

## The Federal Republic's Ostpolitik and the United States: Initiatives and Constraints

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In March 1971, Willy Brandt wrote a long letter to John McCloy, one of the founding fathers of the Federal Republic of Germany and known for his sceptical attitude towards Ostpolitik.<sup>1</sup> Brandt emphasized that his Ostpolitik was embedded in the general Western policy *vis-à-vis* the East. Ostpolitik did not ignore the conflict “between communism and democracy.” The conflict would go on but military force must necessarily be avoided. This did not mean, however, that the military power of NATO and the political cohesion of the West could be disposed of. Brandt stressed his government’s significant contributions in both of these fields. He also pointed out that the process of European integration had been pushed forward recently. “I cannot share your anxiousness,” he wrote, “that the Soviet Union will reach her goals<sup>2</sup> without giving something in return and that her influence in Western Europe will increase.” Brandt continued with a criticism of the old policy and a vision of what the new Ostpolitik might achieve. The old policy of confrontation had not been able to prevent the Berlin Wall and the division of Europe. The existence of the German Democratic Republic as a state could not be disputed even if the government in East Berlin was dependent on the presence of the Red Army. In the existing situation, it was of the utmost importance that the allegedly hostile Federal Republic could no longer be used by Moscow and East Berlin as an excuse to discipline the member states of the Warsaw Pact. It would serve Western interests if Ostpolitik removed the enemy image of the Federal Republic. Thereby, a change in East–West relations to the advantage of the West might be possible. Brandt alluded to “interesting information” as to the effects of Ostpolitik. However, he observed, it would not be wise to put this down in writing.

Brandt’s letter summarized the main assumptions of Ostpolitik as well as American attitudes and reactions to it. Basically, Ostpolitik meant a decisive turn in dealing with the German question and the post-war status

quo. By accepting the existing European borders and, consequently, by improving East–West relations, the financial burdens and military dangers of the confrontation between East and West were to be reduced. As to the supposed implications of Ostpolitik, the Bonn government had to react to fears and suspicions which were uttered in public in the United States and were shared to a certain extent by the Nixon administration. Accordingly, Brandt dealt with these fears. Furthermore, he indicated his long-term expectations. Through *détente*, and through Ostpolitik in particular, the Eastern bloc and the conflict-oriented behavior of the Soviet Union might change. Recognizing the status quo could be the first step to its transformation.

It is interesting that Brandt did not mention explicitly that Ostpolitik – after the failure of Adenauer’s revisionism – was a new kind of revisionism. The German question was still regarded as open. This was realized at once in East Berlin (though, apparently, not immediately in Moscow), and also in Washington. It goes without saying that this caused some American uneasiness and suspicion. Furthermore, Brandt did not refer to West German perceptions of the United States and the European security system. He was silent about the impact which, in his view, the Vietnam War and America’s over-commitment in world politics might have on the future role of the United States in Europe and of Europe as an actor in international affairs.

When Brandt wrote his letter, the treaties with Moscow and Warsaw were signed but not yet ratified. The ratification by the German Bundestag depended on a satisfactory agreement on Berlin. Any American doubts over the usefulness of Ostpolitik had to be removed in order to get the full support not only of the U.S. government but also of public opinion. Hence Brandt’s efforts to convince the “old protectors of Germany McCloy and Clay.” Apparently, he succeeded when he met them in New York on 17 June 1971, on the occasion of his speech to the American Council on Germany.<sup>3</sup> Two days earlier, Brandt had talked to President Nixon. At a press conference, he was able to tell journalists that there was “complete agreement” on the issues of Berlin and Ostpolitik.<sup>4</sup> Brandt and the members of his cabinet regarded American support for Ostpolitik as a vital precondition for its success. This chapter deals with the efforts to insure it, mainly between 1969, when the Brandt government took office, and 1971, when the agreement on Berlin was signed by the Four Powers.

For Willy Brandt, an ardent anti-communist and strict adherent to the Western alliance, it was not easy to understand the scepticism and even opposition he initially encountered in Washington. Brandt had visions

but he was no dreamer. This was also true, for example, in the case of Defense Minister Helmut Schmidt who, in contrast to Brandt, had never been a left-winger in his political life and, therefore, could not be under any suspicion of being disloyal to the Western cause. In his memoirs, Schmidt describes the initial distrust by parts of the Nixon administration as “unfounded.”<sup>5</sup> The German self-perception and the American perception of Bonn’s Ostpolitik differed at times. But these differences were a matter of perception, not of actual policy.

What worried Washington, and especially Kissinger, most was the self-consciousness and independence of the new government in Bonn when formulating the guidelines of Ostpolitik. This was done between 1966 and 1969, when Brandt was Foreign Minister in a Grand Coalition government formed by the Christian Democrats (CDU) and the Social Democrats (SPD). During these years, the planning staff of the Auswärtiges Amt (Foreign Office), directed by Egon Bahr, who had been Brandt’s close confidant for many years, dealt with the possibilities and options of a more active Ostpolitik. Bahr emerged not as the only but as the principal architect of Ostpolitik on the intellectual as well as the operational level.<sup>6</sup> Throughout the period under consideration here, he emphasized both the necessity for change in East–West relations and for continuity in the Federal Republic’s relations with its partners in NATO. Security for the Federal Republic, he was certain, was only conceivable as security provided by the United States.<sup>7</sup>

Although the CDU/SPD government started the first phase of a new Ostpolitik, there was no real breakthrough. Chancellor Kurt Georg Kiesinger, the leader of the CDU, was more reluctant than Brandt to launch a new policy based on accepting post-war realities in Europe. At the same time, the FDP, the small Liberal Party which was in opposition, advocated a more radical departure in Ostpolitik, very much on the lines of the views of the SPD and Bahr’s planning staff.<sup>8</sup> In October 1969, after the elections for the Bundestag, both parties formed a new coalition government. Ostpolitik and foreign policy in general was the essential link between the otherwise often conflicting views of Social Democrats and Liberals.

Henry Kissinger clearly understood that the new government would pursue not only a new Ostpolitik but also a much more independent course in foreign affairs, and this seemed to indicate the end of the post-war period. The Federal Republic, in theory, was still a semi-sovereign country and had to keep in mind the constraints which stemmed from the rights of the Four Powers, not to mention the constraints which had to do with

strict and faithful allegiance to the European Community and to NATO. But *within* these constraints, Bonn took initiatives of its own and did not ask for permission beforehand. Both Brandt and Kissinger later agreed on this point.<sup>9</sup>

When beginning its initiatives towards the East, the Bonn government followed the general American lead. The Germans could refer, for instance, to the beginnings of détente during the presidency of John F. Kennedy. In fact, this had provided the background to Brandt's reorientation towards the concept of détente in the early 1960s, when he was mayor of West Berlin and had to realize that the U.S. government was willing to accept the status quo. Later, the Germans were encouraged by President Johnson. Brandt met Johnson and Secretary of State Rusk in February 1967. Both emphasized the necessity of improving relations with the East. Rusk expressed his readiness to assist wherever help was needed.<sup>10</sup> A few months later, Johnson told two German journalists who played a prominent role as supporters of a new Ostpolitik that the German government did not need to ask permission for any initiative. In Johnson's view, German bridge-building towards the East was highly useful. He had no anxieties with regard to German reliability within the Western alliance, and no distrust of Willy Brandt.<sup>11</sup> The President felt reassured, as he regarded himself as undisputed leader in the process of bridge-building. Apparently, Johnson saw the Germans as firmly subject to U.S. guidance.<sup>12</sup> It is interesting, however, that reports reached Bonn in which the German government was asked to be on its guard and to avoid any inconsistencies in its policy which might follow from the overlap of NATO membership, European integration, and Ostpolitik.<sup>13</sup>

There was no change in the American reaction to Ostpolitik when Richard Nixon entered the White House with Henry Kissinger as his National Security Advisor. Ostpolitik was not to be blocked. But there was widespread disquiet over its wider implications. At least in the beginning, Kissinger had "grave reservations."<sup>14</sup> They were shared<sup>15</sup> by the Pentagon and by some sections of the State Department, although the U.S. embassy in Bonn gave full support. Opposition to Ostpolitik also came from conservative Congressmen and, as mentioned above, from people such as John McCloy, Lucius Clay, Dean Acheson, and George Ball, who had shaped the post-war policy towards and in Germany. Satirically, Denis Healey, British Defence Minister between 1964 and 1970, called them "distinguished American dinosaurs from the occupation age." They "clearly find it difficult," he noted, "to come to terms with a world so different from that in which they were able to determine the policies not only of the U.S. but of Germany too."<sup>16</sup>

As membership of NATO was not questioned for one moment by the Brandt government or by West German society as a whole, American perceptions of Ostpolitik were influenced principally by the legacy of German nationalism<sup>17</sup> and by the self-conscious way in which Ostpolitik was implemented. Kissinger did not fear that the new government in Bonn would do anything to endanger "Germany's Western association" deliberately.<sup>18</sup> But would the West Germans resist Soviet temptations for ever? Moscow could conceivably offer something which might lead to unification if the Federal Republic turned to neutralism. In Kissinger's view, Brandt "possessed neither the stamina nor the intellectual apparatus to manage the forces he had unleashed."<sup>19</sup> On the one hand, this was a gross misperception of Brandt's abilities and politics. On the other, it has to be taken into account when dealing with U.S. reactions to Ostpolitik.

The government in Bonn made its own contribution to Kissinger's reservations, as the U.S. government was not really consulted on Ostpolitik, but only informed. Willy Brandt insisted, in his memoirs, that his Ostpolitik did more than echo American initiatives. It had its own roots and logical basis.<sup>20</sup> As early as March 1969, Brandt warned of overrating the role of the Federal Republic as an independent actor in East-West relations.<sup>21</sup> But he was equally sure that Bonn should not underestimate its role "as a partner of the Soviet Union."<sup>22</sup> Without any publicity, a period of intense talks between Bonn and Moscow had just started.<sup>23</sup> The Social Democratic-Liberal government in Bonn wanted to accept the post-war realities in Europe as results of the war. This was in accordance with the expectations of Germany's NATO partners, the U.S. included.<sup>24</sup> At the same time, Brandt and his Foreign Minister, Walter Scheel, wanted to win some freedom of action. Their strategy of overcoming the status quo by first accepting it in the end conflicted with the post-war order. Other Western governments, which at times felt uneasy about the possible consequences of Ostpolitik, also had this conflict in mind.

Brandt's critics deplored the advantages the Soviet Union got by Ostpolitik. But Brandt expected to get something in return for recognizing the territorial status quo. In the medium term, he and Bahr looked forward to a transformation of the Eastern bloc. Instead of turning to neutrality, as feared by many observers in the West, they wanted to play a more active role in European and world politics. Their wish was to emancipate the Federal Republic from its postwar supervision by the Western powers. Konrad Adenauer had been the model pupil of the West (although time and again he had complained about U.S. policy).<sup>25</sup> Brandt, and even more so Scheel, wanted to leave school and enter normal life. They

consequently questioned one of the central elements of the post-war European architecture, namely the containment of the Federal Republic by the Western alliance.<sup>26</sup> Twenty-five years after the end of the war, a new democratic and Westernized Germany wanted to be accepted as an equal partner. Ostpolitik has to be seen in this wider context (it is revealing that Brandt spoke of "legitimate national interests").<sup>27</sup>

When dealing with the Soviet Union, the Bonn government was fully aware of the above-mentioned constraints. Egon Bahr even emphasized them in his talks with Gromyko, held early in 1970, when he referred to the rights of the Four Powers in "Germany as a whole." He was, thereby, able to reject certain suggestions made by the Soviet Foreign Minister. Also, Bonn did not fail to keep its allies, and especially the United States, informed. Even before he was elected Federal Chancellor, Brandt asked the U.S. government to receive Bahr as his special envoy. The first contact between the White House and the SPD leadership after the election of 28 September was on 1 October 1969. Henry Kissinger talked to Bahr on the phone and apologized for President Nixon's earlier call to Kiesinger, the leader of the CDU and then still Chancellor. Immediately after the election, Nixon had congratulated Kiesinger, who headed the poll but had no majority in the Bundestag. Now Kissinger told Bahr he was looking forward to cooperation with the Brandt government. He agreed upon an early meeting. In a note to Brandt, Bahr commented: "That sounds good."<sup>28</sup>

Kissinger and Bahr had met before. But their meeting on 13 October 1969 began a series of talks and other communications between these two men at the center of power. After the elections, Bahr moved to the Federal Chancellery, where he was in charge of Ostpolitik. He now tried to implement the various steps which had earlier been envisaged by the planning staff of the Foreign Office. According to Bahr's notes, three issues were on the agenda in his conversation with Kissinger. The first was the way in which both governments should relate to each other. Bahr announced a greater degree of independence. The new government in Bonn wished to think for itself. Alluding to the peculiarities of American-German relations in the post-war period, Bahr added that Bonn would not ask every two months whether the American ally "still loves us" (Kissinger's reaction was: "Thank God!"). Second, Bahr dealt with the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Bonn was willing to sign it. But before doing so, certain clarifications by the Soviet Union would be needed, although for Bahr they were of minor relevance. "Absolutely central," he believed, "was the German-American relationship and the alliance." Concluding this point, both Bahr and Kissinger "moaned about the Russians in a

moderate way." The third point was Ostpolitik. Bahr explained his ideas and concentrated on two aspects: the essential continuity of German foreign policy and the renunciation of force in German-Soviet relations. Kissinger's advice was to start negotiations as soon as possible. He concluded: "Your success will be our success."<sup>29</sup>

Whether Ostpolitik would be a success or not was an open question. Kissinger did not say so, but there is no doubt that he was more sceptical than Bahr. Whatever their expectations might have been, Bahr and Kissinger not only arranged to stay in touch, but Kissinger proposed to establish a back channel between the White House and the Chancellery in Bonn.<sup>30</sup> This enabled them to communicate directly and without interference from the bureaucracies of the respective foreign ministries. As a result, Bahr's contacts with the State Department were only of secondary importance.<sup>31</sup> Within a few days, this channel was used. On 23 October, Bahr received information that the Soviet government had suggested beginning the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks on 17 November. Washington wanted to accept this.<sup>32</sup> Bonn also kept the White House informed over Brandt's letter of 19 November 1969 to Kosygin. In this, Brandt suggested bilateral talks on the basis of the existing commitments of both sides to their security systems.<sup>33</sup> Washington's backing was expressed by Secretary of State William Rogers when he came to see Brandt in Bonn on 6 December 1969.<sup>34</sup> Later that month, Kissinger was informed about the imminent talks between the Germans and Russians to be held in Moscow.<sup>35</sup>

The first two rounds of these talks between Bahr and Gromyko had been completed when Chancellor Brandt himself travelled to Washington in April 1970. The White House did not give any special advice on the negotiations with the Soviet Union, nor did it voice specific objections to Ostpolitik.<sup>36</sup> Nevertheless, Henry Kissinger felt deep-seated reservations concerning both the new government in Bonn and its foreign policy. In June, he told Paul Frank, the new Staatssekretär in the German Foreign Office: "I tell you! If a course of détente is to be pursued, we do it."<sup>37</sup> Kissinger's claims to leadership must be seen in the context of his fears that the Soviet Union might be successful in pursuing "selective détente," improving relations with European countries while remaining tough towards the United States.<sup>38</sup> Although the NATO meeting in December 1969 had strengthened Bonn's position for its negotiations with the Soviet Union, while at the same time imposing some constraints,<sup>39</sup> and in spite of the intense exchange of information between Bonn and Washington, Kissinger still remained nervous about the dangers of German nationalism and the possibility that Ostpolitik could weaken the NATO alliance.<sup>40</sup> As Ostpolitik was officially backed by Washington, any doubts concerning

the reliability of the West Germans could only be spread in the form of rumor. When such rumors reached Bonn, Bahr, in a letter to Kissinger, did not attach much importance to them. He reminded Kissinger of their mutual trust and added: "Who ever has a question or feels any cause for concern should express it frankly."<sup>41</sup>

Kissinger's doubts over the reliability of the Germans were shared by the French President, Georges Pompidou.<sup>42</sup> The British Prime Ministers Harold Wilson and (since June 1970) Edward Heath endorsed Ostpolitik, although Heath did not hide his anxiety that the Soviet Union wanted to test "the solidarity of the Western Alliance." In Western European perceptions of the Federal Republic, there was still a big question mark. How solid was the attachment of the West Germans to NATO? Had they really become an integral part of the Western world? Or was the containment of Germany still necessary? Heath wanted Brandt to remain "very conscious of the pitfalls on the way . . . I am confident that the Alliance can stand the strains of détente as it has survived the test of the Cold War. But in a climate of relaxation we shall have to be, and indeed more, on our guard."<sup>43</sup>

Kissinger's attitude was much more patronizing, at least as it is shown in his memoirs. He consoled himself with the thought that the Federal Republic did not have the means to pursue its Ostpolitik independently "on a purely national basis."<sup>44</sup> Bonn was not Paris, and Brandt was not de Gaulle. The problem of West Berlin could only be solved in cooperation with the Four Powers. In his memoirs, Kissinger, in great detail and almost crowing with pleasure, demonstrated the constraints of Ostpolitik which followed from the postwar settlement in Germany: "The linkage to Berlin was our ace in the hole."<sup>45</sup> Since Bonn wanted to develop a linkage policy as well, there was no disagreement in substance. There was disagreement, however, with respect to the speed of Western-Soviet talks on Berlin. Bonn wished for some early progress. Only the Western allies could put pressure on Moscow in order to improve the situation of West Berlin. Bonn insisted on Soviet recognition of the special links between the Federal Republic and West Berlin.<sup>46</sup> The success of Ostpolitik was dependent on progress in Berlin, and progress in Berlin was not only a matter of Soviet but also of U.S. policy.<sup>47</sup> In contrast to Brandt, Kissinger was not in a hurry.<sup>48</sup> For him, the Berlin problem was only one issue in his linkage strategy which included a wide range of questions such as SALT and Vietnam. Consequently, the speed of the German-Soviet *rapprochement* seemed to be too high. Why not wait for the results of the German-Soviet encounter?

The first result was the Treaty of Moscow, signed on 12 August 1970.

Immediately after the ceremony, which he had watched on TV in his summer retreat, Helmut Schmidt sent a remarkable handwritten letter to Brandt. In Schmidt's view, the treaty was a "great step" forward. There was every reason to believe that a "new era" had begun in East-West relations. Yet, almost in the same breath, Schmidt warned of "euphoric propaganda" which might shed doubts on the West German position in the Western camp. Euphoria would be counterproductive with respect to East Germany, the Western allies, and the forthcoming debate in the Federal Republic. Washington, London, and Paris ought to be informed immediately. Schmidt's impression was that the White House was frowning at the speed of Ostpolitik.<sup>49</sup>

Only five days after the signature in Moscow, Bahr arrived in Washington. Kissinger seemed to be impressed with the Russo-German agreement. The Federal Republic had been successful in realizing what it had earlier proposed in public and in the confidential talks in Washington. Kissinger expressed the wish to continue "our close relationship." Bonn, he advised, should not believe in rumours. The Nixon administration gave its full support to Ostpolitik. Time and again, Franz-Josef Strauss, the mighty leader of the Bavarian branch of the Christian Democrats, had been on the phone. But Kissinger only listened to him and did not encourage him in his opposition to Ostpolitik. It may be that Kissinger's trust in Bahr had increased by August 1970. But it is revealing that he wanted to know how Bahr perceived the motives of the Soviet Union. Assistant Secretary of State Hillenbrand also wanted to know whether the Soviet Union was hoping to undermine the Western alliance. In responding, Bahr pointed to the Soviet interest in economic cooperation with the West. As to American fears with regard to NATO, he took the contrary line, contending that the Soviet Union wanted to preserve the existing bloc structures, including the Federal Republic's NATO membership. Otherwise, the Soviet grip on the Warsaw Pact states would be in danger.<sup>50</sup>

Bahr did not only want to give information about the German-Soviet Treaty. He also urged Kissinger to speed up the Berlin negotiations.<sup>51</sup> In October 1970, Chancellor Brandt asked for consultations on the part of the "four Western governments" (including the Federal Republic) over Berlin. Difficulties between the United States and the Soviet Union should be solved, he argued, by improving the means of communication. "Whether the Soviet Union is really interested in a détente in Central Europe," he wrote to Nixon, "what I assume, will be proved in the test case of Berlin . . . We should not be discouraged by setbacks which are common practice in Soviet tactics."<sup>52</sup> Brandt was impatient and also critical of the American handling of the Berlin problem.<sup>53</sup> Bonn felt under

enormous pressure of time. It was concerned that the frustrated government in East Berlin might, as a result of delay, regain some influence with Moscow.

During the autumn of 1970, the Federal Government in Bonn also took action to deal with public opinion in the United States. U.S. reactions in general towards Ostpolitik still seemed mixed. Hans Apel, deputy floor leader of the SPD in the Bundestag, reported home from Washington that he had found "odd ideas" about the aims of Ostpolitik among many members of the administration, Congressmen, and journalists.<sup>54</sup> Defense Secretary Melvin Laird also appeared concerned that certain sections of the SPD might harbor "illusions about the Soviet Union."<sup>55</sup>

In Bonn, it was realized that something had to be done. One strategy was to employ a public relations company in New York.<sup>56</sup> Another was to use any contacts with American politicians or institutions in order to work on those who remained sceptical about Ostpolitik.<sup>57</sup> Although the attitude of the Social Democrats towards the United States had changed during the 1960s, becoming at the same time more pragmatic and more positive,<sup>58</sup> not many Social Democrats had first-hand knowledge of American politics and society.<sup>59</sup> One outstanding exception was Horst Ehmke, a professor of law before he entered politics and, eventually, became Head of the Chancellery under Willy Brandt. After the German-Soviet Treaty of August 1970, he travelled twice to the United States. The first trip, in late September, was to influence American public opinion. Ehmke met not only journalists but also representatives of the trade unions and the Jewish community, two important segments of public opinion which were known to be highly pessimistic about the implications of Ostpolitik. He also held talks in the State Department, where he asked for quicker negotiations on Berlin. Ehmke discovered that people in New York or Washington had a much broader view of the Soviet Union. The United States, unlike West Germany, confronted Soviet power and ambitions on a global scale. Some Americans complained about Soviet activities in Cuba and the Middle East. American Jews wanted to know whether Bonn's relations with Israel were likely to change, given the anti-Israel stance of the Soviet Union. The AFL/CIO (trade union) officials did not oppose détente on principle, but rejected any closer relations between German and Soviet trade unions. Because of the allegedly "socialist" element in the Social Democratic-Liberal government in Bonn, Ehmke was faced with anxious questioning – from both his AFL/CIO interlocutors and members of the State Department – on whether the Federal Republic would move to the left. He was able to give reassurance on this point. In general, Ehmke found that Ostpolitik was being received

in an open-minded way, although Americans had some questions and a number of reservations.<sup>60</sup>

At the start of his trip, Ehmke had been briefed by the public relations company in New York working for the government in Bonn:

Today Germany is a full-fledged economic and political partner of the U.S., and its power in both those areas is respected and perhaps a little feared by Americans. The public relations status has entered a new phase which, for want of a better term, could be called the equality phase. The new Germany's coming of age has coincided in time with a period of great political, racial and economic stress in the U.S.

Under these circumstances, Bonn should not ignore the strictly anti-communist stance of the AFL/CIO and of big business as well. Occasionally, the company mentioned, the Federal Republic was depicted as a "workshop of the Reds." The main advice it offered was to organize a new "German clique in the U.S." which would be a substitute for the old one headed by McCloy and Clay: "Unfortunately no real attempt has been made to form a new and liberally oriented group to serve the same purposes as the old group."<sup>61</sup> Ehmke fully endorsed this recommendation. Contacts in America, he believed, had to be intensified. In particular, Karl Schiller, Minister for Economic Affairs, should go to Washington to try and improve the relations of the SPD with business and finance in the United States. In Ehmke's view, no such relations currently existed. This might be easily explained, but was at the same time deplorable: "This group, being not on close terms with the Social Democrats, is very close to the Republican government."<sup>62</sup>

Within a very short time, Ehmke made a second trip. In December 1970, just before Christmas, he hurried off to see Kissinger in order to find out definitely what the White House had in mind with regard to Berlin and Ostpolitik in general. Again, Bonn had received reports announcing "a storm mounting in the American right wing on the subject of Germany's Eastern politics."<sup>63</sup> Shepard Stone, who was in favour of Ostpolitik, advised taking such objections to Ostpolitik seriously.<sup>64</sup> This more or less normal American accompaniment to Ostpolitik might, however, have caused no particular alarm in Bonn had it not been for more dramatic developments. On 16 December, Russell Fessenden, from the U.S. embassy in Bonn, talked to Ulrich Sahn from the Chancellery and, three days later, also to Bahr and Ehmke. The White House and the Pentagon, he warned, were not happy with the speed of Ostpolitik. In Washington, the Soviet Union was still regarded as an expansionist power active in many parts of the world.<sup>65</sup>

From the German point of view, any slowing down of détente meant a delay in the solution of the Berlin question. The matter was urgent enough for Ehmke to telephone the White House. Kissinger was asked for a meeting, which took place on 21 December. He seemed completely surprised when informed about Fessenden's warnings. Ehmke's impression was that Kissinger's reaction was honest and not merely for show. But he could not find out on whose orders Fessenden had been acting. Hillenbrand and Sonnenfeld, when they joined in, were also either unwilling or simply not able to disclose the secret. With respect to Berlin, Ehmke repeated what the Germans had said before. Since the Soviet ambassador, Zarapkin, had hinted to Brandt that Moscow was interested in a Berlin settlement in order to get the Treaty of Moscow ratified, he argued that the Americans should not hesitate. Ehmke agreed that the Soviet Union still pursued a policy of confrontation in other parts of the world. But this did not justify risking a standstill in Berlin as well. Kissinger's response was typical. The United States, he asserted, was interested in a Berlin settlement. The main interest, however, was on the part of the Federal Republic. He added that President Nixon wanted to decrease tensions with the Russians. The Europeans should continue their policy of détente also, providing the Western allies were not played off against each other. As Ehmke shared this concern – Kissinger's principal obsession<sup>66</sup> – there was full agreement. Security and détente had to go hand in hand. Ehmke also took the opportunity to explain that any American concern about economic and technological cooperation with the Soviet Union was unfounded. One should not overestimate, he maintained, the importance of trade with the East.<sup>67</sup>

It is difficult to say whether Ehmke's fleeting visit achieved very much or, indeed, changed anything in American policy. The story of the meeting with the Americans is perhaps mostly revealing with respect to the anxieties on both sides. The well-known American misgivings notwithstanding, Bahr was quite happy with the kind of communications that were taking place between Bonn and Washington.<sup>68</sup> In January 1971, a German journalist reported home from Washington that "tiresome talk" about Ostpolitik had apparently come to an end.<sup>69</sup> In the final resort, Ostpolitik was perceived as what it had been all the time: an integral part of Western détente. When Brandt and Nixon met in June 1971, Ostpolitik was no longer on the agenda. The issues of China and relations between the United States and Europe had proved themselves more interesting.<sup>70</sup>

In the end, a Four-Power Agreement was reached in September 1971. Bonn was involved in the negotiations when, at a crucial point, secret talks took place. Its participants were two of the Four Powers, represented

by ambassadors Kenneth Rush and Valentin Falin – and Bahr. Times had changed: Bonn had become part of a system of back channels in the triangle Washington–Bonn–Moscow.<sup>71</sup> Kissinger pointed out to Bahr that nobody outside the White House knew anything about the "Rush–Falin–Bahr meetings, or your channel to me."<sup>72</sup> The new situation did not alter the dependency of the Federal Republic on the United States. But the impact of the Federal Republic on inter-allied relations and on the conduct of East–West relations was now evident. This was confirmed when Brandt went to see Brezhnev in Oreanda, in the Crimea, roughly two weeks after the signature of the Berlin Agreement. Brandt was convinced that both sides had entered a phase of normality. They "know where they agree," he commented, "where a *rapprochement* is conceivable, where they have differences." According to Brandt's notes, both sides demonstrated "strict loyalty to their respective allies."<sup>73</sup> The Federal Republic was not in danger of neutralism. Instead, it was successful in undercutting German–Soviet enmity by starting a process of confidence-building. Former enemies, Brandt and his government believed, should become normal opponents. If approached in the proper way, Ostpolitik – as an integral part of the Western policy of détente – might influence Soviet politics for the better.

This was one of the key arguments put forward by Brandt when he met President Nixon in Key Biscayne in December 1971.<sup>74</sup> The meeting was part of a series of talks the President had before going to Peking and Moscow. Nixon naturally consulted the British Prime Minister Edward Heath and the French President Georges Pompidou. But Brandt was a must, too. Apart from the good personal relationship between Nixon and Brandt and the increasing weight of the Federal Republic within the Western alliance, Brandt's government had been a driving force of détente. Also, Nixon had no personal knowledge of Brezhnev and was as keen as Brezhnev had been in Oreanda three months earlier to gain reliable information about his opposite number. It is interesting that both Brandt and Nixon gave assurances of their loyalty to NATO. Ostpolitik – as an independent German approach to détente – was simply not conceivable without close cooperation within the alliance. Nixon, on his part, ruled out any idea of a bilateral understanding between the superpowers which might be detrimental to the interests of America's allies. Nixon asked about Brandt's perceptions of Soviet policy. Brandt believed he saw an opportunity for more political communication and economic exchanges and even, though this proved wrong, for a reduction in Soviet armaments. At the same time, he warned against illusions. The West must remain on guard. It would never know for how long the Soviet Union was prepared to respect Western interests.

Most reassuring of all for Brandt was that Nixon stressed the inter-relationship of Ostpolitik, the agreement on Berlin, and a breakthrough in American–Soviet relations. Instead of fearing a German move towards the East, Nixon acknowledged the achievements of Bonn's Ostpolitik, which had smoothed the way for better East–West relations. Consequently, he was interested in having the German–Soviet Treaty ratified by the Bundestag before his own meeting with Brezhnev. But he emphasized that it was Bonn's decision to make. The Federal Republic, as an "independent power," should have "every room of manoeuvre."

The Federal Republic seemed to have become established as an equal actor on the world stage. Ostpolitik was approved of "everywhere in the world," as Defence Minister Helmut Schmidt noted on a trip to Asia, Australia, and New Zealand. It was also important, he thought, that it was regarded as an independent German initiative.<sup>75</sup> For Bonn, the feeling of independence and the support of its allies, in particular the United States, were equally important. During the whole process of détente, German Ostpolitik and American approaches to the Soviet Union were mutually supportive. Among those who suffered from this growing concert between Washington and Bonn were the Federal Republic's Christian Democrats, who opposed Ostpolitik. They wanted to use American counter-arguments as a lever in the intra-German debate, which tended to be full of emotion and outright bitterness.<sup>76</sup>

Members or supporters of the Social Democratic–Liberal government tried it the other way round, happy when they could refer to American support for Ostpolitik. In the course of 1971, they gained the upper hand in the debate. Bahr himself was invited to give lectures at the universities of Harvard and Georgetown in April and June 1971. In the invitation he got from the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Georgetown, he was told that Ostpolitik "has not received a full hearing in Washington." Many speakers from a CDU background had had a chance to advance objections, with the consequence that "an imbalance of views on the Ostpolitik has emerged."<sup>77</sup> This was eventually corrected and, in March 1972, James Reston compared Brandt's Ostpolitik and Nixon's moves towards China. Both, he maintained, "are trying to dismantle the Cold War."<sup>78</sup> Even the American labor unions, whose attitude to Ostpolitik had been a continuous concern to the SPD,<sup>79</sup> seemed to be less negative.<sup>80</sup> At an official level, Bahr had the impression of an excellent working partnership. In March 1972, Kissinger proposed meetings every three months. "For the first time," Bahr noted, "the conversation with Kissinger could be described as cordial."<sup>81</sup>

There is no doubt that, during the period of Ostpolitik, the Federal Republic's foreign policy continued to rely on the United States. For the simple but vital reason of security, there was no alternative.<sup>82</sup> At the same time, as demonstrated above, there had been a change in the relationship between the American superpower and the semi-sovereign Federal Republic. The United States was still the cornerstone of the Western alliance, but the perception of the American role in international affairs had changed. The Cold War pattern had to alter, in part to serve the cause of peace, in part because U.S. resources were now clearly limited. Hence the vital German interest in improving the European security system. It was always assumed, however, that the United States would remain an essential part of that system. In particular, no European Security Conference – proposed by the Soviet Union and regarded as useful by the government in Bonn – was conceivable without the participation of the United States. Kissinger was not at all enthusiastic about the prospect of such a conference, but he did not prevent it either. Addressing a group of American and German parliamentarians in November 1971, he dismissed it as "superfluous."<sup>83</sup> Bonn, however, wanted the Harmel formula to be further developed. The existing balance, it believed, ought to be supplemented by additional moves towards confidence-building. This aim seemed attainable because the Soviet Union was currently behaving in a promising way. But it also seemed to be a necessity: "It is not Holy Writ," remarked Helmut Schmidt, "that U.S. forces will have to remain in Europe at present strength for ever and ever."<sup>84</sup>

In the overall assessment, there was no short-term alternative to the role of the United States in Europe. Though its responsibility for its own security was growing, Western Europe could not "substitute the balance of Soviet Union/United States" in the foreseeable future.<sup>85</sup> But the Federal Republic and the other European states had to be aware that the role of the United States might change. Given the isolationist voices in America and the never-ending rumours of a reduction of U.S. troops in Europe, given the impact of the Vietnam War on U.S. foreign policy and the financial strain caused by the American global overcommitment, a policy of détente seemed vital for the Federal Republic, which might find itself greatly disadvantaged by renewed tensions with the Soviet Union. In this different situation, the United States was regarded as an indispensable, if somewhat uncertain, ally. "Is the U.S. going to continue to be a great nation, number one?" – President Nixon's nervous question,<sup>86</sup> asked in August 1971 when the dollar was taken off the gold standard and a symbol of the post-war order disappeared – was answered by Willy Brandt in a simple and affirmative way. For him, there was no change in the American



role as a Western world power.<sup>87</sup> But it seemed both highly probably and timely that the United States should adapt to new circumstances.

The accommodation to realities was a characteristic feature of international politics from the 1960s to the 1970s. The Federal Republic had to accept the territorial status quo as the result of the Second World War. The superpowers had to acknowledge that their resources were limited and that the days of the bipolar world had gone. More specifically, the United States had to come to terms with an integrating Europe and, at the same time, to realize that maintaining a military presence in Europe, rather than isolationism, was in its own best interest. For Moscow, the economic shortcomings of the Soviet system could only be overcome by a reduction of armaments and economic cooperation with the West. Western financial, economic, and technological aid was dependent on a Soviet willingness to accept realities in Europe, including the closer integration of Western Europe, the links of West Berlin with the Federal Republic, and the continuing presence of U.S. troops in Europe.

In the long run, the policy of détente proved profitable to the West and especially to the Federal Republic of Germany and its revisionism. From the outset, Ostpolitik disputed the Soviet view that frontiers in Europe were forever unalterable. Bonn accepted the status quo only in the sense of a *modus vivendi*. Bahr put it succinctly as early as 1968: "The Soviet goal is to legalize the status quo. Our goal is to overcome it. It is a real conflict of interest."<sup>88</sup> Of course, this could not be said openly. But there is enough evidence that the architects of Ostpolitik had in mind not only West Germany's reconciliation with the Soviet Union, but also a change in the postwar order. A policy of détente with its implications (better East–West communications, an increase of trade relations, etc.) might transform the Warsaw Pact. Contrary to Kissinger's early pessimistic anxiety that the Soviet Union might be the only winner,<sup>89</sup> Brandt and Bahr did not rule out the chance that it might be the loser. Or, to put it more precisely, the Soviet Union might be forced to accept peaceful change. Although they had no timetable in mind for the change they envisaged, their policy was not only directed towards the recognition of the status quo but also towards its transformation. At a later stage of Ostpolitik, Bahr disclosed their strategy to Kissinger. The expansion of trade with the East, he argued, would produce more and more friction within the communist countries. As a result, it would contribute to changing them.<sup>90</sup>

## Notes

1. Brandt to McCloy, 24 Mar. 1971, Willy-Brandt-Archiv im Archiv der sozialen Demokratie der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Bonn (WBA), Aktengruppe Bundeskanzler und Bundesregierung 1969–1974 (BK), 43.
2. Namely the recognition of the post-war borders in Europe and of Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe.
3. Willy Brandt, *Erinnerungen* (Frankfurt: Propyläen, 1989), p. 193.
4. "Berlin und Ostpolitik: Nahtlose Übereinstimmung," WBA, BK 92. See also Brandt, *Erinnerungen*, p. 191.
5. Helmut Schmidt, *Menschen und Mächte* (paperback ed., Berlin: Goldmann, 1991), p. 187.
6. See Andreas Vogtmeier, *Egon Bahr und die deutsche Frage: Zur Entwicklung der sozialdemokratischen Ost- und Deutschlandpolitik vom Kriegsende bis zur Vereinigung* (Bonn: Dietz, 1996).
7. Memorandum by Bahr for Brandt, 30 Jan. 1967, Archiv der sozialen Demokratie der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Bonn (AsD), Depositum (Dep.) Bahr 299/3.
8. Gottfried Niedhart, "Friedens- und Interessenwahrung: Zur Ostpolitik der FDP in Opposition und sozial-liberaler Regierung 1968–1970," *Jahrbuch zur Liberalismus-Forschung*, 7 (1995), 105–26.
9. Brandt, *Erinnerungen*, p. 189; Henry Kissinger, *White House Years* (Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown and Co., 1979), pp. 411, 530.
10. Notes by Brandt on his talks in Washington, 8 Feb. 1967, WBA, Aktengruppe Bundesminister des Auswärtigen (BMinA) 17.
11. Report by Henri Nannen and Theo Sommer, who were received by President Johnson on 8 July 1967, WBA, BMinA 7.
12. Frank Costigliola, "Lyndon B. Johnson, Germany and 'the End of the Cold War'," in Warren I. Cohen and Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, eds., *Lyndon Johnson Confronts the World: American Foreign Policy, 1963–1968* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 197. See also Thomas Alan Schwartz, "Victories and Defeats in the Long Twilight Struggle: The United States and Western Europe in the 1960s," in Diane B. Kunz, ed., *The Diplomacy of the Crucial Decade: American Foreign Relations during the 1960s* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 137–38.
13. Report by Bernd von Staden (German embassy Washington), 18 July 1967, WBA, BMinA 1; note by the German journalist Georg Schröder on a conversation with R. S. Cline (U.S. embassy Bonn and Head of

- the C.I.A. for Germany), 9 Apr. 1968, AsD, Dep. Helmut Schmidt 5202.
14. Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994), p. 735.
  15. Willy Brandt, *Begegnungen und Einsichten: Die Jahre 1960–1975* (Hamburg: Hoffman und Campe, 1976), pp. 385–86. See also Clay Clemens, "Amerikanische Entspannungs- und deutsche Ostpolitik 1969–1975," in Wolfgang-Uwe Friedrich, ed., *Die USA und die Deutsche Frage 1945–1990* (Frankfurt and New York: Campus, 1991), p. 207; Dietrich Orlow, "Ambivalence and Attraction: The German Social Democrats and the United States, 1945–1974," in Reiner Pommerin, ed., *The American Impact on Postwar Germany* (Providence and Oxford: Berghahn, 1995), p. 46.
  16. Denis Healey in a working paper "The Nixon Doctrine and the Future of Europe," presented to the twentieth Bilderberg Meeting at Woodstock, Vermont, 23–25 Apr. 1971, AsD, Dep. Bahr 301/4.
  17. See, for example, Kissinger's comments on Bahr as an "old-fashioned German nationalist." Henry Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1982), p. 147. Although the impact of the Wilhelmine and Nazi periods on the image of Germany was still there in the 1960s, a more positive image of the Federal Republic as a loyal and trustworthy partner of the West had made progress in the United States. See Ernest May, "Das nationale Interesse der USA und die deutsche Frage 1966–1972," in Gottfried Niedhart, Detlef Junker, and Michael W. Richter, eds., *Deutschland in Europa: Nationale Interessen und internationale Ordnung im 20. Jahrhundert* (Mannheim: Palatium Verlag, 1997), p. 275. On the Johnson administration and its perceptions of Germany, see Costigliola, "Johnson," pp. 173–79 and 189–90.
  18. Kissinger, *White House Years*, p. 408.
  19. Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, p. 144. Raymond L. Garthoff, *Detente and Confrontation: American–Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan* (Washington: Brookings, 1985), p. 109, is right when he makes the point that Kissinger, in his memoirs, tries vainly to prove that he rescued Ostpolitik from failure.
  20. Brandt, *Erinnerungen*, pp. 189–90.
  21. He had been told by Rusk in August 1967 that the Europeans could not simply leave the American–Soviet conflict. Notes on talks with Rusk, 15–16 Aug. 1967, WBA, BMinA 17.
  22. Brandt, addressing the parliamentary party of the SPD, 4 Mar. 1969, AsD, SPD-Fraktion, 5, Wahlperiode (WP) 119.

23. Brandt, *Erinnerungen*, p. 176. Summaries and positive assessments of the whole series of talks at government and party level were given by Brandt, Schmidt, and Wehner at a meeting of the party executive of the SPD, 25 Aug. 1969, AsD, Parteivorstandsprotokolle. Helmut Schmidt, at that time leader of the parliamentary party of the SPD in the Bundestag, had just returned from a trip to Moscow. In July 1969, Walter Scheel and two more FDP politicians travelled to Moscow, after having talks in Washington. Kissinger, *White House Years*, pp. 435, 440.
24. For details see Adrian W. Schertz, *Die Deutschlandpolitik Kennedys und Johnsons: Unterschiedliche Ansätze innerhalb der amerikanischen Regierung* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1992).
25. Klaus Schwabe, ed., *Adenauer und die USA* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1994).
26. Wolfram F. Hanrieder, "Deutschland und die USA: Partner im transatlantischen Bündnis der Nachkriegsära," in Jürgen Elvert and Michael Salewski, eds., *Deutschland und der Westen im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert: Teil 1: Transatlantische Beziehungen* (Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag, 1993), p. 131. See also Wolfram F. Hanrieder, *Deutschland, Europa, Amerika: Die Außenpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1949–1994* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2nd edn., 1995), pp. 25–30.
27. Brandt, *Erinnerungen*, p. 170.
28. Note by Bahr for Brandt, 1 Oct. 1969, WBA, Loses Material.
29. AsD, Dep. Bahr 439/2.
30. Note by Bahr for Brandt, 14 Oct. 1969, AsD, Dep. Bahr 439/2. See also Kissinger, *White House Years*, p. 411.
31. Author's interview with Bahr, 15 Mar. 1996.
32. AsD, Dep. Bahr 439/2.
33. *Ibid.*
34. AsD, Dep. Bahr 440/2. See also Ambassador Kenneth Rush to Brandt, 28 Oct. 1969, *ibid.* Rush's predecessor, George McGhee, had endorsed Ostpolitik too. George McGhee, *At the Creation of a New Germany – From Adenauer to Brandt: An Ambassador's Account* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989), p. 243.
35. Bahr to Kissinger, 30 Dec. 1969, AsD, Dep. Bahr 439/2.
36. Kissinger, *White House Years*, p. 423–24. Brandt, addressing the executive of the parliamentary party of the SPD in Bonn, 13 Apr. 1970: "Die Gespräche von Moskau, Warschau und Erfurt werden von den USA mit Sympathie betrachtet." AsD, SPD-Fraktion, 6, WP, 139.
37. Paul Frank, *Entschlüsselte Botschaft: Ein Diplomat macht Inventur* (Munich: dtv, 1985), p. 287.

38. Kissinger, *White House Years*, pp. 410, 528–29.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 412.
40. *Ibid.*, pp. 409–11. See also Kissinger's memorandum for President Nixon, 16 Feb. 1970, *ibid.*, pp. 529–30.
41. Bahr to Kissinger, 24 July 1970, AsD, Dep. Bahr 439/2.
42. Georges-Henri Soutou, "L'attitude de Georges Pompidou face à l'Allemagne," in Association Georges Pompidou, ed., *Georges Pompidou et l'Europe* (Brussels: Complexe, 1995), pp. 267–313.
43. Heath to Brandt, 27 Sept. 1971, WBA, BK 52.
44. Kissinger, *White House Years*, p. 410
45. *Ibid.*, p. 531.
46. Letters by Brandt to Washington, London, and Paris, 25 Feb. and 22 Mar. 1970, WBA, BK 51. See also Bahr to Kissinger, 25 May 1970, AsD, Dep. Bahr 439/2.
47. On the central importance of the "American-led negotiations on the Berlin problem," see also Frank Ninkovich, *Germany and the United States: The Transformation of the German Question since 1945* (Boston: Twayne, 1988), p. 153.
48. Kissinger, *White House Years*, p. 532.
49. Schmidt to Brandt, 13 Aug. 1970, WBA, BK 18. On 18 Aug. 1970, Schmidt asked the planning staff of the Defence Ministry for an analysis of the Treaty of Moscow. In a memorandum of 28 Aug. 1970, the main points, marked by Schmidt, were: the treaty did not remove the differences which existed between both sides; it leaves room to manoeuvre with respect to peaceful change of the status quo; it must not lead to an inappropriate feeling of security; the Federal Republic is in need of a solid safeguard in the West against any risks which might come up. AsD, Dep. Schmidt 1649 A.
50. Notes on Bahr's conversations with Kissinger and Hillenbrand, 17 and 18 Aug. 1970, AsD, Dep. Bahr 439/2 and 444/1.
51. *Ibid.* and Kissinger, *White House Years*, p. 533.
52. Brandt to Nixon, 14 Oct. 1970, WBA, BK 60.
53. Kissinger, *White House Years*, p. 800.
54. Apel to Wehner, 20 Aug. 1970, AsD, SPD-Fraktion, 6. WP, 322.
55. Peter Petersen, SPD member of the Bundestag, to Helmut Schmidt, 29 Sept. 1970, on a conversation with Laird, AsD, Dep. Schmidt 5493.
56. The company, Roy Blumenthal International Associates: Public Relations and Advertising, had a contract with the government in Bonn. AsD, Dep. Bahr 81.
57. Hans Eberhard Dingels, Head of the Department for International

- Affairs of the SPD, to Karl Wienand and Kurt Mattick, 4 Nov. 1970, WBA, Aktengruppe Parteivorsitzender, 59. See also Martin J. Hillenbrand, "Die Vereinigten Staaten und Deutschland," in Wolfram F. Hanrieder and Hans Rühle, eds., *Im Spannungsfeld der Weltpolitik: 30 Jahre deutsche Außenpolitik (1949–1979)* (Stuttgart: Bonn Aktuell, 1981), pp. 144–45.
58. Orlow, "Ambivalence and Attraction," p. 44–46.
59. In 1974, a Social-Democratic study group on the United States, which was directed by Heinz Ruhnau, still complained about the prevailing attention paid by SPD parliamentarians to Eastern Europe at the expense of the United States. Meeting of 21 Jan. 1974, AsD, Dep. Schmidt 6240.
50. Ehmke's memorandum of 13 Oct. 1970 on his trip to the United States, which lasted from 27 Sept. to 3 Oct. 1970, AsD, Dep. Ehmke 286. In the same file, there are notes by the German consulate general in New York (6 Oct. 1970) and by Ulrich Sahm of the Federal Chancellery in Bonn, who accompanied Ehmke (20 Oct. 1970). See also Horst Ehmke, *Mittendrin. Von der Großen Koalition zur Deutschen Einheit* (Berlin: Rowohlt, 1994), p. 140; Ulrich Sahm, "Diplomaten taugen nichts": *Aus dem Leben eines Staatsdieners* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1994), pp. 277–78. On 23 Oct. 1970, Ehmke had a conversation with Ray Cline who, after his time in Bonn (see above n. 13), had moved to the State Department. Cline had doubts concerning the Soviets' reliability. But the U.S. government did not wish to return to a policy of confrontation. Ehmke stressed that the German initiatives towards the East were possible only on the basis of a strong Western alliance. AsD, Dep. Ehmke 286.
61. Memorandum by Blumenthal for Ehmke, 10 Sept. 1970, AsD, Dep. Bahr 81 A/1.
62. Memorandum by Ehmke, 13 Oct. 1970 (see above n. 60).
63. Memorandum by Blumenthal for Ehmke, 10 Dec. 1970, AsD, Dep. Bahr 81/A 1.
64. Klaus Harpprecht, a journalist who was close to Brandt, on a conversation with Shepard Stone. Harpprecht to Brandt, 17 Dec. 1970, WBA, BK 8.
65. Note by Sahm, 16 Dec. 1970, AsD, Dep. Ehmke 286; Ehmke, *Mittendrin*, pp. 140–41.
66. Repeated frequently, for instance on 24 Apr. 1971, when Kissinger gave a speech at the Bilderberg conference. Kissinger's support for Ostpolitik was combined with a warning against "differentiated negotiations" with Moscow. In the event of a race of Western states

- to Moscow, it was beyond any doubt who would win. Notes by Bahr, 28 Apr. 1971, AsD, Dep. Bahr 439/2.
67. Back in Bonn, Ehmke wrote a lengthy note on his talks in Washington on 21 Dec. 1970, AsD, Dep. Ehmke 286. Also see Ehmke, *Mittendrin*, pp. 141–42 – where Ehmke, however, gives a wrong date for his meeting with Kissinger.
68. Bahr to Blumenthal, 13 Jan. 1971, AsD, Dep. Bahr 81B/1.
69. Klaus Bölling to Helmut Schmidt, 24 Jan. 1971, AsD, Dep. Schmidt 5701.
70. Notes by Brandt on his talks in Washington, 15 and 16 June 1971, AsD, Dep. Bahr 440/2. See also Brandt, *Begegnungen*, p. 390.
71. Kissinger, *White House Years*, pp. 807–809; Valentin Falin, *Politische Erinnerungen* (Munich: Droemer Knaur, 1993), pp. 165–74; Werner Link, “Außen- und Deutschlandpolitik in der Ära Brandt 1969–1974,” in Karl Dietrich Bracher, Wolfgang Jäger, and Werner Link, *Republik im Wandel 1969–1974: Die Ära Brandt* (Stuttgart and Mannheim: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt/F.A. Brockhaus, 1986), p. 202.
72. Kissinger to Bahr, 24 May 1971, AsD, Dep. Bahr 439/2.
73. Notes taken by Brandt, 18 Sept. 1971, WBA, BK 92. Kissinger was informed by Bahr in a letter of 20 Sept. 1971, AsD, Dep. Bahr 439/2.
74. For a full account of the meeting on 28 and 29 Dec. 1971, see Brandt, *Begegnungen*, pp. 395–402. Also see Brandt, *Erinnerungen*, p. 193.
75. Schmidt, addressing the parliamentary party of the SPD, 14 Dec. 1971, AsD, SPD-Fraktion, 6. WP, 81.
76. A good example can be found in Kurt Birrenbach, *Meine Sondermissionen: Rückblick auf zwei Jahrzehnte bundesdeutscher Außenpolitik* (Düsseldorf and Vienna: Econ Verlag, 1984), pp. 324–43.
77. John M. Steeves to Bahr, 6 May 1971, AsD, Dep. Bahr 301/3. On the lecture at Harvard, *ibid.*, 440/1.
78. *New York Times*, 1 Mar. 1972, reported immediately by the German ambassador to Bonn, AsD, Dep. Schmidt 342.
79. Helmut Schmidt to George Meany, 18 Mar. 1971, AsD, Dep. Schmidt 5813; Schmidt to Brandt, 23 Apr. 1971, AsD, SPD-Fraktion, 6. WP, 310.
80. Ruhnau to Wehner, 14 Apr. 1972, AsD, SPD-Fraktion, 6. WP, 243. However, the relations of the German trade unions with the East were still criticized.
81. Notes by Bahr on a conversation with Kissinger, 28 Mar. 1972, AsD, Dep. Bahr 439/2.
82. Bahr stressed this point time and again. See, for instance, his memo-

- randum, 18 Sept. 1969, and his letter to Brandt, 21 Sept. 1969, on the foreign policy guidelines of the Federal Republic: “The United States are our most important ally. Our security depends on the U.S.” Vogtmeier, *Bahr*, p. 110.
83. Report by Heinz Ruhnau on the conference, 14–16 Nov. 1971, AsD, SPD-Fraktion, 6. WP, 211.
84. Helmut Schmidt, “Germany in the Era of Negotiations,” *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 49, no. 1 (1970), 43. See also notes by Brandt in June 1970: “US bleiben, aber reduzieren,” WBA, BK 91.
85. Undated notes by Brandt (Notizen für Krim September 1971), WBA, BK 92.
86. President Nixon, 13 Aug. 1971, H. R. Haldeman, *The Haldeman Diaries: Inside the Nixon White House* (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1994), p. 344.
87. Brandt, *Begegnungen*, p. 379. For his resentment of the way Washington acted, see *ibid.*, pp. 387, 395.
88. Memorandum by Bahr, 1 Oct. 1968, quoted in Vogtmeier, *Bahr*, p. 129.
89. Kissinger, *White House Years*, pp. 408–10, 533.
90. Bahr to Kissinger, 14 Apr. 1973: “Eine systematische, aber nicht wahllose Erweiterung der wirtschaftlichen Ost–West-Beziehungen wird die Widersprüche in den kommunistisch regierten Ländern steigern und zu weiteren Modifikationen des Systems beitragen.” Vogtmeier, *Bahr*, p. 177.