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1

What Kind of Union?

The 1940s in Europe saw the end of one war and the beginning of another. World War II ended in 1945; the Cold War began almost immediately afterward. The Cold War was not inevitable but occurred as a result of deep-rooted antagonism, intense mistrust, and happenstance. It gelled in the late 1940s, dividing Europe into two armed camps. Western Europe gratefully accepted U.S. protection from a seemingly messianic and expansionist Soviet Union. Eastern Europe lay under Soviet control, as the Red Army turned from a liberating to an occupying force. The main fault line between East and West ran through Germany, the geopolitical fulcrum of twentieth-century Europe.

World War II changed Europe completely. Germany was defeated, destroyed, and divided into four zones of occupation. Soviet-controlled Communist parties came to power throughout Eastern Europe, establishing dictatorial governments, seizing private property, and imposing command economies. Coping with the consequences of the war and an emerging threat from the East, Western European countries desperately sought economic recovery, political stability, and military security. The United States made it possible for them to achieve all three.

The United States promoted economic interdependence through free trade and unrestricted financial flows. Europe, truncated by the Cold War into Western Europe, was an important element in the U.S.-inspired global system. But Western Europe was too weak economically and financially to participate fully in the emerging international order immediately after the war. The United States came to the rescue with the Marshall Plan to expedite economic recovery and the European Payments Union to facilitate currency convertibility. The North Atlantic Treaty, signed in Washington in April 1949, provided a security umbrella for Western Europe in the form of the U.S.-dominated North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

This chapter examines the early years of European integration in the context of the emerging Cold War. It shows how the United States supported European integration in order to enhance regional security and accelerate economic recovery, although Europeans were ambivalent about sharing national

sovereignty. Very few advocated full-fledged federation; most subscribed to a vague notion of solidarity and transnational cooperation. Rhetorical support for integration reached its zenith in the Congress of Europe in May 1948, leading to the establishment of the intergovernmental Council of Europe a year later. Economic integration along supranational lines emerged instead as a solution to a specific problem in postwar Europe: what to do with the new West Germany. The Schuman Declaration of June 1950 was a French initiative to resolve the German question by means of economic integration.

■ From World War to Cold War

By the end of World War II, Germany was thoroughly defeated and utterly devastated. The former Reich was at the mercy of the four occupying powers (Britain, France, the Soviet Union, and the United States). For Germany, 1945 was "year zero" (*Stunde Null*). The country changed shape as Poland and Czechoslovakia regained disputed territory in the east. Hundreds of thousands of ethnic Germans fled westward. Together with a huge number of displaced persons already in Germany (forced laborers and concentration camp survivors), these impoverished arrivals caused a refugee problem of unprecedented proportions. The official economy collapsed, and a thriving black market emerged. Law and order broke down. This is how Noel Annan, then a young British army officer and later a distinguished academic, described what he witnessed:

It was not only the displaced persons who were on the move . . . millions of Germans . . . were moving from east to west. . . . The two great canals were blocked. Trains crept over improvised bridges: only 650 of the 8000 miles of track were operating. You drove along roads where every few miles you met a sign "*Umleitung*" [bypass], and you were diverted down tracks and side roads. The devastation of the bombed cities beggared description. Three out of four houses were destroyed, seven out of eight damaged and shattered. Scarcely a city of any size and importance had escaped. In Berlin the trees in the Tiergarten were cut down for firewood, and a familiar sight was of some wizened old man hauling a little cart with a few sticks in it, and of chains of men and women passing chunks of rubble from hand to hand in an attempt to clear a site. The spectacle of misery pervaded one's life.¹

The situation varied elsewhere in Europe in the summer of 1945 but was generally grim. Many countries in Central and Eastern Europe had suffered grievously under German occupation and were ravaged by the epic battles of 1944 and early 1945 between the German and Soviet armies. The German occupation regime in Western Europe had not been as harsh as in the east, nor had the scale and impact of fighting on the Western Front been as great as on the Eastern Front. Conditions differed markedly within Western Europe,

although most countries endured considerable economic privation and social dislocation. Having escaped heavy damage and been liberated before the end of 1944, Belgium was relatively prosperous in 1945. Parts of neighboring Holland, by contrast, were a battlefield almost until the end of the war. Some liberated countries, such as France and Italy, went through short but sharp civil wars at the time of the German army's retreat, as the resistance settled scores against local Fascists and against elements within its own ideologically diverse membership.

Under the leadership of Josef Stalin, the Soviet Union had withstood a series of ferocious German onslaughts since June 1941, suffering enormous physical destruction and loss of life. Having pushed the progressively weaker German army all the way back to Berlin, the Soviet Union emerged from the war as a great power whose armies were encamped in much of Central and Eastern Europe. Thus Stalin was in a position to impose Communist regimes in a region that the United States and Britain, the two leading Western powers, recognized as a Soviet sphere of influence. Initially, Stalin seemed content to allow non-Communist parties to reorganize themselves in Central and Eastern Europe and participate in coalition governments with the Soviet-supported Communist parties. Nevertheless, historical enmity between Russia and most of its neighbors, as well as the generally loutish behavior of Red Army troops, fostered a climate of deep suspicion toward the Soviet Union.

The United States emerged from the war undamaged and more powerful than any of the other protagonists. It had global postwar ambitions and interests. The United States wanted above all to establish an international economic system conducive to free trade and unfettered investment. This required a tripartite institutional structure: the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the International Trade Organization. Only a country as self-confident and influential as the United States at the end of the war could have hatched such a grandiose scheme for global economic management. Ultimately U.S. plans for the postwar world foundered on domestic and foreign resistance and were only partly realized.

Despite profound differences between their political and economic systems, the United States and the Soviet Union hoped to maintain a working relationship after the war. The United Nations (UN) was to have provided an overarching political framework for postwar diplomatic relations among the members of the wartime Grand Alliance (the countries that had fought against Germany). The death in April 1945 of President Franklin Roosevelt jeopardized prospects for close U.S.-Soviet cooperation. Harry Truman, Roosevelt's successor, adopted a more aggressive stance toward the Soviet Union. Sole possession of the atomic bomb by the United States emboldened Truman and deepened Soviet suspicion of the United States. Mutual mistrust, widespread before the war, quickly resurfaced.

Postwar Politics

National governments returned to power in Europe as soon as the German army withdrew. Apart from discredited collaborators who had no political future (in the short term at least), there were two main distinctions between politicians at the end of the war: the party to which they belonged and where they had spent the years of occupation. Some politicians had fled abroad and formed governments in exile; others remained at home and in many cases joined the resistance. Inevitably tension arose between those who stayed and those who left, even within the same party or political tendency. But the main distinction between politicians after the war, as well as before and during it, was ideological orientation and party affiliation. Communists emerged stronger from the war because they had played a leading role in the resistance and had the support of the Soviet Union, a country widely credited with having defeated Hitler. Social Democrats were also popular because of their long-standing opposition to fascism and the appeal of the social market to voters wary of both communism and capitalism. Eager to distance themselves from disgraced right-wing political parties of the prewar period, conservatives recast themselves after the war as Christian Democrats, advocating compassionate capitalism and accepting the welfare state.

Most governments immediately after the war were coalitions of Communist, Socialist, and Christian Democratic parties. Often infused by the resistance ideals of partnership and shared sacrifice, and conscious-stricken by the failure of anti-Fascist Popular Fronts in the 1930s, they attempted to work harmoniously together to build better societies and fairer economic systems. Human frailty, lingering resentments, political ambition, and party rivalry soon drove them apart. Distrust between the Communists and non-Communists ran deep and erupted into the open at the onset of the Cold War. By the late 1940s, Communist parties were leaving or being thrown out of government in Western Europe (as in France and Italy) and were throwing non-Communist parties out of government in Central and Eastern Europe (for instance in Czechoslovakia and Poland). Socialist and Christian Democratic parties, sharing a common antipathy toward the Communists, generally continued to cooperate with each other in Western Europe.

Britain was an exception to the postwar European pattern. For one thing, Britain did not have a significant Communist party. Thanks to a series of political and economic reforms, the vast majority of the British working class had eschewed revolutionary socialism in the nineteenth century. Instead, most British workers supported the nonrevolutionary, social-democratic Labour Party. For another thing, Britain had a two-party system in which one party alone traditionally formed the government. Following the collapse of the Liberal Party early in the twentieth century, Labour and the Conservatives were the two main parties. Although they had formed a national unity government

under Winston Churchill during the war, the two parties competed against each other in the first postwar election, in July 1945. Despite their gratitude for Churchill's wartime leadership, most Britons did not trust the Conservatives to provide housing, jobs, and a generous welfare system. Promising comprehensive state care "from the cradle to the grave," Labour won by a landslide and remained in office until 1951.

Britain's situation was particularly important because continental Socialists looked to the Labour Party for leadership and inspiration.² Denis Healey, later a leading British government minister, was Labour's international secretary in the late 1940s. He recalled that "among socialists on the Continent, the British Labour Party . . . had a prestige and influence it never enjoyed before or since. Britain was the only big country in Europe where a socialist party had won power on its own, without depending on any coalition partners. Britain had stood out alone against Hitler after the rest of Europe crumbled. And Britain had won."³ To the great disappointment of fellow Socialists on the Continent, the Labour government pursued a foreign policy that seemed to place European affairs third in line behind relations with the United States and with the Empire and Commonwealth (a collection of former colonies).

Germany was another exception to the postwar continental political norm, but for very different reasons. Politics in postwar Germany initially remained under the strict control of the occupying powers, whose approach to local government varied considerably. True to national form, the Americans were relaxed about it, the Soviets strict, the British condescending, and the French haughty. Britain and France drew on their respective imperial traditions. To quote Noel Annan again: "In true colonial style the British set up nominated councils as the first faltering step on the path to democracy, and a redoubtable former colonial servant, Harold Ingrams, saw to it that the policy was implemented. Ingrams was apt to treat the Germans as if they were a specially intelligent tribe of Bedouins. Discussion in the shady tent was permitted until the Resident Officer struck the ground with his stick and gave his decision. This attitude exasperated the Germans."⁴ A U.S. academic later observed that, in their zone of occupation, the French "sought to re-educate and democratize the German people, to make them worthy of a place in the moral and cultural community of Europe, notably by cathartic acquaintance with the best of France's own cultural heritage."⁵

The Four Powers were supposed to have cooperated in governing Germany through the Allied Control Council, consisting of senior U.S., British, French, and Soviet officials, but never managed to do so. Reparations became a major sticking point. The Soviets wanted to get hold of as much plant and material as possible in the more industrialized Western zones. Mindful of the economic mistakes made in Germany after World War I and realizing that it would ultimately have to foot the bill, the United States objected and eventually stopped delivering reparations to the Soviets in May 1946, triggering a



Germany Under Occupation

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series of events that drove the former allies farther apart. One of the most dramatic of these was the Berlin Blockade of 1948-1949, when the Soviets blocked all rail, road, and water routes between Berlin and the West. The Western powers responded by supplying their beleaguered zones in Berlin with food and other supplies by air, before the Soviets lifted the blockade eleven months later. The Berlin Blockade symbolized the collapse of the Yalta and Potsdam agreements of 1945 among Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union on Europe's future and the emergence of a bitter confrontation between East and West.⁶

Mindful of the privations of the Great Depression, European electorates wanted their governments to provide economic growth, full employment, and generous social welfare. That was a tall order at the best of times, let alone immediately after the war when disaster relief was the first priority. It was surprising, under the circumstances, that economic recovery proceeded as quickly as it did in postwar Europe. By 1946 a number of smaller countries—Belgium, Denmark, and Norway—attained a level of gross domestic product (GDP) equivalent to that of 1938 (the last year before the outbreak of war). France and Italy followed suit in 1949. Britain, relatively unscathed in the war, continued to improve upon its 1938 level during the war itself, whereas Germany, greatly damaged at the end of the war, attained its 1938 level only in 1951.⁷ This recovery took place despite the massive wartime destruction of industrial plant and infrastructure, shortages of skilled manpower in critical economic sectors, and millions of displaced persons. Nor did the weather help: the winter of 1946-1947 was exceptionally cold and wet, and the summers before and after exceptionally hot and dry.

The Marshall Plan

Following the abrupt termination in August 1945 of its wartime Lend Lease program, the United States continued to assist war-damaged Europe through the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. That helped European countries to meet pressing demands for food and fuel. As Europe's recovery gathered speed, Europeans looked to the United States for additional supplies of basic commodities as well as for machinery, raw materials, and consumer goods. The cost of imports depleted Europe's precious dollar reserves. Hence the emergence of a "dollar gap": the difference in dollars between what European countries needed and what they could afford to buy in the United States. The gap could have been narrowed by a combination of domestic austerity drives and more intra-European trade. But austerity was unpopular and therefore politically impracticable, especially so soon after the war; at the same time a plethora of restrictions on the movement of goods and capital, together with the hoarding of dollars for dealings with the United States, hobbled intra-European trade. The only alternative was for the United

States to continue giving more dollars to Europe, an unpopular option in Washington.

U.S. officials were well aware of Europe's predicament. Reports of widespread hunger and poverty in Germany in early 1947 intensified State Department efforts to promote Europe's economic recovery. Although Germany's situation was not typical of the Continent's as a whole, the humanitarian motive proved useful when selling to Congress the idea of additional aid, as did the far more compelling argument that an economically buoyant Western Europe would be less susceptible to communism. More than anything else, the consolidation of Soviet control in Central and Eastern Europe and the strength of Communist parties in Western Europe galvanized elite opinion in the United States in favor of a long-term assistance program.

The provision of massive assistance was also in the economic interest of the United States. As William Clayton, undersecretary for economic affairs, informed Secretary of State George Marshall in a memorandum in May 1947:

Without further prompt and substantial aid from the United States, economic, social and political disintegration will overwhelm Europe. Aside from the awful implications which this would have for the future peace and security of the world, the immediate effects on our domestic economy would be disastrous: markets for our surplus production gone, unemployment, depression, a heavily unbalanced budget on the background of a mountainous war debt. *These things must not happen.*⁸

Based on reports of Germany's plight and more broadly on their assessment of Europe's economic and political situation—the dollar gap and the threat of communism—officials gave Marshall the outline of an idea to assist Europe's recovery through the provision of U.S. assistance, in cash and in kind, for a period of several years. The United States would act in concert with Europe. As Marshall said in his famous speech at Harvard University in June 1947:

It would be neither fitting nor efficacious for this Government to undertake to draw up unilaterally a program designed to place Europe on its feet economically. This is the business of the Europeans. The initiative, I think, must come from Europe. The role of this country should consist of friendly aid in the drafting of a European program and of later support of such a program so far as it may be practical for us to do so. The program should be a joint one, agreed to by a number, if not all, European nations.⁹

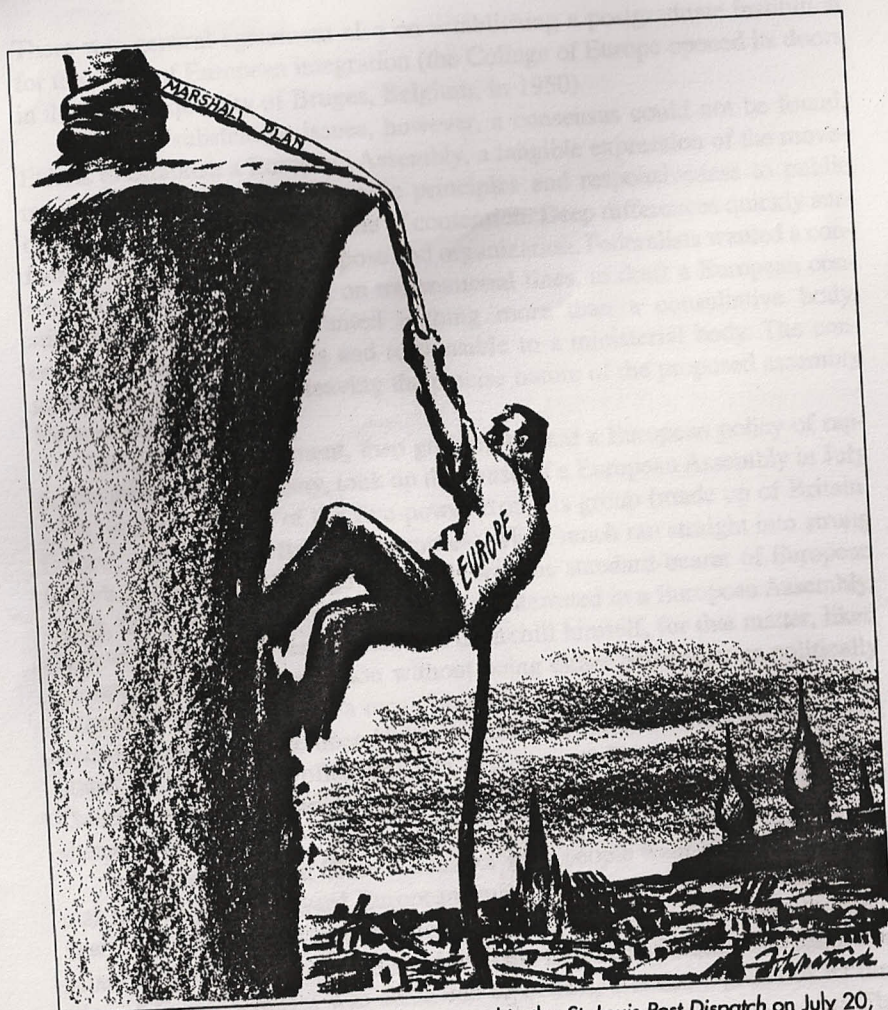
It took a year of intensive negotiations among the Europeans themselves, between the Americans and the Europeans, and especially within the U.S. government before what became known as the Marshall Plan was fully fleshed out and functioning.¹⁰ Its immediate objective was to close the dollar gap while simultaneously promoting intra-European trade by discouraging

imports from the United States and facilitating currency convertibility. Its longer-term objectives were to inculcate U.S. business practices and to fashion in Europe a marketplace similar to the one in the United States: large, integrated, and efficient. In U.S. eyes a single market was an essential prerequisite for peace and prosperity in Europe and for Europe's full participation in the global economic system.

Earlier, in March 1947, President Truman announced the doctrine that bore his name, promising military assistance to Greece (then fending off a Communist insurrection thought to be supported by the Soviet Union) and to any other European country that came under Communist attack. The Marshall Plan was the economic flip side of the Truman Doctrine. The Americans were careful not to exclude the Soviet Union explicitly from the Marshall Plan, but Soviet participation was incompatible with the plan's anti-Communist intent. The Soviet foreign minister attended the conference of potential aid recipients in Paris in July 1947, but withdrew after failing to convince the others to reject the U.S. insistence on a joint European request for assistance. Claiming that the Marshall Plan amounted to U.S. interference in domestic affairs, the Soviets forbade the Central and Eastern European countries from participating as well.

Thus the Marshall Plan and the Soviet Union's negative response to it were pivotal events in the early history of the Cold War. For many Western Europeans the Marshall Plan was synonymous with the selflessness and generosity of the United States toward allies and former enemies alike, in marked contrast to the rapaciousness of the Soviet Union in Central and Eastern Europe. The Communist seizure of power in Czechoslovakia in February 1948 and the Berlin Blockade three months later deepened the growing Cold War divide. Like the Marshall Plan, these events were great propaganda coups for the United States.

The Marshall Plan was a great success. Politically, it signaled the intention of the United States to remain engaged in Europe after World War II, in contrast to the country's disastrous disengagement from Europe a generation earlier. Economically, the plan did not "save" Europe, because Europe was already on the road to recovery.¹¹ Nevertheless, Marshall aid helped close the dollar gap, even though a recession in the United States in 1948–1949 depressed U.S. demand for European goods, causing the gap temporarily to widen again. Through the sale of goods supplied by the plan, recipient governments were able to raise "counterpart funds" (in local currency) with which to pursue national economic objectives such as infrastructural development or debt reduction. According to Charles Maier, a leading historian of the period, "by easing balance-of-payments constraints and freeing key bottlenecks for specific goods, American aid allowed the European economies to generate their own capital more freely, certainly without returning to the deflationary competition of the 1930s. U.S. aid served, in a sense, like the lubri-



"The Way Back" by Daniel Fitzpatrick appeared in the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* on July 20, 1947. Used by permission, State Historical Society of Missouri, Columbia.

cant of an engine—not the fuel—allowing a machine to run that would otherwise buckle and bind."¹²

■ The European Movement

In May 1948, three years after the end of the war in Europe, nearly one thousand people attended the Congress of Europe in The Hague, the political cap-

ital of the Netherlands. They included senior politicians from most European countries and political parties (excluding the Communist Left and the Far Right). All participated in a private capacity. Winston Churchill, the already legendary prime minister of wartime Britain, then the underemployed leader of the opposition Conservative Party, presided over the event.

The Hague Congress was the high point of the postwar European movement.¹³ Inspired by appeals throughout the ages for European unity, and appalled by events in the interwar and wartime periods, the movement included several dozen organizations—some nationally based, others transnational—encompassing thousands of individuals in more than twenty countries.¹⁴ Popular support for European unity in the immediate postwar years was widespread and deeply felt. The idea of European integration in the 1940s was not elitist but had broad support and mass appeal.

Although members of the European movement subscribed to the general goal of European union, they disagreed among themselves on what form such union should take. A few were ardent federalists, convinced by the lessons of the recent past that relations between European states needed radical recasting. Some of the more ideological of them, notably Altiero Spinelli, saw federalism as a panacea for Europe's ills, an antidote to the evils of nationalism and the corruption of modern capitalism. His was a "big bang" approach to European union—a conviction that a United States of Europe should immediately and irrevocably replace the existing states system.¹⁵

By contrast, most of those attending the congress had only a vague vision of Europe's future. Like the vast majority of Europeans, they were either indifferent to federalism or opposed to it. For them, a high degree of intra-European cooperation was desirable or even imperative, but the legitimacy and efficacy of the nation-state were not disputed. The idea of European union had political, economic, and cultural dimensions, without as yet having precise constitutional contours. For all its proponents, however, European union meant an unequivocal commitment to democracy, justice, and human rights. It also acknowledged the need to bring Germany back into the international fold. The rhetoric of European union was pan-European, but the reality of the emerging Cold War meant that concrete initiatives would be restricted to Western Europe and therefore also to West Germany.

The large and influential attendance at the congress reflected the appeal of European union. Yet ringing phrases in the final resolution could not disguise the difficulty within such a heterogeneous group of deciding what steps to take next. There was general agreement to transform the International Committee of the Movement for European Unity, the body that had organized the congress, into an umbrella organization called the European Movement. The new organization was launched in Brussels in October 1948 under the joint presidency of Churchill, Leon Blum (a French Socialist), Alcide de Gasperi (an Italian Christian Democrat), and Paul-Henri Spaak (a Belgian Socialist).

There was general agreement also on establishing a postgraduate institution for the study of European integration (the College of Europe opened its doors in the picturesque city of Bruges, Belgium, in 1950).

On more substantive issues, however, a consensus could not be found. Efforts to establish a European Assembly, a tangible expression of the movement's commitment to democratic principles and responsiveness to public opinion, became the biggest bone of contention. Deep differences quickly surfaced over the assembly's purpose and organization. Federalists wanted a constituent assembly, organized on transnational lines, to draft a European constitution; antifederalists wanted nothing more than a consultative body, organized on national lines and responsible to a ministerial body. The congress agreed to disagree, leaving the precise nature of the proposed assembly for another day's work.

The French government, then groping toward a European policy of rapprochement with Germany, took up the cause of a European Assembly in July 1948, under the aegis of the five-power Brussels group (made up of Britain, France, and the three Benelux countries). The French ran straight into strong British opposition. Although Churchill was the standard-bearer of European union, the governing Labour Party was uninterested in a European Assembly, however anodyne its responsibilities. Churchill himself, for that matter, liked to orate about European union without being either personally or politically committed to it. Churchill's most famous speech on European union, delivered in Zurich in September 1946, in which he called for "a kind of United States of Europe," is often cited as evidence of Euro-enthusiasm. In fact, Churchill was too nationalistic to champion a new European system based on shared sovereignty.

Regardless of what Churchill said or what people wanted him to say, official British policy toward European union was extremely negative. Britain saw itself as a global power whose foreign policy priorities were twofold: relations with the United States and with the Empire and Commonwealth. The idea of Eurofederalism was anathema to Britain, a country proud of its distinctive political institutions and culture and of its recent wartime record. The prevailing view in London was that shared sovereignty was for continental losers, not for British winners.

Eventually the British government agreed to the establishment of a Consultative Assembly, but one that was virtually powerless and that was answerable to an intergovernmental body, the Committee of Ministers. This was the institutional foundation of the Council of Europe, which ten countries—the Brussels powers plus Denmark, Ireland, Italy, Norway, and Sweden—formed when they signed the Statute of Westminster in May 1949. British foreign secretary Ernest Bevin suggested that the Council be located in Strasbourg, a city long disputed between France and Germany and far enough away from national capitals to help ensure the Council's marginalization.

The assembly met for the first time in August 1949. Churchill led the delegation of British Conservatives at the inaugural session and gave a rousing speech in a square in Strasbourg's war-damaged city center. It was vintage Churchill: emotional, entertaining, and enthralling. It also marked the zenith of Churchill's career as the champion of European union. Although the former prime minister presided over the newly launched European Movement and although popular interest in integration remained strong on the Continent, the Council of Europe's obvious weakness sapped political support for similar grandiose schemes.

Enthusiasts for European integration continued to look to the assembly for inspiration and leadership, believing that it could act as a constituent body for a federal union. Spaak, Belgium's foreign minister and the assembly's first president, personified their hopes. His resignation from the assembly's presidency in December 1951, in protest against the Committee of Ministers' opposition to any and all federal initiatives, signaled the end of the road for the Council of Europe as a possible instrument of political integration.

■ Prospects for Economic Integration

A number of international organizations existed in Europe immediately after the war. They aimed to rebuild national economies rather than integrate Europe economically. There were three emergency organizations—the European Coal Organization, the European Central Inland Transport Organization, and the Emergency Economic Committee for Europe—as well as the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, which closed down in 1949. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe subsumed the remaining emergency organizations in May 1947. Walt Rostow, a U.S. official who was special assistant to the Economic Commission's first executive secretary, wrote in 1949 that "the [Economic Commission] appeared a possible realistic first step along the long slow path towards a democratically negotiated, economic unity in Europe."¹⁶

The onset of the Cold War destroyed whatever potential the organization had to promote European integration. The Soviet Union was content to keep the commission in existence but had no intention of turning it into a forum for economic cooperation along capitalist lines. The United States and the countries of Western Europe focused instead on the Marshall Plan, which, unlike the Economic Commission for Europe, had the financial means to match its economic ambition and, the United States hoped, would promote European integration.

In his memorandum of May 1947 for Secretary Marshall, Undersecretary Clayton urged that the proposed package "be based on a European plan which the principal European nations . . . should work out. Such a plan should be based on a European economic federation on the order of the Belgium-

Netherlands-Luxembourg Customs Union. Europe cannot recover from this war and again become independent if her economy continues to be divided into many small watertight compartments as it is today."¹⁷ Clayton's equation of "economic federation" and "customs union" shows that integration lacked a precise meaning at the time. Charles Kindleberger, then one of Clayton's officials and later an internationally renowned academic economist, noted in 1950 that "at no time was there in existence a single clear idea of what [integration] meant." Thus the Marshall Plan presented an opportunity for the United States "to usher in a new era of European collaboration, cooperation, unification, or integration—to run the polysyllabic gamut."¹⁸

Michael Hogan, one of the foremost historians of the Marshall Plan, has described the endeavor as "a grand design for remaking the Old World in the likeness of the New."¹⁹ John Killick, another Marshall Plan historian, quotes a resentful British Treasury official complaining that "the Americans want an integrated Europe looking like the United States of America—God's own country."²⁰ What the Americans really wanted was what eventually happened in Europe not in 1952 but in 1992: a single market involving the free movement of goods, services, and capital. The free movement of people—the "fourth freedom" in the single market program—seemed neither desirable (except for Italy) nor obtainable in the early 1950s and was not fully implemented even in the early 1990s.

The Foreign Assistance Act of April 1948, which enacted the European Recovery Program (as the Marshall Plan was officially called), contained the following "Declaration of Policy":

Mindful of the advantages which the U.S. has enjoyed through the existence of a large domestic market with no internal trade barriers, and believing that similar advantages can accrue to the countries of Europe, it is declared to be the policy of the people of the U.S. to encourage these countries [receiving Marshall aid] through a joint organization to exert common efforts . . . which will speedily achieve that economic cooperation in Europe which is essential for lasting peace and recovery.²¹

The countries of Western Europe had no objection to submitting to Washington a joint assistance request. Soon after Marshall's speech in June 1947, they formed the Committee on European Economic Cooperation, and upgraded it in April 1948 to the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC). But they balked at the suggestion that they should integrate their economies into a single European market. In effect, they paid lip service to the idea of economic union as a guiding principle for Europe's future. For instance, the final resolution of the Hague congress contained a commitment to economic and monetary union as essential elements of European union. In reality, Western European governments were jealous of their economic prerogatives. They had striven immediately after the war to restore the proper

functioning of their own economies and were still preoccupied with national economic rehabilitation rather than European economic integration. In an uncertain geopolitical, economic, and monetary environment, governments sought maximum national advantage through a plethora of tariff and nontariff barriers. The lessons of the interwar years may have taught otherwise and the rhetoric of the postwar years may have claimed otherwise, but protectionism was deeply entrenched in Europe in the late 1940s.

A cursory examination of various calls at that time for the formation of customs unions bears out the point. Belgium and Luxembourg, which formed an economic union in 1921, agreed with the Netherlands in 1944 to form the Benelux customs union. It came into existence in 1948, but balance-of-payments problems (for the Dutch) and the persistence of nontariff barriers to trade impeded prospects for closer economic integration. Moreover, Benelux was conceived not as a first step toward wider European integration but as a defensive mechanism against possible postwar economic recession and protectionist measures by larger states.

French interest in forming a customs union, first only with Italy and later with a number of countries, was motivated not by a desire to open the European marketplace but by the goal of limiting Germany's economic recovery. A partial Franco-Italian customs union was finally agreed to in March 1949, but France's earlier idea of extending Benelux had little appeal for Belgium and especially for the Netherlands, which—having had close ties to the prewar German economy—was eager to hasten German's postwar recovery. France then proposed a wider European customs union, once again without German participation. A series of negotiations followed in Brussels, under the auspices of the European Customs Union Study Group, from November 1947 to December 1948. Fourteen countries, including Britain, took part in the talks. It soon became clear that each country was jockeying for sectoral advantage rather than seeking to open markets and that concern about sovereignty would preclude Britain from participating even in a customs union. The study group then transformed itself into the Customs Cooperation Council, a standing body that slaved away on tariff nomenclature. Finally, in April 1949, France called for a customs union with Benelux and Italy (to be known as *Fritalux*). Once again, Dutch insistence on including Germany thwarted the initiative.²²

The fate of these efforts shows that economic integration was an idea whose time had not yet come. The OEEC was a prototypical organization for European integration. But the British were not about to concede economically to the OEEC what they refused to concede politically to the Council of Europe: a share of national sovereignty. The Americans wanted Spaak, a leading advocate of European union, to become director general of the OEEC; the British successfully objected to the nature of the office and the political preferences of the proposed incumbent.²³ British obstructionism and continental

indifference consigned the OEEC to the role of a clearinghouse for economic information, devoid of real decisionmaking power. In effect, the OEEC became a cover for European disregard of U.S. insistence on closer integration in return for Marshall aid. The OEEC gave the impression that Europeans were integrating by providing a collectivist gloss to individual national assistance requests. The Americans were not fooled. They realized the limits of their influence as well as the extent of European resistance to shared sovereignty in economic affairs.

Yet in the long term, as the success of the single European market program showed more than forty years later, the Marshall Plan and related U.S. initiatives had a profound effect on European integration. As Killick observed, "US policy and the Marshall Plan pushed Europe towards an integrated and multilateral future, created mechanisms to transfer the best of US commercial organization, social patterns, and technology, and attempted to create an open and unified international market."²⁴ Marshall aid had an immediate impact on the growth of intra-European trade through the establishment in 1950 of the European Payments Union, which restored multilateral settlements and paved the way for the introduction of full currency convertibility by the end of the decade. Backed by the United States, the Payments Union allowed its members to run surpluses or deficits with each other without fear of either non-payment (in gold or dollars) or withdrawal of credits. The launch of the Payments Union coincided with the adoption by the OEEC of a code of trade liberalization, calling for the progressive removal of quantitative restrictions on a nondiscriminatory basis.²⁵

The Marshall Plan, the OEEC, and the Payments Union triggered a virtuous cycle by encouraging countries to reduce tariff and nontariff barriers in order to promote cross-border trade. At the same time, participation in the U.S.-sponsored General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) set European countries on the long road to global trade liberalization. The gradual abandonment of trade protection facilitated the emergence in the late 1950s of the European Economic Community. Yet the Economic Community could not have come about unless European countries had tackled a residual postwar problem of fundamental political and economic importance. That was the German question.

■ Tackling the German Question

Political and/or economic integration could not begin in earnest in Western Europe until the question of Germany's status was resolved to the satisfaction of all concerned, including the West Germans themselves. The immediate question was how to realize Germany's huge economic potential without risking a return to German hegemony and a new imbalance of power in Europe. A solution was as pressing for Germany as it was for the United States and for

Germany's neighbors in Europe. The United States had long since abandoned the wartime Morgenthau Plan that called for Germany to be politically and economically emasculated for a lengthy postwar period. By the late 1940s the United States wanted an economically strong Germany, particularly in the context of the worsening Cold War. U.S. thinking was clear and comprehensible: a weak Germany meant a weak Europe, and a weak Europe meant a weak Atlantic alliance.

Britain underwent a similar change in its approach to Germany after the war. So did France, but only up to a point, and certainly not to the point in 1949 of countenancing German remilitarization, as Britain and the United States were inclined to do. In the meantime, France was far more reluctant than either Britain or the United States to allow unfettered German industrial revival. The difference in allied thinking about Germany was due in part to geography: France was much closer to Germany than was either Britain or, more obviously, the United States. It was also due to history: since the industrial age France had been economically weaker than Germany; Germany's greater economic strength had either caused or contributed to nearly a century of Franco-German conflict. Tackling the German question therefore amounted to allaying French security concerns about Germany's economic recovery. Properly speaking, the German question was the Franco-German question, or perhaps even the French question.

By contrast, there was no "Italian question"; no feeling of French insecurity toward Italy after the war. Although Italy, like Germany, had united late in the nineteenth century and fought against France in World War II, Italy's existence did not threaten France. Compared to Germany and even France, Italy had limited economic potential. Moreover, Italy was burdened by an impoverished and overpopulated south. France and Italy made amends soon after the war, signing a peace treaty in February 1947. Italy's main postwar problem was political instability due to limited economic opportunity and the existence of a powerful Communist party. Alcide de Gasperi, the Italian Christian Democratic leader, used the threat of indigenous communism and the influence of Italian immigrants in the United States to maximize U.S. economic assistance. This, in turn, helped the Christian Democrats to defeat the Communists in the decisive general election in 1948.²⁶

France also faced political uncertainty immediately after the war. Charles de Gaulle, leader of the wartime Free French Movement, formed the first government of liberated France (it lasted from August 1944 until January 1946). Despite pressing domestic problems, de Gaulle was keenly interested in foreign affairs. The foreign policy that he pursued then, and later as president of the Fifth Republic between 1958 and 1968, is often described as one of *grandeur* (greatness). It took for granted that France was a great power with global interests. Not only that, but France was a *victorious* great power, having redeemed the defeat of 1940 with the participation of French forces in the allied victory

of 1945. But France was not invited to attend the two conferences with the Big Three powers (Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States), held in Yalta in February 1945 and Potsdam in July–August 1945, where the fate of Germany and Eastern Europe was broadly decided. De Gaulle despised the Yalta and Potsdam settlements and abided by their terms only when it suited him to do so. For instance, he rejected the implicit acceptance by Britain and the United States of a Soviet sphere of influence in Eastern Europe but accepted the decision at Potsdam to give France a small zone of occupation in Germany. In de Gaulle's view, France had every right to occupy part of Germany and have an equal say with Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States in deciding the country's future.

Yet de Gaulle was not so unrealistic as to think that other countries would take France at face value. France's economic weakness, stretching back a century or more, was as apparent to de Gaulle as it was to other allied leaders. Hence, despite his supposed disdain for the dismal science, in 1945 de Gaulle devoted considerable attention not only to France's immediate economic needs but also to its long-term economic resurgence. France's immediate needs would be met in part by exacting reparations from defeated Germany; France's long-term goal would be met in part by capitalizing on Germany's economic demise. Despite his willingness to confront unpleasant facts of economic life, de Gaulle shied away for political reasons from undertaking thoroughgoing monetary reform of the kind advocated by Pierre Mendès-France, de Gaulle's economics minister. French economic recovery, no matter how impressive, would therefore rest on a rickety financial foundation.

The Monnet Plan

Jean Monnet, a senior civil servant, advocated a modernization plan for France that held out the prospect of achieving economic recovery and long-term security. Monnet did not approach de Gaulle directly—Monnet rarely approached key decisionmakers directly—but hooked de Gaulle on his plan by first winning over one of the general's closest advisers. Monnet was wary of de Gaulle in any case because of their previous dealings with each other. Like de Gaulle, Monnet was in London in June 1940 at the time of the French military collapse. But Monnet chose not to join de Gaulle's Free French Movement, opting instead to work on allied economic policy in Washington, where he was attached to the British embassy. Monnet and de Gaulle met again in Algiers in 1943, where de Gaulle was fighting (politically) to wrest control of the provisional government-in-waiting from Henri Giraud, a senior French general who enjoyed Roosevelt's support. Roosevelt asked Monnet, whom he knew in Washington, to intercede in Algiers on Giraud's behalf. Once in Algiers, Monnet quietly switched sides and supported de Gaulle, who

clearly was more qualified to lead the Free French than was the bumbling and undemocratic Giraud.

De Gaulle should have been grateful to Monnet. But gratitude was not in the general's nature. Instead de Gaulle resented Monnet for a variety of reasons, including Monnet's refusal to serve under him in London in 1940, his subsequent service in the British embassy in Washington, his cultivation there of influential U.S. policymakers, and his cosmopolitanism and internationalism. Nevertheless, de Gaulle appreciated Monnet's skill and experience as an economic planner. Monnet also had a major virtue that, for the moment at least, canceled out his obvious vices: he was not a member of any political party. De Gaulle hated political parties, especially those that had sprung back to life in France after the liberation. He craved strong presidential power. De Gaulle was hamstrung as president of the provisional government by what he saw as the machinations of small-minded political parties and their leaders. Those politicians prevailed over de Gaulle in the struggle for the constitution of the new Fourth Republic, which incorporated a parliamentary rather than a presidential system of government. Accordingly, in January 1946, de Gaulle resigned in a huff, but not before he had approved the appointment of Jean Monnet to head the national planning commission (*Commissariat Général du Plan*), a government agency independent of the giant finance and economics departments.

Monnet spent the next few years absorbed in French economic affairs. He and his small staff oversaw the work of numerous sectoral committees that brought together representatives of all sides in industry, setting guidelines for resource allocation and production levels in order to meet domestic demand and fill foreign markets. For the moment France depended far more on imports than exports for its economic survival. Clearly, international developments held the key to future French and European prosperity.²⁷ Monnet paid particular attention to the United States, the country at the center of the emerging international economic system and the source of desperately needed dollars.

French planning was not at all like planning in the Soviet Union, which had a command economy. Monnet was not a Socialist, let alone a Communist. Having grown up in the brandy business and spent many years as an international financier before the war, he was a bona fide capitalist. Yet he personified the consensus in postwar France that capitalism could best be served by judicious government direction of key economic activities. This view was not anathema to Washington, where a number of New Dealers were still influential in government. The promulgation of the Marshall Plan, although very different from the Monnet Plan, showed that Washington also accepted the idea that market mechanisms alone would not suffice to get the European economy fully going again.

The Marshall Plan was a mixed blessing for France. It presented both an opportunity and a threat. The opportunity was the prospect of funding the

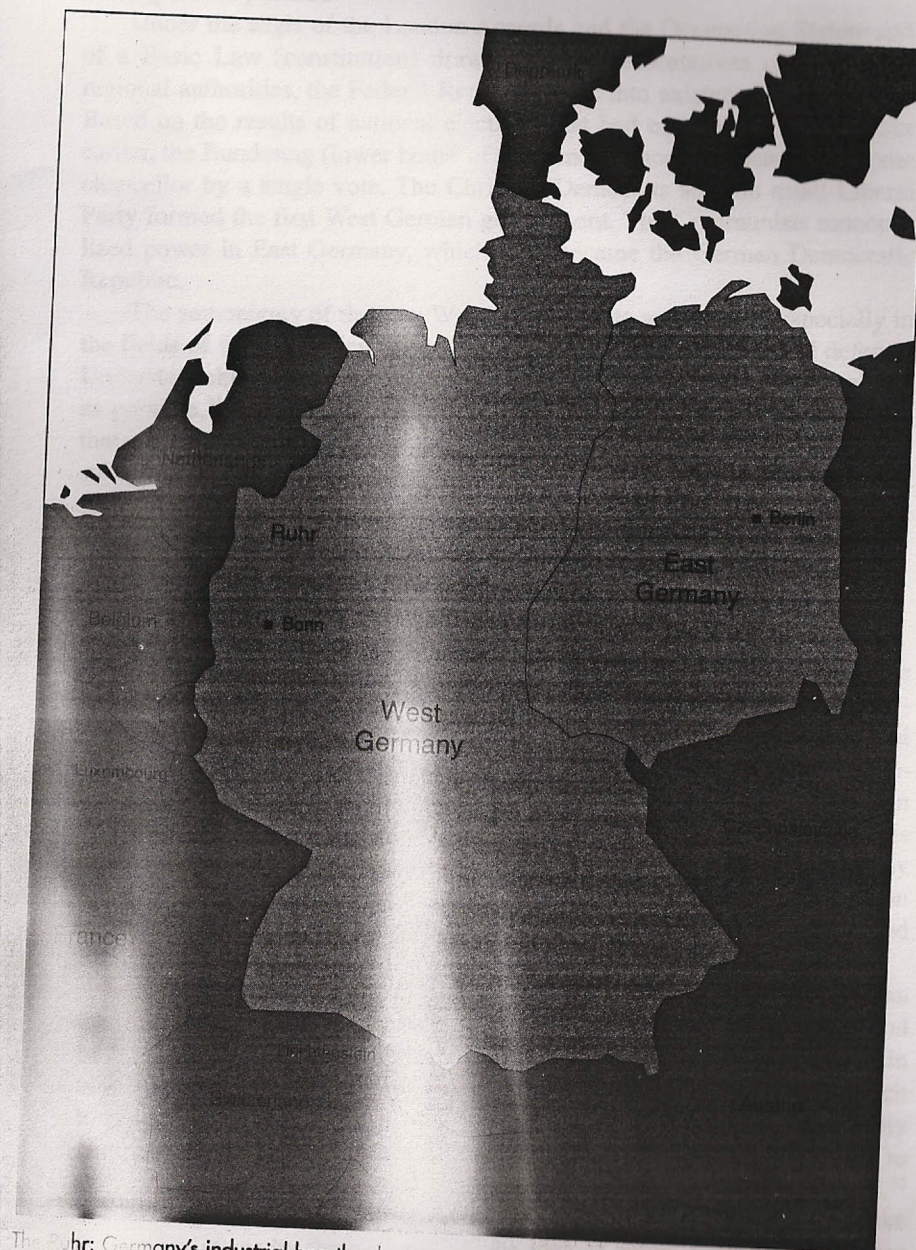
Monnet Plan's strategy of investment in French industrial modernization. Counterpart funds from the sale of goods supplied to European governments were not supposed to have been used to implement national economic planning. But the Americans made an exception for Monnet, who had a host of influential friends in Washington. For that reason, historians often say that the Marshall Plan saved the Monnet Plan.

France Under Pressure

Yet the Marshall Plan also posed a threat to the Monnet Plan and to French security in general. Whereas the Marshall Plan sought German economic recovery as an integral part of European economic recovery, the Monnet Plan sought French economic recovery at the expense of German economic weakness. This was especially true of the coal and steel sectors, the basis of industrial power in mid-twentieth-century Europe. Historically, France's lack of coking coal, which Germany had in abundance, notably in the Ruhr region in the west of the country, hobbled French steel production. Monnet based his plan to modernize the French steel industry on the assumption that, with Germany on the ropes economically, France would have unlimited access to Ruhr coal and could exploit postwar markets previously filled by German producers. As François Duchêne, Monnet's biographer, put it, France would develop its steel industry "on a diet of Ruhr coke till it largely replaced German steel."²⁸ Because of the nature of Germany's prewar and wartime military-industrial complex, the Ruhr was synonymous in France with militarism and the rise of Nazism. Controlling the Ruhr was therefore a vital French interest, economically and strategically.

By signaling through the Marshall Plan its intention to allow Germany to revive economically, the United States challenged France's Ruhr policy and stoked French security concerns. Sensitive to France's situation, the United States sought somehow to reconcile French interests with its own determination, for economic and strategic reasons, to reconstitute Germany. As the terms of the Marshall Plan indicated, the Americans believed that European integration could provide the solution. Rather than impose a particular scheme, however, the United States wanted the Europeans themselves to come up with a proposal for economic and, ultimately, political integration. Because French interests were so directly affected by the rapidity of German economic recovery and because the United States strongly supported France, Washington looked primarily to Paris for leadership on the German question.

The ensuing swing from repression to rapprochement in French policy toward Germany, in response to pressure from the United States, is a key theme in the history of European integration in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Robert Marjolin, a Monnet planner, recorded in his autobiography that,



The Ruhr: Germany's industrial heartland

despite the violence of my feelings towards the Germans before and during the war, I had rapidly convinced myself after the hostilities ended that Europe could not recover unless Germany were rebuilt and became once again a great industrial country. . . . I did [not] believe in the dismemberment of western Germany, from which the Rhineland and the Ruhr, for example, would have been separated. That would have sown the seed for future wars. I was therefore quite ready to include the Germans in European cooperation.²⁹

Marjolin was ahead of most French people in his attitude toward Germany so soon after the war. The French government, let alone most French people, was not inclined to ease up on Germany. Thus France refused to merge its zone of occupation with those of Britain and the United States and acquiesce in the raising of Germany's allied-approved levels of industrial production. France found itself fighting a rearguard action as Britain and the United States merged their zones in 1947 and raised Germany's production levels regardless.

As long as the Communists were still in government, France was unable to work closely with its Western allies. The removal of the Communists from office in May 1947, an inevitable consequence of the deepening Cold War, increased the French government's freedom of maneuver vis-à-vis the United States but closed the door on cooperation with the Soviet Union. The intensification of the Cold War in turn intensified U.S. pressure on France to relax its policy toward Germany so that Germany's economic potential (and eventually its military potential as well) could be put at the disposal of the West.

France gradually yielded as Germany rebounded politically sooner than any of the allies had expected. Germany's Socialist and Communist parties, proscribed since the Nazi seizure of power in 1933, were reconstituted relatively quickly after the war, and a new Christian Democratic Party came into being. With the Communists predominant in the east, the Socialists and Christian Democrats vied for ascendancy in the west. Konrad Adenauer, a wily old conservative with impeccable anti-Nazi credentials, emerged as leader of the Christian Democrats. Kurt Schumacher, an implacable Socialist and ardent nationalist (but a bitter foe of National Socialism), was the undisputed leader of the Social Democratic Party.

In the London Accords of June 1948, France finally agreed to the formation of the Federal Republic of Germany through the merger of its zone of occupation with the previously merged U.S. and British zones. France insisted on a federal, decentralized Germany and on maintaining control of the Saar, a coal-rich region in southwest Germany. France also hoped to thwart German control of the Ruhr through the establishment of the International Ruhr Authority to oversee coal production and distribution. These conditions were enshrined in the Occupation Statute of April 1949, which regulated relations between Germany and the Western allies. The narrowness of the French Assembly's approval of the London Accords indicated the depth of French

distrust toward Germany despite the distance that France had traveled from its initial postwar position.³⁰

Under the aegis of the London Accords and the Occupation Statute and of a Basic Law (constitution) drawn up by representatives of Germany's regional authorities, the Federal Republic came into existence in May 1949. Based on the results of national elections that had taken place some weeks earlier, the Bundestag (lower house of parliament) chose Adenauer to become chancellor by a single vote. The Christian Democrats and the small Liberal Party formed the first West German government. The Communists monopolized power in East Germany, which duly became the German Democratic Republic.

The sovereignty of the new West German state was limited, especially in the fields of foreign policy (including foreign economic policy) and defense. Understandably Adenauer sought to restore to Germany as much sovereignty as possible.³¹ Adenauer especially resented the International Ruhr Authority that, though largely ineffectual, symbolized Germany's continued economic subjugation. The Ruhr Authority's ineffectualness irked France perhaps even more than the authority's existence irked Germany. Once again, French policy toward the Ruhr seemed unavailing.

Accepting the Inevitable

The United States continued to press Paris to propose an alternative scheme that would allay French concerns about the Ruhr without engendering German resentment and therefore endangering Germany's economic and political rehabilitation. U.S. pressure intensified under Dean Acheson, the new secretary of state. The solution, Acheson told his ambassadors in Europe, lay "in French hands."³² On October 30, 1949, Acheson sent Robert Schuman, his French counterpart, a forceful message: "I believe that our policy in Germany . . . depends on the assumption by your country of leadership in Europe on these problems."³³ Acheson gave Schuman a deadline—a meeting of allied foreign ministers in London in May 1950—to propose something new.

As the United States and France edged toward a resolution of the German question, Britain stood on the sidelines.³⁴ Britain's behavior in the OEEC and in the Council of Europe convinced many continental Europeans that Britain was uninterested in contributing much to European integration, through which a solution to the German question would have to be found. A Labour Party pamphlet of 1948, "Feet on the Ground," emphasized Britain's opposition to integration based on a supposedly more pragmatic foreign policy approach.³⁵ The message was clear: Britain's continental neighbors would have to take further initiatives by themselves. Yet the idea of acting without Britain was unpalatable for most Europeans. After all, Britain was at the pinnacle of its postwar power and prestige. Britain's economic and military strength were

formidable by European standards (although not by the standards of the United States and the Soviet Union).

If the experience of the OEEC and the Council of Europe implied that the continentals would have to go it alone, another development, in April 1949, suggested that they *could* proceed without Britain. This was the signing in Washington of the North Atlantic Treaty. As the contractual basis for the future North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Washington treaty signaled the unequivocal commitment of the United States to Western Europe's defense, which had hitherto rested on the Brussels Pact of March 1947 between Britain, France, and the Benelux countries. Built around Britain, the Brussels Pact was originally intended to guard against a revanchist Germany. With the onset of the Cold War, the Soviet Union replaced Germany as a much more plausible security threat, and NATO replaced the Brussels Pact as a much more effective military alliance. With the United States now committed to Western Europe's defense, continental Europeans were less dependent militarily on Britain. Although NATO's organizational structure was not fleshed out until the end of 1950, the North Atlantic Treaty gave France more security than the Brussels Pact vis-à-vis Germany and Russia and more confidence to take diplomatic initiatives in Europe without fear of offending or possibly alienating Britain.

Yet the political situation in France did not seem conducive to a bold foreign policy initiative. The country was in almost constant flux. Governments followed each other in quick succession, often with the same cast of characters playing ministerial musical chairs. Prime ministers came and went, but two people, Georges Bidault and Robert Schuman, occupied the foreign ministry for most of the Fourth Republic's relatively short life (1946–1958). Bidault, foreign minister for much of the earlier period, was witty, outgoing, and frequently inebriated. Schuman, his successor, was solemn, saintly, and always sober. Yet, Bidault has a historical reputation for obduracy and Schuman for imagination. That is because Bidault is associated with a policy of hostility toward Germany, whereas Schuman is associated with a policy of reconciliation.

Yet, Bidault was moving toward a rapprochement with Germany when he left office in 1948, and Schuman supported a punitive policy toward Germany before replacing Bidault as foreign minister. As de Gaulle's foreign minister immediately after the war, Bidault was obliged to implement a harsh policy toward Germany. Even after de Gaulle's departure, public and official opinion in Paris did not countenance a thaw in relations with Germany for some time to come. When the thaw began in late 1948, it was Schuman's good fortune to be foreign minister. Undoubtedly Schuman favored a new departure with Germany and genuinely supported European union. Unlike Bidault, he quickly grasped the significance of a supranational solution to the problem of the Ruhr and soon personified not only Franco-German rapprochement, but Franco-German reconciliation as well.

Coming from the disputed borderland of Lorraine, speaking French with a German accent and German without a French accent, and wearing his Catholicism on his sleeve, Schuman became the living embodiment of Franco-German amity after generations of Franco-German enmity. He could easily have gone down in history the other way around, however. Had it been politically imperative to do so, Schuman might well have used his borderland background and experiences in Lorraine before 1919 to perpetuate distrust of Germany. Schuman's Catholicism and personality may have predisposed him to seek reconciliation with Germany, but political necessity ultimately determined his course of action. Fortunately for Schuman, a reappraisal of French policy toward Germany made it possible for him to combine personal predilections and political preferences and give his name to a declaration that symbolized a radical new departure by France. The declaration contained a proposal to pool sovereignty in the coal and steel sectors under a supranational High Authority, thereby reconciling U.S., German, and French interests without going too far down the road toward political union.

■ The Schuman Declaration

The announcement of the Schuman Declaration took place at a hastily convened press conference late in the afternoon of May 9, 1950, in the ornate Salon de l'Horloge (clock room) of the French foreign ministry. Schuman proposed both a specific solution to the problem of the Ruhr (a supranational coal and steel organization) and a general solution to the German question (implicit equality and nondiscrimination in the context of European union). It was an approach that combined economic, political, and social objectives. The immediate goal was to ensure the modernization of production and the improvement of its quality; the supply of coal and steel on equal terms to the French and German markets; and to those of the [other] member countries; and the equalization as well as the improvement in the living standards and working conditions in those industries." Schuman linked this to the greater goal of European integration, for which strong emotional support still existed despite the Council of Europe's disappointing development. Thus the coal and steel pool would "lay the concrete foundation for a European Federation which is so indispensable to the preservation of peace."³⁶

The immediate background to the declaration was equally dramatic. By his own account, which historians are not disputed, Monnet developed the idea while on one of his periodic holiday holidays in the Alps, in April 1950. After returning to Paris, Monnet invited key people in his planning office to work out the details. Having run through various drafts, Monnet sent the final version first to Prime Minister Bidault, who did not respond, then to Foreign Minister Schuman, who did. He also contacted Adenauer through an intermediary. Aware of Adenauer's approval of it, Schuman slipped the pro-

posal through a cabinet meeting on the morning on May 9, hours before the famous press conference.³⁷

Monnet's account may be correct, but the manner of its telling, without adequate reference to the evolution of French foreign policy during the previous two years, gives the declaration a heroic quality to which early scholars of European integration eagerly subscribed. William Diebold, author of one of the first books on the Schuman Plan, wrote breathlessly about

a foreign minister who took a major foreign policy initiative with little or no consultation with his own ministry; a rapid elaboration of the final version of the plan in great secrecy by a tiny group of people; only the briefest discussion before the Cabinet; . . . a measure that went well beyond foreign policy and would have a major effect on the defense and economy of France; almost immediate public announcement with only the shortest notice to allies and others on whose assent success would depend.³⁸

Some historians of a later generation, notably Alan Milward, gleefully debunked the myth of May 9.³⁹ Monnet was certainly imaginative and farsighted. But he did not conjure the proposed community out of nowhere. Ideas about a coal and steel association of some kind or other had been floating around France and Germany, in government and private circles, for several years; some could even be traced back to the interwar period.⁴⁰ Thinking along such lines had intensified as France came under mounting pressure in 1949 and early 1950 to adopt a radically new approach toward Germany. Monnet was more imaginative and astute than most: the idea of a High Authority as the supranational instrument of sectoral integration was novel and timely. Yet even François Duchêne, Monnet's former collaborator and biographer, admits that the Schuman Declaration "may have been a lucky strike when other prospectors had given up."⁴¹

Nor was it surprising that Monnet devoted so much thought to a prospective coal and steel community. After all, it was Monnet who bore the brunt of U.S. pressure for a new French policy toward Germany. Monnet was the main conduit for U.S.-French relations in the late 1940s and early 1950s. He was in almost daily contact with the highest representatives of the United States in France. Monnet knew how badly Washington wanted Paris to launch a new initiative and how desperately Schuman wanted to oblige. Moreover, the future of the Monnet Plan was at stake. Economic modernization in France could not be realized without a resolution of the Ruhr problem. "Internationalization"—the maintenance of French control through the International Ruhr Authority—had failed; "Europeanization," through the creation of a supranational community, might succeed. France's policy options were limited.

Monnet was in his element when under pressure. He was an opportunist who thrived on crises (even his marriage involved elopement and intrigue); he was the right man (a fixer, a close friend of the Americans) in the right place

(head of the national planning commission) at the right time (when France needed to come to terms with Germany's resurgence). With the Schuman Declaration, he delivered the goods and saved his own skin. Not only did the Marshall Plan save the Monnet Plan but also, in Milward's memorable phrase, "the Schuman Plan was invented to safeguard the Monnet Plan."⁴²

The Schuman initiative bore all the hallmarks of Monnet's approach to economic development. As outlined in the declaration, the High Authority would be an international version of the French planning office. Just as the planning office consisted of technocrats acting independently of government ministries, the High Authority would consist of technocrats acting independently of member state governments. The High Authority would not be overtly *dirigiste*, but would provide overall direction and arbitrate disputes between vested interests. As for the greater goal of European union, the declaration reflected Monnet's preferred approach of sectoral economic integration, what Charles Kindleberger described in a State Department memorandum as a way of moving "crabwise through technical cooperation in economic matters."⁴³

Monnet may have launched the plan, but Schuman took the political risk (Bidault was disinclined to do so). Most members of the French cabinet were still too resentful of Germany and fearful of the future to embrace a bold initiative. Hence Schuman's subterfuge, talking the initiative down in the cabinet and up at the press conference. Only after the press reported favorably on the declaration did the cabinet grudgingly accept a *fait accompli*. It is often said that Monnet, the architect, deserved to have had the declaration called after him. The name of the declaration accurately indicates, however, where the political credit belongs.

Diebold was half-right when he remarked that France's allies had received only "the shortest notice" of the declaration. Britain received no notice at all because of Schuman's concern that London would again obstruct a major European initiative. Understandably, the British were furious at not having been consulted, but they rallied in advance. Supposedly the United States was informed only on May 7, when Acheson visited Paris en route to the foreign ministers' meeting in London. In fact, U.S. support was too crucial to have been left to chance. Monnet let his U.S. interlocutors in Paris, as well as John J. McCloy, his friend and the U.S. high commissioner in Bonn, know that a major initiative was in the offing. Once assured that Schuman was not proposing an international cartel, Acheson was delighted with the declaration. Although the proposal was a lot smaller in scope than what the United States had called for in the Marshall Plan, Washington immediately recognized the declaration's political importance.

Adenauer's response was equally positive. The chancellor wanted a resolution of the German question, just as the allies did. Chafing under the restrictions of the Occupation Statute and the International Ruhr Authority, inevitably Adenauer embraced the new initiative based on the principles of equal-

ity and nondiscrimination. Fulfilling the promise of the Schuman Declaration became a key element of Adenauer's Westpolitik, which sought to maximize German sovereignty, integrate Germany into the Atlantic system, and bring about a rapprochement with France. The Schuman Declaration was grist to Adenauer's mill (for Germany, shared sovereignty was better than limited sovereignty).⁴⁶

Ironically, the Schuman Declaration came at a time when Adenauer's relations with France were under strain. France's virtual annexation of the Saar under the terms of a convention agreed on in Paris in March 1950 by the French government and the French-sponsored government of the formerly German region inflamed German opinion. A purported goodwill visit by Schuman to Bonn in February 1950 ended on a sour note when Adenauer vehemently protested French policy in the Saar.

Adenauer then floated an idea that may have been sincere but seemed jarring under the circumstances. In an interview with a U.S. journalist on March 9, the chancellor proposed a Franco-German union, complete with a joint parliament.⁴⁷ Official reaction across the Rhine was far from favorable: victorious France, not defeated Germany, should make daring overtures. Two months later, with the Schuman Declaration, France took such a step on a less ambitious but more realistic basis. With the declaration coming on the heels of his own trial balloon, and eager to ease Franco-German tension, Adenauer enthusiastically endorsed the declaration at a press conference in Bonn several hours after Schuman's press conference in Paris.

Adenauer was often criticized at home for being subservient to the former occupying powers. Schumacher, leader of the opposition Socialist Party, famously called him the "Chancellor of the Allies."⁴⁸ Having stood up to the allies on a number of issues during the previous few months, Adenauer was less vulnerable to charges of complicity with them on the question of the Schuman Declaration. Nevertheless, the declaration became a major domestic political issue. The Socialists disliked the proposed coal and steel organization for ideological reasons (Schumacher dismissed it as "France, Germany, Inc.") and because they thought that it would perpetuate the division of Germany.⁴⁹ Adenauer conceded that a rapprochement with the West was incompatible at that time with an opening to the East, but countered that European integration would lead ultimately to German unification, with an economically weak East Germany eventually gravitating toward an economically strong West Germany. "The stronger the Federal Republic of Germany becomes, economically and politically," Adenauer claimed, "... the better it will be for Berlin and the German east."⁵⁰

The Schuman Declaration is now hailed as a major turning point in Franco-German relations and in contemporary European history. Those who heard or read Schuman's words at the time could not have foreseen the future and rendered such a verdict, but most grasped that something new was in the

air. French and German leaders were now on the same wavelength, public opinion was generally on their side, and the United States stood squarely behind them. Only ardent nationalists, Communists, and doctrinaire Socialists in France and Germany strongly opposed the Schuman Declaration. Vested interests in the coal and steel industries were unenthusiastic about it, fearing a government sellout. France and Germany's prospective partners faced a similar set of domestic circumstances. Realization of the Schuman Plan, in the form of the European Coal and Steel Community, would therefore be tricky.

Notes

1. Noel Annan, *Changing Enemies: The Defeat and Regeneration of Germany* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), p. 149.
2. See Clemens A. Wurm, "Britain, Western Europe and European Integration, 1945-1957: The View from the Continent," *Revue Européenne d'Histoire* 6, no. 2 (Autumn 1999), pp. 235-249; and Oliver J. Daddow, *Britain and Europe Since 1945: Historiographical Perspectives on Unification* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003).
3. Denis Healey, *The Time of My Life* (London: Penguin Books, 1990), p. 76. Alan Milward disagreed: "It is not true that the United Kingdom had a fund of goodwill in Europe arising from its wartime role on which it could have traded to lead Europe in support of shared common interests. Europe was not asking to be led." Alan Milward, *The UK and the European Community*, Vol. 1: *The Rise and Fall of a National Strategy, 1945-1963* (London: Whitehall History Publishing in association with Frank Cass, 2002), p. 3. A. J. P. Taylor, the famous British diplomatic historian, wrote in 1971: "How much easier the situation in Europe would be today if the Labour government had followed [Harold] Laski's advice in 1945 and put itself at the head of European social democracy." A. J. P. Taylor, *From the Boer War to the Cold War: Essays on Twentieth-Century Europe* (London: Penguin Books, 1995), p. 329.
4. Annan, *Changing Enemies*, p. 157.
5. J. Roy Willis, *France, Germany and the New Europe, 1945-1963* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1965), p. 132.
6. On the outbreak of the Cold War, see John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997); Arnold A. Offner, *Another Such Victory: President Truman and the Cold War, 1945-1953* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002); Sean Greenwood, *Britain and the Cold War, 1945-1948* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000); Charles S. Maier, ed., *The Cold War in Europe: Era of a Divided Continent*, 3rd updated and expanded ed. (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener, 1996); Antonio Varsori and Elena Calandri, eds., *The Failure of Peace in Europe, 1943-1948* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002).
7. See Tim Geiger, "Reconstruction and the Beginnings of European Integration," in *Western European Economic and Social Change Since 1945*, ed. Max-Stephan Schulz (London: Longman, 1996), pp. 23-41.
8. William L. Clayton, "The Marshall Plan, and OECD," *Political Science Quarterly* 78, no. 4 (December 1963), p. 497. Emphasis in the original.
9. The text of the Marshall speech is available at <http://www.let.leidenuniv.nl/history/pres1/marshall.htm>.
10. On the Marshall Plan, see Gérard Bossuat, *La France, l'aide américaine et la construction européenne, 1944-1954*, 2 vols. (Paris: Comité pour l'Histoire