaret Thatcher said: "A crumbling empire is a very dangerous

situation." Very few empires crumbled without bigger wars and he was also very keen on keeping Gorbachev in a stable situation. On the issue of the European balance of power, when George Bush senior offered Gorbachev partnership and leadership in a speech, Kohl told me later that he '"dropped it like a hot potato because [he] knew this would only destabilise Europe." We don't go into that form of leadership; sometimes now it's reproached, I don't do it. But Kohl dropped this because he knew it was a delicate issue. When the dynamics then came he found out there were two effects, one of which was already mentioned: the GDR was really breaking down, crumbling into pieces. And this was something which he himself did not know when he drew up the Ten Points. The Ten Points were still quite a moderate approach, but later he found out that there was nothing there, and that there was a vacuum. This vacuum can be filled by the wrong people, it can be filled by destabilisation, so you have to do something about it, and he had the conviction, different from Margaret Thatcher's, that Gorbachev was already much weaker than was seen from the outside. He was not weakened by reunification; he was already weak at that moment. And Ligachev was already plotting against him at that time. This is also a very important point because he saw that the window of opportunity was going to be very short. Interestingly enough, I hear this often from Eastern European diplomats today when we talk about it. They say it may have been neglected here, which is not reproachable because nobody can predict history, but it was neglected that stabilising Eastern Europe, making Eastern Europe stable on the path to free independent countries, was impossible with a weak, independent and unstable East Germany. In Russia itself, and this may have influenced Gorbachev, this was always the leading opinion.

When I served in Russia in the 70s, I had two very interesting experiences. One was a typical blockhead in the Foreign Ministry telling me at one point of the negotiation about pictures hanging there from Berlin (West): "You can do nothing and as long as we have the power we will stop you in doing anything about German reunification." They were convinced in the first moment that power was gone, that oppression was gone, that unification was inevitable. This was a very open view in the Soviet Union. The second is that I went to Georgia in 1977, and a collaborator of Shevardnadze, at that time party chief in Georgia, at twelve o'clock at night, raised a glass and said, "to German unity." I was very surprised because he was a member of Komsomol, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and he raised his glass to German unity. He explained it in Georgian terms; he said, "Georgia has been Byzantine, Russian, Persian, everything, and it always came together again." And then he said, "to German unity", and he meant it. He said then it is inevitable and we have to tolerate it when it comes. I think here the Soviets were more realistic as far as Germans were concerned. I think Genscher was absolutely sincere when he said that it is not on the agenda, because at the moment he said it, he didn't believe it. It overawed him as well as anybody else.

Lord Powell

On the last point I don't think you are saying anything different. She was overtaken by events and she hung on to her previous position longer than others did. I think she was very well aware of the weakness of Gorbachev; she was well advised on that by our excellent embassy in Moscow. The difference I suspect between our analyses of the situation is that she wanted to see Gorbachev preserved as long as possible to see through the wider revolutions across Eastern Europe as a whole, and didn't see unification as the absolute number one priority. She saw that in a way as the most dangerous development for Gorbachev: she wanted to see things established and solidified in Poland and Czechoslovakia, Hungary and so on. Breaking up the Soviet Empire had been the object of her diplomacy since at least the early 1980s onwards, slowly detaching the East Europeans,

encouraging the Hungarians and others to distance themselves gradually from the Soviet Union. There was no strategy to break up the Soviet Union.

Sir Christopher Mallaby

One question about the United States' attitude. It was clear to me in Bonn that Baker in particular was driving hard and fast for German unification. There were some moments in early 1990 when it seemed to me that Baker and some of his acolytes were actually getting further ahead than Kohl and Teltschik were on specific points. Why do you think that the United States saw German unification as urgent against the background of a crumbling Soviet presence in Central Europe?

Lord Powell

Jim Baker and to a degree Bob Zoellick were well ahead of President Bush and Brent Scowcroft on this. That's fairly clear if you read the memoirs I keep citing because they are fresh in my mind. There was a lot of complaining about Jim Baker getting out too far ahead and so on. So there was quite a division in the U.S. government there. Secondly, it goes back partly to 1989 and to what the ambassador was saying. The Bush administration came into power with a belief that was particularly strong in the State Department under Baker, that under Ronald Reagan, Britain had had far too much leeway and Margaret Thatcher had had far too much influence. She only had to pick up the telephone and tell President Reagan something and he would do it, whether it was in the U.S. interest or not. This simply had to be changed and priority had to be given to Germany and France. Britain had to be pushed more on to the back burner. I remember this all very clearly because I remember going to talk to her about this, quite early on, and I said to her, look, this rather worries me, this development, and how we are going to counter it. And she said to me, Charles, don't worry about this, you just wait until a conflict comes along and the Americans will soon remember who their real allies are. She took a very relaxed view of it. I think that what you are describing is part of that phenomenon: there was a genuine belief by Jim Baker and the State Department that Germany should be the principal partner in Europe and that what corresponded to the German interest at the time was worthy of support and possibly urgency. I don't find it surprising that Jim Baker was giving strong support to rapid progress on unification.

Dominik Geppert

I would like to ask a question about Poland and the Solidarność movement, which I think Margaret Thatcher greatly and rightly admired. You mentioned that Thatcher was not only concerned about Gorbachev's fate but also about peaceful transition to democracy in Eastern Europe. As far as I know, one of the most important foreign policy decisions that the Solidarność intellectuals had made early on at that time was that a free and united Germany would be better for a free and united Poland than two separate German states of which one would still be communist. Did that argument, that position, figure at all in Thatcher's recollections?

Lord Powell

You're right about her admiration for Solidarność. She paid a very important visit to Poland in late 1988. Jaruzelski was still in power and it was agreed that she could nonetheless meet Lech Wałęsa privately. She went up to Gdansk and first of all went with the Polish

authorities to lay a wreath on the memorial where the first shots from the German battleship had hit. Then she and I were driven to a hotel, tossed out of the car and left on our own and were told to go to room 93. The rest of the delegation was a bit surprised. We went into this room and sat down, and first of all nothing happened at all. After about ten minutes – she was getting a bit impatient, asking, Charles, what's going on, why are we sitting here –the door opened slightly and the very recognisable head of Wałęsa peered round it. He withdrew and shut the door. Then after a pause it opened again, with the young man who worked so closely with him pushing him forward. Wałęsa came into the room and they had this discussion and then he took her over to the home of his priest, which was very close to the shipyard. There was an immense demonstration at the shipyard gates in her favour. She had lunch with the Solidarność leadership and they all kept saying the most outrageous things about Jaruzelski and communism and she kept pointing to the ceiling, meaning they must be listening to us, and he said don't worry, they've been listening to us for years, they won't find anything new here. Then we moved on to his church and there was a very, very moving service with a lot of singing, Polish national songs and hymns. Really moving with an enormous congregation. One of the only two times I have seen her cry, it was so moving. What I don't remember, I have to disappoint you, was them talking about Germany. They were more concerned with the Soviet Union, with the relationship with Jaruzelski, how to get Poland into a state of free elections and so on. Germany just didn't feature. I speak about all this from memory and my memory might be deficient. I am absolutely sure you are right that they did think about it; I don't remember it being central to their concerns at that time. So I can't really say that it was.

Sir Christopher Audland

Was Margaret Thatcher conscious of the treaty obligation that the UK had undertaken to support reunification? I am referring of course to the Convention on General Relations between the Three Powers and the FRG, which established the FRG and was ratified in 1955. I want to read one sentence that comes from Article 7: “Pending the peace settlement, the signatory states will cooperate to achieve by peaceful means their common aim of a reunified Germany enjoying a liberal democratic constitution like that of the Federal Republic and integrated within the European community.” Was she conscious of it, and if so, how did she reconcile her behaviour with it?

Lord Powell

She was certainly conscious of it, as you know; someone who got to the bottom of every document ever put into a box wouldn't miss something as important as that. Which is why I say she was not in any way opposed to German unification. She couldn't be because she knew she was bound by legal obligations and by many declarations to which she herself had subscribed. What she was concerned about was the pace and the process of it. That is the difference that appears to be essential and not widely understood. She may have had views about Germans but this didn't affect the fact that she knew we were committed to reunification. An absolute categorical yes to your question, she was aware of it.

Cord Meier Klodt

I just wanted to follow up on your last remark in your introduction, in which you stated that after all unification did come at a cost to Germany, for the UK and Europe. Applying the good philosophical tradition of English utilitarianism, action isn't good or bad until you have counted the amount of happiness or unhappiness that came out of it. Now, twenty

years later, I would be interested in your personal view. Can you assess the amount of happiness that came out of unification for Germany, the UK or Europe? Would you mention other elements than those with which you ended your remarks?

Lord Powell

I hope not. I regard it as a wholly undiluted good thing when Germany was unified and I think it has been hugely beneficial for Germany. It had prices and I mentioned three of them, one of them being the economic cost for the whole of Europe, the others being lost jobs and higher inflation and interest rates. We all paid for the reunification of Germany; we didn't pay nearly as much as West Germany nor should we have, but we did pay for it. Secondly, I think it has had an impact on the revival of authoritarianism in Russia today. I think they look back on that period as the Soviet Union being weak and being pushed around, that must never be allowed to happen again, whereas had the whole thing been handled a bit more slowly, if that had been possible, maybe that perception would not be so strong. You can't really produce chapter and verse for that. The third reason was the treatment of the East Europeans afterwards; that was disgraceful. I think history will give the European Union a pretty bad chit for the way it cynically delayed assisting the Eastern Europeans into Europe. Of course the overall balance is positive. There's no doubt about that.

David Marsh

I have a more technical question. The questionings that you are describing seem to be a very dynamic process with all sorts of moving parts and all sorts of capitals, Washington, Moscow, Paris, Bonn, and nobody really in control; I think we've established that. I don't think anybody would think that Helmut Kohl was some kind of malign puppet operator. I remember annoying him greatly by asking him about unification in 1988, and he was using the same sort of self-censorship that I'm delighted to hear that Colin has now admitted was taking place in the Foreign Office telegrams. He simply refused to say the word unified. When things began moving, though, did we just rely on what you seem to be describing as static processes? The question is whether we had any dynamic intelligence gathering operations at the time to know, for instance, that Gorbachev was having various phone calls with Mitterrand when no doubt a lot of lying and dissemination was being done then, and whether or not we had enough power in Bonn to know that Berlin seemed to be on a totally different line from Jim Baker, and also afterwards whether the Foreign Office in its wisdom – and we've got many distinguished members of the Foreign Office in the room now – if they were able to draw any conclusions on what seemed to be a bit of a debacle on the British establishment side, to say, well look, we'll try to get things a little bit better; difficult though it was, we'll try to learn from the experience and do better next time.

Lord Powell

Well, there are going to be others who will be around over the next few days who will be able to answer better than I can. Let me say a couple of things anyway. One is, remember that No. 10 is a pyramid, a very small peak of a pyramid. In the eight years I was doing this job, there was nobody else actively doing foreign affairs at all. Horst Teltschik had a large staff. Jacques Attali had a large staff. Brent Scowcroft had a huge staff. There was nobody else in No. 10 doing foreign affairs. There was a limit to the amount of information that can be absorbed at any one time, and what is crucial is to pick out the key bits of information and make sure they are transmitted to a Prime Minister. I think Michael Palliser, who had the same role in earlier years, would say the same thing. It is about making sure that a Prime

Minister sees what he or she has to really see. I don't believe we were under-informed at that time. We had superb embassies in both parts of Germany. We had a strong Foreign Office. I think the flow of information reaching us was exceptional. Of course the main burden was borne by the diplomatic process, that is, the ambassadors in Bonn and East Berlin, and what they reported about their contacts with governments, what the embassy in Washington said about the Americans. That was reported in the best British diplomatic style by cable, and was rapidly available for everybody to see. We had a sort of shadow network, of Horst Teltschik, Jacques Attali and myself and Brent, who met sometimes and conferred frequently and so on. It was only really to be sure that our four heads of government were all hearing the same thing, so there weren't huge differences in the perception or information that they enjoyed. Of course there was a big lacuna in all that: there was nobody to fill that role on the Soviet side. There was Anatoly Chernyaev, but his only foreign language was a rather fractured German; there was certainly no English. I think the picture you try to draw of Britons flailing around wildly, overtaken by what was happening, as not up to speed – I don't think that is right at all. It was moving along with very fast-moving events, which started to stabilise once the, and I have to say it in the way that Margaret Thatcher always said it, the Four Plus Two process started. That of course gave a certain stability to the whole process for her. But it was not unique to international crises or fast-moving developments. If you look at other things that happened, there was a similar rush of events, and not everybody was in control of them. It is part of the complexities of modern life; we'll never again see the slower pace of the Congress of Vienna, even though a lot of diplomatic services are structured as if they did.

Hermann Freiherr von Richthofen

Did you really believe in leaving Soviet troops on GDR territory, even if it was becoming less communist? What do you think would have happened to Berlin if a long process with unclear responsibilities had begun in November 1989? Was not the process we have set out together with the Americans, with you, ourselves and in the end also the French, the best way to avoid a destabilised Central Europe? Wasn't it the best way to bring the German question to a final solution, by properly ending the Quadripartite Rights and Responsibilities, not asking for a peace treaty which had been given up already in the year of 1970, and withdraw the Soviet troops, and bring Gorbachev to that aim? I think we couldn't have achieved more and better things together than we did without a long unclear situation in Germany that would have had many elements of insecurity for the people themselves and also for Germany and its neighbouring states.

Lord Powell

I think the concept of not forcing Gorbachev instantly to withdraw all forces was a valid one at the time, and I think there was just so much he could take within the Soviet system: of humiliation at the Soviet Union having to withdraw from all across Eastern Europe, including East Germany as a jewel in the communist crown, and of having his nose rubbed in it, and would have further weakened and destabilised his position, and in the end he settled for a very small cheque, I mean a financial cheque, not a Czech. A fairly small cheque in order to withdraw his forces pretty promptly. In fact it is amazing how little money he agreed to accept in return for doing that. Do I think the way the situation eventually played out was the best that could have been done and had a positive result? Yes I do.

Patrick Salmon

I would like to say how grateful we all are to Lord Powell for a wonderful presentation of Mrs. Thatcher's position. I think the frankness, the openness, the clarity, is completely unprecedented; I think we are very privileged to have heard that. I also thank those who made some very personal observations, and some very searching questions, and again the way in which they were responded to. I think we should be very grateful. Thank you very much.

Helmut Trotnow

We have had a slight change in programme. We have learned that one of our advisory board members is related to an '*Urgestein*' of Anglo-German relations. Professor Fritz Caspari, who was one of the first members of the German Foreign Office, worked in London from 1954 to 1956, and of course he has remained in contact and now today lives in Britain. We thought it would be a wonderful idea for him to join us, especially as he agreed to share his memories with us about how he began working in the field of Anglo-German relations. Herr Professor Hudemann will now say a few words about Professor Caspari's career.

Rainer Hudemann

I am a member of the Advisory Board of the Allied Museum and an historian at the University of Saarbrücken. Helmut Trotnow asked me to say some personal words about Fritz Caspari. I would rather speak about him as an historian, as his biography reflects the turbulences of German history in the twentieth century. He was one of the first high school pupils to go on an exchange programme to a French family, which makes him characteristic, in my personal view, for the beginning of the internationalisation of young Germans between the wars. And this was reinforced immediately after Hitler's accession to power in 1933, which he opposed. He was one of the last German Rhodes Scholars before the war to attend St John's College, Oxford, where he earned his Master of Arts. Then he went to the United States and taught at Southwestern University in Memphis, Tennessee. He returned to Germany and did his Ph.D. thesis at the University of Hamburg. Following the pogroms of November 1938, he decided in 1939 to leave Germany for the United States, where he pursued a university career. His book, *Humanism and the Social Order in Tudor England*, has been republished by Columbia University Press and translated decades later. He spent the war years in the United States as an emigrant. He was twice interned in a camp, and, in spite of being an enemy alien, he married a charming American who died last year after a long life together. In his exile in Chicago, he belonged to a very small group of people who were to shape German social and historical sciences after the war. One of his best friends was Hans Rothfels, a leading historian in the reconstruction of the discipline of contemporary history (*Zeitgeschichte*) in post-war Germany, and another close friend was Arnold Bergsträsser**,** one of the founders of German political science after the war. Fritz Caspari was engaged in that fascinating intellectual universe of German emigration.

Two times during the course of his career, people looked for Germans who had distanced themselves from the Third Reich. First came Adenauer in 1954, who asked him to build up the British, Commonwealth and Ireland Department at the new Auswärtiges Amt, which led later to his service at the German Embassy in London. And in 1969, Bundespräsident Gustav Heinemann was looking for someone unblemished by a Nazi past for the position of the Deputy Chief of the Federal President's office, which was responsible, among other things, for foreign affairs. When Caspari returned to the Foreign Office, he was posted as the first German Ambassador to Portugal, where he had to deal with the Portuguese revolution; once again this involved discussions with the Americans because Henry Kissinger remained very

sceptical about whether Portugal would not have to given up and left to the communists. As the published documents now show, Caspari's influence was a considerable element in convincing the Federal Republic to support the democratic forces in Portugal.

Fritz Caspari will speak here mainly about his time at the Auswärtiges Amt and at the German Embassy in London before 1963. As he has lived since his retirement in Greenwich, this is quite a symbolic moment on the way from Germany to the United States. Although Caspari has suffered from German history in the twentieth century, he has turned all of these difficulties into a constructive life of political work.

Fritz Caspari

Thank you very much. I am not sure whether my subject has very much relevance to the subject matter of your conference but I have been asked to give you some reminiscences of German-British relations half a century ago, from 1954-1963, when I was very much involved in them. As you have heard, I left the University of Chicago after many years in the United States in 1954 to enter the German Foreign Office at the *Stunde Null*[3]. I had come to Germany with an American wife and my two sons, who were born in Chicago. The changes in living conditions, the very low income the Foreign Office paid – that is, the German Foreign Office – and a country that was almost unknown to my wife, were all considerable obstacles.

When I returned to the Federal Republic of Germany after 15 years in the United States, the country was still governed by the occupying powers. It became sovereign a year later in May 1965. Since my days at Oxford I had always been interested in German-British relations and I returned to Germany partly because of my desire to work in that field. When I went into the German Foreign Service there was virtually no one available in Bonn who knew Britain well and who could work in that field. From 1954-58 I was in charge of the British section of the Auswärtiges Amt and then from 1958-63 I was posted to London as counsellor in the embassy. I had the desire to establish a good relationship between the two countries.

My remarks concern that entire period, but I must start with an autobiographical remark. I had been one of these German Rhodes scholars at Oxford during the inter-war period. I was there from 1933-36. There were two of us for every year at that time. I should mention two other members of this group: Adam von Trott zu Solz, hanged after the plot against Hitler, and Fritz Schumacher, known in this country very well as the author of *Small is Beautiful – Economics as if People Mattered*. After my time at St. John's, Oxford, and taking my doctorate in Germany, I emigrated to the United States and spent 15 years there, most of it at the University of Chicago. From there I returned to Germany, partly at Adenauer's own invitation; he visited Chicago and asked me. There was hardly anyone at the time with much knowledge of Britain and Germany who had British friends and acquaintances from pre-war times. I was convinced that it was essential to re-establish good relations between the two countries, conditions shared by the first German ambassador to this country after the war, Herr von Herwarth. Prime Minister Macmillan once said to me that, when he first arrived, Herwarth had a cool reception, but when he left as ambassador there was a hardly a house in Britain that would not have opened its doors to him. I think this remark does indicate a change that took place in that period. Chancellor Adenauer in 1954 was also Foreign Minister. His relationship with Britain was ambivalent and his attitude and mood changed from time to time. The trouble was that the British had deposed him as mayor of Cologne, for complete incapacity, as he claimed, and he had been deposed by Hitler before.

[3] A German term that literally means "zero hour"; a term used to refer to the period immediately following World War II.

This did not prevent him from having a private and essentially non-political personal correspondence with Harold Macmillan, most of which I had to try and translate sometimes during weekends. He didn't want an official translator. Nevertheless, when Adenauer visited Britain in 1958, Macmillan had a collection of unfriendly remarks about the United Kingdom and about himself, statements reportedly made by Adenauer in the preceding months. When he mentioned the discussion during a conversation at Chequers, Adenauer simply declared that they were all lies. Macmillan declared them non-existent as a result of that denial.

One major problem between the two governments was the cost of the British Army of the Rhine. These had been occupation costs while the occupation lasted, but they became stationing costs thereafter. The Federal Republic, without armed forces, relied heavily on the presence of British forces in view of the large Soviet presence in Eastern Germany, but it only wanted to pay part of this. The British wanted to pay no more than the necessary minimum. This problem of stationing costs was in the atmosphere, in the press and news organs of most countries for many months. Eventually there was a meeting of four people, kept secret at the time, and the meeting participants from each side found a solution that was later accepted by both parliaments. Sir Frederick Hoyer Millar**,** later Head of the Foreign Office, changed from being High Commissioner to being Ambassador with the advent of sovereignty. When Millar left Bonn, Chancellor Adenauer gave him a big dinner at which he praised his guests, for which he provided his own private best wine. As he said at the time, there were people who were generally interested in re-establishing good relations between the countries. One of them was Millar's wife, who asked me to become the godfather of their daughter, an honour that I gladly accepted.

My British opposite number and I had had many meetings, some of them rather liberal in our respective positions. These meetings took place over four years and after that I became his daughter's godfather. Another staff member of the embassy was married to the sister of a British friend, with whom I had climbed some of the high peaks of the Swiss Alps in the early 1930s. This old friendship obviously enhanced our relationship. The contact between the British – first the High Commission, then the Embassy, and the Auswärtiges Amt – was always friendly. There was no occupation mentality as you might call it. Some people, not necessarily diplomats from both sides of the group, composed and sang ironical songs such as "We are the land commissioners / we never had it so good." I was not able to sing. The business between the two sides was conducted in a normal way. Fortunately I was not usually concerned with occupation stationing affairs except in the Final Settlement. We did try on both sides to establish social contacts between the German and the British families of the British forces at a local level with some success. I don't wish to deal with any specific issues that surrounded this period, which will be evident from the available publications.

After four years in Bonn I was posted to the German Embassy in London. The immediate reason for this was the imminent visit of President Heuss to London in 1958. This was the first visit of the German head of state since the visit half a century before by Kaiser Wilhelm II, with two wars in between. I was heavily involved in this visit and also in a very different position in the visit of President Heinemann to this country in 1972. The Heuss visit went well, despite some negative comments made in the German press. I actually returned privately a year or two later and I guided him around. I became counsellor at the embassy in London in 1958, my ambassador, von Herwarth, who as I mentioned before was a convinced advocate of a German-British friendship, worked very hard to achieve it. One of his principal means to this end was a very active social life. He had been chief of protocol in Bonn and was very skilled socially and invited a large number of people to functions at the embassy in Belgrave Square. I think he once told me how many people he had invited, many thousands! People from all walks of life. This turned out to be a very effective way of obtaining the sympathy of many people, making the relationship popular. That of course

was only one aspect of his effort that was continued by his successor, von Etzdorf. When I left London in 1963 to be posted to our United Nations mission in New York, I was very much received in the spirit of German-British relations. I do not wish to go into the subject of history in the last almost half century. When we look at it as a whole, however, it must be clear that the two countries have a very solid, positive, and close connecting link. They connected closely bilaterally and of course in a larger context since they are both members of NATO and thus allies, and also of course of the European Union. They worked together in many fields and share many ideas in common. Thank you very much.

FIRST PANEL

THE FALL OF THE BERLIN WALL: LONDON – BONN – BERLIN (EAST AND WEST)

Helmut Trotnow

Welcome to our first panel, entitled "The Fall of the Berlin Wall: London, Bonn, East Berlin and West Berlin." Unfortunately we have to start with the sad news, and you will surely have noticed that one person is missing. Sadly, Lord Hurd cannot be with us, as he is in hospital undergoing an operation on his back. We learned about this on Friday evening; he sends his apologies and would have liked very much to be here. He originally had planned to go on holiday and when he heard of our programme, he said, "no, no, no, I've got to come", and in the course of last week, I had a message that he had problems with his back and that he wanted a wheelchair, and then apparently things became more serious and sadly he had to check into hospital. I think you will all agree that we send him a message, wishing him a speedy recovery. Health is more important than anything else.

Our speakers will now have more time, especially Sir Christopher Mallaby, who will put two hats on, one for Bonn and the other for London. May I suggest we take the reverse order for our presentations, that is, starting with the micro-cosmos and then later finishing the session with the London perspective? Having said that, Colin Munro will start with events in East Berlin, where since the Four Power Agreement in the early 1970s, the Western Allies had embassies too. After that we move over to West Berlin with Sir Michael Burton, who together with the city commandant at the time, Robert Corbett, had to deal with events unfolding there. Then as I mentioned, something that many people tend to overlook, the Brandenburg Gate was part of the British sector, and that is why Sir Michael certainly was responsible for those central events that took place at the Brandenburg Gate and were covered all over the world by the media. And then the third speaker will be Sir Christopher Mallaby, bringing in the Bonn perspective, and then he will talk about the instructions he received from the British government in London. It was a short notice, but still I hope we will be able to cope with this. Then afterwards we will again open the floor to you and I am sure there will be quite a discussion.

Before handing it over to Colin, let me say a few words about how I learned about the fall of the Wall. As I mentioned yesterday, I was a member of the task force for the German Historical Museum, which gave me the chance to follow the events in Berlin and the surrounding area very closely. This was one of the times when I really enjoyed my job because I was absolutely free to roam around the greater Berlin area, watching events unfolding, and that already began really in the summer of 1989, even late 1988. For example, you had the Polish buses moving into West Berlin to go shopping and I will never forget, I drove to the office, and came across a Polish car or a car with a Polish registration number, looking a little bit lost. So I stopped and asked if there is anything I could do to help, because they were in a far off part of West Berlin and not in the centre. So they unfolded a map of West Berlin and you know all these Aldi shops were in this map – Aldi is a very famous supermarket chain, and I think they even have stores now Britain – and I really looked at this and said, this looks like a real change now. To come back to the situation in late 1989, it reminded me later on of the situation in 1961. We all knew this is not going to stop, and that something is going to happen, we all knew that, but the big question was, what is going to happen? And to be quite honest with you, I never expected what happened. I will never forget on 1 September 1989, I gave a lecture in the Reichstag building. There was a conference on the 50th Anniversary of the beginning of the Second World War. And of course in the later discussions I was asked by the participants, "What do you think of the present

situation?" And I said, "Well, yes, things will happen, but I never dared to forecast anything in that direction." We will see how our speakers this morning experienced the situation and what their expectations were at the time.

Colin Munro

Thank you very much. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Helmut's story of the Polish market and Aldi prompts me to tell you the following story. There were not only buses travelling from Poland to this vast market in West Berlin but also smaller vehicles as well, and I remember one of these Polish Fiat 500s, a little sort of Topolino, and it broke down just short of Bornholmer Strasse, and a crowd gathered around it, and what was in this Topolino but two Poles and a sheep. These East Germans said, "*diese Polacken, dieser Schaf, die dürfen nach Westen*, but not us."[4] And this gave you a sense, as Helmut said, that something was going to happen, but we were certainly not quite sure what.

We are going to hear later about the achievements of the Americans, the British, French and German officials in the early 1970s in improving the lives of Berliners, and confirming the city's Four Power status, and keeping the German Question open. Now one of the objectives of the NATO embassies that Helmut mentioned, established in East Berlin in the early 1970s, was to uphold the achievements of our colleagues who had negotiated with the Russians by ensuring that our official contacts with the GDR authorities were compatible with the Quadripartite status of the whole city. East Berlin was not part of the GDR and certainly not its capital. The UK for its part took this objective seriously, so seriously in fact that FCO officials were sometimes compared with medieval scholastics and accused of wasting time and resources on an irrelevant subject, something that the French called 'Berlinologie'. The FCO's Western European department dealt with the Federal Republic, Berlin and the GDR, much to the chagrin of the GDR ambassador, who was observably uneasy at functions to which his brother ambassadors had not been invited. Some 'Berlinologie' was indeed tedious; for example, members of the embassy could use their GDR-issued MFA identity cards crossing between East and West Berlin. But official visitors, who required a GDR visa, we couldn't allow the GDR authorities to stamp their passports. So they had to travel from Tegel airport out of West Berlin round the autobahn ring to enter the GDR before getting to East Berlin. It was quite laborious and time consuming. The city's status was sustained in the East by the military 'flag' tours of the Soviet sector and these could have a cultural component; East Berliners I think rather enjoyed the sight of officers of the three Western Powers, resplendent in their uniforms, enjoying a night out at the Staatsoper on Unter den Linden. I should mention also the Roman Catholic Church, which was very punctilious about status, was always careful to place the three commandants in the front row of St. Hedwig's Cathedral in East Berlin, superior to representatives of the GDR state sitting behind. Cardinal Meisner, Bishop of Berlin from 1980-1988, who was incidentally a friend of the late pope John Paul, paid particular attention to Berlin's status.

If 'Berlinologie' seems sometimes a bit anachronistic, promoting peaceful evolutionary change was a high priority for all Western missions, including those from neutral and non-aligned countries such as Austria and Finland. They promoted it on the basis of the Helsinki Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Its principles committed states to allow their people not only self-determination but also freedom of movement, access to information and to express their opinions freely – the famous 'third basket'. As far as the division of Germany was concerned, Britain rested its case on self-determination. East Germans had never been allowed to express their views in democratic elections. Thus the

[4] "These Poles and this sheep are allowed to go into the West, but not us."

Prime Minister and Chancellor Kohl, after their summit in May 1984 – Professor Nicholls will remember this well – they confirmed in a public declaration, and I quote, "the conviction of successive British governments that real and permanent stability in Europe will be difficult to achieve so long as the German nation is divided against its will." Now, Honecker had taken great pride in signing the Helsinki Final Act in 1975, seated next to President Ford and Chancellor Schmidt. For the GDR, like the Soviet Union, the Final Act was all about the principles of inviolable frontiers and sovereign equalities of states, and I think nobody expected then – least of all Henry Kissinger, who was actually pretty dismissive of the CSCE process – that the provision allowing frontiers to be changed peacefully and by agreement would put be into practice 14 years later. Nor indeed that the catalyst would be the decision on 10 September 1989 by Hungary, a member of the Warsaw Pact, to restore to East Germans their freedom of movement, which Honecker amongst others had abrogated 14 years earlier by building the infamous Wall – still officially designated, ladies and gentlemen, even in 1989, as the 'anti-fascist protection rampart'. In January of that year, Honecker predicted, and I quote, "it will still be standing in 50 or even 100 years if the reasons for its existence have not been removed." But after 10 September 1989, East Germans could circumvent it and exercise self-determination by voting with their feet or indeed in their sputtering Trabis; the Trabant was the car of the year in 1989 or 1990.

Before September 1989, I certainly did not foresee that the division of Germany would end when and in the way that it did. I did however always regard the GDR as an artificial state, dependent on communist ideology and Soviet determination to sustain it in the Warsaw Pact on grounds of strategic necessity. Only when the Soviet Union's view of its own security requirements changed fundamentally could the German concept of overcoming the division of their country by overcoming the division of Europe become practical politics. Trends in this direction emerged as Gorbachev's policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika* took hold. The GDR was isolated from burgeoning democracy in Poland and Hungary. Soviet publications such as *Sputnik* were banned in East Germany because of the liberal notions they contained. At a CSCE information forum in London in April 1989, GDR representatives made common cause with Ceaușescu's Romania, as they did again in June by approving the Tiananmen Square massacre. There was ferment in the think tanks; Russians, Poles, Hungarians were calling on the old men in East Berlin to catch the tide of history. And in East Germany there was an absolute obsession with West Germany. Kohl had wrung concessions out of Honecker during the latter's grand visit in September 1987, the zenith of his '*Westpolitik*'. Agreement was reached to greatly expand opportunities for young people below pensionable age to visit West Germany. Soon over a million younger people had formed favourable impressions, and the main impression was that West Germany was a much nicer country than it appeared on East German television. Economic dependence was actually very difficult to measure. GDR statistics were unreliable, to put it lightly, and the West Germans' objective was to stabilise the country, prop up living standards, and persuade the old men to relax their neo-Stalinist grip gradually. So, to take a phrase from the British civil service, they too were sometimes rather economical with the truth about the East German economy.

The Protestant Church had been recognised in 1978 already as having a legitimate role in this socialist state, but recognition involved compromise with the regime and of course infiltration by the omnipresent Stasi. By 1987, dissidents were shifting their focus from peace, as it was also understood by the West German peace movement, to the quite dreadful pollution of the environment by the chemical industry and lignite-fired power plants. Reduced life expectancy and increased infant mortality in places such as Bitterfeld were state secrets. But the stench, the dust and the acid rain could not be concealed. And although the regime continued with the tried and tested methods of imprisonment, intimidation and deporting dissidents, I think it is fair to say they were working less well than in the past.

The embassy was aware of these trends and I think we had quite good contacts with the future new political forces, but we underestimated their potential impact, for example in our comments on Teltschik's judgement in June that the situation in the GDR was "potentially explosive." There was still no hard evidence that the Soviet Union was about to abandon the country. Had not Gorbachev himself said that history would answer the German Question in 100 years? And that incidentally was his rather dusty answer to President Reagan's speech in front of the Brandenburg Gate in June 1987, in which Reagan called upon him to "tear down this wall." Hungary in fact propelled the German question onto the international agenda. In East Berlin the chattering classes argued that British and American and French support for reunification was hypothetical and hypocritical. GDR officials went further; they argued that as opponents of reunification we should actually support strengthening of the socialist order, because, as the president of the Academy of Sciences put it in an interview with the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* in September 1989, "a capitalist GDR would have no reason for existing along side a capitalist FRG." And it was after that interview that I advised the FCO to dust off its reunification files. It seemed to me that if ideology and the economy began to crumble and the people were beginning to leave, the Wall could no longer fulfil its function and reunification might become unavoidable.

East Germany was now in a state of peaceful revolutionary change, combined with a mass exodus to West Germany. Now here are the major landmarks: 21st September: Neues Forum is denied registration; it is "hostile to the state." 25th September: 8,000 people attend the Leipzig Monday prayer meeting, the largest unofficial public gathering in East Germany since the 1953 uprising. 4th October: violent clashes as the demonstrators attempt to board trains carrying asylum seekers released from the West German embassy in Prague to freedom; you know sealed trains have an absolutely dreadful impact in Central Europe, evoking all sorts of horrible historical memories. Visa-free travel to Czechoslovakia and Hungary at this time was banned, so people felt they were going to be imprisoned all over again. 6-8 October: Gorbachev attends the GDR's 40th anniversary celebrations, which are marred by demonstrations against the regime. Honecker was in the Palast der Republik, saying "*Vorwärts immer, rückwärts nimmer*"[5], and Gorbachev was staring at the ceiling, and outside the demonstrators were being beaten up by the Vopos.[6] In fact, Honecker had just reappeared; he had been taken ill on 8th July in Bucharest, and here is poetic justice: this was a Warsaw Pact summit which abolished the Brezhnev Doctrine. 9th October: first Leipzig demonstration after the birthday party, 75,000 demonstrators in Leipzig, and Krenz, who was responsible in the Politburo for security, so he would later claim, revoked Honecker's orders for a Tiananmen-style massacre to end the peaceful revolution. 11th October: a new modern form of socialism announced, no popular interest or support. 16th October: 150,000 demonstrators in Leipzig. 18th October: Honecker resigns. 23rd October: 300,000 demonstrators in Leipzig. This was the date on which Hungary became an independent republic and rocked world socialism. Why 23rd October? Because that was the date on which the revolution broke out in 1956. 24th October: demonstrators in East Berlin and other cities lambast Krenz, Honecker's successor, immediately after his appointment. A popular slogan was that his first name, Egon, was an acronym for "*Er geht och noch.*"[7] The SED is still the ruling party, and just one word about it: SED now stood for '*Sozialistische Exil Dachdecker*'[8];

[5] "Always forwards, never backwards."

[6] "Vopo" was an abbreviated way of referring to the East German Volkspolizei, the national police of the German Democratic Republic.

[7] "He's on his way out too."

[8] "Socialist Exile Roofer."

this joke was made at the expense of Honecker, who was from the Saarland, where he had been a roofer, and he was in exile. The Party eventually changed its name to PDS, the Party of Democratic Socialism, which people referred to as the '*Partei der Strolche und der Stalinistin*'[9] and '*Prinzipiell der Selbe*', or basically the same. 2nd November: ban on travel to Hungary and Czechoslovakia rescinded. 3rd November: exit the Politburo old guard, including Mielke, Stasi boss, aged 81, and Hager, ideology supremo, aged 77. 4th November: one million people demonstrating on the Alexanderplatz in East Berlin for a reformed GDR. This was the sort of high point of the movement that wanted to turn the GDR into a sort of German Sweden. 7th November: Council of Ministers resigns. 8th November: Politburo resigns and Neues Forum legalised. 9th November: Schabowski, former Politburo member responsible for Berlin, makes his famous announcement at an early evening press conference. I myself was attending a conference in the Reichstag and Frau Dorothea Wilms – we were just having a drink and she was saying a few words to all of us – somebody handed her a note and she read this out. And I've never seen people at a cocktail party drop their drinks so fast and head for the action.

So, throughout this peaceful revolution, Britain was in step with the Germans in the East and the West. We expressed solidarity over the exodus, we supported popular demands for the reform of the GDR, and officials advised repeatedly that British support for reunification was neither hypothetical nor hypocritical. One liberal democratic German state, integrated in the West, had been our objective since the late 1940s. And it had been a treaty obligation, as Sir Christopher Audland reminded us yesterday, since 1955. And nobody who was privileged to witness the fall of the Wall could be in any doubt whatsoever about the desire of East Germans to live in a liberal prosperous democratic state. We thought that unification in some form or other was coming, and indeed my Soviet colleagues – not the ambassador, who thought that Brezhnev was a dangerous liberal, but his deputy and some others – confirmed to us that Gorbachev would not authorise use of Soviet forces to halt what was already regarded as unstoppable momentum to German unity in some form or other. And nowhere was this momentum more obvious than in Berlin. So in the embassy we were actually rather disconcerted by some official statements after the fall of the Wall that unification was not actually on the agenda, but the origin was actually clear enough because we were asked orally after the fall of the Wall to go easy on reports of demonstrators calling for '*Deutschland einig Vaterland*'.[10] Keep them out of telegrams that would be read by the Prime Minister. Berlin status issues fell outside our remit, except to uphold them as best we could. Although we did advise that the rights acquired by conquest should be replaced by agreements, we focused on this unstoppable momentum.

Now I would like to conclude my remarks by paying tribute to Chancellor Kohl and the way he handled his visit to Dresden on 19 December. This was a difficult visit to organise in terms of timing. He didn't want to come to East Berlin; he wanted to get ahead of Mitterrand, who had announced a visit to have a last look at the country and to see if something could be salvaged from the wreckage. And so Mitterrand was on for 20th December, and so Helmut rushed in on the 19th and was met by Hans Modrow and there, after the talks, an impromptu meeting was arranged for him to address the crowds who gathered in front of the Frauenkirche. And there they were shouting, "*Helmut, Helmut, du bist unser Kanzler*."[11] And Kohl recalls in his memoirs that this was the moment when he realised for certain that unification was coming and it was also the moment, ladies and gentlemen,

[9] "The Party of Thugs and Stalinists."

[10] "Germany, united Fatherland."

[11] "Helmut, Helmut, you are our chancellor".

when he could so easily have tipped East Germany into absolute chaos, with really serious consequences for European security. Instead he calmed people down, albeit by promising the crowds in front of the Frauenkirche that their aspirations would be fulfilled if they displayed patience and discipline. And discipline, I should add by way of conclusion, was an abiding exemplary feature of East Germany's peaceful revolution.

Helmut Trotnow

Thank you Colin for this wonderful reminder of how events unfolded, looking at it from East Berlin. Now we get the other side of the story and the slightly wider implications, for after all, East Berlin was not part of the GDR.

Sir Michael Burton

Thank you Helmut. As has been said, I am the chap from West Berlin. In fact I was in Berlin for no less than seven years: five years as Minister and Deputy Commandant in West Berlin, and then I stayed on for two years as head of a thing called the 'British Embassy Berlin Office' for two years. Somebody had to do it. I can talk about that period at some point, if it is of any interest.

Just to pick up on one of Colin's stories about St. Hedwig's Cathedral: I remember an occasion there when the protocol was a bit different, and it was the farewell mass of Archbishop Meisner, who was going off to be Archbishop of Cologne, and a cardinal. And on that occasion the Allied Commandants and ministers were in the front row on one side, and the Politburo were on the front row facing us on the other side, having some difficulty keeping up with the service. At the end of the service there was an unseemly rush to see who could get to the door first. And the Allies being fitter made it. So we went out first, our cars were called up, and off we went, and there was a big crowd of Berliners there, East Berliners, applauding us. And then when the last of us had gone and the Politburo appeared in the door a complete hush fell on that crowd. And then a funny coda to that: the American Commandant then drove his car into West Berlin, stopped at a traffic light, and some peace dissident came and tried to grab the flag off the front of his car, and he was totally outraged by the way people behaved in West Berlin.

So, the fall of the Berlin Wall as seen from West Berlin. For the Allies in West Berlin, it was business as usual at the start of 1989. Their role continued to be governed by the Quadripartite Agreement of 1971. The essence of that hard-fought deal with the Soviet Union, as far as West Berlin was concerned – I am a bit hesitant to describe it in front of so many experts – was that the security situation in Berlin was stabilised on the basis that the rights and responsibilities of the Allies would continue unchanged, and that West Berlin was "not part of the Federal Republic and not governed by it."

The most important of the Allied responsibilities was the protection and security of the city. This was primarily the task of the three Allied garrisons. The British garrison was roughly mid-way in size between that of the Americans and that of the French. It consisted of three infantry battalions, an armoured squadron and support units. The RAF was equipped with only one spotter plane (which, I found out later, somewhat to my surprise, was actually a significant security asset!), which was stationed at RAF Gatow. Yes, I must break off to say, thanks for arranging this conference, Helmut, and anybody who has not visited the Allied Museum in Berlin really should go. It is a fantastic museum. So back to the security in the city. Internally the West Berlin police, who came under Allied control, were responsible for order in the western part of the city.

Another vitally important responsibility was for the city's air links with the West. Only one airline of each of the three Allies was authorised to serve the city using the three air corridors. Every single flight was controlled in the BASC, the Berlin Air Safety Centre, with Soviet representatives. The rules had not changed since the end of the war and included the tedious restriction that the maximum height an aircraft could fly was 10,000 feet, since that was an acceptable height in 1945, although it hardly suited a modern aircraft. Furthermore, the Soviet doctrine was that flights could only be legally undertaken from the Allied occupation zones, i.e. the Federal Republic. So a flight from London, for example, would have stamped on its authorisation slip by the Soviet representative, in the BASC, 'Safety of flight not guaranteed'. Fortunately passengers were not aware of this.

Where the Allies came into the most contact with the West Berlin Senat was over authorising the subsumption of federal laws by the Berlin House of Representatives after they had first been checked to ensure that none of the provisions of the status of Berlin, including the rights of the Allies, were infringed. Presiding over all this was the Allied Kommandatura, the AK, out of which the Soviet representative had marched in 1948. This consisted of three Western Allied Commandants and the Ministers and Deputy Commandants who were the senior diplomatic officers and who were of equal rank. The AK met monthly to conduct its business under the chairmanship of the Commandant of the Ally that held the rotating chairmanship of all the Allied committees that particular month. AK members also met the Governing Mayor over tea once a month. And the Ministers separately had lunch with the head of the Senat Chancery. Each Ally had a Senat liaison officer who dealt with the Senat bureaucracy on a daily basis.

So getting back to the start of 1989. Berlin seemed unaffected by President Gorbachev's *glasnost* and *perestroika* and the stirrings in neighbouring countries. Life for the Allies followed its seemingly immemorial routine. As far as the British were concerned, there were parades on national days, a parade took place on the Queen's birthday, and it was a full dress and very splendid affair, with the salute normally taken by a member of the royal family and in 1987 by the Queen herself. Every two years there was the Berlin-British Tattoo, modelled on the Royal Tournament, held in the Deutschland Halle. A great occasion, great fun, lasting for a week or so. And then in the four Bezirke in the British sector the regiments would hold Volksfeste at some point in the year, which are a kind of fairs, and all the fun of a fair enjoyed by everybody. And then the Allies as a whole, we would have the Luftbrücke commemoration ceremony once a year at the Luftbrücke Memorial outside Tempelhof airport, and lay flowers and wreathes at the memorial to commemorate the proportionally large number of British service men who died in the airlift. Just to remind you, during the airlift, RAF Gatow, at one point, was the busiest airport in the world in terms of landings and taking off. And the Sunderland flying boats landing at the Havel, with the heavy cargo such as coal, were an absolutely fundamental part of provisioning the city at that dangerous time. And lastly, I am just naming some examples here, the last thing I would mention is an annual conference in Berlin, the Young Königswinter conference. It was the great conference set up after the war, British and German political and business leaders coming together. And the Young Königswinter conference was the child of the Königswinter conference, always held in Berlin, for 30 young British people and 30 young Germans, and they were given some subject to debate for about a week. It was a residential conference and always presided over in my time by that great figure in Anglo-German relations, Sir Frank Roberts, who would have liked to have been here today. So all of that was going on in the usual way.

But I am still at the beginning of 1989. There had been 40 escapes to West Berlin the previous year. The last escape attempt, when shots were fired, was on 8 April 1989. In his regular lunch meetings with the Ambassadors of the Allies, the Soviet Ambassador Kochemassev, was as intractable as ever. The Soviets had shown no interest in taking up the Allied

proposal to discuss the obsolete Berlin air regime that I have described. This initiative had arisen out of President Reagan's speech in front of the Brandenburg Gate in 1987, in which he had memorably called on President Gorbachev to open the gate and tear down the wall. It is worth noting that the West German and West Berlin response to that speech had been decidedly muted. The German orthodoxy of the time was that provocative statements should be avoided and efforts concentrated on making the Wall more porous. Furthermore, according to the senior German politicians who took part in it, the German question was little discussed in Germany at the time, except at the Berlin branch of the Aspen Institute under the avuncular chairmanship of Shepard Stone, an American and an honorary citizen of Berlin.

It is also worth noting that President Reagan was not the only Allied head of state to make a significant speech in Berlin in 1987, the year the city celebrated its 750th anniversary. In a speech to an invited audience, the Queen said, "the hope of all of us must be that the cruel division of this city will one day be overcome, in the spirit of its long tradition of tolerance. May the same Berlin which is now the symbol of the division of Europe become on that day the symbol of its unity."

It has to be said that for some years before 1989 the Berliners had been showing some restlessness over what they considered the disadvantages of the Allied presence. Without going too far into the murky waters of what the French called 'Berlinologie', these ranged from the fact that Berliners could not elect their Bundestag and European Parliament members by direct ballot; the disturbance to traffic in the city created by the annual Allied Forces Day Parade; and training by the Allied garrisons in recreation areas such as the Grünewald. It ranged from all of that to the fact that the Allied Commandants entertained the Governing Mayor by rotation to the monthly tea, but he himself could never act as host. The fact that the Allied role was a package resting on the unchallengeable right of conquest, which in the Berliners' own interest would be risky to unpack, was understood by few people, particularly the young. It was also not wholly accepted by some German and even Berlin politicians.

As the year progressed, a revealing incident that took place was the attempted escape of three young East Berliners by swimming across the river Spree just by the Reichstag while a GDR patrol boat was looking the other way. Two of them, including a pregnant woman, managed to scramble on to the bank on the Western side. But the third one, named Martin Notev, failed to get up on to the bank before being spotted by the patrol boat, which thereupon crossed over and hauled him off the bank onto the boat. A passing British tourist happened to photograph that moment, which provided the evidence for the three Allied Foreign Ministers to protest to Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Schevardnadze that the GDR had in effect kidnapped Notev from the British sector, and to demand his return. Berlin officials told us that, by this forceful response, we had probably condemned Notev to seven years' hard labour. But to our relief he turned up at the West Berlin reception centre a few weeks later. I went down with Alan Charlton from my staff to welcome him with a glass of *Sekt*. Clearly something was changing in the chemistry between the Soviet and GDR authorities.

This incident had a sequel. The Senat agreed with our suggestion to place ladders along the riverbank where the incident had occurred, to enable anyone falling into the water, such as pregnant women or children, to climb to safety. Honecker was outraged, I learned afterwards, and badgered Moscow to do something about this provocative action. Then my Soviet opposite number came to make a serious protest on the subject, delivered a piece of paper and said that the ladders mush be removed or the Soviet Union cannot be responsible for the consequences, which is serious talk. I said, I cannot believe that a representative of a great power should be protesting about ladders placed there to enable pregnant women and

children to climb out of the water. And he said, "I had not heard of pregnant women or children climbing out of the water, but I have heard of people swimming across." But I looked him hard in the face and decided that he was only acting pro forma and we could safely leave the ladders in place. But I was glad that the opening of the Wall a few months later meant that my judgement was not put to the test.

Coming to the night the Wall opened, we in West Berlin were, of course, fascinated observers of the events leading up to the night of 9th November, which took everybody by surprise. It so happened that on that fateful evening I was the only member of the AK who was at home watching events unfold on TV. Once I had reported to Bonn and London I then made it my task to co-ordinate a statement by the AK to be carried by the following day's Berlin press welcoming the opening of the Wall. It would not have done for the Allies not to have commented in real time on such a momentous event.

Governing Mayor Walter Momper then rang me in the small hours to tell me that he was on the other side of the Wall at the Bornholmer Strasse crossing point and was being asked for instructions by the WPB, the RMP and the East German VoPos. How should he deal with this unprecedented situation? I suggested he tell them to do their best to keep order.

The next day the British garrison, specifically the Royal Welch Regiment, were conspicuous at the crossing point with their regimental mascot, a Welsh goat, dispensing welcoming mugs of tea from a Naafi van to the strains of the regimental band. This went down well with the Berliners streaming through.

At this stage the GDR border guards were still standing on the Wall at the Brandenburg Gate facing the milling crowd on the Western side. Soviet President Gorbachev sent an urgent message to the three Allied leaders urging them to take action to prevent this potentially inflammatory situation from getting out of control. At a meeting of the Allied Ambassadors, Commandants and Ministers to discuss what should be done, we were able to propose a solution based on a precedent of the previous year. We had then instructed the West Berlin Police (WPB) to restore order in an area called the Lenne Triangle, which lay on the western side of the Wall but was formally part of the Soviet sector, having warned the Soviet authorities, and through them what we were intending to do.

We now instructed the WPB to police the *Unterbaugebiet*, the strip of land adjourning the Wall on the Western side that had the same legal status as the Lenne Triangle, and to assure order. And that's what happened. The hoppers then went off the Wall, with no loss of face, and what was a potentially extremely dangerous situation was avoided. That was, I think, one of the Allies' main contributions to the unrolling of events.

The following day – we're now on a Saturday – was unforgettable in West Berlin. This was not just because of the tumultuous scenes at the Wall. There was also the spectacle on the KuDamm of hundreds of East Berliners, having drawn their hundred Deutschmarks of *Begrüßungsgeld*[12] from the banks, pressing their noses against the windows of the smart shops and trying to decide what the priority purchases for each member of the family should be. Unfortunately, a hundred marks did not go very far. This sight made a very strong impression on me. It made me realise that the most powerful force driving the political process was likely to be the East Germans' demand for the Deutschmark as soon as possible. I therefore reported, after the weekend, that we were probably witnessing "the beginning of the end-game" for the Allies in Berlin, meaning that reunification, a word not mentioned in my telegram, would come at some point, and that then the function of the Allies would end. This seems a very obvious thought, but at the time it was unusual, a bit

[12] 'Welcome money' disbursed to East Germans by the West German government after the fall of the Wall.

ahead of its time and in fact almost subversive. Our view in BMG even then was that although there would be an interim period during which both German states would try to make a third-way solution work in the GDR on the basis of a reformed system, this would in time succumb to the overwhelming economic attraction of the Federal Republic and the GDR would implode.

The Soviets in Berlin, who had been as taken aback as everyone else by events, were at a loss on how to respond. At a lunch with my Soviet number the following week, he said that he emphatically agreed with the Prime Minister that reunification was not on the political agenda. As regards the prospects for the GDR, he said that the Soviet view was to hope that the new leaders could make a genuine socialist alternative work on the basis of democracy and human rights, which he added, with some passion, were not capitalist concepts but the basic rights of all mankind.

In a final desperate bid to keep a Four Power handle on the situation, the Russians then proposed the holding of Four Power talks. The Allies would only agree provided these were limited to discussion of the so-called Allied Initiative on the Berlin Air Services launched in 1987 following the Reagan speech. Talks were held on the 11th of December in the imposing building of the Allied Control Authority from which the Allies had governed Germany after the War. The Allies however had their work cut out to reassure the Germans that this was not a last-ditch effort by the Four Powers to pre-empt decisions which had probably been taken by the Germans themselves.

In the eleven months between the opening of the Wall and German reunification, there was understandable pressure from the German side for the Allies to relax their grip. Some measures presented little difficulty: the Allied Forces Day Parade was abolished, the hut at Checkpoint Charlie was removed to the Museum of the Allies at the end of an impressive ceremony featuring six Foreign Ministers, in which Douglas Hurd, who is not here, made what I thought was a very good remark – best remark of the morning – "It's time for Charlie to come in from the cold." And the Governing Mayor finally got to host the Commandants for tea. Other measures still presented difficulties on status grounds, at least in the eyes of the hardliners in the Foreign Office. But I was delighted that there was finally agreement on my longstanding recommendation to abolish the obsolescent title of BMG (British Military Government) and to rename the post the British Mission Berlin, a name change which the Americans had brought in without endangering the safety of the city in 1948.

The major question for the Allies in Berlin during this period – that's up to reunification – was whether at least part of the Allied garrisons would remain in the city after reunification. After the successful conclusion of the Two Plus Four talks this was easily resolved. Allied troops would remain for a few years, until the Soviet troops had withdrawn from the new *Länder* but reporting to a Bundeswehr Stadtkommandant. However, the Allied Commandants, as the very symbols of Allied authority, had to take their leave after reunification.

The last act of the Allies before reunification was to hold a final meeting of the AK on 2 October 1990. At this meeting, all the AK members signed a letter, drafted by us, addressed to the Governing Mayor. In it we congratulated the people of Berlin and praised them for their staunchness. As for the Allied role, the letter read: "Today we look back on the long and difficult road leading to the reunification of the city. We salute the many thousands of Allied men and women who have served in Berlin with dedication and professionalism. The contributions of these Allied soldiers, airmen, and civilians helped to lay the foundation for this happy day. They, together and in partnership with the Berliners, saw the city through a difficult time. We shall always remember them."

After handing over this letter to the Governing Mayor, in a simple ceremony attended, to our great pleasure, by Willy Brandt, the British Commandant, Major General Robert Corbett, who was Chairman Commandant, presented it to a full meeting of the Berlin Abgeordnetenhaus in a speech in German in which he quoted Winston Churchill: "The artificial division of Germany is a tragedy that cannot endure." This speech was greeted with great acclamation.

That evening the Chairman of Daimler-Benz, Edzard Reuter, son of the great Governing Mayor Ernst Reuter, generously invited the Allies to a party at the top of a hotel, from where we could view the enthusiastic celebrations taking place in front of the Reichstag to mark reunification. I thought it was a delightful touch, whether intended or not, that as midnight approached, the band played Elgar's 'Land of Hope and Glory'. Thank you.

Helmut Trotnow

Thank you for this wonderful description. It brings back a lot of memories, very happy memories indeed. And now we are going to get a level further up with the analysis side as well.

Sir Christopher Mallaby

Thank you Helmut. This is a witness seminar, or, as Helmut has said, a seminar with veterans describing what happened. And I am a witness and a veteran for I became Ambassador in Germany, in West Germany, in March 1988 and was there for five years. So I experienced the run up to unification and the next two years after unification. And in fact I had been in the embassy in Bonn for three years, ending three years before that return in March '88. So I saw a lot of the Federal Republic during those years. I've been asked to speak about how the Berlin story during unification seemed from Bonn, and then late last night I was asked also to stand in for Douglas Hurd and speak about the British attitude. I'm going to do these two things separately rather than trying to do it all date-by-date because then you would get an intertwining of the two things with repetition.

To set the scene, I'll quote from a report I sent to the Foreign Office in June 1988. This was about how I found the Federal Republic after three years away. I quote, "Amid the mounting display of the failure of communism in Europe, the Berlin Wall is still the greatest admission of that failure. West Germans and West Berliners see no prospect of its going. Meanwhile West Berlin is doing well, economically and politically, one of the wonders of the modern world. Its success depends on the courage and determination of the Berliners and on two pillars: the presence of Allied forces and large financial subsidies from Bonn." Well, that's one quotation out of 25 pages and gives you just an idea that everything was very orthodox. The feeling in the middle of 1988 is not really different from the feeling over the previous years.

I then fast-forward to 8 November 1989, the day before the Wall broke. I wrote, "The view in Bonn is that Gorbachev has evidently decided that reform in the GDR is less dangerous for stability there than no reform. But there is also a feeling here that the Russians, because the GDR is their frontline state facing west, will be more reluctant about a political transformation there than they are in Poland or Hungary, and that they will seek to maintain the statehood of the GDR. There is here in Bonn an impression but no confidence that the Soviet forces in East Germany which, at 380,000, are larger than United States forces in Europe, would not be used to halt political change in East Germany." The key here is the point about the difference between the GDR and Poland or Hungary or Czechoslovakia. The GDR was the lynchpin of the Soviet security system in Central Europe and it was an open

question whether the Soviet Union would try somehow to preserve that, despite all the change around East Germany. Then I went on in this same report on 8th November: "If during a process of reform in the GDR, there were major setbacks or a crisis, might reform movements call for unification as the one certain means of guaranteeing freedom and prosperity? Would a leader in the Federal Republic respond by appealing for a drive to unification?" So there's a good bit of change between those quotations.

But there is still a tentative feel about the analysis. Going back a long time, I had been the British liaison officer with the Berlin Senat and the City Assembly between 1966 and 1969. So I knew – I'd lived this everyday – that Allied Rights and Responsibilities with regard to Berlin were constantly discussed with the German authorities in Berlin and Bonn, and there was much day-to-day work, including also contacts with the Soviet Embassy in East Berlin. On the other hand, Allied Rights and Responsibilities regarding Germany as a whole and the German Question were in those days of course always important, but they did not give rise to a constant stream of daily work. And that's what changed in late '89. But before I move on to change, I just want to make one remark about the value of Quadripartite Rights and Responsibilities, which is that it was not only a question of upholding the freedom of West Berlin; it was also a question of demonstrating daily that the German Question remained unanswered. Those rights and responsibilities and their exercise were a demonstration that the answer still lay in the future, that the division of Germany was not the answer.

And one other remark about Berlin's status, some 'Berlinologie'. It was, as Michael Burton very well described, a very complicated contrivance. The Allies were firm in maintaining it because that preserved the legal basis for their presence, for their ability thus to preserve the freedom of West Berlin. But it was a contrivance that tremendously and triumphantly succeeded all the way through those years – 40 years – this system of maintaining the freedom of two million people within the sea of oppression that was East Germany. It worked. And at the end, of course, everything came to exactly the right conclusion.

Going back to the change in late '89, Quadripartite Rights and Responsibilities in relation to Germany as a whole come to the fore in the minds of the Western Allies and the Russians. But that's only a background thought, as I will show. Change in the GDR and then the possibility of unification became, of course, the top stories in the world press. Berlin remained very important. And so of course was the scene on 9 November 1989, the most thrilling, historic single event in the whole story of the new freedom in Europe. But Berlin by 1990 was part of a wider scene of change in Germany and especially in East Germany. In Bonn, where I was, politicians focused mostly on this wider change. There was, above all, great joy and immense interest in what was happening east of the Elbe.

I went to Berlin on 11th November and landed at the Wall very early on that freezing morning. It was still dark on the western side of the Wall. There were many people standing around talking beside the Wall, a happy crowd. I'd assumed they were Westerners who'd come to see history in the making. But I discovered when I talked among them that actually they were East Berliners who'd come through the Wall and gone round the back and come back to look at the Wall from the western side. When I asked why they did this rather than going off to look at West Berlin, they said, well you can't really believe that you're out until you've come right round and seen it looking eastwards from the western side. Well, I then went to the meeting with Walter Momper and the three Western Ambassadors at the Rathaus Schöneberg, but I was early and I stood in the square talking to East Germans who were queuing for their greeting money, to which Michael Burton referred earlier. I asked them what they were going to buy. They said first of all, *Südfrüchte* … tropical fruit, a very understandable thing because they didn't have nearly as much of that as they were seeing West Germans and West Berliners having everyday on television. But the second thing they

said surprised me: the second thing was toys. And I thought that the toyshops of East Germany were rather better than many other sorts of shops in East Germany. But they explained that their children also watched Western television and the most important thing that they could do for a child or a grandchild was take back a toy that was visible on Western television but not available in East Berlin. And toys continued to play a role that day for me, because that evening my wife and I went through Checkpoint Charlie to East Berlin to our embassy there for a supper meeting that the ambassador had arranged with a number of critics and opponents of the regime; that was the first time I met Manfred Stolpe, who became a friend over the ensuing months. And as we went through Checkpoint Charlie we were controlled in the usual way, checked by Soviet personnel, but beside us running through the checkpoint uncontrolled completely were thousands of Easterners who'd spent the day in the West Berlin and were going back. And in that crowd I saw a little boy – I think he was three or four – and he was pulling a large plastic red London double-decker bus, approximately his own size. And I thought, well, if a London double-decker bus can be crossing from west to east on the Iron Curtain, something really big really is happening.

And I went then to Frankfurt; I had to make a speech to the British-German Chamber of Commerce in Frankfurt the next evening and I was going to talk, I can't remember about what, but some routine subject, and I ditched that text and spoke about my experiences in Berlin in the previous 48 hours. And of course the audience – bankers and others in Frankfurt – were extremely excited and pleased and happy and optimistic. But even there, some of the concerns that were shortly to emerge in the West German debate were coming up in the questions that I received. First and foremost, I would mention immigration from the East: clearly an immense problem, a practical problem potentially and an economic problem for West Germany potentially. As well as a problem that could have caused, if it had gone on haemorrhaging, an economic collapse in the GDR itself. There was fear in the debate in Bonn and in West Germany about a collapse of power, a regime crisis in East Germany, and therefore of instability. There was much uncertainty of wider kinds that I will come to. But this uncertainty caused the Allies, looking at Quadripartite Rights and Responsibilities and especially at Berlin, to feel that there was absolutely no case right now – we're talking now about October, November, December even, in 1989 – no case for changing our ways. Our main position, our main practice is in Berlin. And indeed there was absolutely no pressure to do so. There was pressure and we did respond – Michael Burton mentioned this – on some specific non-central matters like the voting rights and electoral system for Berlin members of the Bundestag. We agreed to the change, to the normalisation of the role of those Bundestag members very, very late in the day, but I was in the Bundestag with the French ambassador that day when the change was put into effect in the Bundestag. And even at that very, very late time we did get an ovation, which showed that although we'd been very slow in making the change, for reasons of not undermining status that could have resulted in earlier months, when the change came it was still regarded as something reasonably significant.

Well, I'll go back now to the reports I was sending from Bonn. I had a constant dialogue with the ministers concerned: Kohl, Genscher and particularly Seiters and a lot with officials, some very able people: Sudhof, Kastrup and especially Teltschik were people I were seeing everyday. And I also talked – this will be apparent from what I am about to say – to the opposition. Quite a lot I talked to Egon Bahr and Hans-Jochen Vogel and two or three times to Willy Brandt. Bahr told me in early September '89 that the GDR was now in a "highly precarious state," I'm quoting now from my report, and that explosions were very possible. I also reported that one view left-of-centre in the politics of the Federal Republic was that myriad contacts between the Federal Republic and the GDR would develop as part of a European peace order so that reunification could become superfluous as well as remain unwelcome to some European countries. Well that proposition soon died, but it was still

alive in late 1989; of course it harks back to one of the more theoretical propositions of Brandt's *Ostpolitik*.

On 13 November 1989 I reported as follows; here we are just after the opening of the Wall: "West Germans are increasingly confident that a turning point in post-war history of Germany and Europe is coming into sight. The great satisfaction of recent days with countless people witnessing the dramatic events in Berlin on television is giving way to debate about the relationship with the GDR. There is now greater confidence that some serious reform will come." A few days later, the 5th of December '89, I wrote: "Kohl said yesterday at NATO that reunification was not on the agenda today." I interrupt just to say that, of course, that was what the UK thought and was saying at the time, but my report continued: "Kohl's statement about unification not yet being on the agenda sits uncomfortably with the last of his Ten Points of 28th November. And that statement would not be endorsed by many, many people here in Bonn. Egon Bahr of the SPD said to me today that the two main political parties in the Federal Republic would compete in the run-up to the general election due on 2 December 1990 in their support for German unity." On 7th December, two days later, I wrote: "Seiters told me today that all authority in the GDR could fade away within weeks. It is more a question of the death of institutions than of chaos through public order breaking down. Hans-Jochen Vogel thinks it will come soon, that the people of the GDR in great majority want unity. I think," I wrote, "I think, like Vogel, that the West German political parties, except the Greens, would all then support unity. Vogel favours a confederation, allowing the Federal Republic and the GDR to stay in their alliances as well as a long transition period from a decision on unity to its implementation." On 8th December, the next day, there were many indications that the Russians were worried about developments in East Germany; this came from the top level and also to me from Kochemassev, the Soviet Ambassador in East Berlin. The Russians had a specific concern, which was that there could be demonstrations against their barracks. There could be incidents involving the families of Soviet soldiers in East Germany. And that was in fact the day when they proposed the Four Power meeting of ambassadors to which Michael Burton referred.

Since I was involved very much in the decision to have the meeting, I want to describe why we did it, because it was controversial. We did not wish to refuse the Russian proposal of a meeting and thus possibly make the Russians even more jittery and anxious. We also wanted to take the opportunity to press the Russians on improvements to air access to Berlin, the famous Berlin Initiative to which Michael Burton referred. And we wanted also to do something else. I saw the idea of such a meeting as a way of reminding West German politicians of the Allied Rights and Responsibilities in relation to the German Question. There was concern that the Federal Republic was moving very rapidly and consulting insufficiently; there was no mechanism for consultation. At the same time we did not wish to give the false impression – I am quoting now from myself at the time –"give the false impression that we would wish or expect the Four Powers to take the lead in deciding what should happen now in Germany." We therefore said we would hold the meeting, but would only talk there about Berlin's aviation. And that was what we did at the meeting. On 24 January 1990, I wrote, "A Kohl government remains the most likely result of the federal elections next December. Any impression, however, that the Allies were seeking to hinder unity would help the Republikaner. And if the Republikaner got more than 5% in the federal election, the present coalition would not have a majority." So there's a warning that the Allies should be very careful about their public position.

The next day I had a two-hour talk, privately, with Helmut Kohl. And he told me among many other things – one of his long reminiscing moments – that he thought unification would come and the date could, for instance, be 1 January 1995. Now that's an interesting point on that date because what it shows is that unity, yes, is now more or less expected, a

general expectation. But when and exactly how it would be done is still only beginning to be debated. Kohl's remark about a date of January '95 was actually revolutionary at the time, extremely and surprisingly fast compared with what other people were saying. And of course, it wasn't long before such ideas were swept aside by the current of events. And then I wrote – this is my last quote – on 5 February 1990, "It is dawning on public opinion that the costs of bailing out the GDR economically will be enormous." And that, of course, was a point that Oscar Lafontaine, as the SPD chancellor candidate, was to exploit, heavily but unsuccessfully, later in the political debate.

Well, back to Berlin: Berlin was a feature of all this debate that was going on in West Germany. Some subjects touched the future of Berlin particularly. And one of those was whether the united Germany would be partly or entirely or not at all in NATO. There was active discussion of this even as early as January 1990. Genscher then was saying – I'm quoting from a report – that "the old *Länder* should stay in NATO and the new ones should not join NATO." And by early February, very shortly afterwards, there were really two options being discussed in the public debate, and in the private political debate in Bonn. One option was unification in neutrality and the other was Genscher's idea about the West staying in NATO. And I think one of the most astonishing things about the whole story is that Gorbachev was brought to accept not only that the GDR – the lynchpin of the Warsaw Pact – would leave the Warsaw Pact and thus destroy the Soviet security system in Central Europe, but actually that the GDR would move across through unification into the Western Alliance, which the Russians, of course, had always demonised. And I think there were three factors that explained that extraordinary change. One – a rather minor factor – is a piece of clear thinking by the Russians: they thought that if West Germany, becoming all Germany – that was the process that was at hand, reunification on Western lines – was within NATO, that would be a more comfortable situation, with the Americans also dominating NATO, than if Germany was on its own. That's perhaps a more logical, more theoretical point, but it was somewhere within the Soviet mind.

There were two other reasons that were immensely important, more important. The first was Soviet weakness; they were not in a strong position to argue for anything. And the second reason was American insistence: they really went, Baker went, absolutely flat-out for this outcome, this very demanding, very ambitious outcome. And he railroaded the Russians, who felt weak, into accepting what we, the West, wanted. The termination of Allied Rights and Responsibilities was, I think, an acknowledged certainty among the Western Allies once unification itself was an acknowledged certainty, that is, from late January perhaps or very early February 1990. The Soviet Union, of course, was brought later to acquiesce in the termination of Allied Rights and Responsibilities. And it was a major purpose of ours to have it like that. The idea that the Russians would retain some sort of continuing right of oversight over Germany was intolerable. And it was tried. I mean, Shevardnadze, at the first meeting of Two Plus Four, did actually propose the decoupling of internal unification from the external aspects, to which the Americans absolutely said no. And the Russians were brought to accept that. And I don't think that the existence or the end of Quadripartite Rights and Responsibilities was ever a very controversial part of the story, either privately in the negotiations or publicly in the Federal Republic.

I'd like to mention one British contribution to that which Frank Berman may remember: there was a difficult legal point. Supposing there was a decision in the final document of all this process, the legal text, to abolish Quadripartite Rights and Responsibilities, but this would be subject to ratification; and supposing there was a putsch in Moscow between signature and ratification, then the Soviet rights with regard to Germany would still be in existence and refusing to ratify could have given them something exploit. It would have been an arguable situation but they might have wanted to try it. And it was a British lawyer in my embassy who suggested suspending Quadripartite Rights and Responsibilities on

signature, which was what was done and that nasty risk of a putsch getting in the way was overcome.

I'm going to turn now to British reactions before coming back again to bring it all together. The very first feeling in Britain was jubilation. There is no other word to describe the reaction in Britain to the scenes on television of the opening of the Wall. There was satisfaction in politically informed circles of life in Britain that change in Central and Eastern Europe was now spreading to the GDR and new possibilities were opening up. And don't forget that Douglas Hurd was the first Western leader to visit Berlin only a few days after the Wall opened. But in late 1989 and early 1990, the British were concerned about various things. One was repercussions in Moscow. Mrs. Thatcher's concern for Gorbachev, her relationship with him being a key in the whole moment of change, might have been lost if there'd been a putsch in Moscow because things went too fast in Germany, or using the German change as the excuse or the occasion to oust Gorbachev. Also there were fears in London about the speed of change in the GDR and in Germany getting in the way of the positive change that was happening in Central and Eastern Europe, placing a question mark over something that was going extremely well. There was also a feeling that the growing expectation of German unity was not accompanied by any decision, or any view even, on what should be the actual act of self-determination whereby it would be shown – not just seem so, but known so – that the East Germans wanted unity. So the British argued at that time – late '89, early '90, like many other countries and many people in Bonn – for measured change, for full consultation; there was, as I said, no machinery for consultation at that point or for a transition period. And we said that pending self-determination, reunification, was not on the agenda. That was the public stance in London.

Meanwhile, behind the scenes, UK officials were actively discussing what might be going to happen, considering what might be the nature of a united Germany. I was saying it's going to be West Germany writ large, it's going to be decentralised because the idea of the federation in West Germany as somehow being compromised by this is way off possibility. And we were thinking about our policy towards united Germany. How would the end of Quadripartite Rights and Responsibilities affect this, and how might the possible, or probable, reduction of British forces in Germany affect the bilateral relationship? We were thinking about Germany's eastern frontier. We were thinking very much about NATO and the European Community and the role of East Germany there. So there was a lot of policy consideration growing in the correspondence between the diplomatic posts involved and within the Foreign Office.

On Margaret Thatcher, Charles Powell gave a very clever description and explanation of her views yesterday. I want to say, before I appear to be critical, that for me Margaret Thatcher is the greatest Briton since Winston Churchill. What she did for our economy was absolutely essential and is still bearing tremendous results. I don't believe the current financial crisis will compromise seriously her legacy in economic policy. On Germany, she had logic on her side, hypothetical logic, when she argued that Germany divided could not ever be a problem for Europe again. And Germany united, well, you couldn't tell; theoretically, mechanistically, that might possibly be a problem one day. I think and I said that this view ignored vast contemporary realities. The Federal Republic could not be compared with Weimar. Far from being bitter or vengeful after 1945, Germany had become a mature democracy, stable and efficient, extraordinarily successful economically and, in my view, the most successful state in German history and the most successful state in post-war Europe and, of course, integrated into the European Community and NATO. Moreover, despite all this success, the Federal Republic was acutely conscious of the crimes of the Nazi period, and therefore was cautious, I sometimes thought too cautious, in foreign policy, and was always alert to the concerns of others where memories of the War might be evoked. And there was, of course, a very, very important point about our public position, which was that

we had long been committed to unification in democracy and that was what was now coming into sight.

Terribly important too was the much wider strategic picture, not just Germany, but East-West relations. Reunification would remove the lynchpin of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet glacis facing the West. It would end the Soviet threat, the greatest threat to Western and British security for the past forty years.

There was concern in London about the speed of movement in late 1989 and early 1990 and the absence of consultation machinery. With the establishment of Two Plus Four in February, that was greatly eased. The British government then focused on Two Plus Four and made, I think, a helpful contribution to those negotiations. But they were going on behind closed doors. The public and the media did not see Britain's role.

The public impression of Britain's policy was different, and this was largely determined by Mrs. Thatcher's occasional public statements. She revealed her concern in *Der Spiegel* and in the *Wall Street Journal* and with Reuters in remarks which gave a very clear public impression that Britain was against unification. So we were being helpful in private negotiations but we looked extremely unhelpful in public statements. And that's a very inefficient piece of diplomacy. You do a lot very helpfully and you really begin to deserve something and you get the opposite. So it was a mixed episode, to say the best of it, for British foreign policy. But it was also – and we shared in the benefits of this – a dramatic success for the West, including the UK. I mean the whole picture, including unification, the transformation of Europe, was a fantastic breakthrough, a marvellous historic change. And Margaret Thatcher's firmness, as a pillar of the NATO alliance, and her inspired – it really was inspired – cultivation of Gorbachev made a big contribution to the wider success. You may truly say that the Iron Lady contributed to the melting of the Iron Curtain. Thank you.

Helmut Trotnow

Thank you very much, Sir Christopher, and one of the reasons why we are having this seminar is exactly to shed some more light on what exactly went on behind the scenes. And it will be the historians of the future who will be dealing, of course, with the documents and the archival material and the material that was used in the talks. And, of course, they weren't secret or anything, but yes, the media plays its role and diplomacy plays its role too. And sometimes, and especially in our time, the media does play a very important role; however, published opinion is not always the public opinion. One has to bear that in mind too. On the other hand, those discussions that were going on, or negotiations, were not always public knowledge, let alone public understanding. Before we get to our discussions, I just want to point out to all of you that those documents in connection with the British Foreign Policy and German unification will be out next week. And Patrick was kind enough to put some reminders on the table so I would refer all of you who want to get a copy to that. Looking at my watch, I would say that we take another twenty minutes before we break so that we keep a little bit in time. And I open the floor.

David Barclay

My name is David Barclay. I'm a member of the Advisory Council and the director of the German Studies Association in the United States, and I'm working on a book on the general history of West Berlin. And in that connection I had a specific question for Sir Michael and a more general question for Sir Michael and Sir Christopher, relating to the Allied liaison with the Senat and with the Bürgermeister. One of the more interesting topics that I've been working on lately concerns the 750th anniversary celebrations in 1987 and your role in that,

in dealing with Diepgen and his obvious desire to go to East Berlin and participate in celebrations there. One of the more interesting sources that I've looked through is the SED materials on that. And it's very obvious when one reads the SED materials that they were quite aware that the Allies weren't exactly pleased with Mr. Diepgen and that they were trying clearly to derive political advantage from this. This is very, very obvious in the archives. I was wondering if you could perhaps shed some light on that in your own experience and comment on that as a chapter in Allied West Berlin relations. I was struck by this in relationship, Sir Michael, to your comments about growing West Berlin restlessness as I think you clearly laid out.

Sir Michael Burton

Well the 750th anniversary of Berlin was in 1987, and Diepgen wanted to make a big thing of it, as the Governing Mayor of West Berlin at the time. And the GDR wanted to make a big thing of it as well. In fact there was a story in the GDR, a joke, that so much money is spent in tarting up East Berlin that they were thinking of selling it to the West. And as far as the West was concerned, all three Allied heads of state made important visits to Berlin: the Queen, I mentioned; Reagan gave the big speech at the Berlin Wall; Mitterrand came and gave a very interesting discourse on Apollinaire as far as I remember. There was, incidentally, a lovely story about the Reagan speech at the Brandenburg Gate. The Gate wasn't in the British zone, but in front of it was the British zone and the Americans had constructed a platform on which the party would sit and there was a glass panel behind it, behind the speakers, from which you could see through to East Berlin, through the Brandenburg Gate and Unter den Linden, you see it all. And they lined it up for the world's television cameras to get the shot and realised that on the Wall someone had written, "Reagan go home." So they came to us the night before and said, "Do you mind if we do something about that?" And we said, "Be our guest; it's not our wall." So they painted it all over and they put a big smiley face "Welcome Reagan." And you know, all the world's press that covered that event, not one person thought, "There's something fishy about that."

But getting to your question, yes, we were rather concerned that Diepgen was playing fast and loose with status over the whole business and thought it was something where he and the mayor of East Berlin could appear together and generally be kind of co-hosts to the event. Of course the Western view, the status view, was that there was only one Governing Mayor of Berlin, and that was the Governing Mayor of West Berlin. And the mayor, Krack, I think his name was, had no status. But Diepgen was quite difficult to discourage on that and he had to be reigned in once or twice, and once or twice he got away. Christopher, do you want to add anything?

Sir Christopher Mallaby

I would add only that that kind of incident where the Allies were upholding something which they felt was necessary to status, even if politically inconvenient in Berlin, had happened with one or two earlier Governing Mayors and it was a small thread running through the Berlin story, not a big one.

Helmut Trotnow

I just want to make a little comment. In the museum, we have a windshield that we found at a bus station near the museum, and it's also decorated with graffiti that reads: "We want our American friends back." That's not fishy; it's a genuine artefact.

Jackson Janes

I'm Jack Janes from Washington. I want to know if you could perhaps clarify something that is currently the argument out of Moscow, from Putin directly: that no troops were to be moved beyond the Elbe. That that promise has not been maintained and that the whole basis of Putin's speech three or four years ago in Munich was based on the principle that that was the beginning of broken promises. Can you tell us what was said to the Russians about the fact that, yes, Germany would be in NATO, in contrast to Genscher's rather dubious suggestion? What was promised and what was not promised? Because Baker has said publicly that there was nothing of that sort made. Can you add your wisdom to this?

Sir Christopher Mallaby

Baker is my source. Certainly there wasn't anything in my experience, in my direct living of all this, or in all the papers I was reading and writing everyday, but the Russians have made quite a bit of it as you say. I am definitely inclined to believe Baker and maybe there was some sort of conversation that was not very precise, and certainly not very professional, in which something was said which was interpreted optimistically from the Russian point of view; I don't know. But I know of nothing specific that the West said about that.

David Marsh

Is it alright if I could just clue in on a particular question about the informational flows between Germany and London and follow on a little bit in continuity of what was said yesterday by Charles Powell? His view, which is very understandable, is that Mrs. Thatcher was driven by certain intellectually held views about Germany and history somehow got ahead of the game. And partly this was a question of information. And we've heard now on several occasions that the British Embassy or British Embassy staff did not give the full picture in telegrams through to London. (Disruption) Umm, well, we were told about the friends of the Deutschland / Vaterland slogans, or the way that there was a subtle shift between '*Wir sind das Volk*' and '*Wir sind ein Volk*' in November. And you remember, because I actually picked this up when I was in Bonn, reporting at the time, I seemed to think there was a little frisson between the two of us when I wrote a story for the *Financial Times* saying, I quote – although I don't have the article in hand with me; I haven't thought about it in the last twenty years, but I seem to remember saying – Christopher Mallaby is telling Mrs. Thatcher only what she wants to hear. And I did pick that up from an informant who is not in this room, I have to say. So what we heard from Colin was not new. I think we can see why Mrs. Thatcher did have her mind set now, and I think a lot of the concerns she had were wholly legitimate, and were shared, as has been said on many occasions, by people in the West German government as well. That's destabilising Gorbachev, almost certainly helped by Mitterrand. But the question is, if history is moving, is it part of the British Mission's mission in Germany to withhold information from the Prime Minister? We all know when this is necessary. In normal life one doesn't withhold from one's wife exactly how late one was out last night. Or one holds back from one's elderly mother various tales of the weather being cold outside. Is it really part of the British diplomatic tradition, typical of rights and service, to hold back such information? Because surely, in this period of time, it would have been useful and necessary, in the customary lucid style of the Foreign Office, to tell Mrs. Thatcher what was going on. And do you feel yourself, Christopher, that you could have done better?

Sir Christopher Mallaby

I won't answer the last question because it's difficult for me. But I will answer all the rest. First of all we did not hold back. And I quoted one report on 5th February where I said that, although Kohl was saying unification was not on the agenda, nobody else in Bonn believed that. That was a telegram so it would have gone to the Prime Minister. That's a particular one that I quoted. The second thing you asked was whether it is part of the role of British missions abroad to report all the facts. The answer is yes, of course it is. You must send everything. You have latitude about to whom you address it. You might send something that was politically difficult or extremely secret through a letter, rather than a telegram; you know they get 500 copies distributed across Whitehall before dawn tomorrow. And you don't want that to be absolutely everywhere immediately. So the means by which you do it may vary, but the need to do it is, I would say, absolute. But my real answer to your question is that these documents are going to be published next week and you'll see it all there.

David Marsh

But if I could have just one point: We're not talking about anything secret, we're talking about things that were in public domain. We all know that the CDU is helping to finance some of these placards, some of these slogans; it was certainly an orchestrated campaign. So no two ways about that: Kohl was certainly dissimulating. But it was absolutely clear to anybody that unification was very much in the air. It was on television, people like myself were writing about it, we had no special knowledge, we had no special antennae. As I suggested, it wasn't rocket science to know this was going on. So I think it's a little bit different from when the ambassador has some secret information, gleaned from a secret source. This is actually in the public domain.

Sir Christopher Mallaby

It may also be extremely sensitive. I was writing, as you were, all the time, and you can read it next week.

Baroness Neville-Jones

I did a great deal of this reporting and clearly it was as much my job on the important facts as anybody else's. I did that job to the best of my ability, without fear or favour. I did not conceal anything from London. My job was to report to London what was going on. And I know that my telegrams were widely circulated and that the Americans relied upon them greatly. I just think you're wrong.

Sir Frank Berman

Telegrams are not historical artefacts; they're a form of communication. And as a form of communication, you're writing words that make quite sure that the intended reader will absorb the message. The message of a telegram is often a piece of political advice. So I cannot for the life of me see what's wrong with somebody in the Foreign Office saying, "Be careful the way you write the telegrams; we don't want the Prime Minister to have a great rush of purist red cloud of blood in her brain that will stop her reading the key paragraph in the telegram, which is not the telegram's part about a big reporting flurry." You have a strange view of a telegram as not being something addressed to a reader. I never encountered in any of the readings that I had – and I wasn't directly involved in this – a

telegram which had even the slightest hint of people pulling their punches or censuring their opinions.

Colin Munro

Let me recall our discussion yesterday. There was a time, after the fall of the Wall, when we toned down our reporting of *'Wir sind ein Volk'* and *'Deutschland einig Vaterland'*, slogans that began to appear on the banners at demonstrations in the third week of November. Charles told us yesterday that when the Prime Minister saw reports of these slogans, she thought, oh my God, *'ein Volk, ein Führer, ein Reich'*.[13] So there was very good reason, as Frank just said, for us to tone things down. But, of course, it wasn't actually the right thing to do because it was all over the newspapers anyway. And eventually we sort of lifted our ban. We got an instruction from London: would we please comment on all these banners that were being reported in the newspapers? And at that point we resumed what I might call normal service.

Hermann Freiherr von Richthofen

Since Douglas Hurd unfortunately cannot be with us today, I would like to recall the moment when the Wall came down. He was invited by my Italian colleague, Ambassador Boris Biancheri, for dinner; Douglas was invited as the Home Secretary but in the meantime he had become Foreign Secretary. When we arrived, Boris smilingly told both of us, "The Wall has come down." Why did he know? Because the Italian correspondent Ricardo Ehrman in East Berlin had reported this to his agency in Rome, and Boris got the exciting information from Rome. And then Douglas and I talked about an early visit to Berlin, which he made five or six days later, and when he went to Potsdamer Platz towards the Wall, we were surrounded by press. We could not see much ahead of us. People from East Berlin were streaming towards us. Hands were stretched out. We shook them. Suddenly Douglas Hurd held the hands of an East German border guard. Oh, my goodness, we both thought. This is a sacrilege, affecting the status of Berlin. But it no longer played a role since these subtleties had been overtaken by developments.

And I would like to add to what I said last night: Douglas was an old 'Königswinterer'. He was very well informed about Germany. As Home Secretary he had attended and addressed two high-ranking Conferences about Germany in 1989 before he became Foreign Secretary, one organised by the Goethe Institute in London to mark the 40th anniversary of the Federal Republic of Germany, and a second one in Düsseldorf to celebrate 40 years of Anglo-German association. In his contribution to a book, edited by the CDU, about the frequent meetings of young conservative politicians from the CDU and Conservative Parties, he describes what he did to avoid a German-British confrontation in the process of unification. As part of this process, he built a bridge talking to Kohl and Genscher as well as Margaret Thatcher. It was this process which finally brought everything to a good end. In fact he was a very constructive bridge builder. Thank you.

Helmut Trotnow

I think, ending on this happy note, that we now deserve a cup of tea or a cup of coffee. And I would suggest that we meet five minutes past noon in here.

[13] "One people, one leader, one empire"; a slogan popular in the Third Reich, 1933-1945.

SECOND PANEL

FLASHPOINT BERLIN: HOW COLD WAS THE COLD WAR?

Rainer Hudemann

I shall be moderating this panel on behalf of Prof. Dr. David Stafford. We are both members of the Advisory Board of the Allied Museum and professors of history, he in Edinburgh and I at the University of the Saarland in Germany. I have some relations to Britain; we heard from my uncle Fritz Caspari yesterday. He asked me to tell all of you that he wanted very much to participate in the discussions, but he sends his greetings via the photo in the leaflet you received yesterday. This was taken some months ago on his ninety-fifth birthday. He didn't have the strength to stay through the conference and went home to Greenwich this morning.

We sincerely regret that Sir Nigel Broomfield and Sir George Walden are unable to participate in our panel. I won't be long now with the introductions in order to have time for our two guests, Baroness Neville-Jones and Sir Michael Palliser.

Sir Michael began his career in the Foreign Office in 1947. He served in Athens and a long time in London, being Private Secretary to the Prime Minister and a Secretary from '54 to '56. He was posted to Paris in '56 and to Dakar in '60. From '63 on he was Counsellor of the Imperial Defence College, and from '64 he was head of the Policy Planning staff before he became – as Lord Powell mentioned yesterday – Private Secretary to the Prime Minister from '66 to '69. After serving as Minister at the Paris Embassy in 1969, he headed the UK Delegation to the European Community in Brussels, first has head of the delegation after '71 and from '73 as Ambassador. And from '75 to '82 he was the Permanent Under Secretary and Head of the Diplomatic Service in the Foreign Office.

Sir Michael Palliser

To begin, I'd like to add my word of thanks to those of others to Dr. Trotnow and the Allied Museum for giving us this really splendid opportunity to amble down memory lane, which is something that I always enjoy doing. On the other hand, of course, as he said, we're a lot of veterans here, but I'm bound to say I feel like the veteran of veterans because in the absolutely fascinating discussion that we listened to earlier this morning, I found myself thinking: Well, of course, all this was taking place long after I've retired from the Diplomatic Service. And by then I'd become a rather successful investment banker, which is probably best not talked about at the moment. But it has been very interesting, both yesterday, with I thought a very illuminating talk by Charles Powell, and then, as I say, a really fascinating whatever-it-was, trio or four-power meeting this morning. And, as far as I am concerned, it was a particular pleasure to me to be asked to take part in the seminar because Berlin – which I've always seen as one of the world's great capital cities – Berlin's always had a special fascination for me. And I think that began with my first visit there at the age of six. Like many children at that time with fathers in the Royal Navy, I spent much of my childhood with my maternal grandparents. Both my father's parents were already dead. And also at home with them was my bachelor uncle, who was an officer in the British Army, who had been too young to be in World War I, but was in World War II. And he and my grandmother took me with them on several motoring trips to the continent. The first, in 1928, was in a bull-nosed Morris Oxford, which I suspect most people here don't even remember, to Northern Europe. And we went to East Prussia to Danzig, as it then was, to Warsaw, Vienna and Berlin. And I've always been amazed at their kindness in putting up with a six-year-old throughout the three-week tour. I think it was really remarkable. And

how lucky I was. Well, of course, my memories of that trip are, in a sense, sort of childish snapshots. But in Berlin in 1928, I remember all too well being whisked away from street riots against the Weimar Republic. And in subsequent visits, the first of which was about ten years later, in 1936, the air of the Olympics in Berlin. And there actually my principle memory, rather childish – I was a young teenager by then – but childish recollections, not so much of Berlin, which had indeed greatly changed from 1928, but of Frankfurt, where my uncle and my grandmother took me to dinner on an island on the Main. I think there is still a restaurant there. There was a huge restaurant. And while we were dining, an aeroplane flew overhead and the word got around that the Führer was in the aeroplane. And the entire restaurant– I don't know how many hundred people there were there, I would say about 200 people – the whole of that group of people dining rose to their feet and rose their arms in the Nazi salute. And I am bound to say that made quite an impression on me, whatever I was then, 12 years old. And then subsequently, I've been to Berlin roughly – not exactly – at ten year intervals: 1946 – I'll come to that in a moment – 1954, 1964, 1979, 1990 – after the fall of the Wall – in 1993, and again in 1999. But don't worry: this isn't about to become a travelogue with a sort of kaleidoscope of impressions, though the impressions were indeed very kaleidoscopic.

For the purpose of this seminar, I'd like to describe my visits to Berlin in 1946 and 1954 because of their relevance to our subject, the Cold War. I don't propose to talk at all about the period when I was Permanent Under Secretary partly because I think that's for another panel, and partly also because, in a sense, as Permanent Under Secretary you cover the world, which is not to say that you don't take great interest in individual parts of the world, but my impressions of the Berlin situation from that period, if you like, are less precise, but also perhaps because it was less impinging on our international conscience during that period. Well, first of all, 1946: serving in the first tank battalion of the Coldstream Guards, I took part in the 1944-45 campaign in Normandy, Belgium, the Netherlands and on into Germany across the Rhine, and finished the War in May 1945 somewhere between Hamburg and Neumünster in Schleswig-Holstein. And I remained in the army and in Germany until the end of 1946, when we returned to this country. I was demobilised, passed the Foreign Office exam, and joined the Foreign Office, as has been said, in the late summer of 1947. Well, there have been so many descriptions of the appalling desolation and destruction in Germany in 1945 that there is no need for me to repeat them to you today. All I would say is that in those 18 months spent in various parts of Germany enlisted in the army, including Berlin, which I'll come to in a few minutes, that period was decisive in making me a convinced and lifelong European. Never again has the determination that so many others had then been so strong, and of which inevitably the memory is fading – it's bound to do so, and I'm not suggesting one needs to keep it alive in its intensity, but I think it is still worth remembering. But one of the Russians in the Cold War—the Cold War, incidentally, an expression which, of course, hadn't by then really been invented, though it came across in the famous Fulton Speech – I think it's often forgotten now how much respect and admiration there was then in Britain for the real heroism of the Soviet resistance to the German invasion and for the way in which the country was reacting to the damage and destruction inflicted by the invasion. And whatever misgivings Allied political leaders and senior military commanders might have had about Stalin's motives – and as we now know from the documents, there were many misgivings indeed – whatever those may have been, to British men and women in the street, encouraged by sometimes almost hysterically favourable comment on the Soviet advance in the British press and media generally, the Russians were our gallant allies in the struggle against a savage foe. And this understandable if unsophisticated view was also very widely held in the British Army in Germany.

And if I may, just to illustrate my point, as I said earlier, my battalion finished the war near Neumünster, and frankly we were looking forward to moving our Churchill tanks northwards, to liberate Denmark, which was a most engaging prospect, since that country at the time seemed – and indeed compared with Germany was – a land, relatively speaking, of milk and honey. To our fury, early one morning an armoured brigade from 21st Army Group drove at high speed through our lines and northwards into the promised land, liberating Denmark some hours later. Our indignant inquiries revealed that because our tanks were heavy and slow, which they certainly were, it was necessary for faster-moving vehicles to get into Denmark quickly to prevent the Soviet Army, advancing from the East, from getting there first. Why on Earth, we asked, did it matter if the Russians got there first? And that's just to illustrate the sort of, if you like, slightly prejudiced state of mind of a lot of the British troops in Germany in 1945.

I think it's also worth saying that there was some discussion at that time and subsequently of why did we and the Germans not get together to hold back the Russians. And I remember saying this to a very nice young German who I met around that time, who raised the question; I said well, you know, my soldiers were supposed to be the best disciplined in the British Army – and I think they probably were – but if I told them in June 1945 that we were going to ally ourselves to Germany up against Russia, I would have had a mutiny on my hands. And I think, as I say, these are memories which maybe now it's best to forget, but which those of us who've got them don't forget. Over the next twelve months, in what was now the army of occupation, we discarded our tanks and reverted to the traditional infantry row of guards regiments. And the 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards in which, aged 24, I now commanded a company, moved from northern Germany to western Germany, including several months in Bad Godesberg, which was less affected by the war than some other parts of Germany, and where, of course, I was frequently, in the future, a visitor from the Foreign Office.

Well, then in June 1946 we moved to Berlin for a four-month period, of which I still have vivid memories. Much had changed in the year after May 1945, especially in our view of the Russians, both in the light of their truly brutal behaviour as invaders and occupiers in Germany and, more widely, their increasing assertiveness in international affairs and the generally intransigent behaviour of the Soviet government. In the army, of course, our information was fairly limited, but it was certainly affected by the changing attitude and reporting of the British media. But even so, when we arrived in Berlin we still had fairly open minds about the Soviet troops in the capital and the relations we were likely to have with them. Berlin too had been tidied up, to some extent, since the chaotic desolation of May 1945. The Tiergarten was still a lunar landscape. One of my most abiding impressions is the difference between then and the beautifully wooded Tiergarten of today. The Kurfürstendamm was a street of single storey shops and offices with nothing left above ground level. The Soviet Sector, in which we could actually at that time roam fairly freely in uniform and in an army Jeep, was still heavily damaged. But our reception by the Soviet troops stationed there, while rather guarded and cautious, was not unfriendly. And in the really abnormal life of that great city there were strange little heresies of apparent normality. To give you just one, slightly frivolous example, the British Military Command ran a daily train from West Berlin, through the Soviet zone, to West Germany and on to the Hook of Holland to take British and Allied troops for leave or duty visits to the United Kingdom. Two of us were due for a short leave and planned to take the train. When we discovered – and I can't remember how on Earth we did discover, but we did discover – that it had two wagon-lit sleeping cars attached to it and that sleepers could be purchased for Reichmarks from a wagon-lit office on Unter den Linden just inside the Soviet Sector. Reconnaissance in a Jeep past a rather scruffy Soviet guard post at the Brandenburg Gate resulted in the discovery, a few hundred yards on, in a fairly damaged old building, of a small office, with a

Berliner clad in a shabby brown wagon-lit uniform, who sold us, with enthusiasm – I think he had very few customers – and for a meaningless amount of Reichmarks, two sleeping berths on the next day's train, resulting in a relatively luxurious journey. Our less well-informed brother officers sat up all night in uncomfortable old carriages. Of course that's a silly story but it illustrates the paradox that was Berlin at that time. Suspicious but relatively easy relationships at junior military level with the Soviet Army and a real desire for a return to normality or relative normality by an impoverished and unhappy population.

For the occupying British soldier, life was of course quite comfortable. We had a rather splendid Officers Club and I am pleased to see that it still flourishes. Because in a rather timely piece which you may have seen in the Financial Times the other day, called 'Coming of Age', about Berlin, and the nifty correspondent in Berlin makes certain recommendations for where to stay and where to eat and so on, and I'm glad to see that one of them is tucked away in the leafy western district that is home to many a diplomat; the Schlosshotel Grünewald is a luxurious alternative with a genteel country home feel to it. Well that genteel country home was our Officers Club and ten years later, or nearly ten years later, when I went back for the 1954 conference – which I'll also come to in a moment – it was where the British delegation stayed. So I am glad to know that it's survived in such a satisfactory way. And, as I say, we had quite a comfortable life, but the contrast all the same between our life in Bad Godesberg before, and life in Berlin was, even for us, very striking, I think really because of the difference in the nature of the surroundings we were in and the difficulties that the population had compared with the relatively easy life that was emerging in a place like Bad Godesberg. In particular of course, although the Cold War only really materialised with the Soviet blockade of Berlin two years later, exposure to the oppressive Soviet presence made it frankly unsurprising when it came to those of us who'd been there two years earlier.

Now when I joined the Foreign Office in the early autumn of 1947 I was appointed to the Siam, now Thailand, desk in the South-East Asia Department. I have no idea why that was, but I suppose there was a vacancy there in which they wanted to put a newly arrived young man. And I spent two interesting years there before going as Third Secretary to the embassy in Athens for a further two years. This meant that I had no personal involvement in a particularly difficult period of relations over Germany and more widely with the Soviet Union, whose threatening behaviour in practice made somewhat easier the task of consolidating the Western response, through first the Brussels Treaty in March 1948 – and I've got an anecdote on that, but which I won't weary you with now – but why I particularly remember Brussels, and then in April 1949 the North Atlantic Treaty, and in particular of course, the Soviet Blockade of West Berlin, powerfully reinforced the determination of the Western Allies to resist this aggressive Soviet behaviour. And the defeat of the Blockade – which has been talked about already – was so decisive that the Soviets had to concede victory to the West, which as you'll remember they did, in effect, at the month-long Paris Conference of the four foreign ministers in May 1949. And that conference was inconclusive in every other way. And from then on the Cold War became ever more apparent as the Soviets tightened their hold on Eastern Europe and East Berlin. In the West the Allies proceeded with the progressive establishment of the Federal Republic, while the Soviets countered with the creation of the GDR.

For me, dealing with Siam or based in Greece, Berlin often seemed a bit remote, but the Cold War did not. The Greek Civil War only ended in 1949 and it left a bitter legacy in Greece's continuing difficulties with its communist neighbours: Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and the already very maverick but nonetheless threatening Albania. Then of course the outbreak of the Korean War added to the more general apprehensions about a possible Soviet threat to Western Europe at a time when all attention was concentrated on Asia. So it wasn't in a state of total ignorance about our problems in Europe that I returned to the Foreign Office in 1952

and to active involvement in German political affairs in what was then called the Central Department, where we had a very lively agenda. And from the end of 1952 until January 1954, most of our work on Germany was devoted to preparing for a further attempt to agree with the Soviets on a peaceful reunification of the country based on free and fair elections. This entailed frequent discussions with our allies, with the Americans mainly in London and the French in London and Paris. And we were led in all this by someone who's already been mentioned this morning, Sir Frank Roberts, our diminutive but brilliantly intelligent and energetic Under Secretary, who of course was later Ambassador to both NATO and the Federal Republic. Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden had discussed this with us; my job was to draft a comprehensive proposal to be put to the Russians at the Four Power meeting of foreign ministers that they had agreed should be held to discuss the future of Germany and other relevant matters. And it was somehow very appropriate that what proved to be the last Four Power meeting of foreign ministers devoted to Germany's future should be held in Berlin, which had so often been the focus of Cold War arguments during the past nearly ten years.

I was reminded of an episode that I can perhaps weary you with, but which was fairly – I won't say decisive – but had an influence on my feelings about Anthony Eden. It's the system of getting into Berlin by air, which has been mentioned already, and we flew out to the conference, quite a small team in an early, I think the first, Vicar Viscount, a turbo prop airliner which was much acclaimed, and which I'm bound to say was infinitely quieter and more comfortable than the horrors we'd flown about in before, which were mainly converted wartime aircraft. And we landed at Düsseldorf, I think in order that our flight plan could show us as coming from Germany, from West Germany, into Berlin. And it was purely one of those landings where, you know, you don't get out and all that. However, Anthony Eden, who was there in the plane with us, was told by someone else that the mayor of Düsseldorf and Counsel General were waiting to greet him at the bottom of the stairs – this was about 9 o'clock in the evening or 8 o'clock in evening; it was dark – and Eden brushed it aside. He said, "Oh no, I can't be bothered. I really don't want to bother to do that", and in despair they approached his principal private secretary, who was called Evelyn Shuckburgh, subsequently our Ambassador to Rome and a very engaging and significant member of the Diplomatic Service, and explained to Eden that this was really, you know, something had to be done. Evelyn of course knew Eden extremely well, so he went up to him and said, "Secretary of State, I don't know if you've noticed, but there are television cameras down there and quite a lot of press hanging around. I wonder…" "Oh," said Eden "Well, oh, I'd perhaps better go down and shake the man's hand." And so a diplomatic instant was appointed by the skill of a senior member of the Diplomatic Service. But that's, as I say, an anecdote which I perhaps shouldn't be telling. But it was a little bit illustrative of Anthony Eden, a man of enormous vanity, great ability, of real experience in foreign policy, and yet sadly and also partly though ill health, a failed statesman in the end.

Anyway, the conference itself, which I'd better come back to, was very long, or it seemed very long: from January 25 to February 19 in a very icy Berlin winter, which only reflected the chilly atmosphere of the meetings. I watched the proceedings from the second row of officials accompanying the minister. Each minister had large teams of advisers that sat behind them. And the meetings took place more or less every other day, alternately in the big building in the American sector that was referred to earlier today, or in the Soviet embassy on Unter den Linden, which I believe is still the Russian embassy today. Not surprisingly I have rather clearer recollections of the latter than of the former. The Russians allocated rooms in the basement as offices for each of the Western teams. And I'm glad to say that in ours it was very easy for our security people to dismantle the hidden microphones because they'd obviously been installed in great haste by Soviet engineers, whose dirty fingerprints on walls and ceiling guided them inexorably to the bugs. And then I've got two

wholly frivolous recollections of that conference apart from the more serious ones, and I'll end with the more serious ones.

When I was sent to fetch a paper by Frank Roberts while the conference was proceeding, I went out of the big conference room onto the first floor landing. And there, just in front of the rather marvellous marble staircase that leads up to it, I heard, to my surprise, every word of the conference discussion emerging, or so it seemed, from the mouth of an enormous, more-than-life-size statue of Stalin, which stood at the top of the staircase. And I've never known how or why that particular technological marvel was operated but it certainly made an impression. And my second equally frivolous recollection relates to the refreshments always provided, by each side, after the meetings. When the first meeting in the Soviet sector ended, junior members of the delegation, including yours truly, hastened from the conference room, happy at their release from the tedium of the meeting, to find a huge buffet with vast bowls of caviar. And I have to say that we all tucked in with such enthusiasm that when the ministers and their senior aides arrived, having had a certain amount of discussion amongst themselves before leaving the conference room, the table was completely bare. But that only happened once. At the next Soviet-hosted meeting there were a dozen burly and rather sour security guards who protected the buffet until the seniors arrived. Well, so much for the frivolity! And there was a good deal of it.

One of the interesting points made earlier – I won't remember if it was yesterday evening or today – concerns the cultural differences between the two sides of Berlin. And Fred Warner – who was the assistant in that department, who was part of our team – and I went two or three times to the opera in East Berlin, which was very easy to do, and I would add at that time very inexpensive, because we were told that it was greatly superior to the opera in West Berlin. I don't know whether that's true or not but it was certainly splendid opera. Now my serious recollections of course are of the failure of that conference to reach any agreement on Germany or indeed on Austria and the other agenda items. The Foreign Secretary launched the Eden Plan quite early in the proceedings and there was a lot of discussion of it. But as he had, quite frankly, expected, it rapidly got nowhere. I sometimes wondered if sitting and observing this, whether Molotov, the Soviet-born Foreign Minister with Gromyko enigmatically at his side, really knew what was meant by free elections. Not at all a Soviet concept. But whatever it meant, he was having none of it. And as the conference broke up, after nearly four weeks, with disagreement on everything except a decision to meet again in Geneva in April, but not to discuss Germany, to discuss Korea and Vietnam. And my feeling was that the Berlin Conference had firmly underlined the reality of the Cold War in Europe, and especially the reality of it in Berlin. Thank you.

Rainer Hudemann

Thank you very much indeed, Sir Michael, for your remarks about the reality of the Cold War in the post-war decade. This panel addresses the two main points of the problems associated with the Cold War: the first decade of its evolution and the time of German unification. The seminar programme lists the posts held by Sir Michael and Baroness Neville-Jones. Both had many important responsibilities. Baroness Neville-Jones started her career as a diplomat in Rhodesia, Singapore and Washington. She had never been, as she told me, to Bonn before the German unification. She served at the European Commission as Deputy Secretary and then Chef de Cabinet to the Budget Commissioner in Brussels at the European Union from '77 to '82. Later she was posted to Bonn, where she served as Minister from 1988 to 1991. From '91 to '94 she was Deputy Secretary to the Cabinet and Head of the Defence and Overseas Secretariat in the Cabinet Office, and in 1993-94 she was Chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee, before being Political Director in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office from 1994 on, for instance leading the British delegation at Dayton

for the Bosnia settlement. She has been a BBC Governor for almost ten years. David Cameron appointed her in January 2006 to head the Conservative Party's National and International Security Policy Group. And she has been a shadow Security Minister and National Security Advisor to the opposition since 2007. You will now take us back to the embassy in Bonn.

Baroness Neville-Jones

As our moderator just said, ladies and gentleman, my time in Bonn overlapped very much with that of Christopher Mallaby. I got there a little bit earlier than Christopher and stayed a bit longer. But basically, I worked under him and a very enjoyable experience it was. Christopher, in many ways I think, has covered a great deal of the territory that was my direct experience in that period; I am not therefore going to repeat that aspect. What I thought I'd do instead is something which is a little bit different but rather more in line with what Michael has just been talking about, and that is to try to put Berlin and Germany in the context of the development of the Cold War. In other words, the second bit of our title of this session was "How Cold was the Cold War?" Of course it varied in temperature, and I thought I might talk a little bit about that.

Obviously this is not in quite the same sense, no witness experience, but more I suppose observation from a period that is now nothing like the Cold War, looking back. I think it's rather fashionable these days, particularly among those who didn't actually experience the Cold War, i.e. people who tend to be younger than most of the people in this room, to take the view that the Cold War wasn't really very dangerous at all and wasn't particularly cold, and it did rather constitute some rather coolness, coldness, a certain amount of hostility but characterised by a great deal of "stability." Well, that's the way it may have ended up, indeed, particularly in the central front in Europe. We learnt to find a way of living with each other and not actually taking dangerous risks. But it's precisely because dangerous risks were not being taken that actually things did not happen which could otherwise. And we've had—it seems to me this morning—several illustrations of the calculations that lay behind people's actions, precisely in order to prevent incidents of the kind that could escalate out of control. And all that control mechanism, it seems to me, you need to understand and have experienced actually to be aware, therefore, of the extent to which, in the eyes of those who were actually operating in that period, it was capable of getting out of control. And I'm quite certain their judgement was right about that. So the thesis that somehow we have got a much more complicated, difficult and dangerous world now than was the Cold War, seems to me to be actually wrong-headed. It's certainly different now and it's very challenging, but I don't believe it myself to be any more "dangerous." I think it's certainly different and challenging but not more dangerous. And indeed, the first stage of the Cold War was indeed, I think, actually pretty hot, if you think about it.

My earliest memories and, I think, emotional tapestry is very important in people's experiences and my early memories, I suppose, of, as a child coming alive to the world round me, was indeed the early stages of television. And what did I see on the television was indeed the Berlin Airlift in newsreels and very, very early television. And it left a huge impact on a young mind. And there wasn't any doubt as to who the enemy was. And very, very quickly, it seems to me, after the end of the war and the immediate post-war experience of course, a dramatic transformation took place, from Germany being the enemy to Germany being an ally. It wasn't immediate, if one remembers, Germany didn't become a member of NATO in the founding document but very quickly did so thereafter. And Germany became a very important part of the fabric of the alliance.

But it seems to me that there were two absolutely seminal events in the post-war period that consolidated a relationship that could otherwise have been difficult. The first was NATO, which of course brought the United States permanently into the security of Europe, without which, it seems to me, the history of post-war Europe would have been utterly different from what it was and indeed I think it would have been not nearly so favourable an outcome, and I'll come back to that in a moment. And the second thing of course that happened was the EU, which has not been mentioned really today but is an important part in the background of the tapestry. In the cases of most of those who've lived through this generation, Michael said, you know never again – a very strong influence. And those who committed themselves to the European enterprise, not everyone in the UK, as we know; Mrs. Thatcher very much that generation in a sense, but actually in a sense one of the outliers, I think of her generation. Not so unrepresentative now. The fundamental difference I think being between, say, Germany and the UK in this respect, is that while with Germany the EU is woven into the very fabric of Germany's geopolitical positioning in the world and in her intra-European relationships, it's not true of my country. It's not true of the UK. It is part of our international relationships, part of our geopolitical positioning, but it's not, I think, central to it, in the way it is to Germany. But both of those events were very important, it seems to me, in enabling Europeans and Allies to live together, because a very important part, it seems to me, of the early post-war period was how former enemies could actually settle down and start living together with each other.

So that was one part of it, but then we of course we were faced by a hostile Russia. Now, there's nothing like having an enemy to cement your relationships. And that was certainly the case. But the threat to European solidarity and the relationship to the West was not just a military one. Clearly there was fear of further conflict. There was fear of the Soviet threat and the nuclear threat in particular. But there was also the ideological side of things. And I think we forget that in the very early stages of the Cold War the existence of Communist Parties in Western Europe was regarded as an extremely serious threat to democracy itself and to its future in Europe. And indeed if you think for a moment about Italy, it had a permanently distorting effect or enduringly distorting effect for something like 25 years. With the permanence in power, or the Christian Democrats, the refusal to let the Left in, finally their *Sinistra*[14] came. But it of course has greatly influenced, and not all to the good, Italian politics. One has legacies of that kind.

One of the themes that comes through is that some of the early moves that we all lived with have their enduring outcomes now. So it seems to me that there were two challenges that we faced: the military security one but also the ideological one. One of the reasons therefore why the EU and NATO were so important, in my view, was that if it hadn't been for those two institutions the ideological frailty of Europe and the threat to democracy in Europe would have been much more powerful than it turned out to be, given the existence of these two organisations, which provided rocks of stability for the Continent. I referred to the Berlin Airlift. Why was the Berlin Airlift important? Well, there were all sorts of reasons why it was important. But one of the reasons why it was very important wasn't just that it showed the kind of threat that the Soviet Union represented to Europe; the very act of the Airlift itself of course showed Western determination not to allow it to succeed and to send a very clear message that we would not give any ground. And this line held; it applied subsequently to Prague Spring, and to Hungary. The line was there; it was not to be crossed, but it was there and we didn't cross it in reverse either. And that of course was, I suppose you could say, part of the bedding down. I emphasise that I think Berlin was very important

[14] The Democratic Party of the Left (*Partito Democratico della Sinistra*), a democratic socialist party in Italy.

because it showed that actually we were not going to give up any of the settlements that had been arrived at in the immediate post-war period. And that was, I think, also subsequently, obviously an influence on Soviet policy because it did, to some extent, put a limit on their own ambitions, their own willingness to up the ante and to test the strength of Western resolve because it had been demonstrated.

I said earlier on that the temperature varied and of course it's as the Cold War moved on we went from, I suppose, Cold War to beginning to have what you might describe as Cold Peace. Certainly a cold absence of conflict. And the Helsinki Process was very important in that. Why was the Helsinki Process important? Well, it was obviously important; we talked earlier on about the baskets and indeed, the two sides attached different weight to the different baskets, which was fairly characteristic of, you know, what we were aiming at. But the one thing it showed – it seems to me – from the point of view of the West was that whereas, in the earlier period I talked about, Western Europe was on the ideological defensive, by the time it got to the Helsinki Process, Western Europe and the Western Alliance was on the ideological offensive. Confident enough to be able to turn the tables and to say, "Yes, we are going to fight you", or "We are going to press our way of life and our cultural norms and our cultural principles and our political principles." And I think that I personally would begin to date the beginning of the recession of the tide of Russian influence and Soviet power in Europe from that time, when I think the boot went from being on Russian feet really basically to being on the Western side. And key in all of that obviously was the position of Germany. The CSCE Process I think showed that by then the two sides had got their minds round the idea that actually the game was, while not ceding position, not to aggravate tension and not to raise the ante, as in say the Cuban crisis, but actually to find ways, in many respects, of easing them.

However, there was a counterpart to all of this, because while on the central front I think the mood moved much more from, say, tension to a more peaceful expression of what had been invented, the term peaceful coexistence. It was not true to say that that was actually happening throughout the battle between the two blocs. Because, in effect, what happened was that the conflict between the two moved to the periphery: it moved to the Nicaraguas of this world, it moved to liberation movements, it moved to Russian exploitation of anti-colonial movements and indeed the decolonisation process. Proxy wars. I think in many respects it was felt by both sides to be a safer way of competing, if you moved it out to the periphery. At the same time, it was still an expression of very considerable hostility. And throughout all of this, of course, one was aware that it could move back to the centre. This period, I think, probably coincides with the apogee of missile activity, while at the same time a serious grip was then being taken of missile negotiation, with the two sides gripping their potential capacity for conflict and paying serious attention not so much to reduction at the time but at least to limitation. So I think it's fair to say that it was during this period, the sort of Kissinger period, that the present popular idea of the Cold War representing organised, moderately hostile stability as the keynote character of the Cold War, I think it's this period that has given that impression. However it took a very great deal of time actually to get to it.

Having talked about what was going on in Germany, but in a sense underneath that overall framework of course, there was extremely active Inner-German politics going on. Willy Brandt's *Ostpolitik* of course was a major initiative by a Western German. And like a lot of those initiatives, it was greeted with sort of mixed emotion by the Allies, about whether he was giving away points of a kind which it would be highly undesirable for the Western democracies to see given away. What did this do to the balance of power? What did this do to what Western Germany represented as a member of the Western family? And there's been, I think it's fair to say, a duality in both Allied approaches and approaches to the whole question of the other half of Germany on the part of West Germany throughout the whole period. If you fast-forward the story, it seems to me that Genscher and Kohl in a sense

represented those two different tendencies in German politics. When it came to the Two Plus Four negotiations, Kohl was absolutely clear that German unification was going to take place within the framework of Germany's Western Alliance. And he didn't waver from that. And Christopher will remember because he was present at the meeting when Shevardnadze made the offer of a neutralised Germany. First of all there was the whole question of the two-stage process of internal and external, but also the other part of the deal would have been neutralisation of Germany. And Genscher was extremely tempted; in fact I personally think he would have gone for it if it had not been for the fact that Kohl was not going to let it happen. And I think out of *Ostpolitik*, in many ways, Genscher's philosophy represented certainly – it wasn't identical – but it represented certain continuation in that – if you remember, his thesis was *Überwindung* – we must overcome the legacy of the Cold War, overcome the legacy of a divided Europe. And I think built into the notion of *Überwindung* was indeed the idea that there would be concessions made by Western countries and by, indeed, Germany in the process of this overcoming. And there was very considerable suspicion, I think, in Western capitals of what it was that Genscher was up to. And he certainly used the CSCE Process in ways in which, I think, the other authors of the CSCE Process didn't really intend to see it used.

Now, none of this business of *Überwindung* came to anything of course because history took over and what we in fact saw was, in effect, the collapse of the Soviet Empire. But I personally think that if history had not taken over, that these two tendencies in German attitudes to how they dealt with their own question would have over time assumed very considerable importance for the rest of us and would have created very considerable tension. Because I think it was in a sense the internal German debate about how to solve the German question, and it was developing, it seems to me, into, in effect, a couple of camps inside Germany. Obviously that is speculation, but it seems to me that, fortunately for us, the Soviet Union, the Russians, actually found it impossible to maintain their position and so this internal German debate of course dissolved under the impact of actual events. Of course, I don't think that Gorbachev ever thought that communism was wrong or undesirable. I think he thought it wasn't working. But in the process of instituting reform of the communist system, which of course in the end got him ousted, he did nevertheless make some moves of the kind which I think for somebody who didn't think that communism was wrong were nevertheless very surprising. And I share the view that – I think it was Christopher who said this – I do share the view that some of the things that he said and did against the background of Russian policy up to that point did represent an extraordinary break with the power position that Russia up to that point had taken. And it was true of course, not only in Eastern Europe, but in the GDR itself.

I am sure Christopher was right to say that that was seen as the lynchpin of the Soviet security system in Europe, but it was he who said, was it not, when he was staring at the ceiling when Honecker was ranting on, that history would judge, and boy did it not. I think Shevardnadze in many respects was a more conventional Russian politician in terms of the policy he tried to pursue on the basis of a crumbling position than Gorbachev was himself. And he remains, I think to some extent, an extraordinarily important, enigmatic figure. And it's very clear, it seems to me, that Putin doesn't really like what he did and doesn't entirely accept the consequences either and that seems to me to be also one of the enduring legacies of the whole period of the division of Europe.

Two final thoughts: After the Two Plus Four negotiations, of course, history didn't stop. And indeed they were being run – if you remember – with Iraq and the intervention in Iraq running alongside and governments were being obliged to chew gum and walk at the same time. And I think one of the extraordinary tributes to Jim Baker was that he could actually run two policies, two policies of major importance, at the same time. And he was so extraordinarily clear-sighted about the opportunity that the collapse in the peripheral

countries of the Warsaw Pact represented for getting an outcome in Germany of the kind that was wholly favourable to the West. And I think, by contrast, European policies – and I'm now thinking particularly the UK and France – were much more confused. We have talked about the UK. I mean the UK was also, of course, preoccupied with Iraq. And if you looked at the traffic – the telegraphic traffic at the time – I would have said that there was a much bigger volume of traffic on Iraq than there was on Germany. And we'd been talking about Germany, but if you actually looked at the span across of what preoccupied the British Foreign Office and the British Government, I think I would put Iraq a lot higher. So I think that a) there was a sort of distraction element, and b) there were these divided councils and divided ambitions and I think also that the British and French didn't talk to each other. We, the British, certainly did talk to the Americans. And my view – I was asked about French policy – it seems to me that French policy, which is not the object of this seminar, was both low-key and rather low-risk. On the whole, they kept their heads down and let other people both take responsibility and flack. Mitterrand did something which was much more scandalous than anything Mrs. Thatcher ever said. She didn't do anything scandalous but she did…I mean but he actually went off, if you remember, and talked to the East Germans, gave them status, for God's sake, legitimacy, and he was the head of state of a friendly power. But he got away with it! Why did he get away with it? Well, all sorts of reasons, including the fact that it is – if I might say so – part of German policy to swallow some of these things, whereas you don't have to swallow them with the British but you do swallow them with the French. So I think I would say that on the whole the French didn't contribute a great deal, but didn't actually get in the way much. And on the whole, I think it was a policy of acquiescence rather than contribution. Whereas I think American policy was of extraordinary importance. I think we were very, very fortunate in having a Secretary of State of such determination and ability at the time. This isn't obvious, it wasn't obvious actually, though it all turned out extraordinarily well, that this amazing outcome right at the beginning of things could have been achieved. It was, I think, a great triumph of Western, and in particular American, diplomacy, greatly aided and contributed to by the clear-sighted leadership of Kohl.

Rainer Hudemann

We are very grateful to you, Baroness, for having situated our question of Britain and Germany in such a large international context. I'd like to take up your last point: the French. Lord Powell, Ambassador Mallaby, and now you have all mentioned the French in the context of the Cold War. In my analysis as an historian, the things on the Mitterrand level – not in the government level – are presented now in a slightly different way. I am speaking in telegram style now because we don't have much time. But I think that, in his policy as President, this became only one element of a quite rational conception whose base was formed by eight more elements. First, France stuck strictly to the principle of self-determination, as did the Germans. Second, the French approach to international politics, traditionally very geopolitical, made the President – as de Gaulle before him – expect that at some time German unification would come. Third, for France's international position it was essential to keep its permanent seat at the Security Council in New York and to respond to the responsibilities relying on its position as one of the Four Powers in Germany, because these were the only levels where the Soviets had to treat the French on an equal level. Fourth, Mitterrand's position in particular: Sir Christopher Mallaby, you differentiated the internal level of British policy from the official level at the end of our discussion this morning; similarly for the French, internally, Mitterrand's attitude, which had rather corresponded early on to Margaret Thatchers' attitude, began changing in 1984-85, and I think in 1989-90 it appears as much more consistent and constructive in the official and in his private papers, perhaps even more than it has been in the British case. I say this in a very

pointed way to invite your comments on it. Fifth, like the British, the French did not want to destabilise Gorbachev. But there were two possible conclusions here: Kohl said we must go fast because Gorbachev can be destabilised; Mitterrand and Thatcher said, don't go fast, it will destabilise Gorbachev. Both were right. Sixth, closely linked to the fifth point: no one wanted chaos in Eastern Germany and particularly in Eastern Europe, so again: go slowly on the German Question. Seventh, and this is a very important point: Mitterrand considered the German-Polish Treaty of 1970, guaranteeing the western Polish frontier and territorial integrity, as insufficient in terms of international law and wanted a definite international treaty that would confirm it; Kohl didn't dare to accept this because he was afraid that his party, the CDU, would break away. Finally, there was the main point on which Mitterrand and Kohl always agreed: linking German unification to European integration. Only they had different views of how this integration should work, and the compromise was found at Maastricht. Lord Powell, for instance, said yesterday that he is sceptical towards Jacques Attali's testimony, who three weeks ago started a new media war against Germany in the French weekly *L'Express*; it's very interesting to observe that Jacques Attali, close collaborator of Mitterrand at the time, is in complete contradiction with other actors like Hubert Vedrine. I think that Lord Powell is right when he recommends that we be careful in using these testimonies, reproducing in this case Jacques Attali's rather than Mitterrand's ideas. This is only a very short insight into the present state of the research about the French position; that's why I bring it in.

Baroness Neville-Jones

But all those points that you have put forward as characterising the French position, I would say were shared by the UK. I don't actually think there's a great distinction there. There's one, I suppose, where there might have been some difference. I think, you know, the British might well have said that unification and European integration go together. We would not, I think, we did not – because of the German attitude to integration – push it the same way the French did, of course. And the French saw themselves as getting a counterpart. I mean, there is a direct link, a direct link, between unification and the Treaty of Maastricht. There's no doubt about that. And what was France doing? France was extremely concerned that the united Germany would be economically more powerful than any other country in Europe, one. And two, that the Deutschmark would be the currency that actually governed everybody else's, therefore let us share the power of the Deutschmark by actually getting a grip on the monetary system in Europe. And that is what that is all about. It is a direct counterpart to agreement to unification. So they had their *contrepartie* but I don't think that – if I might say so – I don't think that any of those other points that you listed as characterising the French position would be ones from which there was divergence between the two countries. But I do think that the proximity and the closeness of the relationship... after all, these things count very much. If you have had a bilateral relationship of the type that France and Germany laboured upon over the years, to very great effect, it can take some strength, and it took some strength and it took it successfully. Whereas I think there was less in the Anglo-German relationship on which to bed a divergence, if not a breakdown, of understanding. So I think all of those things, you know, the context of the two is very important. But I think it is fair to say, however, as I did, that actually Mitterrand did do something which the British came nowhere near doing in the actual course of that very important negotiation.

Helmut Trotnow

What I do remember is that Mitterrand's visit to the GDR didn't go down well at all with the German public. And for the time being, though, set up really a public debate: Both Britain and France are against German unification. And I think Mitterrand lost a lot of acknowledgement with the German public because of that visit, because the pictures were all over in the press and it was of course some kind of questioning, annoying irritation. What are the French really up to?

Cord Meier Klodt

Baroness, since you mentioned the enigmatic Gorbachev, I wanted to come back briefly to what Lord Powell described yesterday as the "cost of unification." He mentioned, apart from the economic side – which not only Germany had to share but the whole of Europe and including obviously the UK – the most speedy destruction of the position of Gorbachev, leading to Putin and Yeltsin and the delayed integration of other Eastern European countries into Europe. I just was wondering whether you would subscribe – I'm sorry, I didn't know that you weren't there – would you subscribe to that in principle?

Baroness Neville-Jones

No, probably not, I think. I mean I regard the way in which Germany was reunified and the speed with which it was done as being both of them whole goods. I don't believe it could have been done on a slow basis. I think the Russians would have found ways of stopping it, which is after all exactly what they wanted to try and do. I mean that's why they were partial to the idea that this should be stages and all the rest of it. They knew they had a weak hand, as Christopher said, and one of the ways therefore of trying to regain some control on the process was obviously to have a long stage thing. Would it have been easier to integrate? No, because to the extent that the Soviet Union, and it probably would have remained the Soviet Union, had retained any kind of hold or position or say in the whole affairs of Germany would succeed at also having a hold, say and control over all other countries which were former—if not still—Warsaw Pact countries. I don't see how we would have had anything like what we got. And I think the price we pay…is it a price? These countries are going to contribute in helping their emergences as capitalist democracies. No, I would say well worth it, well worth it. I have no reservations at all. I don't think the alternative thesis holds water, I confess.

Sir Michael Palliser

I was very surprised actually to hear the idea that somehow the Germans had put a great deal of strain on the European economy because of the unification. After all, there was the evacuation of this huge number of Soviet troops out of Central Europe, which was of tremendous benefit to everyone in the Western Alliance, and which did cost a lot of money. It may have been less than one might have expected, but it was a very large amount of money. And of course there was also the colossal cost of then rehabilitating East Germany, which couldn't be avoided, and may have been underestimated by the German government, but I still feel we're talking about a ballpark figure of a trillion Marks, and I think that's probably more or less right. Now at the same time I seem to remember in the press in Britain a lot of talk about the peace dividend, which was going to be so beneficial to the British economy and other Western economies. That peace dividend was effectively being paid for by the German taxpayer.

Baroness Neville-Jones

I don't really want to dominate the discussion period, but I think a lot of the costs were actually paid by Germans. But I think in the sense of: We're all committed to the European Union and the idea of the European Union obviously is that if you're European and you qualify, qualified is very important. I have reservations about letting countries in when they're not really ready and I'm not sure we've been so sensible about that. In the end you pay in all sorts of ways. It seems to me that we're all committed to this thesis. So I don't really think, you know, that this was a somehow implicitly unfair burden. And a great deal of the cost has been borne by Germany. I do think Kohl made one mistake and that was the whole question of the Ostmark/Westmark. And I know all the arguments about how it was that we had to encourage people not to trail over to the West and try and get jobs and he was very influenced by that. And there was also this thesis that you needed to treat East Germans as equals, and therefore you had to give the Ostmark equality. Well, I think that's silly personally. And it posed a great burden on the German public purse, which they need not have borne. And the actual economic revival of the *neue Länder*[15], it seems to me, would have been different and would have been better and could have been sooner and could have been faster than it has been for all these reasons. I do think that was an absolutely fundamental error; indeed, the then-chairman of the Bundesbank resigned shortly afterwards.

Rainer Hudemann

So now we have contributions from Sir Christopher Mallaby and Sir Michael Burton.

Sir Christopher Mallaby

If I could be very quick in a footnote about France: I think Pauline is exactly right, there are two differences between the British and the French behaviour up to the moment when unification became certain. Our views – not our actions and words – but our positions were very, very similar. When unification became certain, there is a difference: Mitterrand went quiet. That did not happen in London. The second difference is that France sought an important quid pro quo: a great big French requirement from Germany, namely European Monetary Union. We thought about that. We considered what advantage we might seek from Germany to bring into this balance and gain some direct plus from this great event of German unification. There was nothing of that order, nothing of that importance in the British-German relationship or in British interests generally which could play that role. We were talking about aviation and British Airways continuing to fly into Berlin. And we were talking about status of forces agreements for our forces after unification, both matters which Pauline negotiated very successfully. But those were small beer compared with the European Monetary Union.

May I add a major footnote? If you look at papers which are about to be published in the coming days – British official papers on German reunification – there is a document there which is a letter from Charles Powell to the Foreign Office with extremely limited distribution describing a discussion in early March 1990 between Thatcher and Mitterrand. And it is an absolute classic case of Mitterrand's way with diplomacy. He goaded her, he

[15] 'Neue Länder' literally means 'new states' and refers to the former East German states that became part of the Federal Republic of Germany after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

fired her up about the bad things that were going on. And he actually said something like, "The Germans very quickly have again become the old Germans." That's a very extreme remark and he was goading her to say something publicly on those matters. He didn't want to say it himself. Her reaction was: let's go outside afterwards, let's put it in our press conference. And he didn't. So what was going on here? Well, what was going on was that he was trying to have her say things publicly which would be worth saying, he thought, but which he didn't want to say himself. Very sly, very clever, very charming.

Sir Michael Burton

Thank you Chairman. I'm glad I'm last because I'm coming in on a rather different point. I'm not following this discussion. Getting back to the Cold War. But first, in my role as the Berlin man who was seeing what's happening on the ground. Pauline mentioned that the liberation of Kuwait was going on at the same time. Well in Berlin, it was quite an awkward time because there was a very strong peace movement in Berlin demonstrating in the streets and against the Allied liberation of Kuwait. It was the only time in my seven years in the city that I was given a close protection team for my own safety. And it wasn't until a woman of strong character, proud Hanna-Renata Laurien, who was the President of the Abgeordnetenhaus, went on television and said to the Berliners, "Hang on! The three countries doing this to liberate Kuwait are exactly the three countries that protected us over the years with our allies. So shut up!" And that more or less did the trick.

But I'd like to add a point, really getting back to how cold was the Cold War, because there's one big subject which we haven't touched on at all, obviously because it's difficult, and that is the intelligence war. And the intelligence war was always being fought very actively in Berlin. All the British people here would have read those famous novels, 'A Spy Who Came in From the Cold' and there were others, leading up to a very good one that was fairly recent, 'Brandenburg', which some of you may have read, which features the head of the KGB stationed in Dresden, who plays an important part, and whose name of course is Vladimir Putin. But more seriously, because we can now talk about it more openly, it was a very important part of life. It's no secret that the Teufelsberg, which was the mound made out of the rubble of Berlin, had a major listening station on top, an American-British listening station. There were Allied missions from the commanders in chief, the Allied commanders in chief, liaison missions to the Soviet Commander in Chief, a British one called BRIXMIS[16] and these missions had a mission house over in Potsdam. And they were in fact licensed spying missions, in that they were entitled to go into the GDR. The areas they went into kept changing and they were kept out of the really sensitive areas. There were permanently restricted areas and temporarily restricted areas. But with those restrictions, I understand – and I've known quite a lot about it recently – they were doing a very useful intelligence job monitoring what the Soviets were doing in their troop rotations and their driver training and then the equipment that would come in, which was always of course covered in a tarpaulin, and they would manage to get photographs of those bits of equipment. And there were people in London who were extremely expert in analysing the significance of a slight bulge that is on this one that wasn't on the last one and drawing up an overall picture. As I mentioned this morning, the Chipmunk[17], also cruising around with very sophisticated photographic equipment on board, was able to verify things that could not be verified in any other way. And the last story is that – surely some of you who've been

[16] The British Commanders'-in-Chief Mission to the Soviet Forces in Germany.

[17] An RAF spy plane in use at the time.

to the Allied Museum will be aware of this – but there was the famous tunnel earlier on in the 50s.

Helmut Trotnow

That was '54-'55.

Sir Michael Burton

'54-'55. The famous tunnel out in the American sector. It was a CIA-British Intelligence joint operation that came up under the main Soviet communications wire and tapped into it. And the only trouble is that it'd been betrayed to the Soviets from the very beginning by a man whom I was studying Arabic with called George Blake, a notorious spy. But the Soviets didn't restrict the traffic because they didn't want to compromise Blake, who was a very important agent for them. And when it all ended and the Museum was set up: how to get a bit of the tunnel? Well there was a film made of a book by Ian McEwan, *The Innocent*, and they constructed the tunnel in Berlin, and so they took a bit of the tunnel from the film and put it in the film. But that's not the end of the story. Finally, the Allied Museum found the real tunnel and substituted the real tunnel for the film tunnel. Go and see it.

Helmut Trotnow

Sadly, part of the story is still classified information. We actually managed to make contact with Peter Lunn a couple of years ago, who was the man who started the business of tunnelling in Vienna. But we did not get permission to talk to him. However, in that context we did succeed in getting three British engineers who were involved in building the tapping chamber.

Sir Michael Burton

I don't want to keep us postponed from lunch. Just two thoughts, though, on the French. I spent seven years at my career in the embassy in Paris in two stages and in particular I got to know Mitterrand pretty well. And I think there are two thoughts I give you on this. Someone or other said earlier, "What are the French up to" and in my 35 years of diplomatic service that was a question that one asked virtually everyday. It's a cliché almost. But the serious point is that I think we forget that the relationship between France and Germany, particularly in the coal and steel community, is totally different in quality from the relationship between France and Britain on the one hand, or Germany and Britain on the other. And it's something that we forget or we don't know about very often, but in any situation one has to judge the French reaction in the light of that identification between the two countries and I would say probably the same is true of Germany. That is not the case – one may or may not regret it – but that's not the case for the United Kingdom.

Baroness Neville-Jones

I think I'll just say a couple of things on Michael's point about the intelligence war, which is quite right. When I was chairman of JIC Germany, the thing that I remember most about that period, which, after all, was right at the end of it all, was that the Russians were developing a new generation of fighter aircraft. I mean they were still at it; this was not a dead threat. And we used to watch the exercises in the Fulda gap. I was just worried about territory

invasion, but one certainly was extremely conscious of their capacity and will to exercise air power.

Rainer Hudemann

I would like to thank you very much, especially as an historian, for all of your contributions. They are very important to us, especially when you do not agree with historians and when you indicate that there and there you have to be more careful, or look at these papers, take that argument into account, etc. I would also like to thank all of the participants who have contributed to the other sections, thereby situating this conference at such an exceptionally high level.

THIRD PANEL

STRANGE NORMALITY: WHAT WAS SO SPECIAL ABOUT THE QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT 1971/72?

Sir Nicholas Bayne

I am Nicholas Bayne. Dr. Geppert has very kindly agreed that I should take his place as the moderator for this session. This panel examines the Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin negotiated between the three Western Allies and the Soviet Union in 1971 and 1972. Your two panellists span forty years of Anglo-German relations. Sir Christopher Audland helped draw up the Bonn Conventions in the 1950s and Dr. Hermann Freiherr von Richthofen was German Ambassador in London in the 1990s. But today they are going to talk about their experiences in the early 1970s as members of the Bonn Group, that circle of American, French, British and German diplomats that masterminded the Quadripartite negotiations on the Allied side. Indeed, Christopher is the only person who negotiated both the Bonn Conventions and the Berlin Agreement. My only qualification to moderate this panel is that I too was in the Bonn Group and, in fact, I joined it in 1969, a year ahead of the two panellists, and so they have asked me to set the scene.

The Bonn Group sought to maintain Allied rights affecting Berlin and Germany as a whole, rights which were established at the end of World War II and codified in the Bonn Conventions, and this brought West Germans into the process. And when I arrived, our work was demanding but it was routine. We kept open access to West Berlin from the Federal Republic by land and air and we supported the Hallstein Doctrine, which refused to recognise the GDR as a state. But the position was unstable and the Hallstein Doctrine was under pressure as non-aligned countries began recognising the GDR, and East Germans regularly harassed road access and Russians sometimes threatened air access as well. So the Bonn Group had been debating for some time how best to revive a dialogue with the Russians in order to improve things. But all this was transformed with the new German government because Willy Brandt, as Federal Chancellor, announced his ambitious new *Ostpolitik* and his aim was complete reconciliation with West Germany's communist neighbours, leading to full recognition of the GDR. And his argument was that the policy of isolating the GDR was only making the ultimate reunification of Germany less likely. The German people could only come together again through regular contact between the two halves of the country under conditions which both could accept. West Germany also had to overcome suspicions about its intentions elsewhere in Eastern Europe. So Brandt launched negotiations for treaties with Poland and the Soviet Union for this purpose and he charged Egon Bahr, the State Secretary of the Federal Chancellery, to prepare to conclude a general treaty with the GDR.

Now the Western Allies could support these moves as regards Germany as a whole but worried on their impact on Berlin. We doubted whether the West Germans on their own could guarantee access to Berlin and prevent encroachment and ultimate absorption of the city by the East Germans. A parallel agreement was needed to reinforce the position of Berlin and this view was shared by the Federal Government. So, the three Western Ambassadors in Bonn sought a meeting in Berlin with the Soviet Ambassador there, and in late March 1970 they met Peter Abrasimov, a Russian diplomat of the old school, and all four ambassadors made formal statements on their positions. The Allies and the Russians disagreed on almost everything except that they would meet again, but that was enough to get the negotiations started. So at this point I can now hand it over to the main panellists, starting with Hermann von Richthofen.

Hermann Freiherr von Richthofen

Thank you Nicholas for your kind introduction. Also, many thanks to the Allied Museum for inviting me to this panel discussion to speak about my experiences as a member of the Bonn Group at the time of the Quadripartite and subsequent Inner-German negotiations. As you said, I came later than you into this business, returning to the Foreign Office from Jakarta in September 1970. At that time the Berlin Talks of the Four Powers had been under way since 26 March 1970 precisely. The Moscow Treaty had been signed on 12th August, the negotiations on the Warsaw Treaty had begun, and two German states had started talks on a Treaty on Inner-German Communications (*Verkehrsvertrag*), following Willy Brandt and Willi Stoph's meetings in Erfurt and Kassel. This was the situation when I was assigned to the Department of International Law and Treaties as Desk Officer for Berlin and Germany as a whole.

Looking back, I can say that it was this new position more than any other before or since which gave my career a totally new and most exciting turn. In my new capacity I was introduced to the Bonn Group as legal adviser of the German Delegation. The Bonn Group was the Allied / FRG forum for consultations about the Quadripartite Agreement as well as wider *Ostpolitik*, the policy launched by Willy Brandt and Walter Scheel in 1969. The Eastern Treaties and the Quadripartite Agreement, as well as the Inner-German agreements, formed part of an overall strategy and that is very important. Willy Brandt had made it clear to Leonid Brezhnev that the ratification of the Moscow Treaty was dependent on a satisfactory solution of the difficult Berlin problem. The whole concept was one of harmony based on the common interests of all participants in easing East-West tensions and creating more stable relationships in Central Europe through co-operation without changing the status of Berlin and without affecting Quadripartite Rights and Responsibilities. President Nixon had taken the initiative after he came to power in early 1969, suggesting the improvement of the status quo in Berlin and to end the tensions of the past 25 years as embodied in various Berlin crises.

Though the two German states were also working towards this goal, they did so for different reasons, as Nicholas said, and neither wanted to compromise certain basic principles. For the Federal Republic, on the one hand, it remained essential not to erode its main political goal, which was embedded in the Basic Law and yesterday heard in Article 7 of the Bonn-Paris Convention. The goal was a state of peace and democracy in Europe in which the German people would regain their unity and free self-determination. In the 1950s and 60s, this political principle had led to a refusal to recognise the existence of the GDR, but by the 1970s the Federal Republic and its Western partners and friends realised that the policy of détente and international co-operation in Europe could no longer ignore the GDR as part of the real situation. The GDR on the other hand at that time would only have acceded to the unity of the German nation under communist rule and opposed free determination for the Germans. But it had a key interest in achieving recognition under international law as a socialist German state within the whole international community of states. The West Germans and their Allies were prepared to upgrade the international status of the GDR but conditioned this upon the negotiation of a satisfactory Berlin settlement and an agreed modus vivendi between the two German states.

The Bonn Group had the difficult task of steering this process towards an acceptable result. The main work was preparing the Allied positions for the Quadripartite negotiations in Berlin, which included working out strategy and tactics not only for the negotiating table but also for talks over coffee and fireside chats. Regular negotiations of the four Ambassadors, as we heard, started on 3 September 1970. On 30 September they tasked their Political Counsellors to prepare their meetings in substance and that was a wise step. To create a common basis for these negotiations in drafting talking points, texts and fallback

positions, the Bonn Group met more and more frequently, often at short notice and, in the final stages, almost daily. In summer 1971, we met sometimes even in the Control Council building. To conceal this from the Russians, our Allied friends smuggled us into the building through the basement. We waited in a separate room on the ground floor while the Quadripartite negotiations took place upstairs so the Allies could quickly consult us during breaks.

The Bonn Group was an extraordinarily efficient body of multilateral conference diplomacy with its own rules and particular sense of humour, consisting of limericks, ditties, jokes and very often quotes from Alice in Wonderland. The delegations of the Three Powers were headed by the Embassy Counsellors Rene Lustig, who is no longer alive, Christopher Audland, and 'Jock' Dean, an American counsellor. Our delegation was headed by the Director of the German and Berlin desk in the Political Department of the Foreign Office, Günther van Well, who also is no longer with us. The heads were seconded by highly competent experts of different backgrounds performing excellent teamwork in good team spirit. The members of the Bonn Group held each other in high esteem and relied on each other in great confidence. They were very open with each other, informed each other about the perceptions of their governments, clarified misunderstandings, and influenced the formulations of the directives from their Ministries in order to reach joint opinions and positions so different from what we talked about this morning.

The personal friendships built up in the Bonn Group have lasted until today. What I personally learnt in these complex consultations on the fine drafting work of the Quadripartite Agreement in terms of diplomacy, politics, international law and how to draft sometimes or something subtly in English, decisively shaped and influenced my further professional path in the Foreign Service.

My first consultation in the Bonn Group concerned the exchange of notes between the federal government and the governments of the Three Powers regarding the Warsaw Treaty, which designated the Oder-Neisse Line as the western state border of Poland. It was very important because the grandees of the Liberal Democratic Party threatened to leave the coalition if this was not happening properly. My question was whether it would be necessary to make a reservation for a Peace Treaty with Germany in order to re-affirm the protocol of the Potsdam Conference in 1945, which had reserved the final denomination of Poland's western border for a peace treaty. To my surprise, and also to the surprise of the politicians, the Allies did not regard this as necessary. They thought it was sufficient to re-affirm that their Quadripartite Rights and Responsibilities, as well as the corresponding wartime and post-war agreements and the decisions of the Four Powers, were not affected by the Warsaw Treaty. Twenty years later, at the time of Germany's reunification and the Two-Plus-Four Treaty, the state of certainty of the German Question was brought to an end without a peace treaty for Germany, just by terminating the Quadripartite Rights and Responsibilities.

Thereafter, my work in the Bonn Group consisted in the consultations on the Quadripartite Agreement itself and the executive German arrangements. Our delegation detailed FRG and West Berlin interests in achieving unimpeded facilitated and preferential access to and from Berlin; better communications and a better life for the people of Berlin; safeguarding the close ties between Berlin and the Federal area; and the representation abroad of West Berlin by the Federal German authorities. Günther van Well represented the West German interests with great skill and toughness. He usually spoke with a low voice but when he occasionally raised it everybody knew he had made a crucial point. In order to defend the existing ties we took great care in finding appropriate language and old documents, in particular in ordinances and letters of the Allies to the Berlin Senate, and I was surprised that the Russians did the same with Moscow and their side.

The solid and competent work of the Bonn Group was crucial. The skeleton of the Quadripartite Agreement was a high bar for the lawyers, indeed it was. In a virtuoso manner, the Preamble, Parts I and III, ensured the status of Berlin and the rights and responsibilities of the Four Powers. The differing legal positions remained unchanged but allowed agreement upon practical arrangements. In this sense the Quadripartite Agreement could have been a model for a modus vivendi in Kosovo. Ambassador Wolfgang Ischinger and the European Union team tried it, but Sergey Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs for the Russian Federation, was open at first and then rejected it as a model. That was the end. But I heard that in Hong Kong the model was used vis-à-vis China.

The Russians were only prepared to discuss concrete improvements for the Western Sectors of Berlin. The Quadripartite Agreement confirmed and strengthened the position of the Three Powers in those sectors. This was essential for the security and viability of West Berlin. The Russians were not willing to discuss the eastern sector. It turned out however that the Soviet Union had not entirely surrendered her rights and responsibilities with respect to her sector. The Preamble makes clear that the Quadripartite status for the whole of Berlin remain unaffected. It puzzled us in the Bonn Group that the Russians stubbornly refused to mention Berlin as a whole in the preamble. It had to be circumscribed by the term "the relevant area", which justifies very well the title of this discussion, "Strange Normality."

The focus of the Bonn Group's work was on Part III, the four annexes and accompanying documents providing practical arrangements for the western sectors in four spheres, which I have already mentioned: access, relationship between West Berlin and the Federal area, possibilities for visits and other improvements for West Berliners and representation abroad.

In Section A, the Soviet Union for the first time undertook the obligation on her account to ensure that in future civilian traffic by road, rail and waterway would be unobstructed. Apart from this, the Soviet Union promised in binding form that traffic clearance was to be effected as simply and quickly as possible. In addition, the Soviets guaranteed that favourable treatment was to be accorded to Berlin traffic. The details had to be settled with the GDR. This agreement on access was the biggest progress made by the Four Powers since the Berlin blockade.

In Section B, the Three Powers made a declaration binding also for the Federal Republic of Germany about the maintenance and further strengthening of ties between West Berlin and the Federal area. These ties were essential for the viability of the city as we heard this morning. The categorical Allied affirmation and the recognition embodied in the Soviet signature represented a substantial gain. On the other hand, the three Western powers re-affirmed that the restrictions on the relations between West Berlin and the Federal Republic conceded a limitation on events organised in Berlin by the Federation. In a letter of interpretation addressed by the Allies to the Federal government, the Allies made it clear that the established procedures for the applicability to Berlin of the legislation of the FRG and the presence in Berlin of Federal Authorities remained unchanged, and we often had to explain this to our parliamentarians.

In Section C, the Soviet Union conceded binding assurances also for the GDR: travel improvements for West Berliners and to the eastern sector of Berlin and the GDR territory, as well as the solution of problems of some small enclaves by the exchange of territory. The improvement of freedom of movement for West Berliners, who had been walled in since 1961, in particular the right to visit on 30 days each year East Berlin and the GDR, was a great encouragement for the Berliners.

Section D was devoted to a particularly sensitive area: the Allied authorisation granted to the FRG under certain conditions to represent Berlin interests abroad, which had caused great difficulties with the Soviet Union and the Allies in the past. That included treaties that

also encompassed consular services, and this was great progress. Now agreement was reached about representation abroad in the future. In addition, an understanding was reached that West Berliners could use Federal passports for visits to the Soviet Union. Willy Brandt and Egon Bahr had insisted on this point for psychological reasons. At the outset, the three Allies were reluctant to fight for it. In the end, Gromyko accepted the passports with a trick making the whole thing a farce: the Russian authorities would only look at the identity card of West Berliners and simply ignore the passports. That was Gromyko personally. Part of representation abroad was the establishment of a Soviet Consulate-General in West Berlin with which the three Allies had had scruples for a long time for status reasons but finally gave in when the Russians accepted restrictions on their consular functions in West Berlin.

The signing of the Agreement and the initialling of the Final Protocol to bind all arrangements together on 3 September 1971 concluded the first stage of the Berlin negotiations. The details on access and the freedom of movement for West Berliners, as well as communications, had to be negotiated between the competent German authorities. The governments of the Three Powers, in a letter to the Federal Chancellor, asked the Federal government to start the envisaged negotiations between the authorities of the FRG, acting also in the name of the Senat and the authorities of the GDR. Willy Brandt mandated Egon Bahr to conduct these negotiations. At the same time, the Allied Kommandatura asked and mandated the Berlin Senate to conduct corresponding negotiations on the freedom of movement of West Berliners.

These negotiations were very tough. The GDR was dragging its feet for whatever reasons. An intervention by Chancellor Brandt with Secretary General Brezhnev was needed to produce the necessary drive. After Brezhnev visited East Berlin on 30 October 1971, Secretary General Honecker stated publicly that the Inner-German negotiations could be terminated at the good will of both parties in a couple of weeks. And that was then the case; the detailed provisions of the Quadripartite Agreement on access to and from Berlin were of great help to us in overcoming the difficulties put up by the GDR, in particular when she tried to exclude individuals and a whole category of travellers from the transit routes.

On 11 December 1971 all of the Inner-German agreement texts were initialled, sent to the Four Powers and shortly afterwards authorised by them. The transit traffic agreement was signed in Bonn on 17 December. The Berlin settlement however could enter into force only after the Federal Parliament had ratified the Moscow and Warsaw Treaties on 17 May 1972. The coalition had by then only a very, very slim minority left, but miraculously we got the ratifications through because the opposition of the CDU at the time abstained due to courageous efforts by Richard von Weizsäcker. The Final Protocol to the Quadripartite Agreement was signed on 3 June 1972. The era of Berlin crises had come to an end.

In retrospect we can state with pride, I think, that the Berlin settlement was solid and enduring. The re-activation or re-actualisation of the rights and responsibilities of the Four Powers with respect to Berlin made a unilateral change of the status of Berlin in favour of the Soviet Union and the GDR impossible for the future. It created much more favourable conditions for Berlin, the Berliners and, in fact, also for the East Germans. It deepened the friendship between the three Western Allies and the Federal Republic, elevated the role of the German Foreign Minister in the famous Group of Four, and eased the sometimes formal relationships between the Allied Commandants and the Berlin Senat. The Federal Republic of Germany and the GDR concluded their Basic Treaty in 1973. Thereafter, both German states became full members of the United Nations under the Quadripartite Declaration. And it was important that we registered of course the Quadripartite Agreement with the United Nations in New York as a precedent. And as we heard this morning, the Allies and all other friendly states took up diplomatic relations with the GDR, ending the GDR's international

isolation. Finally it paved the paths for a new era of security and co-operation in Europe and the CSCE.

I would like to conclude that the viability and cultural radiance of West Berlin were not only maintained but further strengthened. The access routes from and to Berlin were repaired, modernised and in parts enlarged, and that was the work of the Bonn Group after 1973. The city environs for the Berlin people extended and Berlin radiated a successful symbol for freedom, democracy and the rule of law far into the GDR, and I think that was a very, very important point. It was essential for the cohesion of the German nation and reinforced the desire of the East Germans to belong to a unified and democratic Germany. The unity of the nation and the sense of belonging together were in the end stronger than the convulsive policy of separation by the GDR and the Soviet Union. Insofar, the Quadripartite Agreement contributed indirectly also to the restoration of German unity in 1990. I would like to thank you for your attention.

Sir Christopher Audland

I first attended the Bonn Group on April Fools' Day 1970, just a week after the first Ambassadorial meeting of the Quadripartite Talks in Berlin. A strong tradition of teamwork already existed and this steadily strengthened throughout the Quadripartite talks. My colleagues, Jock Dean, René Lustig and Günther van Well, the American, French and German titular representatives, were of the highest quality. They had good support teams. There was complete mutual confidence between everybody. My own work was greatly helped not only by having an able and considerate Ambassador in Roger Jackling, but also a superb supporting staff. Allied FRG co-operation took place at two other levels: the Allied Ambassadors met occasionally with Foreign Minister Scheel or State Secretary Frank or Bahr. The four foreign ministers met frequently.

I would venture to add just one point to Hermann's description of the Bonn Group's work in preparing the Allied position on the Quadripartite Agreement. The first proposals tabled by the German side appeared to the Allies to be not demanding enough. However, in discussion it was readily agreed that the Allies should aim higher.

In May 1970, the Bonn Group was given a second important task. The Allied / FRG Foreign Ministers commissioned it to prepare the report reviewing comprehensively the prospects for a Berlin Agreement, the Eastern Treaties, the Inner-German negotiations, the FRG/GDR General Relations Treaty, the future entry of the two Germanies into the United Nations, and finally the relationship of all these to the preparations for the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, much favoured by the Russians, and those for a Treaty on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions. The Bonn Group Report took time and a good deal of trouble to prepare, but it was approved by the Allied / FRG Foreign Ministers in December and thereafter provided orientations for all four governments in the different negotiating contexts. These orientations were kept under constant review by the Bonn Group. This close co-ordination meant that the Allies and the FRG were able to operate consistently everywhere and use the leverage of any one of the negotiations to best advantage in relation to the others.

The Allies / FRG, from an early stage, mobilised NATO to support their policies. Once a year the Bonn Group counsellors attended meetings in Brussels of the NATO Council. The first occasion, in January 1971, was to present and explain the Bonn Group Report. We decided that all four counsellors should speak to show our unity and agreed who should say what and that became our standard behaviour. We liked to call it our 'tumbling act'. Our visits paid off. NATO countries throughout the *Ostpolitik* period responded to FRG / Allied requests positively, even when asked to do things they might have preferred not to.

Meanwhile, although the Four Power Ambassadorial meetings had taken place monthly throughout 1970, there had been much repetition of positions and no real movement. The first Quadripartite Counsellors' meeting was on 7 October 1970 and it lasted all day. The Allies by now had their own draft outline of a Quadripartite Agreement – I mean just headings, not details. From the Chair, I advanced the points it contained one by one. The Russians nodded them through, with some changes. I then said that I had made notes of our discussion to form the basis of a report to our four Ambassadors and I read them out. Kvitsinsky, our Russian counterpart, suggested I should circulate them as a 'Chairman's Note'. That was done and the next week the Allied Ambassadors convinced Abrasimov to accept its contents. At last we had a framework.

By the end of 1970, the Moscow and Warsaw Treaties had been signed, but the FRG was not going to ratify until the Allies had negotiated their agreement on Berlin. So now the Russians wanted to speed things up. Life became an endless round of meetings; though wearing, they were never dull. In 1971, our busiest year, there were meetings of the four Ambassadors or Counsellors in Berlin and of course the Counsellors attended both levels on 39 occasions. Each usually involved a separate trip by air from Bonn to Berlin and back. Occasionally there were two or three such trips in a week. Before each ambassadorial meeting there was always a preparatory meeting of the three Allied Ambassadors with their Counsellors. We also regularly consulted the Allied Missions in Berlin and the Berlin Senat.

In that same year, the Bonn Group met on at least 65 days, sometimes two or three times in the space of twenty-four hours. A meeting might take all day or it might last only half an hour to clear a specific problem. Meetings were no respecters of weekends or public holidays. When I reached Bonn, the Allied Counsellors met by themselves before each Bonn Group meeting. As pressure mounted this proved a waste of time and we only had such meetings if a strong Allied-German difference was at all likely.

The Quadripartite Counsellors, assisted by their Political Advisers in Berlin, found it easier than their Ambassadors to develop negotiating techniques. At the outset they agreed that interpretation would waste time and they looked for a common language. This proved to be German. Hence the strange picture of representatives of Four Powers, all negotiating in a tongue that was nobody's mother tongue. At first this was very practical; only when we had to start writing actual drafts was refinement needed.

The drafting problem did not arise at once. A legacy of twenty-five years of mistrust between Allies and Russians had first to be overcome. When the Allies tabled a first draft of a possible agreement, a full draft now I'm talking about, in February 1971, it was rejected out of hand. When the Russians tabled a counter-draft, it was so extreme that the Allies in turn refused to consider it. How could we progress? We invented a different approach for our next meeting in May 1971 – a counsellors' meeting, I should say. We went armed with Allied texts on different issues but we didn't say we had them. I had arranged as if by chance for a blackboard to be in the room. We first had a general discussion of a concept with Kvitsinsky and then I as the Allied Chairman offered to suggest a form of words I had "thought up in conversation."

We had already settled with Kvitsinsky that, since the Quadripartite Agreement was going to have official English, French and Russian texts, but no official German one, it would be wrong to write the drafts in German. Kvitsinsky agreed that English should be used for this purpose as he had no French and I had no Russian. The other two had both. I wrote on the board therefore in English and Kvitsinsky reacted orally but, his spoken English being poor, he commented in German, asking me to transpose this into English on the blackboard. Gradually a text was established. It was full of footnotes, reserves, alternative formulations and dots for missing words, but nevertheless it was a text that we could put to our Ambassadors. The procedure may sound to you a little clumsy but it worked. It enabled

Kvitsinsky to report to his authorities not that he had accepted an Allied text as the basis for negotiation – oh no – but that a compromise text had emerged from discussion. Our personal relations with Kvitsinsky and his political adviser, Khotulew, grew steadily closer as the negotiations progressed. Agreement on substance was always tough but we respected each other and we knew that for Kvitsinsky as well for us, 'an aye was an aye and a nay was a nay'. Eating together soon became a habit whether as a group of all eight counsellors, that is the four counsellors and the four political advisers, or in a bilateral format of two plus two like two Brits, two Russians. In these circumstances we used to talk very freely off the record and I would like to have time to tell you some of the stories that Kvitsinsky used to tell us, particularly about the Russian military and the, as he called them, 'our Germans'.

The negotiations were nevertheless tough. By now Bahr had got the Inner-German negotiations going. Well this simply suited the Russians' book. They could argue with the Allies that there was no need for anything meaningful on transit traffic between the FRG and West Berlin and the Quadripartite Agreement. Mr. Bahr's negotiations with his opposite number Kohl were going well. For the Allies however, responsible for West Berlin security, it was not sufficient for the FRG to get assurances from the GDR. The latter might always renege. We had to have a proper Russian commitment to us. Roger Jackling, as the then current Chairman of the Allied Ambassadors, arranged a Dinner at his Berlin home, in the spring of 1971, for his two Allied colleagues and State Secretary Bahr: there, with strong American and French backing, he forced Bahr to stall his negotiations on communications with the East Germans until the Allies had concluded the Quadripartite Agreement. The promise was kept. The Russians were outmanoeuvred; the Allies got their way.

This led to a massive move forward, following the presentation to Kvitsinsky of a carefully crafted Allied compromise on an issue of principle. Until then the Allies had insisted that the only acceptable arrangements were ones that the Four Powers agreed on every word together. The Soviet side had refused, arguing speciously but firmly that they'd handed over responsibility of this sort of thing to the GDR, whose capital was East Berlin. All such practical matters therefore had to be settled between the FRG, the West Berlin Senat and the GDR.

Our compromise was called the 'one-to-three and three-to-one' formula. It meant that the Russians would give specific but broad assurances to the Allies about the substance of the arrangements. In appropriate cases the Allies would do the same to the Russians. It was then left to the – and I quote – "competent German authorities" to agree on detailed but consistent arrangements. The Quadripartite Agreement would take effect only after the detailed arrangements had been agreed and the two sets of instruments would remain in force together.

Suddenly in five days between 22 and 28 May 1971, at a series of crunch Counsellors' meetings in Berlin, more than half the Quadripartite Agreement was written initially on the blackboard on this basis. At our first meeting, which lasted all day, we emerged with a largely completed section on transit traffic, subject to ambassadorial authority, which was quickly obtained. My diary for that day notes the following: "if this sticks it could be a turning point in the talks", and so it proved. In the four following days, the Allied counsellors sat through forty hours of talks, whether in Quadripartite or in Bonn Group meetings. By the end the Quadripartitely-agreed output included not only the draft on transit but also largely agreed sections on ties and on travel by West Berliners into the East, and a first shot at the section on representation and largely agreed final provisions. Many problems still lay ahead but the West Germans were absolutely delighted and the chance of a full agreement before the summer break had for the first time become significant.

At the end of our meeting on 28 May 1971, I said to Kvitsinsky that we had come far in a very short time. The Allies were nevertheless confident that the results would be acceptable

to our governments and our Germans. Could he say the same for his Germans? Kvitsinsky thought hard and then he said, "I have gone far beyond my instructions. I think it is a fair package. I shall do my very best to sell it in Moscow but this time I cannot absolutely promise success." He told us later he had been strongly criticised at home; indeed, some time passed before Abrasimov confirmed Moscow's approval. But confirm it he did, showing that Kvitsinsky had again been as good as his word.

After this, although the talks continued, June saw little progress. However, throughout July the tempo was gruelling. On 30 May, the Ambassadors had their scheduled last meeting of the month. The British and French were gloomy on prospects. Ambassador Rush was optimistic because of secret contacts between Kissinger and Gromyko, as we learnt later. He proposed holding a crunch ambassadorial meeting on 10 August, and Abrasimov unexpectedly agreed. At this stage, Roger Jackling saw I was exhausted. He told me to take a holiday regardless. He rightly assumed that Nicholas Bayne would prove an excellent substitute. The Ambassadors in several tough meetings finalised the agreement on 18 August and they also agreed that, subject to confirmation in capitals, the Foreign Ministers would sign it in early September.

They did in fact sign it on 3 September. They all knew there were discrepancies between the English and French official language version on the one hand and the Russian official text on the other. There were others between the West and East German unofficial texts. In the event, no discrepancy gave rise to later difficulties. This was not a surprise to the Allied Counsellors because we had by then found that the Russians could be relied on to respect a written agreement once they had accepted it.

I cannot detail the other phases of the different negotiations. The Inner-German negotiations to add detail to the principles were satisfactorily finished as you have heard by Christmas. All was now ready for the signature of the Final Quadripartite Protocol bringing the agreement into force. You have heard about the delay waiting for the Eastern Treaties being ratified. As soon as that happened in May, the signature of the Final Protocol took place on 3 June 1972. With hindsight, I think that *Ostpolitik* and the Quadripartite Agreement opened a completely new phase in East-West relations that remained on a broadly improving phase until the Wall came down and reunification followed.

I close with a story. A West Berliner gave me a beneficiary's view of the Quadripartite Agreement after it had been in operation for five months. He was a German chauffeur with the British Military Government. He had often driven me on visits to the city. On the way to Tempelhof Airport for my plane – but with time in hand – he invited me to a drink and I accepted. He said there was something he wanted to tell me. I can't recall his exact words but they went something like this: "Throughout the negotiations you used to assure me that, though the going was tough, at the end of the day, the Allies would get a good Agreement. I never commented, but frankly I did not share your optimism. Now I want to tell you that the Agreement has transformed my life. I have been seven or eight times to the GDR to visit relations I hadn't seen for well over 10 years. At the beginning I found it was necessary to work very hard to re-establish normal links after so long a gap; but now, we are back on the old terms. Besides that, I can travel freely on the Autobahn to the Federal Republic and can feel safe in doing so. Thank you very much." This man's story moved me deeply. One realised he was, in effect, speaking for all the inhabitants of West Berlin. In my diplomatic career of nearly 40 years, all of which I enjoyed, my participation in the Four Power Talks on Berlin gave me a unique satisfaction. Usually in diplomacy, one is dealing with things, not with people. One is negotiating about matters that are broadly speaking economic: trade, taxation, technological co-operation, claims and that sort of thing. But on this occasion we dealt with matters directly affecting the daily lives of some two million people. It was a profoundly worthwhile cause. It made the Allies determined to get the very best deal

possible. And it sustained us in the long months when the Soviets initially tried to wear us down into lowering our negotiating sights. In fact, we did the opposite, and we succeeded.

Sir Nicholas Bayne

Now before I launch the discussion, I have got another witness to call: Yuli Kvitsinsky**,** about whom you heard a lot from Christopher just now, has published his memoirs, and in them he has quite a lot to say about the Berlin negotiations and I am going to read some summary extracts.

He says that he had an early diplomatic posting in Berlin from 1959 to 1965 and then joined the Third European Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry. And from early on he favoured a reduction of tension in and around Berlin. After Falin became head of the department in 1969, he made Kvitsinsky his deputy, although he was only 33, and charged him to prepare the Four Power Talks in Berlin. After Gromyko had stated publicly in July 1969 that he was ready for an exchange of views between the Ambassadors of the Four Powers to avoid wider complications around West Berlin, Kvitsinsky was put in as an expert alongside Abrasimov. He took part in the Berlin Talks and the Four Power negotiations from start to finish. He briefly describes in his memoirs the first meetings of the four Ambassadors and said that these talks began slowly, as the Western powers showed no haste and this only changed after the signature of the Moscow Treaty. Kvitsinsky thought that in the negotiations that people would play distinct roles reflecting the divisions between the Allies and the West German positions, but in the end the only differences were about nuances, and the simplest way, says Kvitsinsky, for the Allies to overcome these was to extract the maximum possible from the Soviet Union and the GDR in all areas.

In November 1970, serious negotiations began, on British initiative, he says. In February 1971, a Western draft of a Quadripartite Agreement was handed over in the experts group, which made Abrasimov very angry because he thought he had been sidelined and the Western draft was naturally rejected as a basis for negotiation. The same happened with Kvitsinsky's counter-draft and then he refers to the usefulness of the blackboard introduced by the British side and the negotiating technique derived from it with jointly prepared texts and dots and footnotes. Kvitsinsky describes the rivalry between Falin and Abrasimov, especially as Falin became Soviet Ambassador in Bonn in 1971. And there he set up at once a secret second channel with Bahr and U.S. Ambassador Rush, with Henry Kissinger in Washington at the other end, and Kissinger sometimes brought in Dobrynin as well. Abrasimov had not dared to go against this. This second channel was kept secret from the British and the French, but at times it led to confusion on the Russian side if a resolution that had been worked out on this level did not command agreement in the four Ambassadors' negotiations because the British and the French rejected it. In August 1971 there was a secret meeting between Abrasimov, Falin and Ambassador Rush in Potsdam, and in the final days of the negotiations, Gromyko established himself incognito at Niederschönhausen. At the end the Germans could not resist demanding yet more concessions, and as an example Kvitsinsky cites the acceptance of federal passports for visits to the Soviet Union. Gromyko finally gave way but, as Hermann explained, he reneged on his partners, says Kvitsinsky, because after the Quadripartite Agreement entered into force he issued an instruction to ignore the federal passports for visits by West Berliners. So there's Kvitsinsky's story.

And now, colleagues, we have a good thirty minutes for discussion. To assist in the recording and transcription process, if I don't recognise you by name, please say who you are before you put your question.

Rainer Hudemann

I have two questions. First, Jean Sauvagnargues, long-time French Ambassador to Bonn and later Foreign Minister, told me that in the Berlin negotiations the Americans, at least in the beginning, would have given up the transit lane to Berlin, and that it was the French, motivated by their Four Power position – I mentioned this morning that it was the French who were stubborn and the British finally followed them – is this right, in your experience, concerning the American position? Second question: As I mentioned this morning, the western Polish frontier in 1989 / 1990: in your judgement, was a new guarantee of the Polish western fronter necessary in 1990, and was it necessary to the Poles? In my opinion, Poland's western border had been settled since 1970, when I was a student.

Sir Christopher Audland

I have no recollection of any such disagreement between the Americans and the French. Everybody always wanted that transit.

Sir Nicholas Bayne

I have a recollection but it's different from Sauvagnargues's recollection. He was the French Ambassador at the time. I tell you this anecdote as I consider it as evidence of the secret back channel at work. In the last session of the negotiations, when I was sitting in for Christopher Audland and we were discussing the final text on access, Ambassador Rush, the U.S. Ambassador, surprisingly was prepared to yield before a last-minute attempt by Abrasimov to soften the access provisions. Well, my recollection is that Sauvagnargues said nothing, but it was Roger Jackling, prodded by me twice, who made the Russians maintain the existing word 'unimpeded'. There is a word in Russian – are there Russian speakers here? 'Bes pomekha' was the Russian term used.[18] So my recollection on British/French/American positions on access is a bit different.

Sir Christopher Audland

It is not inconsistent because I wasn't there. I had gone on holiday at the time described by Nicholas. Prior to that you would probably agree with what I said. Yes.

Hermann Freiherr von Richthofen

On the first question, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our British friends here and now for what they had contributed to the improvement of the life of the West Berliners in the Quadripartite negotiations, in particular, Sir Roger Jackling as Ambassador. Also Christopher Audland and Nicholas Bayne; it was really outstanding. To your second question, you recall that the Potsdam Protocol of 1945 contains the delineation of the western border of Poland with a clear reservation to be settled in the peace treaty with Germany, and it was absolutely necessary to make a reservation for a final settlement of the German Question in the exchange of notes between the Federal Government and the three Western Allies to not allow an interpretation under the Vienna Treaty Convention that would silently have given away this right. The surprise was that also in London, a reservation for a peace treaty with Germany was demanded. The Americans flatly said no. It

[18] A Russian phrase meaning 'without hindrance'.

is sufficient to preserve the Allied Rights and Responsibilities, which indirectly of course also contained a peace treaty. But luckily we did not have this reservation on a peace treaty for Germany. I do not know what would have happened in the Two Plus Four talks if others would have demanded to know, where the peace treaty for Germany was, which we all wanted to avoid for obvious reasons.

Patrick Salmon

It was not so much a question to the panellist as to others in the room that was prompted by the thought that Kvitsinsky must have been the only person present both in the negotiations in 1971 and in the Two Plus Four negotiations. I was just wondering what other connection other than that might be between the two sets of negotiations? The Bonn Group was of course in existence throughout the period right up to the end. Did people consciously learn from the earlier negotiations? Did they apply them to what was happening in 1990? Or were the Two Plus Four negotiations more generous? In other words, were they making up new processes, new procedures, for that different situation? It is a question I probably need to ask Christopher Audland.

Sir Christopher Audland

I was not a member of the negotiating team of the Federal Republic on Two Plus Four so I cannot answer this question.

Sir Frank Berman

I can offer a tiny bit of insight into the question, which is that an important component of our input to all of these negotiations, and certainly in the case of Germany as well, was the lawyers. The lawyers were experts on the subject, and there was a strong continuity. Although David Anderson and I were the ones who were involved at the time of the Four Power Agreement, as was Michael Wood, my successor in the Foreign Office who did the Two Plus Four. We fed into a body of continuing experience and were in extremely close contact with one another personally over the entire period of time, so from that sense there was a continuity of experience. And although the structures of the Two Plus Four negotiation had to be developed on the spot and in a different way, an enormous amount was learnt from what had been done previously.

Can I add a little to Christopher and Hermann's accounts? We heard a lot this morning about what it was like negotiating with the perfidious French. Here is a little thing about negotiating with the Russians that has slipped even Christopher's encyclopaedic memory. We did indeed negotiate in German and we drafted exclusively in English, and as we went along and texts began to be established, the French would produce a French version of text which we looked at and were familiar with and we would ask the Russians from time to time, how about a Russian text? They said that will come, that will come, later. And then we arrived at a moment at which the negotiations had been completed, and within a matter of a day or two at the most, we had a complete French text that we looked at in the Bonn Group and agreed upon. And so we put the question to the Russians and they said yes, our experts are working on the subject in Moscow, and then the text didn't appear so the question was repeated from time to time. When the text did arrive and was presented to us, I think in Berlin, I can't quite remember, this was the day before the Foreign Ministers were due to go to the signature ceremony and when we looked at it, surprise, surprise, surprise here and there and there. On important points, the text did not correspond to the agreement; it corresponded to the positions that the Russians had advanced during the negotiations.

When we queried this we were told the text had been approved by the Supreme Soviet and is therefore unalterable. And that was the point at which, after beating our heads against a brick wall throughout the night, that was the point that we tried to get the two German sides, the competent authorities on each side, to arrive at a German text if at all possible. Because that was going to be the text of the operationalisation of the agreement to produce something and despite all the efforts of Hanno Bräutigam, perhaps you too Hermann, it proved not to be entirely successful. But it was a good example of the Russians negotiating all the way through, as Kvitsinsky displayed: trying to pull the points back behind the scenes and then produce them in the face of the meeting of the four Foreign Ministers the next day. It was quite an extraordinary little episode.

Sir Nicholas Bayne

There is a lot in the literature about the dispute over texts but I think I am going to discourage our panellists from embarking on it because, as Christopher rightly said, at the end of the day it had no significance at all.

David Barclay

My name is David Barclay. I mentioned earlier this morning that I am working on a history of West Berlin and so what I have to say is less of a question and more of a comment. As I work on this book it is becoming increasingly clear, to me at least, that the Quadripartite Agreement represents not only chronologically but thematically the turning point in the history of West Berlin between 1948 and 1990. To my mind it is one of the most extraordinary diplomatic achievements of the twentieth century and I want to say that without exaggeration because very rarely, as Sir Christopher said, does one see an example of an agreement that has not just diplomatic and political effects but also sociological, cultural, psychological and attitudinal effects. One of my acquaintances in Berlin is a woman who was born in 1962, who has written an autobiographical account of her childhood, a very interesting one called *Insel der Glücklichen*. And she says for her entire generation of West Berliners who came of age after 1972, life in West Berlin was radically different than it had been for their predecessors. This is a point that Klaus Schütz has also made to me in several conversations. He said that in talking to or interviewing West Berliners before 1960, who were born before 1960, and those that were born after 1960, one was talking to very different groups of people who had very different experiences of that city. He and I both believe this is a consequence of the Quadripartite Agreement. Any comments?

Hermann Freiherr von Richthofen

I think it is entirely right. It was a complete turning point.

Sir Christopher Audland

I agree to that completely and therefore in publications I think that it should be worked out better and be made known to the now young generation.

Dominik Geppert

I have got two questions. The first question concerns the status of Berlin as the capital of Germany. Bonn was regarded as the seat of government, not as the capital. And as you

know, the Federal President was elected in Berlin during the fifties and sixties. Did that status problem, and it seems it might have been a problem for the Western powers as well, this kind of insistence by the Bonn government of the capital status of Berlin, did that play a role either in the Bonn Group or the Quadripartite Agreement? My second question concerns something that Baroness Neville-Jones mentioned this morning about a certain nervousness amongst the Western Allies regarding Bahr's talks in Moscow preceding the Moscow Treaty. I think this nervousness in a way culminated in a last-moment attempt by the Council of the British Embassy in Moscow to have the signature delayed under the Moscow Treaty in August 1970. Did the British side regard the Quadripartite talks as a way to correct certain distortions or concessions by the Bonn talks in Moscow to correct those distortions in the Quadripartite Agreement?

Sir Christopher Audland

On the first point: the question simply did not arise. The Basic Law, and I am quoting from memory, states that Bonn would be the provisional capital of the Federal Republic; it didn't say at any point that in due course Berlin would become that. Of course, people in Bonn rather expected that would happen although that was not a certainty up until the last minute. Weimar-type solutions were thought about. But certainly in Four Power talks and the Bonn Group of that period, the question of Berlin being the capital of Germany was completely irrelevant and it didn't arise at all.

Sir Nicholas Bayne

Do you want to comment on the *Bundesversammlung*, the election of the president?

Sir Christopher Audland

I seem to remember that 1969 was the last president to be elected in Berlin.

Sir Nicholas Bayne

Do you want to comment on that?

Hermann Freiherr von Richthofen

First of all I would like to say the Bonn/Paris Convention was taken as a basis of the consultations in the Bonn Group and therefore I was rather disappointed that Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher did not put the same weight to the Bonn/Paris Convention in 1989/ 1990 Article 7, which we had done in the negotiations of the Quadripartite Agreement because we believed this is the basic treaty between us, and both sides bestowed the same value to it. But these questions were of course outlawed by the Bonn/Paris Convention and the Three Powers agreed in their statement that the Soviet Union, the qualified agreement, no longer allowed us to have the *Bundesversammlung* in the western sectors of Berlin. This was the major concession in this part of the qualified agreement....

Sir Christopher Audland

Also committee meetings of the Bundestag –

Hermann Freiherr von Richthofen

Committee meetings of the Bundestag. Where Egon Bahr negotiations in Moscow are concerned, they terminated with the so-called Bahr Paper, but we had a coalition government and Walter Scheel had a great merit and also Carl Gustav Fleischhauer for the debt of German unity as you may recall. And what is important is the end result of the treaty, but there is no connection between a kind of repair in the Moscow Treaty and the Quadripartite Agreement; both were part of the overall strategy that I described. That was the connection.

Sir Christopher Audland

I think you gained the impression that I had said that we stopped the Bahr negotiations but the negotiation I was talking about were the access negotiations, not the Moscow Treaty.

Hermann Freiherr von Richthofen

Because Egon Bahr had started, as I said, the negotiations on the *Verkehrsvertrag*, which was not the Transit Agreement. And of course the GDR tried to exploit this and the Allies stopped the talks on the Communications Treaty.

Eckhard Lübkemeier

My name is Eckhard Lübkemeier**,** the Deputy Head of the German Mission in London. I was wondering if you could elaborate, having been together with the Soviets/Russians for so many months, on their motivations. What actually was in it for them? Because it seemed to me that in a rather short period of time – and this was still in the Cold War Era – they were forthcoming to strike a deal. And I would assume that some in the GDR were not amused about what was going on. So what was the Russian motivation? Why were they so flexible, as forthcoming as they turned out to be? What is your reading about this? And then I was struck by Mr. von Richthofen's introductory remark. If I understood you correctly, you said the ultimate objective of all this was German reunification. As you know, we have had a discussion in Germany, and a controversial one at that, about whether in fact this was still the ultimate objective goal driving German policy at the time. So I would ask you, was this in fact the clear objective set by the political authorities to the officials, or was it your reading that this was still the ultimate objective of German policy at the time: that we do this with the clear sight on the ultimate objective and this being the reunification of Germany as part of a European peaceful settlement of all the issues? And my third remark would be, how was this helped in fact by the strategic negotiations going on between the two superpowers at the time, the SALT negotiations for example, was this preparing the climate, the environment conducive to the negotiations on the issues that actually you were dealing with at the time?

Hermann Freiherr von Richthofen

I will begin by answering your first question. Kvitsinsky was 33 when he became Deputy Head of the Third European Department in the Soviet Foreign Ministry. He had been through university; thereafter he was posted to East Berlin. He saw that if you wanted to have better relations in Central Europe you could no longer treat the GDR as an occupied territory. Gromyko's position was the opposite; he was the old generation. They were the followers of Molotov and Stalin. They had a completely different way of thinking. It's maybe

a parallel between Putin and Medvedev now in Russia. And fortunately the young generation was falling somewhere between the two generations and was brought to success. I think that's one explanation. The second is that I did not say the unification of Germany was the ultimate goal of the negotiations, but the subtlety of our legal positions, which remained unaffected, was that we kept open the possibility of ending the German problem with the unification of Germany. And both Willy Brandt and Egon Bahr at the time were strong believers in Germany unity. But this had to be done in stages, maybe for a long, long period, and that was the first step. So that was very clear for both, it was very clear for us; we would not have dreamt that within twenty years we could really solve the German question. Fortunately we were able to do it. That was the situation when we negotiated the Eastern treaties and the Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin, Inner-German treaties and so on, and I would like to give Willy Brandt and Walter Scheel high credit for the far-sightedness of their courageous policy, which was so attacked by the CDU/CSU opposition at the time which, in the end, abstained in the Bundestag.

Sir Christopher Audland

A sentence or two on the first question. I refer to the discussion over the last two days about the general feeling of the top level in the USSR and in the USA that it was a time of détente. I think in that context you can see it.

Sir Christopher Mallaby

Could I add something to this? I was the Desk Officer to the Soviet Union in the Foreign Office at the time. And in fact I remember when you were on your way to your posting in Bonn, you came to see me and asked whether I thought there was any hope – any reason to hope – that the Russians would actually negotiate seriously about Berlin. And I thought so. Looking back on it, I think they had two purposes. One was the broad one that Christopher Audland has referred to, namely that they wanted détente, they wanted Central Europe to become safer, and doing something to stabilise it, to take the sting out of the Berlin situation, was in their interest for that very Berlin reason. But a much wider thing was the effect on them of the linkage that the West was making on a number of the elements in the negotiations constituting détente. They were looking particularly – the Russians – for some solidification, some strengthening of the status quo in Central Europe, meaning basically the status of the GDR. And they could look for some of that through the Germany negotiations. They got something there, not as much as they would have wanted, but we conceded something. And they were looking for it later in what they were then calling the European Security Conference, where of course, under basket one of Helsinki, they again got something, but not nearly, nearly as much as they wanted. The skill of Western diplomacy was that we got them to concede things before they knew that we were not going to concede other things.

Sir Nicholas Bayne

Are you satisfied? Any more questions?

Sir Christopher Audland

I just wanted to add something, to make a comment on what Dr. Geppert said. It seems to me that there was a certain ambivalence – perhaps ambivalence is the wrong word – a certain concern amongst all three Western Allies about the speed – once again we're going

through this question of pace and so forth – with which Bahr and Brandt seemed to be approaching the business of getting a détente with the Soviet Union. There had, after all, been a long period of stagnation in a way connected with the Hallstein Doctrine; the British government was very pleased that Willy Brandt was going to try to do something about that, and Ambassador Jean Sauvagnargues was thoroughly in favour of him and his policy. But there were those, the warning voices in the Foreign Office, who were saying, look this could go too far, as has already been mentioned in discussion, and the Germans may give up some of their rights if we're not careful. And this is where this question of the intervention by the British Embassy in Moscow comes in. In fact, he was only speaking on behalf also of the other two Allied embassies, in the sense that they hadn't had the same sort of instructions that he'd received from London, from the new Foreign Secretary at the time. So I think it was just unfortunate that this particular demand that was being made had been made from an early stage, that the Germans should get some sort of written clear commitment by the Soviet government to the Allied rights in Berlin, that this should be part of this Moscow Treaty, which of course the Russians didn't want to accept because they said this is a treaty between us and the Germans.

Sir Nicholas Bayne

Christopher, can you comment on this too in your position as Soviet Desk Officer?

Sir Christopher Mallaby

No, not really.

Sir Christopher Audland

I'm going to work backwards. From the moment the Bonn study had been approved by the Allied FRG Minister, there was no problem whatever between the Allies and the FRG, honestly. Up to that point, I wasn't too much in the picture and so that I can't answer about the earlier stages.

Sir Nicholas Bayne

Was that after the ...

Sir Christopher Audland

…it was written in May 1970, yes, and the treaty was not signed until August.....

Hermann Freiherr von Richthofen

Well, I would like to say, of course, the Moscow Treaty was the first one, and I only arrived in Bonn after it had been signed. The consultation was not as good as it was for the Warsaw Treaty because the Allies found that they were not well enough informed. And not well enough included. And so progress was made to use the Bonn Group to consult also on these treaties in a proper way. In the later stages there were again complaints by the Three Powers that they were not involved well enough in Inner-German negotiations. And a working group was installed in the Federal Chancellery, which I had the honour to chair after Hanno Bräutigam, to guarantee that there was a close link from the Federal Chancellery on Inner-

German relations to the Auswärtiges Amt and the Bonn Group. And we never ever had problems then.

Sir Frank Berman

And I think I want to add that that particular time – you will remember and Sir Christopher will too – was a time of great tension in German politics, and leaking to the press was endemic. Every single day one read in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine* or *Die Welt* something that had gone on. And therefore there's a lot of sensitivity over consultation. One of the enormous virtues of the Bonn Group is that I don't think that any leak ever emanated from the closest of consultations in the Bonn Group. And that in the end must be one of the factors leading and encouraging the German government to use the Bonn Group as a focus group for wider consultation.

Sir Nicholas Bayne

You may have heard someone mention that jokes and limericks and ditties were spread around the Bonn Group, so I am going to keep you from your tea just a couple of minutes more while your panel recites to you the Bonn Group Ditty. I warn you it has six verses and apologies are due to A.A. Milne. Are you ready colleagues?

BONN GROUP DITTY

1. Rush, Rush,
Sauvagnargues, Sauvagnargues,
Jackling, KCMG
Took great
Care of the Chancellor
Though they were only three.
Rush, Rush,
Jackling and Sauvagnargues
Said to Herr Brandt: 'Don't cuss;
But you'll never get far
With the GDR
Without consulting us.

2. Brandt, Brandt,
Federal Chancellor
Wanted a deal on Berlin.
Rush, Rush,
Jackling and Sauvagnargues
Hardly knew where to begin.
Rush, Rush,
Jackling and Sauvagnargues
Said to the Bonn Group: 'You
Must leave your wives
And devote your lives
To telling us what to do'.

3. Dean, Dean,
Lustig and Audland
Talked with Van Well every day.
Then they
Told the Ambassadors
All that they had to say.
Rush, Rush,
Jackling and Sauvagnargues
Weren't in the least impressed.
They said: 'You next
Must produce a text
And then we'll tackle the rest'.

4. Dean, Dean,
Lustig and Audland
Sat with the Russians all night.
They soon
Wrote an agreement
But couldn't get everything right.
Dean, Dean,
Lustig and Audland
Told their Ambassadors: 'See!
We just put in lots
Of convenient dots
Whenever we couldn't agree'.

5. Rush, Rush,
Jackling and Sauvagnargues
Felt it was time for the crunch
Rush, Rush,
Jackling and Sauvagnargues
Wanted to finish by lunch.
Rush, Rush,
Jackling and Sauvagnargues
Whispered to Abrasimov:
'Just get the word go
From old Gromyko
And we'll very soon polish this off'.

6. Rush, Rush,
Jackling and Sauvagnargues
Settled with Abrasimov.
They then
Said to the Chancellor:
'Now you can talk to Herr Stoph.
You may
Think our agreement
May not be worth all the fuss.
But you'd not have got far
With the GDR
Without consulting us!'

FOURTH PANEL

THE BRITISH MEDIA AND GERMANY

Jackson Janes

So now for the proverbial '*Ausdauer*', or endurance, for the rest of the afternoon. I don't know all of you so I'll introduce myself as Jack Janes. I'm from Washington. I run a think tank on German-American affairs. Some of you know the institute (the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies) but I'd be happy to tell you more about it if you're interested. The discussion that we've had so far with all of you has been enormously interesting as far as watching how the process went. And those of you in the room who drove it. And a lot of it happened behind closed doors. Which of course, when we were just hearing the panel before us, was saying how incredibly important it was that there were no leaks to the press. Well the fact is, that in an atmosphere of all of these last years, the press and the media of course did play a role as far as setting up the atmosphere for the decisions that were then handed down. And I think we wanted to take a look, in this final panel, to see what the larger tapestry, in which all of this took place, looked like. And what was in fact, the level, or shall we say parameters, of decision making that you, as those of you who are making these decisions, were facing? And what in fact, in this case particularly, was the British media doing when it was presenting what they were seeing happening around them, be it before 1989 or '90 or certainly afterwards? We wanted to take a look at that. And I have to say that the Institute was founded in 1983 in Washington on the basis of the fact that the German Democratic Republic was a great black hole. There was nothing of any interest in the GDR when we got started back in '83, but the Institute was created on the basis of the fact that we saw two Germanies talking to each other after the double-track decision in a way that we found very interesting. And little did we know that five years later that would be a different scene in a different climate, but nevertheless that's how we started. And I think it might be safe to say that the presence of the GDR in the media, certainly in the United States, was minimal during these years.

First of all we're going to hear from Professor Howarth, who's an expert on the subject, as to how we can evaluate the role, shall we say the relevancy, of the GDR in the British media and how it was presented. We're then going to move over and listen to someone who's been here for two decades plus, Jürgen Krönig, who works for *Die Zeit* now and talks from his German perspective about what he evaluated the British were saying about his own country, but also talking about what maybe in retrospect how that impacted the way Germans talked about the British, especially around the time of 1990-91. And I would hope that in the course of those two exchanges that we also get your own input from your own experiences with this. And then finally we'll turn to David Marsh, who's going to talk about the economic backdrop to the discussions that were being held. We heard a little bit earlier about the fact that there were concerns that this was going to be enormously expensive, there were going to be a trillion marks or a trillion Euros perhaps spent on this whole project, and how that debate about how the ripple effect of unification might affect the economic situation, not only I think in Germany, but certainly throughout the EU and well beyond. So we're going to kind of layer this discussion. And we hope that we will engage with you at the end. We have no ditties yet, although David said he's promising me he'll deliver one later. So we will come back at the end and hope that we will draw your experiences as to what you were reading, what you were seeing, and I was particularly intrigued by the fact that someone said earlier how important it was that the press should not get the leaks, but they got them in some ways or another. The question is how did that shape the debate, the decisions, that you all had to make as you watched the press shape the atmosphere of Germany as well as

in Britain. So that's how we're going to start and we're going to ask Marianne to shove us off the shore.

Marianne Howarth

Thank you. I'd like to start also by thanking Dr. Trotnow and colleagues from the Allied Museum for this invitation. I feel very privileged because I am not a veteran in the way that all the other speakers have been. Nor was I an activist or a journalist, as my colleagues here on the platform are. But I was in my way an academic activist. I started my academic career at Coventry University, where the relationship with Dresden in the general context of reconciliation was a very, very important one for the city. And it was there that I started to research and then to teach on the GDR. I have to say – as I said to Jack earlier on – I was ploughing a very lonely furrow for quite some time and after recognition I actually rather switched my allegiance away from the GDR – this is towards the end of the '70s – and I started to do a final-year module on relations between the two German states, and it was the most popular module that we offered in the languages department at Coventry at the time. After unification, I had many letters from former students saying how much better they felt able to understand what had happened. I have to say, we also discussed was there ever going to be reunification and basically our view was that unless the Soviet Union played the reunification card, not in our lifetime.

I left Coventry in 1988 to take up a more senior position at the University of Brighton, and in November 1989 I was actually in Vienna leading a seminar for teachers of English – you had to be very versatile at Brighton. Now Vienna was actually where I was when the Wall went up – I was still at school. And it was quite clear in 1989 that change was in the air. This was said yesterday, I think, that everybody knew something was going to happen, nobody knew what. Now my family was not affected by the division of Germany, but it was affected by the division of Europe because my grandfather, as a very young man at the turn of the twentieth century, had come to the UK from what was then Bohemia, and he was the only member of his family to leave there, and we have and had a large family in what was then Czechoslovakia. And in 1969 a set of relatives defected to Vienna. And they had no English at the time and it was some time before we had any contact with them. But I was the principal channel of communication because by then they had German and obviously so did I. And – just to sort of finish off this bit – the night before German unification, before the Wall came down – I phoned my cousin and his wife – I didn't have time to see them, but we did have time for a telephone chat – and I remember saying, because we were talking about what was going on in Czechoslovakia, your turn next. And we didn't know what we meant, but we all agreed: your turn next. So thank you for allowing me that.

I've been asked to talk about the British press and the GDR, and I've given myself a subtitle of "curiosity and condemnation" because there was more condemnation than curiosity, but there was some of the latter. I don't think it's going to come as a surprise to anybody to know that over the forty years of its existence, the GDR didn't enjoy a good press in Britain. And British press coverage was generally hostile and critical, and the image of the GDR portrayed to British public opinion was very largely a negative one. And the reasons are obvious: it's a combination of Cold War politics where an anti-GDR position formed part of a broader anti-Soviet stance. An enduring sense of moral outrage at the existence of the Berlin Wall, with all its anti-humanitarian implications and a deep – and as it happens well-founded – suspicion of GDR international sporting success.

Now there were some exceptions to this at different times. So for example, during the late 1950s, large numbers of Labour backbenchers were invited to visit the GDR. And on their return some of them published positive reports on social and economic development in the

British national press. A lot of this was actually linked with the trade interests that some of these Labour MPs had. I don't have time to go into the very extensive press campaign mounted by the Sunday Telegraph from 1960-1962, which had in its sights the commercial interests of Labour MPs with the GDR – but not only Labour MPs; there was one sole conservative as well. These reports attracted hostile reactions from readers in the British press. But they attracted more attention actually outside Britain, more in West Germany, and it was a source of considerable tension between the UK and the Federal Republic. For a short time following the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1972-73 and in the conditions of East-West détente, British public opinion proved itself more receptive to positive press coverage of the GDR. Jonathan Steele, the East European correspondent of the Guardian, commented favourably on GDR social and economic development. And in fact, he used those reports as the basis of an extremely well-received book that came out in I think it was '77, called '*Socialism with a German Face*'. And also GDR cultural achievements, especially in literature and film, attracted some admiring attention in specialist circles, but the GDR was awfully good at shooting itself in the foot. The decision to deprive Wolf Biermann of his citizenship in '76 and the associated storm of protest by writers and artists and intellectuals did little to improve the GDR's image in Britain. And finally, in the late or second half of the 1980s, the activities of the fledgling East German peace movement generally received sympathetic press coverage, partly because it was seen to represent a new form of opposition to the regime. But I have to say that in the overall history of the GDR such instances were relatively few and far between.

The building of the Berlin Wall effectively prevented the promotion of a positive media image in Britain and British press curiosity as to the development of the other German state. While it did remain a feature of British press coverage of the GDR, it was located within a position of profound and enduring distaste for the regime and its politics, especially in relation to the lack of freedom of movement, the treatment of dissidents and the shoot-to-kill policy. Even when the Wall came down, there was no mourning in the British press for the demise of the GDR and there was little by way of sorrowful reflection on any of its achievements. Instead the British press found a new and equally enduring object of loathing: the Stasi. In life, in death and beyond the grave, it seems that the image of the GDR in Britain would always be a tarnished one.

I am going to give you some examples later of both the curiosity and the condemnation, but before I do, I'd like to say just a brief word about the conditions under which British journalists operated in the GDR, both before and after recognition. The GDR, as you will appreciate, was always very sensitive to press reporting and sought to keep reporters at arm's length. Before the building of the Berlin Wall, correspondents based in Bonn or Berlin had relative, not full, but relative freedom of movement within Berlin, but access to other areas was very restricted, and deliberately so. However, there were two or three exceptions. First of all, the GDR was prepared to grant accreditation to correspondents of the Communist Party newspapers of the Western European Communist Parties. And from very early on, The Daily Worker – The Morning Star, as it became – had a correspondent in the GDR. It didn't do it as much good though as the GDR had hoped because after 1956 the relationship between the SED and the Communist Party of Great Britain deteriorated quite a lot and The Daily Worker wasn't very interested in publishing reports on the wonderful socialist achievements of the GDR. And this caused considerable dismay in Berlin, especially as the SED was actually paying the salary of the correspondents at the time and there were threats to expel him; it didn't come to that. It just seemed incredibly ironic, you know, you've got your man in place and then the paper he's working for doesn't cover you. The other source of information, a regular source of information, from a quasi-British perspective from 1952-1975, was John Peet's Democratic German Report. Now I don't know how many of you will know about that, but John Peet was a very, very experienced English journalist.

He'd been Reuter's West Berlin Bureau Chief and defected to East Berlin in 1950. And from 1952 he published a free fortnightly newssheet in English. Obviously it wasn't a British publication; it was fully funded by the GDR and it was often little more than a mouthpiece for the regime. But it was, despite all that, really quite successful. It was originally conceived as a source of information for Western journalists. But it rapidly developed much wider circulation to trade unionists, MPs and teachers. I believe I may be the only academic in the UK who actually ever interviewed John Peet and he told me that his subscriber list included the Director of Naval Intelligence, which sheds interesting light.

Now, as I said, before Peet defected he'd been chief of the Reuter's bureau in West Berlin, but in May 1959 Reuters opened an office in East Berlin. Peter Johnson, who was then a Reuters correspondent in Bonn, was sent to East Berlin for six months to set up the office and pave the way for his successor. And Peter Johnson has written two very interesting memoirs of his period, one relating to his Bonn experience and the other to his East Berlin posting. Johnson describes the timing of this appointment as very significant for the competitive advantage that Reuters was going to have over other Western news agencies: because of the lack of telephone connections between West and East Berlin, having a teleprinter with a direct line to the West from the GDR was really a significant advantage. One of the interesting things that he mentions is that they were expecting surveillance, but he didn't know the extent of it until after he got his Stasi file in 1990. And it's full of revelations, including the fact that the Stasi had rented the flat adjacent to his office in Schönhauser Allee.

So with the opening of the Reuters office, you had the Daily Worker correspondent, John Peet, and Reuters, and that was about it. It was with the Reuters appointment of course that the press presence was strengthened, but it was still very minimal. And you might expect that the opening of the British Embassy in 1973, which obviously provided British journalists with access to an official British presence in the GDR, you might expect that things would have improved. But they didn't. In March 1973, the GDR authorities, clearly very anxious to restrict the extent of Western journalistic activity – and predominantly West German journalistic activity within the GDR – passed what the Times described as "a highly restrictive decree." And under the terms of this decree, foreign correspondents had to be resident in the GDR in order to be accredited. They would be able to travel freely within the GDR, save in certain border areas, but their visits had to be approved in advance. Their reports had to be lodged with the Foreign Ministry and if they did not comply with East German regulations they ran the risk of being expelled and having their offices closed, as happened to *Der Spiegel* in the mid 1970s. So, in fact post-recognition, the British press presence did not increase significantly. And you mentioned the lack of interest in the U.S. media in the GDR, and I would say that certainly the time you were talking about, towards the end of the '80s – much the same was the case for Britain – but, in the early days of the diplomatic relationship the Fleet Street editors obviously took the view that the GDR was much of an unknown quantity. And I want to give you just a flavour, a very brief flavour of some of the things that were carried in The Times at the time.

Richard Davy, one of Britain's most experienced commentators on Germany, wrote an article in May 1973, so just three months after the formal establishment of diplomatic relations. And he described the early signs of cultural relaxation evidenced *inter alia* by the staging of Ulrich Plenzdorf's *Die neuen Leiden des jungen W*. And he concluded: "It's too soon to speak of a thaw. And much of the debate seems exciting only in comparison with the aridity which preceded it, but the regime is clearly trying to explore new ground." In another article he talked about, and with some sympathy, the impact on the GDR of increased personal contact; we were talking about this earlier on today, the personal contact between West and East Germans. And he said, "personal contacts are certainly growing. They're supplemented by letters, television and radio. The two populations are scarcely strangers to each other. This is difficult for East Germany, which claims the right to submit its citizens to continuous

education in socialism. Exposure to the decadent morals, material temptations and political confusion of capitalism presents a challenge which is stimulating in its way, but are not always easy to cope with."

Now, so far so good. But a year later the relationship or the portrayal of the GDR in the British press was to take a significant downturn. And I just want to talk, again very briefly, about this for the impact this had on the way in which British relations – British diplomatic relations with the GDR – were developing at the time. The incident was the arrest and subsequent imprisonment of two British nationals for their part in helping East German citizens to escape. Allan Watson had been arrested at the border with West Germany and sentenced to four and a half years' imprisonment on 31 May 1974. And Susan Ballantine, the second one, was arrested the day after Watson had been sentenced, this time at the border between West Berlin and East Germany. She was sentenced to five years' imprisonment on 18 September 1974. Her arrest, the circumstances surrounding her trial, and the severity of her sentence were all the subject of the extensive and often hostile reporting in the British press. In particular the delays in securing consular access, the unwillingness of the GDR authorities to specify the precise nature of the charges against her, the conduct of the trial in secret and the refusal to allow either British Embassy officials or her parents to be present in the courtroom until sentence was passed, all combined to create a view of the GDR as a ruthless violator of the UN Charter on Human Rights, both in relation to the two British nationals and to its own people, preventing their freedom of movement.

The pressure of press and public opinion in Britain led Harold Wilson as Prime Minister to send a personal letter to Horst Sindermann in which he stated, "I am confident that an act of clemency would contribute greatly to relations between our two countries, which have been developing favourably since the establishment of diplomatic relations." To no avail. Wilson did not receive a reply for many weeks and Curtis Keeble, Britain's first Ambassador to the GDR, was left in no doubt by the East German Foreign Ministry, "that in the view of the exceptional smear campaign against the GDR in the British mass media, there was no basis for a sympathetic examination of the request for clemency." Now Susan Ballantine was actually released in December 1974 and Allan Watson in March 1975. But the role of the press did remain a thorny issue in the bilateral relationship, and part of that was to do with the way in which the GDR was reporting Britain. Of course, one of the ironies is that what British newspapers were saying about the GDR was hardly read in the GDR – at least not by those on Karl-Marx-Allee – and likewise *Neues Deutschland* was not read in Britain. So in a sense all this fuss was kind of about nothing.

But East Germany's *Neues Deutschland* was presenting a very negative view of Britain to its readers. Partly, I am sure, or probably predominantly, as a counterweight to the influence of the BBC German Service, which was broadcasting from West Berlin and which targeted some of its programmes specifically at East German audiences, and which was widely listened to. But nonetheless, this caused a rift, or it struck a raw nerve with the British Embassy in East Berlin, and when Sir Curtis Keeble took his leave as Britain's first Ambassador to the GDR in January 1976, he was reported by GDR sources as complaining about GDR press reporting of Britain – what an amazing reversal – with its focus on unemployment, slums and crises. And he contrasted this with what he regarded as the efforts of the British press to present a better image of the GDR than had been the case in the past and went on to regret the cold peace that now characterised Britain's relationship with the GDR.

Now the only other time that there was really a lot of coverage of the GDR in the British press prior to the opening of the Wall was in 1985 with Sir Geoffrey Howe's visit, and there the coverage was very much focused on the role of human rights and Sir Geoffrey Howe's call to use the Helsinki Final Act as a trumpet call to bring down barriers. It was less focused

on the internal development of the GDR. And in terms of the press attention given to the GDR at that time I think it was something of a high point; there was really nothing like it again until November 1989. And indeed in November 1989, the exit of large numbers of refugees in the summer and the increasingly loud voice of protest of those remaining – obviously it was welcomed and admired in the British press, but it also confirmed the press in its condemnation of the GDR and its hated Wall.

So just to finish, I think it's too early to draw too many conclusions about British press reporting of the GDR; there hasn't been a full-scale academic study of it yet and whether there will be I don't know. But I think it is quite interesting to look at the legacy of the GDR in the British media today. I have done this very, very unscientifically; I've just looked at all the newspapers that come into our house over a fortnight's period and tried to summarise that. But I think it's reasonably valid. The impression I get is that the impression of the GDR in the media today – and I'm saying media to include TV – is a curious mixture of repression and surveillance based on what we now know about the Stasi on the one hand, and promotion of opportunities to travel to the former GDR following the unification of Germany on the other. Recent media attention includes the serious and the factual, such as the recent two-part BBC World Service programme on the enduring legacy of East German doping of athletes for the Olympic movement. Don't know whether anybody else heard that; very, very interesting. But it also includes the entirely fictional storyline of a former Stasi informant as featured in a recent episode of *Louis*, *Inspector Morse's* successor. Now these really enduringly negative images sit alongside the glowing recommendations for visits to the New Berlin. I was interested to see that you had also alighted on the feature in the FT, Saturday before last, that one of the things about the recommendations for visiting New Berlin is that there is barely a trace of the Wall. The Wall has kind of disappeared from press coverage in a rather strange way. But the recommendations don't just…it's not just Berlin, it's historic sights…museums of Weimar and Dresden and the unspoiled coastlines of the Baltic. In 1974, one of *Neues Deutschland*'s more exaggerated claims was that East Germany is enjoying rapidly increasing popularity and "thousands of British tourists" visit that country. Well, perhaps now they're beginning to have some credence.

Jackson Janes

If you wait long enough! Thank you very much. It's very interesting that there is no academic treatise at this point of the subject so we hopefully will maybe…

Marianne Howarth

There has been a German PhD on coverage of 1989-1994 in British broadsheets, but that's about the only study that has come out thus far.

Jackson Janes

Maybe that will come from you. Jürgen you've been here for, well, since '85-'86, if I remember, and you worked before you started with *Die Zeit* in radio and TV. My experience over here back and forth has always been that there's been some German, West German, grumbling about the way the German press has treated Germany well before '89. I remember Boris Becker being sort of pictured as the bomber from Germany with his tennis racket.

Jürgen Krönig

Quite affectionate.

Jackson Janes

Quite affectionate. Well, whatever the case may be, but I mean one of the points that she made was interesting in the sense that the GDR was complaining of a smear campaign. One would think that the West German media would have liked that. But you've been here long enough to know what drives the German media – and the British media – when it comes to covering your country as well as the GDR, so tell us about it.

Jürgen Krönig

I would like to start in the spirit of this meeting: Where were you when the Wall came down? I was in a hotel room in Blackpool listening to Jeremy Paxman's introduction to *News Night*. And what he said was quite interesting; he said, tonight Germany dominates the headlines as it will dominate in future Europe. Jeremy Paxman on the eve of the fall of the Wall. You could say that this is one of the many misjudgements that coloured the relationship between our two nations. I would like to give you a German example from the nineteenth century: Heinrich Heine was asked, where would you like to be when the world comes to the end? And he said in England because everything there happens 100 years later. What an astonishing statement by one of our great writers because it's so awfully wrong, because it confuses substance with form. One could regard the United Kingdom or England as a test laboratory of history: here democracy evolved first, the bloody birth of capitalism, the Industrial Revolution, happened here, and now in recent decades we saw the strange birth of mass media democracy, evolving into a hybrid form of representative and direct democracy in which the masses have gained power and the media are tools of power for the masses. By the way, this significantly changed the job of Ambassadors because we have seen public diplomacy; in today's language you could say that Ambassadors are major spin doctors for their governments. They've always been that, but behind closed doors, so this is a significant change, but I will come back to this later.

I would like to characterise the relationship between our two countries in the last three decades in three periods. The 1980s were the golden age of British-German relations. Diplomats talked about the quiet alliance; the Germans were regarded to be the best friends of the British in Europe; every opinion poll confirmed this, despite all kinds of television shows, which poked fun at the Germans or confirmed well established stereotypes, such as *Hello Hello or Hogan's Heroes*, as well as a never ending flood of documentaries about Nazis and WW2. All the hallmarks, all the elements, of unfriendly treatment by the mass media were there, but nevertheless, the Germans during the eighties were still seen to be Britain's best friends in Europe. All in all the press coverage in this period was very friendly. Of course, under the surface, occasionally one could notice a bit of grumbling.

I remember a reception in the military mission in Berlin in 1987. I had travelled with a group of prospective conservative MPs through West and East Germany. They were mightily impressed by West Germany's economic power. And they were equally impressed by East Germany's alleged economic power and the social façade they were shown. As a consequence, their perception of Germany changed. (Many of these future members of Parliament would later become cabinet members). German unification was at that time not a topic of operational politics, it was a purely theoretical notion, something it was easy to be in favour of, because it was anyhow far away, not something seriously to worry about. But the encounter with two German states and their real or alleged economic power turned the

majority of this group of politicians firmly against the idea of German unification, and they expressed their their worries about a unified Germany to one of the diplomats at the British Military Mission in Berlin. His answer: don't worry, we are here to maintain the status quo. He didn't know that I was listening. I was the only journalist. He thought I was a prospective Conservative MP as well.

The second period were the 1990s, the *annus horribilis not only of* the Queen. It's the decade *horribilis* of German-British relations. It became obvious that the good Germans in the eyes of the British political class had been the divided Germans. The positive attitude in Britain changed after the day of unification. The "German problem", so the unofficial term used in the Foreign Office, was back with a vengeance. This surprising development hit the British especially hard because they didn't expect it to happen or did they see it coming. While the French foreign policy and international European policy was always geared – defined – by the fear of the German nightmare returning, while the British thought it had been solved once and for all, through division and the two German states being bound in two opposing military alliances; when this post war system collapsed, they were extremely worried. In the press and among elected officials, stories and opinions resurfaced and were expressed clearly and loudly – opinion which were of course always there but not necessary to be expressed. For instance, opinions such as, that the Germans were dangerous and unpredictable, or, in the words of *Granta*, a left-leaning cultural magazine: what is it about this nation, that it is so ugly, so predictable, so dangerous? I could give you endless quotes coming mainly from intellectuals on the left and the right, occasionally taken up by tabloids. But these hostile, negative perceptions and opinions about Germany came mostly from intellectuals. It is important to keep this in mind because it has become generally accepted that nasty tabloids and ghastly mass-circulation papers were the real culprits for poisoning the relationship between our two nations. They were not. There is another telling quote from Martha Gellhorn, a well known writer, who expressed in a column in the *Daily Mail*, that there was something profoundly worrying about Germany being so unstable. She concluded that the Germans must have a gene loose. A topic which appeared in the writings and musings of historians like Andrew Roberts, John Charmley and others who said Germany would never be a normal nation, that the Germans seem to be prone to fall for evil, given the right circumstances. This was a minority opinion of course; there were many positive counter opinions, but the theme of the unpredictable German character, played out in the famous Chequers seminar of 1989, was quite dominant at that time. Tristan Garel-Jones, Minister of State in the Foreign Office, once asked, 'Who is afraid of Germany?', providing a long list with Thatcher and Kohl at the top, of course referring to fears of the German unpredictable character in the German Left as well. And not only in the German Left, as we can see with Helmut Kohl. And this fear expressed itself in the resistance of elements of the German Left against unification, inside and outside the SPD: "*Nie wieder Deutschland*."[19]

During the nineties, German Ambassadors tried their best to point out deficits in the English curriculum. They complained that pupils were not getting a realistic picture of Germanys mutation into a peaceful democracy because they were only studying the Second World War. After 1990, the national curriculum involved the Second World War and the Holocaust, which of course doesn't create a positive feeling towards Germany. So all these things came together.

I would like to move forward to the present decade. Things got much quieter. The reasons are that the fear about Germany, Germany's power, the "Fourth Reich", the giant in the centre of Europe, didn't materialise. It might ironically materialize now. Secondly, Germany proved to be a rather wimpy nation; it does not really want to fight, and it complained about

[19] "Germany never again."

Iraq and Afghanistan; we want to trade with all sorts of regimes, but not fight. After 9/11 it came to a major shift in British public opinion; the new dangers were totalitarian Islam and Jihad terrorism. Opinions about immigrants changed as well. Polish immigrants were all in all seen as positive, in contrast, for instance, to dark-skinned immigrants from Muslim countries, from Pakistan or Bangladesh. So this helped of course to quiet down fears of Germany and Germans as well.

I would like to close with three points. First, the stereotypes. There's always this complaint about unfair stereotypes and clichés and of course we know that there is always an element of truth in stereotypes and clichés; they developed over centuries and are here to stay anyhow. If you have seen German tourists abroad you know that they really do go and reserve the best places at the beach. Secondly, it has become an accepted fact that mass circulation tabloid papers were responsible for the negativity. The best example is the *Daily Mirror*'s headline for the 1996 European Championship – 'The declaration of war" – tasteless perhaps, but it was meant to be a joke and was not really meant in this hostile way it is interpreted nowadays.

And finally, German clichés about Britain: in the course of the 1990s, the German press and the media became much more hostile and changed its perception about Britain and the British. They, in the spirit of Heine, had seen Britain as an eccentric, slightly quaint, old-fashioned nation that loved its tea and its monarchy and its traditions. But this changed then dramatically, partly as a result of the negative, hostile media coverage coming from Britain during 1990. The German media discovered the ugly Anglo Saxon: heartless, cold, warrior-like, and of course this was as wrong as the first quaint British image. Tony Blair mutated inside a few years in the majority of German papers from a farsighted left of centre moderniser into a kind of caricature: half Christian fundamentalist, half mad. It was astonishing to see this sort of sudden dramatic shift in public perception in Germany's media. So I close here because there will be many questions and so on. Thank you.

Jackson Janes

It's a good segue to get into David's particular point about the economic backdrop, but I think just to throw this out before we move on: you know the accusations about Anglo Saxon capitalism in the last few years have been extremely present in the German press. But before I get to you David, let me just ask one question. In those years before we get to the 2000 period, post 9/11, was it the fact that the GDR's negative image, which you, Professor Howarth, describe so well, enhanced the attitude toward all of Germany? I mean, did they kind of synergise? There was obviously a very critical view of the GDR the whole time, but did that overlap, did that reinforce, did that give strength to a criticism in the 1990s of Germany?

Jürgen Krönig

It should have, but it didn't, as you can see in the fact that Jonathan Steele, from the Guardian, wrote a book, published in 1977, praising the GDR as an alternative model for a Socialist state, which contrasted to the social market economy of West Germany. And I would now like to sort of do a bit of *Nestbeschmutzung*[20] because *Die Zeit* sent a high-geared team of commentators, among them Theo Sommer and Gräfin Dönhoff and a few other sort of high-ranking commentators in 1987 to East Germany, to the GDR, and they praised this regime, the GDR, as becoming more and more legitimate and very stable and accepted

[20] A German term that means to foul one's own nest.

widely by the population. This just shows that certain sections here on the Left and in Germany on the liberal and Left part of media were easily taken in by wishful thinking.

Jackson Janes

Okay we'll come back to that. Thank you very much; so David, that's a good set up for you in the sense that we actually have somebody saying it in the 1980s: that was the high point, Jürgen arguing that it takes a nose dive after the 1990s. But what in your view – I don't know if you want to start with 1989 or if you want to go back further – what were the driving forces that affected the way that looking at Germany from here and also maybe reflected in the press, with which you were affiliated for so long. What were the drivers?

David Marsh

I do think that the answer is in the economics. And I think these three layers of history that Jürgen just described do have a lot to do with the economic power of Germany. Germany did seem to be harmless in the 1980s, and then it clearly came back onto the map in the 1990s. And it started to look harmless again in the 2000s, although that may change. But what I'd like to do is also just illustrate some of the themes that we've been hearing in the last couple of days, by a kind of interaction with economics. And it's clear that I've been very lucky in my life, as I was able to be in Germany as a journalist at a really important time. I really owe this to two of my distinguished predecessors at the *Financial Times* in Bonn, and Rupert Cornwell, the half brother of John Le Carré, and so on, has got a very literary bent to him, and also Jonathan Carr, who unfortunately recently died. They both decided that Bonn was such a boring place in 1986, and they both decided for different reasons. I was a correspondent then in Paris. I'd already worked in Bonn because I had joined Reuters; this makes me a long veteran of Reuters. I worked for Reuters in Germany in the 1970s and so I was able to go there and immediately slot in. I can remember going to the branch of the Dresdner Bank where I think I'd last been about six or seven years ago. "*Ach, Herr Marsh, Sie sind schon wieder da!*"[21]

This was a very good place to be. As soon as I got there things did start to move. The important point is that the economics did interact with the politics. Clearly the Gorbachev spell was starting to be wrought. But also the German economy, the West German economy, did start to pick up steam in 1986. Again, I was extraordinarily fortunate because the good thing about being a journalist is that you get to do some of the things that senior diplomats do, only you're twenty years younger. And you don't have, of course, a giant staff or anything like that. But I did manage to get quite close to Helmut Kohl. I did manage to annoy him quite a lot of the time. But I think it was a kind of grudging respect developed there. I was lucky too because I had the field slightly to myself. There weren't a lot of terribly able correspondents in Bonn at that time because everybody had more or less written it off. And I have to admit, I did ration myself a bit. I never once went to attend a Bundestag debate because I just thought that was going to be a waste of time. I did go to the Bundestag to interview people and things like that. But I'm always lucky to be in the right place at the right time. So I was in Köln with Helmut Kohl when the Wall fell, and I do remember just seeing how crestfallen and how thunderstruck he was at something so – not totally unexpected – but something which was clearly throwing into alarm his carefully made plans of a peacekeeping mission to Poland. He had to rush back, as everybody knows, to Berlin.

[21] "Ah, Mr. Marsh, you're back already!"

I was able to be in East Germany during that fateful time of the fortieth anniversary celebrations. In those days they didn't have much security, so when Honecker came to Germany I was able to accompany him and even chat to him as he walked around the Karl-Marx-Haus in Trier. You wouldn't really be allowed to do that kind of thing these days. But also I was able to get to know the Bundesbank; I'd already sat at the table of the Bundesbank in the 1970s. But again, nobody took the Bundesbank even the slightest bit seriously. It was me and a couple of other elderly journalists and my rival from AP Dow Jones, a young sporting man like myself; we literally had to run for the phones afterwards because of course in those days there were no mobile phones working like that. So I was able to really get to know Germany from an economic point of view, when I think there wasn't as much competition as there is these days.

I just want to say a few words about some of the underlying themes and also go back to some of the things that Charles was saying yesterday, but also focus a bit on the economic side in terms of rivalry. And I think it's absolutely true also what you said, Pauline, and also Michael, about the nature of the Franco-German relationship being very different from the British-German relationship. And I think it's also true that some of the disagreements that we've been talking about were carried out, if you like, at a more public level, because of Mrs. Thatcher and her own personality. And her own basic honesty, which we have heard a lot about. And I do think that there have been plenty of chances also to look at some of the underlying tensions in the relationship with France as well. And I just wanted to focus on one or two of those things and then end up with a point about monetary unity because this is very crucial to what's going to happen next.

Now it is true that some of the French reservations about German unification were less megaphoned than what we saw from Mrs. Thatcher. As I said yesterday, Mr. Mitterrand did actually foresee this happening; this is in the German and the French archives and so he did have, if you like, a fellow feeling for what was happening in Germany and what might happen with major weakness in the Soviet Union, long before many other analysts. But it is quite untrue that the Germans sort of bargained away the Deutschmark in exchange for unification. Unification was going to happen anyway. What happened was that the German government under Mr. Kohl used unification, if you like, as a catalyst to accelerate what conceivably might not have happened, i.e. the monetary unification of Europe. And as has been said before here, President Mitterrand used this as an additional lever to help the Germans to accept monetary unification of Europe, perhaps slightly more quickly than would otherwise have been the case. But what is significant is that the Germans significantly toughened their conditions for economic and monetary unity during the time when the Berlin Wall fell. And so the major disagreements between the French and the Germans actually took place before the fall of the Berlin Wall. We all remember that this was all inscribed into the Delors Report. Charles said yesterday that Mrs. Thatcher had hoped that by committing the whole monetary union project to a committee of wise men, the whole project would have been – to use his words from yesterday – kicked into the long grass. And think this was actually a plausible thought. Because Carlos Ripa di Meana, whose name has come up, was not in favour of this Delors Committee. And he did indeed think that he could become just a talking shop. But none of them reckoned with Jacques Delors, who gave this committee a rare shape and purpose, quite unlike the Werner Committee of twenty years previously. This was a committee with a real purpose and direction. Some of the disagreements about the independence of the European Central Bank were already prefigured in the Delors Report, well before the fall of the Berlin Wall. And some of the really brutal disagreements between France and Germany over the pace of the EU intra-governmental contracts was going to take place in 1990, took place, say, between Mr. Kohl and Mr. Mitterrand in Paris in October 1989 before the fall of the Wall. That all sharpened afterwards and there were extremely unpleasant, brutal scenes between the French and the

Germans. I know this because I've studied the French archives, which are there. They are available to be used. And I think they need to be put alongside the brilliant job that Patrick Salmon has done in terms of the archives that we have for what happened between Britain and Germany twenty years ago.

I do plead for this to be put into a slightly more dynamic European context, rather than just looking at it in terms of the bilateralism between Britain and Germany. Some of these disagreements were occult. I was absolutely staggered by finding out in the French archives almost demonic language: the talk of the tyranny of the mark. That was not invented by journalists; that was a phrase from official documents at the Banque de France. President Mitterrand in 1987 and 1988 said to his council of ministers that the German mark was the equivalent of the nuclear bomb, and he meant it not in an explosive sense but really that it was like the fruit of their labours just as the nuclear bomb had been the fruit of the Allies' victory in the Second World War. The Germans didn't have a nuclear bomb, but they had their strong economy. It was still pretty vitriolic language. And the phrases of people like Élisabeth Guigou played a very vital role behind the scenes: hegemony of the Germans, an air of dissatisfaction with the way the Germans were running the show in Europe with the Bundesbank in the 1980s. Now if all this was not making waves quite on the surface as it was with Mrs. Thatcher, but it was all there to be seen. And I think one of the faults I believe of Mrs. Thatcher during this unification time was to fail to see that there could have been some very valued cooperation with the French, precisely on that monetary side. And I think that was only seen too late.

Taking that forward now to the present, it was absolutely clear that Mitterrand did not want the independence of the European Central Bank. The Germans, as they toughened their attitude, toughened their preconditions, made it absolutely clear that this thing that the French had sought after for such a long time, i.e. that the Bundesbank would give up its power, would only be done if there was a new Bundesbank in Frankfurt, looking, smelling, feeling and acting very much like the Bundesbank, only with an even greater degree of independence. That was the German condition. Kohl, when he put forward that condition, didn't think the French would actually acquiesce in that. And Mitterrand did, against the advice of many of his ministers including Pierre Bérégovoy. But he said on many occasions – he had seen the records – I do not want an independent European Central Bank. He said if we have an independent European Central Bank, it will be dominated by the Germans and the Germans will dominate us. He said that on several occasions to various interlocutors. And so this explains also the fundamental ambivalence that we still do have.

Although, as has been made clear on many occasions, I'm not a fan of Mrs. Thatcher's views about Germany at the time of unification, I do think she had a point about whether the German would be stronger inside or outside some kind of a federal system. And I have to say the jury is still out on this.

It is clear that Mitterrand wanted to get back somehow control over the European Central Bank and he didn't succeed at that. Will the French play for the long game here? After all there's 22 or 23 people sitting round the table in Frankfurt every week to decide interest rates and only two are Germans. I know we're supposed to think of them all as Europeans but the fact is that only two of them are Germans. Because we will have an absolute battle royal over who will replace Jean-Claude Trichet as the head of the European Central Bank. I'm just intruding into the future for one small moment in a conference which has been dominated by the past and I do advise you to look at this because it has been, if you like, a self-denying prophecy that the Germans wouldn't go for that position as the head of the European Central Bank. And I myself thought only nine months ago that they didn't have a chance in hell, but so many senior Germans have told me just recently that they would like to have the head of the Bundesbank as the head of the European Central Bank. So I do think

that some of these old demons about what the French allegedly bargained away or didn't bargain away are going to come back to haunt us.

So my overriding point in all this is that I don't think we should think of the demonology of Germany and Germany's power and Germany's potential domination being something that is only shared by British politicians. It's absolutely clear that this goes very deep into the French psyche as well. I do take the point that Britain was slightly more disarming, naive, honest, whatever the word is, about admitting those worries and preconceptions. But I do think they are there, manifest in the body of the present friendship. And I do think that all the things that we've been talking about in the last day and a half of delightful conversations are going to be very, very relevant for the next couple years of the European economy as well. So thank you very much.

Jackson Janes

Thank you David. It's very difficult to come up with one question that kind of brings all of these contributions together but if I can just stick with you for a minute, David. You're about to have a new government in London and will that contribute more to the kinds of problems you're predicting?

David Marsh

I think all these governments in Europe are going to be very preoccupied with themselves. And I don't think that there's much demonology associated with Germany these days in the new conservatives. Pauline can tell us more about that. But I do think that the economic problems that we have at home, sorting that out, is absolutely crucial. Also I do think the world has moved on. I do think that Europe, for us in Britain, but maybe for the rest of Europe, has become less important, less relevant, less interesting. I do think the wider world, the challenges or opportunities of globalisation within Russian or Brazil, India, China are looming much, much larger than they were 20 years ago. And I think this helps us, if you like, to put into some kind of perspective both the threats and the opportunities of Europe. I do think that Europe has become actually less important for Britain but also for the rest of the world than it was 20 years ago.

Jackson Janes

Alright, on that note, let me ask if there's any…yes sir?

Rainer Hudemann

You compared the French and the British several times. I think the evolution occurred on the Mitterrand level much earlier than '89-'90, but in the French press this was often completely different. I think the French were sometimes rather badly informed by their press about Germany until 1990, for instance during the period of left-wing terrorism. And my impression of the French situation – this is my question to you – was that the fear and the power of the old stereotypes was so strong in 1990 that many more journalists than before ran into Germany to see whether the Germans would now start the next World War, or at least to see what else they would do, though the British press sometimes seemed even more critical. Consequently there were from then on many more French correspondents reporting from Germany, as you showed for Great Britain. And arriving in Germany – to be slightly ironic way – they were very astonished to discover that Germany had become a democratic

country since 1945, which they hadn't much realised before because of all these old demons. And after some years – I find your three periods very interesting, Mr. Krönig, and the economy of course played an important role –, I had the impression that this knowledge spread into broader national and regional newspapers in France, that it changed a lot of the old ideas and led to a certain normalisation, which might in fact be situated around 2000. And in the French polls, on the opinion level, Franco-German relations had had a much better status than in the press already well before 1990. How did you experience and rate these interactions in a comparative Franco-British perspective?

David Marsh

Well I think it is several things there. I agree with you that the lack of British journalists in Germany can be a problem in terms of luring knowledge. I had a bit of a row with *The Daily Mail* at the time. They kept writing articles that Germany was going to start a new war. I remember writing quite a number of postcards of decreasing length, I have to say, to a man called Andrew Alexander, whom some of you might know, who I get on quite well with these days... too conservative. And I said look, if Germany's going to start a war, you'd bloody well better have a correspondent here, hadn't you? And I think that's why that's automatic of the ignorance of the armchair reporter. One of the problems of the malaise of the press in general is that newspapers don't have the money to send reporters overseas, and it's a minor point about the French press in Frankfurt that there's nobody there to cover the European Central Bank, even though it's their bank, it's their money, it's being done in their name. I think there's a huge problem there with the economics of the press. I happen to think that it is ordinary people going to Germany, including to Schönefeld Airport – that we've heard about a little bit in the last day or two – on EasyJet and Ryanair—and I go there quite a bit myself on EasyJet, I have to say that I work for myself these days so you can't just travel club class. I think that does a great deal for common knowledge and perception, the fact that so many young people do go to Berlin these days from England and a few from France as well. I do think that does a huge amount overcoming some of these stereotypes. Stereotypes are fun and some of them are true and that's what makes them so tenacious, but I do get irritated when stereotypes are propagated without any basic knowledge.

Jürgen Krönig

I forgot to mention that an important part in this normalisation, apart from 2001 and 9/11 and the shifting dangers in the world, which – as David quite rightly emphasised – make the European quarrels look petty and less important, of course, is the 2006 World Cup. This was a significant turning point in the relationship between Germany and Britain and all the other nations around us because a lot of the media discovered suddenly a relaxed, friendly and cheerful German nationalism. They saw German patriotism, in contrast again to some sections of the Left media in Germany, as a kind of normalisation, evidence of a less neurotic country. One could say that a normal nation had evolved. This was very important. Secondly, another point we should not forget in these complaints about the media: the media industry, the media beast, has changed and is changing and in general of course, apart from the continued existence of some quite good media, sensationalism, over-simplification and emotionalisation are the orders of the day; they are the sort of laws, the internal laws, followed by the media. And this of course reduces the chance for a more differentiated picture, which doesn't bode well for the future.

Sir Christopher Mallaby

Do you think the British statements during the unification process had a lasting effect on the way Britain is seen in Germany and in the German media, public and published opinion?

Jürgen Krönig

It's difficult to predict how long lasting it will be, but it definitely changed perception for the worse. At least in the short term and in the medium term, I would say. And even though – I would like to make this point because David mentioned this as well, saying that the British were naive maybe to express these fears – I think the British, thanks to their tradition of a free press, being more intellectually honest and outspoken, quite often irresponsible of course as well, expressed what every other nation and especially many neighbour states around Germany were thinking as well but didn't dare to say. They were all afraid of Germany. Germany has many neighbours with bad memories. And this of course affects them, but the British were more confident, intellectually honest, and have this great tradition of press freedom and freedom of opinion. And therefore they had the courage to say it.

Baroness Neville-Jones

Two comments on very interesting contributions. Just a word on likely conservative attitudes: I think that if the conservatives do get into office, I don't think that it's going to somehow alter for the worse the quality of relations with Berlin. If the Conservative Party has a target, it is not other European capitals, it's the transfer of power to Brussels, it's the institutions of the Union, where clearly the party has reservations. I would be interested to know from Germans in this room whether they think that that in turn will actually damage the bilateral relationship or make it harder to establish a good one. My impression is that Germans themselves are less enchanted by the wonders of Brussels than they used to be. So I don't know to what extent what is otherwise potentially quite a strategic divide between the two countries, is really going to make itself felt.

The other point that I wanted to make, going back to history … you commented, David, on the apparent inability of the then British government to see some of the advantages that she could have derived out of the situation that was evolving out of German unification. But one thing you didn't say, which it does seem to me, affected and coloured British attitude – and much more widely than just the government – was that people were not talking about EMU, they were talking about political and monetary union. And monetary union was quite bad enough, thank you, but political union, my God! You know that was something well beyond where any Brit thought we ought to be trying to go. And I think that was probably not just…even those who would regard themselves as pro-European gulped rather at this notion. Now in Berlin it might well have been seen as the sharing of power. In Britain it was certainly seen as the handing over of power. And I think that when you took those two things together: one very difficult…and after all it broke the back of Major's government, that whole story of having to exit from the monetary regime; it was an absolutely traumatic series of events. And what you were being invited to sign up to, seemed to be an extraordinarily unappealing agenda. Now a lot of that is not active at the moment; things went a different route. But the same responses tend to turn up in British attitudes to what's actually emerged from the conference and from the present Lisbon Treaty. So the story is not concluded. And one of the things we were going to try to do, obviously, was to find a way forward, which brings us together rather than pulls us apart again. But I do think that these issues do relate to fundamental differences about exactly where it is you're trying to go and what you're trying to get out of European cooperation. I think there's a common commitment to European cooperation but there's not a common vision on what it means.

David Marsh

I do think that's a very valid point. I think there's a fatal dilemma about the EU, which is that you do need political union to make it work. And yet very few people in Europe want political union, including the French and the Germans these days. So that is the fatality at the soul, at the heart of the Euro. And Chancellor Kohl did say a few days before the Maastricht Treaty that if you simply had monetary union without political union it would be a *Luftschloss*, a castle in the air, and many people including the Bundesbank have pointed to the lessons of history and that without political union this thing would fail one day. And I do think it's a huge risk to bind together these nations together monetarily without having a great deal more fellow feeling from a political point of view. In fact, I'd say there's been more political dis-unification in Europe over the last 20 years than unification. And I think the credit crisis has somehow exposed that. One thing that has been said and I did want to mention this but I forgot: the point about the costs of German unification that did come up with Charles. There were undoubtedly costs and these did come out of the rather foolhardy – even though understandable – action in February 1990 under which Chancellor Kohl almost totally unilaterally, without actually consulting even his helmsmen for reasons which we can understand, to offer the mark to the East Germans, thus giving up the prudence which had guided Germany's monetary policies for 40 years. With a currency which had become de facto the currency for Europe. This was actually grotesque ill judgement I would say. Of course, British ill judgement was already on the ground, and there was a misjudgement of us joining the ERM in October 1990, just when the Germans were going to put up interest rates. But that's a whole new story I'd say.

Marianne Howarth

I would just come in here. I think that, going back to the point you were making about the deterioration in stereotypical images in the 1990s, it's not just a product of intellectual reflection, it was prompted by a number of things. And one of them was the enforced exit from the ERM that was presented to the British people as a very humiliating event foisted on us by the Germans. It was at a conference in Berlin at the time with a number of British and German colleagues – it was an Association of the Study of German Politics conference – and I can remember colleagues saying to holders of German passports who were resident in Berlin, "You'd better not go home!" You know, it's going to be that bad. But then one of the very unpleasant aspects of unification was the growth in racism and racist attacks in former East Germany and the rise of the Right. And that was an entirely distasteful thing for a lot of people in Britain. And I think that contributed to a lot of anti-German feeling that expressed itself in a very frustrated way by this return to horrible stereotypes. And all I would say is that the other thing that I do know is that this was very much a subject of academic debate within – I mentioned the Association of the Study of German Politics, though less so there – although I can remember you, David Marsh, talking on the subject at the Goethe Institute in London – but the Conference of University Teachers of German, which is the major professional association for Germanists in universities, devoted quite a lot of time and attention to that, and also worked with the DAAD to try to combat stereotypes in teaching materials—there was a very good 'Learn German' campaign, etc. There weren't counter-voices that weren't sort of just letting this happen. There was a lot of work going on, in various circles in Britain, to try to combat this Germanophobia which was also – I should have said – very closely linked with Europhobia.

Jürgen Krönig

It was an equation of course. Andrew Roberts for instance, this historian, said to me quite openly in a television programme on which I appeared that it was welcome of course if anti-German feelings or fears increased the resistance against European integration.

Jackson Janes

That's one of the questions you asked; you'd like to hear from a German; Mr. von Richthofen, maybe you'd like to answer that question. What happens if we go in Britain into a more conservative position? Is there a latent amount of tension that could lead to some of the people in Berlin saying, look, we have a stake in the future, this is the Lisbon Treaty, if you don't like it then leave? That there could be that amount of tension? But I have two comments over here and then I have to get back to Helmut.

Sir Christopher Audland

My point has been partly made by Jürgen Krönig when he, in his answer to Christopher Mallaby, referred to Germany's neighbours and their feelings. And I think we are slightly in danger of focussing too much on what Rumsfeld called Old Europe. And there are of course very deep-seated suspicions of Germany among its neighbours to the East, particularly Poland and the Czech Republic, and I think what we don't take special account of is the way that John Major fundamentally changed the dynamics of Europe by espousing the calls of the enlargement of the EU. And the Europe of today is not the Europe of 1989. And quite honestly it matters less what Britain thinks of Germany and Germany thinks of Britain. It's all part of a much wider picture now in which other people have their views as well.

Helmut Trotnow

I would like to come back to the European Central Bank. And indeed I have the same feeling that we're talking about things that matter. If you are not part of it: does Britain want to stay outside when it comes to monetary issues? Or how should European co-operation work in future? And we already have some experience of what worked, what didn't work, but are we going back now to say, what do we really want? The dynamics of history have carried us further away and the situation now is no longer whether should we do something, or rather how should we do it? And I feel, as I mentioned yesterday, it was the Anglo-German discussions over the last 40 years, whether at university or whether with friends or people, it was always no, we don't want Europe. But what does Europe actually mean? Nobody has ever really defined it. Or in a way that it was workable. And if we come back to the monetary issue, what are we going to make out of it?

David Marsh

I think Michael has given you part of the answer. The litmus test, to use a famous Helmut Kohl line, or Britain's adhesion to European gold, should be whether or not we're a member of monetary union. I happen to think that it's extremely unlikely that there'll be any circumstances within the next 10-20 years under which we would join. The only likely circumstances are those of extreme weakness in the British economy where we would say we'll give up everything else; the Bank of England has yet again failed us, we'll join the ECB. And we wouldn't make a very good partner if we came in as a weak partner. I don't think the rest of Europe would want it. Technically we'd have to come in at a very, very low

exchange rate, which would cause gigantic problems. I was in Hong Kong and Canada the last couple weeks and it looked to be rather well that London could be to Frankfurt what Hong Kong will be to Shanghai. It's almost like one country, two systems. And I didn't see at all why very fully paid-up members of a European trading area with a certain amount of political commitment to each other and remain with a currency. I do not think that the two things are illogical and I think it's far more likely actually that EMU with either break up or become a very different animal in the next 20 years, and that Britain will join in the next 20 years.

Jackson Janes

We have to get to a few other points. I'd like to ask Herr von Richthofen: would you like to address Pauline's question? Maybe you want to rephrase it?

Sir Michael Palliser

Let me try to concentrate a bit. First I think that a very important point was made on stereotypes. We all live on stereotypes in a way. And I've always believed that no one should do any job for more than ten years, and listening to the unfortunate Herr Krönig, worried about British attitudes and so on…not too worried, but…I was thinking actually of two or three recent German Ambassadors, present company excepted, but who were publicly and rather desperately worried, and I thought they were mistaken. And that, I'm glad to say, was corrected subsequently by a subsequent ambassador. But I think I would like to suggest to Herr Krönig that he should either go back to Berlin now or possibly go to Paris. I'm not sure that you haven't been too long in Britain.

Jürgen Krönig

It is the first time I've heard this accusation coming from the country in which one is living that one has gone native. Normally this is an accusation coming from home because one is too independent-minded. I think you are wrong.

Sir Michael Palliser

I am not accusing you of misunderstanding. If I may continue, and take what I am saying with more than a pinch of salt about your future, but what I do feel is that were it not only a phenomenon, which I certainly sense it might have been – I suspect it's true elsewhere – which is not only the diminishing importance of diplomacy, which has been talked about earlier, but the very diminishing importance of the media in the terms of what we think of them at the moment. My granddaughter, who has just emerged from university, is now working in London, is aged 23 or 24, never looks at a newspaper; such news as she gets is either on the Internet or occasionally and very sporadically on television. But she manages somehow to keep in touch and she's been to Germany now several times and comes back each time enthusiastic about Germany. And I only quote her because I think she's representative of a whole generation of young people. One of the problems for old Europeans like me – and I'm a desperate dinosaur – is that the younger generation don't think in the terms that we do. They're not interested in the last war. They see Europe as something where they can wander without hindrance and I don't think they're coming back to the point about enlargement; it's been an enormously important development. It's got all sorts of problems to it, but it's also enlarged the perspective for young generations in all our countries. And I think by looking in this discussion too much at the past and not enough at

the present, and particularly at the future, I don't know where all this is going to lead to. But it's going to lead to something very different. The other thing that's going potentially to lead to something different is the Lisbon Treaty. Now we don't know whether it's going to be ratified. I think it probably will be. It's going to present a lot of problems and particularly to an incoming Conservative government in my country. But it's going to make a very big difference over time to the development of the 27-nation European Union. And whether or not that leads to an expansion of the Euro – which I think it certainly will – it will lead not to political union, that's not been on the cards for the last 25 years, but it will lead to a more politically oriented European Union, which will include a more political attitude and measure of control. Don't ask me how because I don't know, but it will come, over the management of the Euro. And these are all things I see about to happen over the next five to ten years, which is very difficult to analyse. But I don't agree with one thing that David said: I don't think that Europe is less important now in the context of the world. Arguably it's more important but we don't yet realise that it's more important.

Jackson Janes

Right, I think we've brought the debate almost to an end, but I would like to say how much I agree with what Michael Palliser has said. It's the difference between talking with the government about certain improvements in the education system rather than making statements in British newspapers, which goes down very badly. On the Chequers seminar, one participant, I don't know who it was, said the Germans are over-excessive. And what the Bavarians did at present with the Lisbon Treaty and the ratification of it and the law that will have to be passed in the parliament is a typical sign of German over-excessiveness by provincialism. How can we dare to foist on Europe the German will of how things are interpreted and ratify the Lisbon Treaty? It's a compromise that has to be settled among 27 nations, case by case, and the federal government may be bound by the decision by the federal constitutional court, but to put the government on a very short line by ratification is absolutely stupid. But this is the inability of provincial politicians to understand how politics works on the European level.

Jürgen Krönig

So this will not impair the Germans' capacity to be a European player in the true German sense, if I may say so. But obviously it's not for me to comment on a hypothetical future German government and what its relations are and what will be with the future hypothetical government over here. But I would mention that it depends on the issue. I think this notion of transferring sovereignty to Brussels is a bit obsolete in the sense that it's not just about transferring national sovereignty to Europe to supra-national institutions like the Commission, which is not going to happen. Take our policy on climate change; here there is a European claim, so whatever the next British government will be, if the government continues to be part of Europe, we have a global player in this particular area...

Baroness Neville-Jones

I think before we take your arguments any further. Two things. One: you don't need to convince me. Two: I didn't suggest there was validity in this attitude; I suggested it was an attitude. And it is an attitude to do with institutional and power transfer. It does not have to do with the development of policy. There's a big difference. When you talk to me about climate change, if we can agree on the policy together among Europeans on climate change, you won't have any problem in London.

Jackson Janes

Let me say at this point, speaking as an American who has watched Europe come as far as it has, it is a damned good story, and I hope you don't forget that amidst the enormous amount of cacophony that goes on on this side of the Atlantic. You heard the German Ambassador speak last night so eloquently as he was coming across back from France and he said look how far we've come. And I think as far as we are concerned, I think we certainly want to have that kind of response that he is talking about. I think Obama has made that quite clear on a number of occasions. However we are aware of the fact that it is going to be an evolutionary process. When I give lectures around the United States, I say I wear bifocal lenses. It's entirely important that I have bifocal lenses because I have to watch what is going on at the Brussels level, and I have to watch what is going on in London, Paris and Berlin. Those two things are always going to be synergistic; it's going to be for awhile, I think, as we try to watch it from our side of the Atlantic. What is another good story is the story of the leadership of the Allied Museum, and I would like to give Helmut Trotnow another word of thanks; congratulations for your leadership these last several years, and we wish you all the best, and thank you for not only making this conference possible, but really pulling together the Allied Museum in the remarkable way you have done it. It is a tribute to you sir, and of course the rest of your staff, but I hope you will all join me in giving him a round of applause.

Helmut Trotnow

I think if history is a predecessor to politics, this discussion we just had is proof of that. A democratic society has to be informed in order to make decisions and I would like to add one word. Two or three years ago, or even a little bit longer, we had a conference in Paris, and the French hosts asked us if we would like to have a little ceremony lighting the candle at the Arc de Triomphe, as apparently that is the French tradition when there is a conference or a meeting of international dignitaries.

I agreed and we did this and I was standing below the arc of the Arc de Triomphe, looking at the names when Germans and French fought each other over the course of a mere 100 years. And now we're approaching the 100th anniversary of the beginning of the First World War. I think in that respect, Jack, you are certainly right; we have come a long, long way. It is not easy; dealing with history is not easy, as we have seen. I think we always have to remember what we are doing it for, and I think that was my driving motivation for doing the work at the museum. I think that our future generation, not only in Germany, also in Britain or France or America or the rest of Europe, has to understand what went on at the end of the twentieth century. They take their lifestyle today for granted and it depended on the work of the likes of you. I was really deeply impressed by your description of the Four Power negotiations. Yes, you could have gone in a completely different direction. And if there had been different individuals, you know, it's another thing. History is shaped by individuals, not by theories or this sort of thing. I as an historian have gone through this debate, especially in Germany. Human beings are the decisive factor. And that is why it is so interesting to study human beings; in the end, everything depends on people's individual decisions. Of course they are not independent, but they had to take the decisions and that is on the one hand, on the individual level, what we are doing for society, and especially young people. I mentioned yesterday that sometimes there will be a fifteen- or twenty-year-old who comes to the museum who has never heard the term 'Berlin Wall' or whatever, and if you talk to them in a historian's jargon they are not interested. Why should they be bothered? This I think is what we have to bear in mind and this is why we did this event

yesterday and today. History is not a grey subject; it is about people, about flesh and blood. On behalf of the entire museum and its staff I would like to thank all of you who made this seminar a worthwhile enterprise. I can promise you we will stay in touch in order to publish the results. Hopefully many young people will read the proceedings, and this will help them to avoid any prejudices in the future.

APPENDIX

PROGRAMME – WINDSOR PARK SEMINAR

Tuesday, 1 September 2009

17.00

Opening Remarks: Dr. Helmut Trotnow OBE, Director of the Allied Museum

Introduction
Moderator: Dr. Patrick Salmon, United Kingdom

The German Problem and the Balance of Power
Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher 1987-1989

Lord Powell of Bayswater, KCMG,
Private Secretary to Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (1983-1991)

19.00

Notes of Welcome
Herr Georg Boomgaarden, German Ambassador, London
Sir Michael Arthur, British Ambassador, Berlin

Wednesday, 2 September 2009

9.30 – 11.00

First Panel: The Fall of the Berlin Wall: London – Bonn – Berlin (East and West)

Moderator: Dr. Helmut Trotnow OBE

Sir Christopher Mallaby, GCMG
British Ambassador, Bonn (1988-1992)

Sir Michael Burton KCVO, CMG
Minister, British Military Government, Berlin (1985-1990)

Colin Munro, CMG
Deputy Head of Mission, East Berlin (1987-1990)

11.30 – 13.00

Second Panel: Flashpoint Berlin: How Cold was the Cold War?

Moderator: Prof. Dr. Rainer Hudemann, University of the Saarland

Rt Hon Sir Michael Palliser, GCMG, PC
Joined the Foreign Office in 1947.
Permanent Under-Secretary of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (1975-1982)

Baroness Neville-Jones, DCMG
Minister, British Embassy, Bonn (1988-1991)

14.30 – 16.00

Third Panel
Strange Normality: What was so special about the Quadripartite Agreement 1971/72?

Moderator: Sir Nicholas Bayne, KCMG

Sir Christopher Audland KCMG DL
Foreign Office, Negotiator of the Bonn Convention
(1950-52) and the Quadripartite Agreement (1970-72)

Dr. Hermann Freiherr von Richthofen
Auswärtiges Amt
Member of the so-called Bonn Group for the negotiation of the
Quadripartite Agreement
German Ambassador, London (1989-1993)

16.30 – 18.00

Fourth Panel
The British Media and Germany

Moderator: Dr. Jackson Janes, USA

The British Press and the GDR
Professor Marianne Howarth
Nottingham Trent University

The British Press from a German perspective
Jürgen Krönig OBE
British correspondent of the German weekly *Die Zeit*

The Berlin Wall and the Euro. The financial
and economic implications of 1989/90.
David Marsh CBE
London and Oxford Group

ABBREVIATIONS

BASC	Berlin Air Safety Centre
BRIXMIS	British Commanders'-in-Chief Mission to the Soviet Forces in Germany
CDU	*Christlich-Demokratische Union*/Christian Democratic Union (FRG)
CSBM(s)	Confidence- and Security-Building Measures
CSCE	Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
DDR	*Deutsche Demokratische Republik* (GDR)
ECB	European Central Bank
EEC	European Economic Community
EU	European Union
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
FSA	Financial Services Authority
G8	Group of Eight
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GDR	German Democratic Republic
INF	Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces
JIC	Joint Intelligence Committee
MBFR	Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NBC	Nuclear, Biological and Chemical weapons
NVA	*Nationale Volksarmee* / GDR National People's Army
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSCE	Organisation of Security and Cooperation in Europe
QRR	Quadripartite Rights and Responsibilities
RAF	Royal Air Force
SDP	Social Democratic Party (GDR)
SED (GDR)	*Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands* / Socialist Unity Party of Germany
SPD (FRG)	*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* / German Social Democratic Party
Stasi	*Ministerium für Staatssicherheit* / Ministry for State Security (GDR)
UN	United Nations
VOPO	Volkspolizei (GDR)

INDEX OF PERSONS MENTIONED

Abrasimov, Peter, Soviet Ambassador to the German Democratic Republic, 1962-71 and 1975-83.

Adenauer, Konrad, Chancellor of the FRG, 1949–63

Anderson, David, American Diplomat, member of the U.S. delegation that negotiated the Quadripartite Agreement of 1971 with the Soviets, British and French

Baker, James A., III, U.S. Secretary of State, 1989–92

Biancheri, Boris, Italy's Ambassador to the UK, 1987-1991 and Ambassador to the U.S., 1991-1995

Brandt, Willy, Chancellor of the FRG, 1969–74

Broomfield, Nigel H.R.A., British Ambassador, East Berlin, 1988–90

Bush, George Herbert Walker, President of the United States, 1989-1993

Ceauşescu, Nicolae, President of Romania (1974–1989). Following a revolution and the December 1989 military coup, he and his wife were executed.

Chernyaev, Anatoly S., Chief Foreign Policy Adviser to Mikhail Gorbachev

Cradock, Sir Percy, Prime Minister's Foreign Policy Adviser, 1984-1992

Dean, Jonathan 'Jock', U.S. Negotiator of the Quadripartite Agreement

Diepgen, Eberhard, Mayor of West Berlin, 1984-1989, and of Berlin, 1991-2001

Dönhoff, Marion Gräfin, Editor-in-Chief and Publisher, *Die Zeit*

Falin, Valentin M., Head of International Department of the Central Committee of the CPSU, 1988–91

Genscher, Hans–Dietrich, FRG Minister for Foreign Affairs and Deputy Chancellor, 1974–92

Gorbachev, Mikhail S., General Secretary of the CPSU, 1985–91; President of the USSR, 1990–91

Gromyko, Andrei, Soviet Foreign Minister, 1957-85

Havel, Václav, President of Czechoslovakia, 1989–92

Honecker, Erich, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the SED, 1971–89; Chairman of the Council of State of the GDR, 1976–1989 (18 October)

Howe, Sir R.E. Geoffrey, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, 1983–89 (24 July); Lord President of the Council, 1989–90

Hurd, Douglas, Home Secretary, 1983–89; Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, 1989 (26 October)–1995

Ischinger, Wolfgang, German Deputy Foreign Minister, 1998-2001; German Ambassador to the United States, 2001-2006; German Ambassador to the Court of St James's (United Kingdom), 2006-2008

Jackling, Sir Roger, KCB, CBE, Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany, 1968-72

Jaruzelski, General Wojciech W., successively Prime Minister, Chairman of the Council of State and President of the People's Republic of Poland 1981-1989; President of Poland 1989–90

Kastrup, Dieter, Political Director, FRG Foreign Ministry, 1988–91

Kohl, Helmut, Chancellor of the FRG, 1982–98

Krack, Erhard, Mayor of East Berlin, 1974-1990

Krenz, Egon, Member of Politburo and Secretary of the Central Committee of the SED, 1983–89; General Secretary of the Central Committee of the SED and Chairman of the Council of State of the GDR, 1989 (24 October – 6 December)

Kvitsinsky, Yuli A., Soviet Ambassador, Bonn, 1986–90; Deputy Foreign Minister, USSR, 1990–91

Lavrov, Sergey, Russia's Ambassador to the United Nations, 1996-2004; Russia's Minister of Foreign Affairs, 2004-present

Major, John, Chief Secretary, Treasury, 1987–89; Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, 1989; Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1989–90

Marsh, David, Chief German Correspondent, *Financial Times*, 1986–91

Matlock, Jack, U.S. Ambassador to Czechoslovakia from 1981 to 1983 and U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union from 1987 to 1991

Mitterrand, François, President of the French Republic, 1981–95

Modrow, Hans, SED Central Committee member and First Secretary of the Dresden regional leadership, 1973–89; Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the GDR, 1989–90

Momper, Walter, Governing Mayor of Berlin, 1989–91

Reagan, Ronald W., President of the United States, 1981–89

Roberts, Sir Frank, GCMG, GCVO, British Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany, 1962-68

Rush, Kenneth, United States Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany, 1969-72

Sauvagnargues, Jean, French Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany, 1970-74

Schabowski, Günter, First Secretary of the SED in East Berlin, 1986–89

Schmidt, Helmut, Chancellor of the FRG, 1974–82

Scowcroft, Brent, National Security Adviser to President Bush, 1989–93

Seiters, Rudolf, Federal Minister for Special Affairs and Head of the Office of the German Chancellery, 1989-1991

Shevardnadze, Eduard A., Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, 1985–91

Sommer, Theo, Editor-in-Chief and Publisher, *Die Zeit*

Stolpe, Manfred, Consistorial President of the Evangelical Churches of Berlin–Brandenburg, 1982–89

Teltschik, Horst, Chief Adviser to Chancellor Kohl on Foreign Policy and Inner-German Relations, 1982–91

Thatcher, Margaret, Prime Minister, 1979–90

Wałęsa, Lech, human rights activist, co-founder of Solidarność trade union, key role in 1989 Round Table Agreement leading to semi-free parliamentary elections and to a Solidarity-led government, President of Poland (1990-95)

Weizsäcker, Richard Freiherr von, President of the FRG, 1984-94