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Casualties of Unification?: Understanding the Various Interpretations of the Dissolution of the Nationale Volksarmee and the Integration of Its Members into the Bundeswehr

Roy R. Weidanz



THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

CASUALTIES OF UNIFICATION?

UNDERSTANDING THE VARIOUS INTERPRETATIONS OF THE DISSOLUTION OF

THE *NATIONALE VOLKSARMEE* AND THE INTEGRATION OF ITS MEMBERS

INTO THE *BUNDESWEHR*

By

ROY R. WEIDANZ

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The members of the Committee approve the thesis of Roy R. Weidanz defended on March 29, 2005.

Nathan Stoltzfus
Professor Directing Thesis

Ljubisa S. Adamovich
Committee Member

James P. Jones
Committee Member

Approved:

Ljubisa S. Adamovich, Chair, Russian and East European Studies

David Rasmussen, Dean, College of Social Sciences

The Office of Graduate Studies has verified and approved the above named committee members.

Dedicated to my parents, Anna-Maria and Theodore Weidanz Jr., in the hopes that my accomplishments will serve as a feeble substitute for the many times I did not show appropriate appreciation for all of the unconditional love, care, and support they continuously gave to me.

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ABSTRACT

“And as the anthem of the still-existing GDR was played, the national anthem, which I did not like, a sense of melancholy arose in me. It was a feeling that I did not expect. After all, 40 years are not so easily erased”.

The above statement is a reflection by Werner E. Ablaß from his book *Zapfenstreich: von der NVA zur Bundeswehr*, and provides a good example of the complicated emotional aspect of German unification. In the book, Mr. Ablaß states that the complexity of those times can also be seen in the change that he himself underwent when his originally negative opinion of the East German armed forces, also known as the National People’s Army or *Nationale Volksarmee* (NVA), changed to a positive one after he became Undersecretary of Defense in the final government of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) prior to unification. Mr. Ablaß rather eloquently explains that this change of opinion came about as a result of coming to understand the *human side* of the NVA soldiers. Today, he believes that the entire unification process would have had a different and probably less favorable, outcome if not for the fact that during certain critical moments, the NVA had acted as an “armed forces of the people” by refraining from intervening in the October ’89 demonstrations, which eventually led to the fall of the Berlin Wall.

In general, the interpretations of the entire German unity process are of a complex nature, primarily due to the lack of consensus among those holding differing, and sometimes controversial, viewpoints regarding this recent historical event. One example includes the dissolution of the NVA and the integration of its personnel into the West German armed forces (Bundeswehr). Over the last few years this process has been one of the few aspects of German unification that has received positive media coverage and has prompted the application of the term *Armee der Einheit* (Armed Forces of Unity) to describe the Bundeswehr of today. On the other hand, there are some historians who have argued that this term is inappropriate, as the process that occurred between the two militaries was a one-sided procedure that almost entirely

avored the Bundeswehr. After the NVA was dissolved, only a limited number of personnel were taken over into the West German military and only a small number eventually became permanent Bundeswehr soldiers. Furthermore, the process did not occur without some sacrifices placed upon all of the NVA personnel.

It is because of this low number of former East German soldiers who were integrated into the Bundeswehr, and the fact that many of them were affected by hardships or disparities during the process, that some of the critics of the *Armee der Einheit* concept might consider the term “Casualties of Unification” as an appropriate label for the former NVA personnel. However, this negative criticism disregards that the unification process could have also proceeded in a worst-case scenario with none of the NVA being integrated into the Bundeswehr. Furthermore, it also discounts the fact that many of the Bundeswehr personnel who participated in the integration process went beyond what was expected of them to assist their fellow soldiers from that “other German military.” In the end, it was their efforts and that of many of those from the former NVA, which allowed for what is generally considered as one of the most successful aspects of the German unification process. This is above all their story!

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“After the Thirty Years’ War, the Germans re-built their country and turned it into a center for education and culture, then reformed it from the bottom up during the Wars of Liberation (1813-1814), and in the 19th century constructed the best universities in the world; they were leading in all areas of science and technology. Largely due to Germany’s own fault and above all the failures of the German elite, the achievements were gambled away twice, and the Germans committed horrible crimes. After the end of the war, the higher price for this was paid by the Germans in the East.”¹

The above statement is an excerpt of the speech that Horst Köhler, the current Federal President of Germany, gave to commemorate the 14th anniversary of German Unity. A historic event that occurred on October 3, 2004, after more than 45 years of division that had begun with the partition of Germany into four occupation zones following its defeat in 1945. This is occupation is also when “the higher price paid by the Germans in the East” began to which Köhler refers to, since Cold War politics between the WWII victors eventually led to the creation of two independent Germanys.

After the defeat of Germany, the Soviet Union occupied what became known as the East Zone, while among the western Allies, the United States and the United Kingdom combined their zones in 1947 to form the Bizone. In early 1949, the French joined their western allies and this led to the Trizone (a.k.a. the West Zone). On the 23rd of May 1949, after approval by the Western military governors, the West Zone became the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), and several months later on October 7 the East Zone became the communist controlled German Democratic Republic (GDR). Hopes for a united Germany still existed in the early 1950’s, but FRG demands for free elections in the GDR coupled with Cold War tensions between the alliances prevented a process towards unification. In 1972, after both countries were

simultaneously accepted into the United Nations, most Germans had given up the hope that the two German states would ever be united again.²

In the latter part of the 1980's, the change in the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union set the stage for a new future of the two Germanys. The two superpowers had started to strive for détente and disarmament and Soviet general secretary Mikhail Gorbachev's *glasnost* and *perestroika* had begun to take its effect in the Soviet Union and throughout Eastern Union. However, the GDR leadership tried to deny the reality of those developments and continued its inflexible grasp on power. Through massive manipulation in the municipal elections, the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (*Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands* or SED), which was the party of the State, received 98.9 percent of the vote. This enraged large segments of the population who had previously remained silent, and over the next few months, church groups as well as opposition groups such as the New Forum, voiced persistent public complaints against poor living conditions and lack of basic freedoms. Combined with the manipulation of votes, this inspired the people of the GDR to take to the streets in large numbers.³

Around the same time, another development began to threaten the regime. As with every year, many GDR citizens went on vacation to the socialist brother-country Hungary, but since May of 1989, Hungary started to dismantle its borders to Austria, and that summer some 600-700 East Germans successfully escaped to the FRG when the Hungarians decided not to use force to stop them from crossing into Austria. On September 11, Hungary completely opened its borders to Austria enabling 15,000 GDR citizens to flee within a few days to the FRG. Other East Germans attempted to escape the GDR by taking refuge in the West German embassies in Budapest, Prague, and Warsaw during the month of August. The GDR leadership was eventually forced to give these individuals permission to emigrate to the West and allow for special trains to carry them to the FRG by passing through the GDR.⁴

In the fall of 1989, demonstrations were taking place in ever increasing size and frequency, and the first of the famous 'Monday demonstrations' occurred in Leipzig on September 4, which later also carried over to Berlin and other large cities. However, the GDR leadership started to use its security forces against the demonstrations in Leipzig, especially at the one from the 2nd of October, during which intimidation measures and mass arrests were implemented. In Dresden on October 4, confrontations between the police and demonstrators

also erupted as the latter group gathered at the train station in order to attempt to board the trains that were passing through on their way to the FRG loaded with East German refugees from the embassy in Prague. On the evening of October 7, after a day of celebration for the 40th anniversary of the GDR, the regime again used force to break-up the demonstrations in Berlin. Although military units were used in a limited role to support the police in both Dresden and Leipzig, the regime refrained from employing them in armed conflict against the demonstrators.⁵

Two days after the events in Berlin, the turning point for the Monday demonstrations occurred when the first real massive demonstration with 70,000 protesters marched through the streets of Leipzig. The slogans “We are the people” and “No Violence” finally took effect, and the police refrained from taking action against the demonstrators. This victory inspired more people to participate and a week later the crowds in Leipzig reached between 100,000 and 120,000 protesters. The turmoil on the streets caused disputes among the members of the Central Committee of the SED, and on October 18, Erich Honecker, the head of state and party leader, along with some of his comrades in the party leadership resigned from their offices. Initially, this brought about a lot of hope, but Egon Krenz who many considered as one of the regime’s old guard became Honecker’s successor and the unrest among the population and the demonstrations continued. At the next demonstrations on 23 October there were approximately 250,000 people in Leipzig, one week later it was 300,000, and by November 6, the estimate size of the Leipzig protesters was around 450,000.⁶

In the early days of November, several other members of the old party leadership resigned and Krenz made a television announcement that the SED politburo had decided on some reform changes that would soon be taken into effect. This did not stop the movements in the streets, and on the 4th of November, the largest demonstration in GDR history occurred in East Berlin with anywhere from 500,000 and one million people demanding democracy and free elections.⁷ On November 6, a draft on the new travel regulations for the citizens of the GDR was released in the newspapers, but because of the many restrictions it contained, several hundred thousands went to the streets to protest against it. Furthermore, the party leadership continued to fall apart and the council of Ministers under Willi Stroph resigned, and by November 8, the politburo only had 11 (originally 21), primarily new elected members. One of these was Günter Schabowski, the secretary for information of the Central Committee of the SED, who had made

an announced during a televised press conference on the 9th of November that would become a major turning point in the history of the two Germanys.⁸

As more of a side-note to that evening's press conference, Schabowski had mentioned that the Central Committee had come to a decision, which would allow all citizens of the GDR to travel to the FRG, i.e. West Berlin, without having to meet the usual requirements such as visits to relatives or for business purposes. Then at around 7 PM, when he was asked as to when this ruling would go into effect, Schabowski answered in a perplexed manner: "This goes into effect according to my knowledge ... immediately, without delay."⁹ This set loose an onrush to the border crossings between East and West Berlin, and at around 9.30 PM, the first GDR citizens crossed over to the West at the Bornholmer street check-point. At first, the process was conducted in the typical bureaucratic and orderly fashion, with the individuals receiving a permit stamp in their passport or travel papers, but at 23.30 PM, due to a flood of approximately 20,000 people that wanted to pass through this check-point, the gates were fully opened allowing the masses to pass through unimpeded. Within minutes, the other border crossings followed suit in removing their border barricades, signifying the 'opening of the Berlin Wall'.¹⁰

The 9th of November event, sometimes called the 'fall of the Berlin Wall' also set the stage for the fall of the SED party leadership. On November 13, Hans Modrow was elected by the parliament to minister president of the GDR, and on December 1, the parliament also struck the SED's entitlement to the leadership role of the GDR from the constitution. Two days later, the demands by the SED members themselves forced the resignation of the entire politburo, and within a few days Krenz stepped down as chairman of the Council of State. With the SED party starting to crumble, Modrow had decided to hold round table talks with representatives of the various aspects of GDR society in order to help legitimize his regime. On December 7, the SED government held its first talks with the GDR's other political parties and the opposition movement known as the New Forum.¹¹ From this collection of representatives the Central Round Table was formed, but it did not have any parliamentary or executive powers. Instead, the Round Table saw itself as a public oversight measure on the SED party until the upcoming democratic elections, which the first round talks had scheduled for May 6, 1990.¹²

In late January, the democratic elections were advanced from the projected date in May to March 18, primarily because the state authority was eroding and the strong continuing exodus of the population, which in January consisted of almost 75,000 East Germans.¹³ The major

contestants at the March elections included the previous SED that had renamed itself the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), the Social Democratic Party (SPD), and the conservative coalition between the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), the German Social Union (DSU), and the Democratic Awakening (DA), which had been named the Alliance for Germany. That alliance also won a 48% majority, while the SPD only captured 22% of the vote and the PDS 16%. A major setback occurred for the Bündnis 90 who had hoped to capture more than 3%, but only achieved 2.91%.¹⁴

A coalition government was formed consisting of three parties from the alliance and the SPD, as well as three smaller parties that had won some votes during the elections. On April 12, Lothar de Maizière from the East German CDU became the new minister president of the GDR. During his almost 6 months in office, de Maiziere still had to take his country through some important steps down the road to German unification. The first of these occurred on July 1, with the economic, monetary and social union between the two German states, which introduced the West German deutsche mark (DM) into East Germany. On August 23, the East German parliament decided that the GDR would join the FRG on October 3. One week later on August 31, the West German Interior Minister Wolfgang Schäuble and GDR State Secretary Günther Krause signed the unification treaty, which was approved by a large majority in the two German parliaments on September 20. Then, on the 3rd day in October of 1990, the 45 years of division finally came to an end through the unification of the two Germanys.¹⁵

October 3 is now an official holiday in Germany, which celebrates the day of German unity. However, there are historians who believe that the term unification is a misnomer, since in a legal sense the unity occurred with the five states of the former GDR joining the FRG. Along similar lines, there are critics who argue that the less than favorable results of the military aspect of unification illustrate that German unity did not become the immediate success that many had claimed it would be. First, they argue that the process that occurred between the Bundeswehr and the NVA did not occur with two parts uniting to become one and as a result the description of the Bundeswehr as the *Armee der Einheit* (armed forces of unity) is an inappropriate term. Second, those critics argue that almost all former NVA personnel suffered some form of hardship in the areas of 'employment', 'rank', 'salary', 'retirement', or their 'military honor and tradition'.

Considering that there are a variety of and sometimes conflicting interpretations on the dissolution of the NVA and the integration of its personnel into the Bundeswehr, one of the main

challenges in understanding this event is to comprehend how these divergent and often issue-specific or biased perceptions have been derived. This thesis analyzes and compares the interpretations, with the intent of showing how many of the competing factors, which ranged from the broad international level down to individual human relationships and needs, set the conditions through which the NVA personnel were taken-over into the Bundeswehr. Furthermore, the relationship between the various interpretations and the specific factors that influenced both the unification and its military aspect demonstrates that a focus on any single factor not only allows for a difference in interpretations but also generally becomes the primary cause for it.

The thesis will be divided into three parts. The first part will cover the various interpretations on the event. Just as there is a conflict between former East and West Germans in the perception of who had more right to determine the way the overall process of unification should occur, there are also disagreements and differences in the feelings between the members of the Bundeswehr and the NVA in regards to the views on the military aspect of the unity event.

The next part of the thesis will present the fate of the NVA starting with the demonstrations in the fall of 1989 until the final integration of the former NVA into the Bundeswehr. This will accomplish the intent of presenting sufficient back-ground information on the specific issues, to include up-to-date information from primary sources, in order to allow the reader to come to his or her own interpretation and gain an understanding on how the different versions have been influenced by each of the author's background.

Part Three will present the factors from the international environment, the inter-German environment, and those factors specific to the NVA to analyze their impact on the final fate of the East German military as an institution as well as the future of its personnel. A comparison of the competing factors will show how they contributed to the overall process, the specific results, and the interpretations of the outcome. The thesis will demonstrate that the rush to unity had a negative impact on the NVA, since it prevented the implementation of projected changes that would have eased the transition process for the East German military and might have lessened the Bundeswehr's fear of becoming burdened with too many NVA older and senior NVA members. However, someone believing that there really was a limit on the time for the event would accept the consequences for the members of the East German armed forces as a necessary price that had to be paid. Individuals of a different opinion on the necessity of a speedy

unification would, on the other hand, see the negative results as a justification that the rush to unification was a serious mistake made by the key players of that time.

The thesis will close with an epilogue that will discuss the unresolved issues of the military integration process, especially those that continue to influence the attitudes on the military aspects of the German unification. Undoubtedly, these issues will remain mired in heavy scholarly debate for quite some time, and until resolved they will be used as examples to illustrate that the “growing together” process still has a long way to go until a real feeling of inner unity finally exists in all the German people.

CHAPTER 2

INTERPRETATIONS

Introduction

In the process of acquiring information on the dissolution of the NVA and the integration of its personnel into the Bundeswehr, the reader or researcher will certainly find an abundance of publications with a variety of interpretations on the issues and results surrounding this event. This chapter will present several of these sources and their divergent interpretations along with relevant background information in order to provide the reader of this thesis the means to evaluate the conclusions that the various authors make and compare them to the information provided in the successive chapters of this thesis. It is the intent of this thesis, that in the end the reader can derive his or her own version of interpretation without relying too heavily on any biased conclusions made by other scholars or authors for whatever reason.

One means of categorizing the various publications would be according to how each views the success of the dissolution and integration in regards to fairness for the individuals involved. Another could be according to how the integration process contributed to the overall success of German unification. This would simplify categorization, but would provide a more or less black and white picture that might hinder the understanding of the types of divergences among the various interpretations. Thus, the sources will be grouped according to the individual author's relationship to the topic, which will result in two main categories. The first category will consist of those works that are considered to be primary sources by authors, who were contemporary witnesses and had an impact on the events. The other category will be comprised of secondary sources in the form of the publications of scholars that have dealt with the

dissolution and integration process. The first category is further divided into those who originally belonged to the FRG and those who came from the former GDR, while the second category will be divided into German scholars and U.S. scholars. An analysis of these various works will show the different and often competing positions that are presented and how they may influence the interpretation of the military aspect of the German unification process. A summary of the biographies of the individual authors is presented at the end of this thesis.

The publications presented here are not the only available sources on this topic; instead they generally represent the interpretations of those that belong to the various above-mentioned categories. Furthermore, some of these publications may be chapters contained within more comprehensive works. Wherever this is the case, a reference in regards to this will be made. Finally, it is important to note that the sources to be discussed have been written by individuals who were and still are in civilian or military positions of high profile. This does not make their comments or claims any more valid than those individuals that held positions of lesser rank or influence, but their interpretations often carry more weight than those expressed by the common officer or individual as it is assumed that the former individuals were or are the ‘experts’ on this subject matter. Thus, in order to show how some of the official interpretations compare with the individuals that were impacted by the events, this chapter will conclude with a presentation of the comments made by some of the individuals that were interviewed as part of the research for this thesis.

Primary Sources

West German Contemporary Witnesses

Among the authors to be discussed that belong to the West German primary sources are Jörg Schönbohm, Werner von Scheven, Gerhard Stoltenberg and Karl-Heinz Carl. All of these individuals were either high-ranking Bundeswehr officers or senior officials in the West German Ministry of Defense or MOD (*Bundesministerium der Verteidigung* or BMVg).

Jörg Schönbohm. Lieutenant General (LTG) a.D. (retired) Schönbohm was the Commanding Officer of *Bundeswehr-Kommando Ost*, the headquarters that commanded all the

forces in the former GDR starting with the day of German unification. He has authored several publications on the military aspect of German unification. These include his book *Zwei Armeen und ein Vaterland. Das Ende der Nationalen Volksarmee* along with the articles “Deutsche kommen zu Deutschen” and “Die Bundeswehr im deutschen Einigungsprozeß 1989/90.”¹⁶ For the English-only reader there is an excellent translation of Schönbohm’s book called *Two Armies and One Fatherland*.¹⁷

In the first few chapters of his book, Schönbohm provides the reader with an introduction to the development of the political situation in Europe as of 1988, especially in regards to East Germany, along with the first contacts between the leadership of the two German Ministries of Defense and a description of the NVA prior to German unification. One of the key arguments of those chapters is the issue of the security alliance status of a future unified Germany. In the earlier part of 1990, there still was some uncertainty among the West German leadership regarding the Soviet position towards a NATO-aligned Germany after unification, but according to Schönbohm’s description, the issue was only a matter of time. Schönbohm also claims that the East German attitude on the Warsaw Pact membership and the positive affiliation that the GDR’s political and military leadership had towards that security alliance was primarily the result of the officer corps’ hope for a continuation of the alliance in order to secure both the NVA’s and their own future. Thus, Schönbohm gives the impression that the senior military leadership, especially Defense Minister Eppelmann and his concept of two armies in one state, was out of touch with reality in regards to the political changes occurring during that time.¹⁸

Schönbohm also does not fail to give his negative feelings towards the senior leadership of the NVA and states “there had apparently been no self-cleansing of the NVA; the old leadership cadres were confirmed in office by the [current] government which had emerged from a peaceful revolution, and thus avoided self-critical discussion about the state, the party and the system they had served.” He further criticizes the new oath of allegiance that the NVA career and contract took on July 20, as he believed that the GDR’s military had not yet accounted for its own history in order to be linked to the German military resistance events of the 20th of July 1994.¹⁹

The overall description of the NVA does not provide a positive picture, with much of the blame put on the political-ideological education and the strong influence of the party, but the information Schönbohm provides is quite limited and thus does not allow for a necessary

understanding of the conditions that influenced the development of the East German armed forces into what it was. He also portrays the NVA with its rigid system and harsh discipline in total opposite to the Bundeswehr and its concepts of *Auftragstaktik* (mission-oriented orders) and *Innere Führung* (inner leadership),²⁰ although he does give the NVA leadership great credit for maintaining order and discipline in the armed forces right up until their dissolution. He further notes that during the final year some military reforms, to include ideas borrowed from the West Germans, were initiated but due to a variety of factors never did move beyond their initial stages.²¹

The bulk of Schönbohm's book is written in the form of a diary starting with the day prior to German unity and ending on July 1, 1991, the day that *Kommando Ost* was disbanded. Probably the most notable aspect of this part of the book is the change in perception that Schönbohm experienced as he got to know the individuals who made up the former NVA, to the degree that his concern for the future welfare of the former NVA personnel sometimes came into conflict with some of the directives issued by the BMVg in Bonn. This included the selection of a higher number of individuals than had been set in the planning structure of the Bundeswehr, under the justification that they were "Schlüsselpersonal" (key personnel).²²

The change in Schönbohm's attitude is a reoccurring theme found in the publications of other Bundeswehr leaders after having commanded of former NVA personnel and the experiences they made with the individual side of the 'other' German military. It can be best summed up in a quote extracted from Schönbohm's speech during the deactivation ceremony of the *Kommando Ost*, in which he stated: "There has been much discussion as to whether former soldiers of a Communist dictatorship can be soldiers in the Bundeswehr...Today, I can say without reservation: The soldiers of the former NVA also understand and accept those principle and fundamental differences and are ready to serve our united Germany."²³

The publication in *Ein Staat - Eine Armee* is a summary of much of the information found in Schönbohm's book with a greater focus on the results in numbers. Schönbohm chose not to list any references or sources in his book or this article in either of those two publications, and although this is his prerogative as a contemporary witness, it presents a difficulty in the verification of the data listed. This, along with the problems of accuracy and use of some of these numbers, will be discussed in one of the later chapters of this thesis.²⁴

Schönbohm's article in the book by Bruno Thoß refrains from the heavy criticism of the NVA's senior leadership, and focuses more on the various tasks that had to be completed by *Kommando Ost* in order to achieve a successful integration. Again, the information is primarily a repeat from his other two works, but the numbers are more accurate and a list of sources was provided. In this article, Schönbohm also argued that after the total force strength of the unified German armed forces had been set to 370,000 in the Two-plus-Four treaty, a concern spread among the Bundeswehr personnel that for every extra NVA individual accepted, one soldier from the Bundeswehr would have to be discharged.²⁵

Since Schönbohm's activities in the overall integration process ended only a few years into the unification process, several aspects of the event had not been finalized during his involvement, and as a result his summaries were not able to comment on the final outcome. Nevertheless, the general conclusions of his publications point to a successful accomplishment of *Kommando Ost*, in spite of all the difficulties that had to be overcome, and the overall positive contribution that the Bundeswehr had provided to German unification.

Werner von Scheven. LTG a.D. von Scheven was a Major General (MG) when he was the Deputy Commander at *Kommando Ost*, and was later promoted to LTG when he became the Commanding General of the *Territorialkommando Ost* (Eastern Territorial Command), which took over the responsibilities of *Kommando Ost* after that headquarters was disbanded. In his article "Die Bundeswehr und der Aufbau Ost", he discusses the integration process with a primary focus on answering the question if combining the two militaries would have been a possible alternative to the dissolution of the NVA.²⁶

His first argument against such an alternative is that because there were such factors as political-ideological education and the strong influence that the party had in all aspects of the NVA, the two militaries were totally different from each other. He explains that much of this was due to the almost complete subordination to the Soviets, and as such, the key to understanding the military system of the GDR lies in understanding the Soviet military system.²⁷

Furthermore, typical for a 'socialist military', the NVA had a top-heavy officer corps, which Von Scheven lists this as the primary reasons that such a low percentage of NVA officers compared to NCOs were integrated. In comparing personnel ratios, the NVA's officer ratio was three times higher than that of the Bundeswehr. On the other hand, the Bundeswehr desperately needed junior NCOs and thus a much higher percentage of those were integrated. Von Scheven

makes this same argument during the discussions at the 'Forum on German Unity' conference, as a counter to Egon Bahr's argument that the reductions dictated by the Two-plus-Four treaty were primarily at the expense of the NVA.²⁸

Although Von Scheven does not discuss his experiences in regards to the adversities in the lives of his former NVA soldiers, the tolerance and in-depth understanding found in his description of the average former NVA officer displays that he was also affected by the personal interactions that he experienced as their commander. His observation that "the loss of a sense of orientation in a person's private as well as professional life is a loss in identity...[it] is a life crisis and such a painful experience that a defensive behavior becomes a natural reaction. It also makes [the individual] sensitive towards harsh criticism from West German mouths ...[and] it would be a grave mistake to believe that in the sensitivity a secret desire for a return of the GDR lies hidden".²⁹ This insight shows the causes for the sensitivity of the former NVA officer towards criticism made by West Germans and is helpful in understanding some of the problems that still exist today between former East and West German.

In his conclusion, von Scheven sees the accomplishments of the Bundeswehr in the former East Germany and the successful integration of former NVA career soldiers as a contributing factor to the German unification process. On the other hand, he does warn that outside of the military a lot of criticism still exists on the emotional and psychological condition of the German unification process.³⁰

Gerhard Stoltenberg. Dr. Stoltenberg was the West German Minister of Defense around the time of German unification. Some of his literary contributions to this event can be found in his book *Wendepunkte* and an article in the book by Bruno Thoß, of which the former primarily mentions the political and economic aspects of the unification process with very little on the military aspect of the unification process.³¹

One of Stoltenberg's first arguments in his article deals with the NATO alliance issue of the unified Germany. He mentions that although it had been his intent right from the beginning to support that policy as the end-result of the agreements with the 'Four Powers', his colleague the Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher was of a different opinion, and as a compromise a watered-down joint-statement became West Germany's public position on that issue.³²

Stoltenberg also states that at his first meeting with the East German Defense Minister Rainer Eppelmann, he and all of the members of his delegation were surprised that Eppelmann

had decided to keep all the senior military members of the NVA as part of his staff. Furthermore, Stoltenberg contributes the incident of the new oath of allegiance for the NVA, as a result of Eppelmann's belief that there would be two armed forces for some time to come.³³

Similar to an argument made by Schönbohm, Stoltenberg claims that in order to reach an effective unification of Germany, the young East Germans who had not participated in the crimes of the system had to be given the chance of a new start. He had preceded that statement with the comment that the general attitude within the Bundeswehr was that officers and higher officials of the NVA should not be taken over since as part of the security instrument of the old regime they had been strongly indoctrinated, both politically and ideologically. This presentation leads to the interpretation that, the older and possibly corrupt members of the NVA had to leave so that the younger generation would have the chance to make the unification process work.³⁴

Stoltenberg concludes that the measures which the Bundeswehr personnel on the ground in the former East Germany and the BMVg in Bonn took in order to dissolve the NVA and integrate its personnel, albeit some difficulties between the two, had a positive impact on German unity. He cites the incident of an oath-taking ceremony for the conscripts of former East Germany, at which the media representation seemed to have been disappointed because there had been no sensational 'bad-news' to report. The ceremony received a lot of applause from the East German spectators, primarily friend and families of the conscripts, while only a small group of people with three banners demonstrated against the event.³⁵ Stoltenberg closes his article with a reference to a *Time* magazine publication nine months after unification, in which 20 journalists analyzed the progress of the former GDR, ending with the quote "the central conclusion of this article was that the Bundeswehr had achieved the most progress on the path towards German unity."³⁶

Karl-Heinz Carl. Dr. Carl was a State Secretary in charge of budget, personnel, legal and human resources matters of the BMVg. In an article describing his involvement in the overall unification process he makes two primary arguments. The first one is that although the BMVg was in a much stronger position than its East German counterpart at the talks where the future of the NVA was determined, the former never tried to exploit their position during those meetings. Related to this, his second argument states, that although the BMVg representatives tried to be as fair as possible, they never hid the fact that contrary to the East German desires for a continuation of the NVA for a certain period after unification, the BMVg was committed to an

end result of only one military remaining in a unified Germany, with that being the Bundeswehr.³⁷

At the 'Forum on German Unity' conference, Carl reiterated those two arguments, and adds the comment that his position from the very beginning had been "one flag, one Bundeswehr, one Minister of Defense." He also points-out that the one-sided conditions were influenced by the fact that the GDR was financially broke, and already for a short period prior to unification, the BMVg was paying the NVA soldiers.³⁸

In his closing comments at the conference, Carl stated that the debates surrounding the problems were of no surprise to him, for the entire German unification process was in itself an enormous and complicated event. As a result, questions have also surfaced by the many smart individuals who have studied the 1000 pages of the Unification treaty, but as he reiterates, all of them *post festum*.

East German Contemporary Witnesses

The publications to be discussed next include those by Theodore Hoffmann, Werner Patzer, Rainer Eppelmann, and Werner Ablaß. The first two were senior military officers in the NVA, while the latter two were senior civilian leaders of the MOD during the democratically elected de Maizière (and last) government of the GDR. Eppelmann.

Theodore Hoffmann. Admiral a.D. Hoffmann was the last military Defense Minister under the Krenz and Modrow governments and then the Chief of the NVA under Defense Minister Eppelmann.³⁹ In *Das letzte Kommando*, Hoffmann tells the story of the final year of the NVA from his perspective while in those positions, in which he argues that the NVA had already been undergoing major reform changes starting in December 1989. As support for this he presents the minutes of the many military leadership meetings to include those with the Round Table, which show the detail and the scope of the planned reform changes. He also notes that the fast pace of changes in the political climate in the GDR either prevented the execution of many of the projected reforms or only allowed for their partial or incomplete implementation.⁴⁰

Another one of Hoffmann's arguments is on the NVA's commitment to the Warsaw pact. He believes that the NVA leadership had no other option than to remain loyal to the Soviets, for even de Maizière had proclaimed to continue to support the national security interests of the Soviet Union and the other Warsaw Pact members until the alliance status of the

future unified Germany had been settled by the Two-Plus-Four treaty.⁴¹ At the ‘Forum on German Unity’, Hoffmann argued that he was misquoted by Schönbohm, as he never supported the concept that the NVA would remain part of Warsaw Pact forever. Instead, Hoffmann claimed that he believed in the notion that the GDR had to continue to fulfill its obligations to the Warsaw Pact until the GDR had officially withdrawn from the alliance.⁴²

Along the same lines, Hoffmann believes that Eppelmann was justified in his ‘Two-Army’ concept, especially since at the time when the latter became Defense Minister, Gorbachev was still announcing that a unified Germany in NATO was unacceptable.⁴³ Eppelmann believed that until the future of the Soviets stationed in the GDR was resolved, which he did not think would occur for one or two more years, the NVA would have to continue to exist, while the BMVg leadership continued to argue that only the Bundeswehr would remain in a united Germany. Hoffmann further notes that prior to the Caucasus meeting between Kohl and Gorbachev, the West German’s were proclaiming that after unification the NVA would exist for a transitional period, but after the infamous meeting discussion regarding this transition period no longer existed.⁴⁴

Hoffmann credits Eppelmann’s ‘Two-Army’ theory as a positive influence on the moral within the NVA, but believes that in early March even before the election of the de Maizière government a stabilization had started to occur within the NVA. This was due to the fact that some of the reform changes had finally taken effect along with measures for a transition to civilian employment and the establishment of a social safety net for the many members that were projected to leave the services.⁴⁵

On the other hand, Hoffmann feels that some of the latter discontent among the NVA was because of conflicting and confusing directives issued by various departments in the MfAV, which was due to the lack of a unity of effort among the civilian leadership and those officers who worked for them. Eppelmann’s his various political engagements as the chairman of his party and as a member of the government, along with the many press statements and interviews prevented him from maintaining a oversight of the MfAV, while his group of civilian advisors only contributed to a discord between him and his senior staff, as well as to the West German military leadership at the BMVg. Hoffmann states that especially during the last few months prior to unification, the NVA’s senior military leaders were being kept out of the information and

decision loop in by the MfAV civilian leadership in regards to the meetings and agreements that were being conducted with the negotiators from the BMVg.⁴⁶

Hoffmann strongly criticized the impact of the media as negative, especially the false reports by the West German media, who either fabricated sensational stories or exaggerated the events of insignificant issues, which then resulted in a very derogatory portrayal of the NVA. This negative picture was further enhanced by remarks and attitudes of West German representatives with the end result being that the NVA members did not have a large support base that looked out for their concerns during the negotiation process for German unification.⁴⁷

Hoffmann's conclusion in his book combined with his comments at the 'Forum on German Unity' present the argument that NVA members should not be ashamed of their participation in the NVA. As in the case of many militaries, they might have been a necessary evil to maintain peace during the Cold War, but their peaceful conduct during the fall of the Berlin Wall, along with the ordered and disciplined manner in which they faced their own dissolution and selected integration into the Bundeswehr gives the members of the NVA the right to be proud of having had a positive roll in the German unification process.⁴⁸

Werner Patzer. MG a.D. Werner Patzer had been the chief of the administration responsible for personnel recruitment and replenishment from 1967 until 1990 of the Ministry for National Defense (Ministerium für Nationale Verteidigung or MfNV), which was the name of the GDR's Defense Ministry prior to its renaming to the MfAV.

In his article "Vom NVA-General zum Wachmann" (From a General in the NVA to Security Guard), Patzer argues that one of the reasons that the NVA had so many career and conscript soldiers during the last years of its existence was because of a directive issued in 1985, which stated that the yearly call-up for new service members to active duty was to be reduced by 1990 from 102,000 to 85,000. The reason for this reduction of approximately 17% for new troops was in order to free-up more young people for the civilian work force. On the other hand, this was not accompanied by a reduction of the authorized strength of the armed forces, since the numbers assigned to the Warsaw Pact had not been reduced and were even projected to increase. As a result, the loss of these potential new troops was to be made up by measures that would increase the number of longer serving career and contract soldiers and utilize more reservists.⁴⁹

Due to the reduction in service time for conscripts and contract soldiers (to be discussed in detail in a later chapter) the personnel strength of the NVA had decreased to 85,000 in April

1990, but the call-up of new conscripts in May increased the numbers back to 117,000. When Patzer met with Bundeswehr officers in July, they had argued for the necessity of further reductions of the NVA, to which Patzer remembers replying that the current strength was the minimum the NVA needed in order to safely guard all of the equipment and munitions.⁵⁰

Patzer admits that initially he had still believed that a fair joining of the two armed forces would occur, but then around the end of July, public statements that NVA officers were not desired were appearing and a mass media campaign in West Germany was demonizing the NVA officers as dangerous and incorrigible. He also argues that the Bundeswehr leadership had planned all along to discharge the bulk of the NVA career soldiers, but had withheld that information as long as possible in order to prevent any protest or resistance from the NVA. To Patzer, this behavior indicated that it was the leadership in the Bundeswehr, who had a strong *Feindbild* (negative perception of the enemy) of the NVA and were acting according to it.⁵¹

As part of pointing out the incompatibility between the two militaries, the West German side had claimed that the NVA had a *Feindbild* of Bundeswehr, while the Bundeswehr did not have that feeling towards the NVA. Patzer recalls a discussion with a Bundeswehr Colonel, who claimed that the NVA had a strong *Feindbild* concept and was prepared to immediately attack the West upon receipt of such orders from the party leadership. Patzer confirmed general validity of this statement, but then asked the Colonel, if i.e. he had been a commander of Armored Brigade and had received orders in the middle of the night to gear up his unit in preparation to attack without knowing the who, what, where, or when, would he have followed those orders. After the Colonel responded affirmatively, Patzer that as soldiers, or as long as they remain soldiers, they really do not have the options to refuse such orders and can only depend on the fact that their political and military leaders realize and live up to the enormous responsibility of acting correctly to ensure the security of the nation and the safety of the people is guaranteed.⁵²

Patzer was discharged as of September 30, since he was in the age group that was forced to retire prior to unification. The provision that he received (~2000 DM, which was 65% of his pay) was not sufficient to maintain his family, especially since the price of rent was increasing by 90 DM every month until it leveled at ~700 DM. As a result, he first took a job with an insurance company and later became a security guard until he reached the age of 68. After that he received a pension, which had also been negatively affected by his service in the NVA. Due to the position that he had held in the military, he was considered to have been a 'privileged' and

‘close to the regime’ supporter of the GDR system, and as a result, 23 of his 41 years of service counted for only one point each in the average pension category. In effect this meant that the payback for those 23 years was the same as an un-schooled worker.⁵³

One of his major complaints include the fact that he is not allowed to utilize the distinction of his former military title combined with the initials a.D. for *ausser Dienst* (having served). All retired Bundeswehr officer are afforded this distinction, but since service in the NVA is classified as “having served in foreign military”, it is actually illegal forbidden for the former NVA soldiers to use that distinction in front of their name. What bothers Patzer most is that former Wehrmacht officers such as LTG Heusinger, who as Chief of Operations of the General Staff of the Army briefed Hitler on a daily basis, was given a second chance by becoming the first Chief of the Federal Armed Forces Staff under Adenauer and then working as a Four Star General at NATO, while the senior NVA military leadership was sent home in dishonor.⁵⁴

Rainer Eppelmann. Eppelmann was the Minister of Defense in de Maizière government, and as such was the first, last and only civilian Defense Minister of the GDR. He also was responsible for the MOD’s name change to the Ministry for Disarmament and Defense (*Ministerium für Abrüstung und Verteidigung* a.k.a. MfAV), and authored the book *Wendewege*, which presents his perspective on the events in the form of fictitious letters to his family and friends.⁵⁵

Similar to Hoffmann’s argument, Eppelmann is convinced that major changes had taken place within the NVA the last few months prior to his appointment as Defense Minister. He states that otherwise it would not have been possible someone like him, a conscientious objector, who as a result of that conviction had spent eight months in prison in 1966 and then served the remaining time of his obligation as a construction soldier (*Bausoldat*), to have taken that post of senior leader of the NVA.⁵⁶ He gives Hoffmann much credit for initiating the reforms that brought about those changes, and believes that a continuation of the democratization process had only been possible with the help of the officers and soldiers of the NVA. Thus, one of his main efforts was to stabilize the NVA by do things for the soldiers and not against them, so that he could gain their trust and continue to establish the foundations for a military in a democratic state.⁵⁷

Eppelmann argues that at the time he became Defense minister his concept of two armed forces, even after German unification, was valid as long as the two military alliances were projected to remain intact. At that time, he was of the opinion that a successful settlement of the European security issues would also have to address the security concerns of the Soviets, which would include changes to the structure and doctrine of NATO, since at that time it still contained the nuclear first-strike option. Furthermore, he was convinced that he had to continue to support the Warsaw Pact treaty, for anything else would have caused uneasy feelings in the Soviets and could have endangered the disarmament talks held in Vienna. Then after the Soviet security issues had been met and Gorbachev gave his consent to a NATO membership for a unified Germany, Eppelmann admits that his 'Two-Army' theory had become null and void.⁵⁸

Eppelmann also shares Hoffmann's discontent with the media. He himself had been the victim of several false accusations and slander by Western media, with some of the information that was used against him originating from both the West German MOD and his own Ministry. He believes that the latter individual may have done so because of discontent for Eppelmann's actions, while individuals of the BMVg may have wanted to discredit him. Furthermore, the speeches at the ceremony in Strausberg on the day of German unification by Stoltenberg and Schönbohm have been printed in the media, while his own speech at that event has not been published.⁵⁹

In both his book and as part of an interview, Eppelmann commends the courageous efforts of some of the senior military leaders, who prevented the party leadership from using the NVA to suppress the November demonstrations. For him this contributed to the success of the peaceful revolution and was the point in time at which the NVA had proven itself as the armed forces of the people.⁶⁰ This event also showed Eppelmann that individuals should be judged according to the circumstances that dictated their action and decisions, to include why service members had chosen to join and become professionals of the military. Thus, he opposes the pre-conceptions that civilians have of the NVA and its members, and points out that even his own negative feelings towards the NVA, as an instrument of the GDR dictatorship to of suppress its people, had changed once he had worked with the individuals of that organization.⁶¹

In the interview, Eppelmann makes the same arguments from the book, but also comments on the criticism made against the actions of him and his staff from the MfAV and the intent of the negotiators from the BMVg, with the end-result being a comparatively less

favorable deal for the members of the NVA. Eppelmann believes that this was un-justified as it overlooks that there was no specific solution for the soldiers. Instead, the fate of the NVA soldiers was tied into that of all members of the civil and public services.⁶² Furthermore, according to his perception of the West German negotiators, they did not try to “wheel and deal” with him or his staff on the issues pertaining to the future of the NVA, and although his relationship with Stoltenberg was purely at the professional level, with little if any warm feelings for each other, Eppelmann cannot think of anything derogatory to say about his former West German counterpart.⁶³

Eppelmann concludes his interview with some discontent on how the senior NVA officers were treated during the final days, i.e. the last minute discharge of some who had thought they would continue in the Bundeswehr. He also believes that the issues that involve all former NVA members such as not being allowed to utilize the distinction of their former rank with *ausser Dienst* and being classified as “having served in a foreign military” are seriously unjust as they negate almost the entire biographies of those individuals. He believes that the distinction “served in the NVA” is free of judgment and would help alleviate this current injustice.⁶⁴

Werner Ablaß. Ablaß was the state secretary and permanent deputy for Eppelmann in the MfAV and presents his perspective from his position as one of the primary East German negotiators on the military aspect of the Unification treaty. He was also one of the key individual that negotiated with the Soviets for the necessary measures to bring the GDR out of the Warsaw Pact agreement, and worked on the initial plans for the Soviet withdrawal from the GDR.⁶⁵

In the years prior to the 1989/90 changes that occurred in the GDR, Ablaß had also viewed the NVA as one of the three pillars that support the dictatorship, and thus had a negative perception of the NVA as an institution that was similar to the one already mentioned by Eppelmann. Only later when he was one of the senior civilian leaders at the MfAV and really got to know the NVA, along with the details surrounding the situation of the military members, who were subjected to a strict double discipline to both the military and the party, did he realize that any over-arching judgments or conclusions regarding these individuals was in appropriate.⁶⁶

Similar to Eppelmann, Ablaß also gives credit to the generals and officers of the NVA for preventing the dictatorship from employing armed soldiers against the peaceful civilian demonstrators in October of 1989, and believes that it was at that moment the NVA had proved

itself for the first time as the 'armed forces of the people'. He especially commends Admiral Hoffmann for his integrity and for initiating the military reform that brought about some necessary changes, although he thinks that many of Hoffmann's efforts as Defense Minister were overwhelmed by the events of that time.⁶⁷

One of the factors that made it very hard for the leadership under Hoffmann to get support for their reforms was the ever decreasing acceptance of the military by the East German people, especially since the NVA members still had their jobs and regular pay while unemployment was on the rise among the civilian population. Ablaß notes that this became a major problem later on, when the MfAV tried to get an increase in pay for the conscripts; a measure that was met by resistance and lack of support from the civilians and their perspective representatives in the government. Other problems with civilians included groups that wanted the NVA to give up the housing installations for its service member, and to tear down the fences separating surrounding the training areas so that they could be made available for public access.⁶⁸

The high unemployment was part of the finance and economic issues that had to be dealt with as part of the unification process, and this according to Ablaß was one of the main reasons the NVA did not have much of a lobby in either the cabinet or the parliament of the GDR government. With approximately 980,000 unemployed at the end of July 1990 and then 1,34 million by the end of August, it is understandable that very few in the government cared about the future of the approximately 100,000 soldiers. As a result there were times when he received more support on an issue from BMVg than from the other ministries of own government.⁶⁹

One of his counterparts in the BMVg was Dr. Carl, with whom he had developed a good and open working relationship, and Ablaß argues that contrary what some critics have claimed, there were no take-over agreements and demands were not forced upon the MfAV by the BMVg. Instead, the participants from the MfAV were told of the set limitations and then negotiations were worked out accordingly.⁷⁰ Furthermore, many of the constraints were set by budget limitations that had been dictated to the BMVg negotiators by the West German Ministry of Finance. Ablaß does complain that in retrospect he would have liked to have more of his advisors along during the negotiations in Bonn, especially to deal with those issues that were made more complex by the West German bureaucracy involved. At that time, the limited

accommodations at the hotel were to blame, but he feels that better preparations and co-ordinations would have solved the problem.⁷¹

According to Ablaß, at his first meeting with Dr. Carl on May 4, the participants from the BMVg did not express any reservations to the taking of a new oath for the NVA career and contract soldiers on 20th July. On the other hand, he later received a letter from the BMVg, which stated that the ceremony should not be interpreted as a general absolution of the NVA, since little had been done up until then in the form of a personnel-cleansing in the NVA. Furthermore, any link to the resistance event of July 20, 1944, would be inappropriate, as it would associate the NVA to those who had actively resisted the 40 years of communist dictatorship. Even some of the descendants of the individuals from the Wehrmacht who had taken part in the resistance against Hitler wanted to wait until after unification of the two militaries before buildings of the MfAV were renamed to represent those individuals. Although Ablaß agrees that he also did not see the NVA in the tradition of the 20th of July, he argues that this new oath was to be a signal of a new beginning for the NVA.⁷²

Ablaß also defends Eppelmann's position at the first meeting between the two German Defense Ministers, when he clearly laid out his vision for the near future of the GDR, which included up-holding its commitments to the Warsaw Pact. Furthermore, Ablaß argues that Eppelmann's 'Two-Army' concept, which he mentioned during the May 2nd commander's conference, not only contributed to the increase of moral and stabilized the situation in the NVA, but was completely justifiable since at that time no one could predict that President Bush was going to be able to achieve a confirmation for a NATO alliance of a unified Germany from Gorbachev at their meeting on May 31.⁷³

Around the end of May, Ablaß himself had stated in a newspaper interview that because the Soviets were still set on the NATO-alliance for a unified Germany as out of the question, the idea of using the NVA as a territorial army of the East was one of the variations of a united German Bundeswehr. Today, he further argues that even those, who later criticized Eppelmann, had originally agreed that this option was a possibility, and Eppelmann's only problem was that he held on to this notion for too long, possibly because he continued to believe that unification would not occur until sometime between May and September of 1992.⁷⁴

Ablaß believes that another factor justifying the long hold on to the belief of future for the NVA, occurred as late as a few days prior to the Caucasus event of mid-July. At a meeting

with one of his BMVg counterparts while discussing the issue the numbers of NVA soldiers to be stationed in the future unified Germany, Ablaß counterpart had shown him a hand-written note by Stoltenberg, which stated that would be around 60,000.⁷⁵

As one of the negotiators on the Warsaw Pact agreement and the Soviet withdrawal from East Germany, Ablaß came back with the impression that the Soviets saw the GDR's withdrawal out of Warsaw Pact as betrayal of socialism. Furthermore, his experiences with the Soviet military leadership showed him that many were still hard-liners and that the threat of a military coup against Gorbachev always lingered in the background.⁷⁶ He also argues that it was a necessity to keep the senior NVA leaders, for both the Soviet and West German negotiators were either professional soldiers themselves or had them as their advisors at their side, and in order to compete the MfAV needed its own professionals. At the 'Forum on German Unity', Ablaß stated " I could not have flown with a 32-year old Major to negotiate with Marshall Jazov, I need experienced military leaders such as Admiral Hoffmann at my side."⁷⁷

In further defense of keeping the senior military leadership, Ablaß believes that they were vital for the cohesion of the NVA, so that it could fulfill its mission of guarding all of the equipment and weapons until hand-over as well as executing its own dissolution, and he gives the generals and senior officers great credit for maintaining an orderly and loyal NVA until the end. Ablaß concludes that not all of them were hard-line Stalinists as it is often portrayed, and admits that although this had also been his original perception and that he had no love lost for them, he change his view after he experienced the individuals personally and discovered that they were normal people with the same problem as everyone else.⁷⁸

Comparison of the Primary Sources

This comparison of the publications by former West German and East German Contemporary Witnesses will focus on the interpretations of the various themes discussed by the authors. It should not be seen as an empirical study since the selected works do not include the point of views of every primary source on the dissolution of the NVA and the integration of its personnel into the Bundeswehr; instead it is an attempt to demonstrate that various interpretations on this topic exist with their differences and similarities often depending on the individual's background and position prior to and during the unification process.

One of the primary themes includes the character and composition of the NVA along with the differences compared to the Bundeswehr, which inevitably leads to a judgment of the NVA as well as the justification of which individuals should or should not have been integrated into the Bundeswehr. The West German authors generally point to the fact that as a 'socialist military' the NVA had certain characteristics that made it incompatible with the Bundeswehr. Especially Schönbohm argues that after the changes in the GDR government had occurred, the NVA had still not conducted a self-cleansing process of its own senior leadership and their participation and influence in up-holding the previous communist dictatorship was one of the factors that justified their exclusion for the integration process. Von Scheven, who shows a more favorable insight to the reasons surrounding the character of the common NVA officer, does not display the same harshness towards the senior military leadership, but he does argue that the political-ideological indoctrination of the NVA made a true unification between the two armed forces an impossibility.

None of the East German authors argued that a complete unification would have been possible, but their statements show that at a minimum the negative picture portrayed by the West Germans was not completely justified. Carefully stated, Hoffmann and Patzer argued that their *Feindbild* towards the West was not much different than the perception that their enemies had of them, although the West Germans stated that they viewed the East as opponents and not as enemies. Furthermore, the two East German military leaders claimed that their obedience to the government and the military alliance was something that should be common for all military leaders, and thus until circumstances dictated otherwise, they had been obligated up-hold their loyalty to both.

Even Eppelmann and Ablaß, who due to their previous dealings with the GDR dictatorship had every reason to hate the NVA because of its support to that regime, gave credit to some of the military leaders for their involvement in preventing a violent solution to the October demonstrations of 1989. They also acknowledged the fact that by the time they had come to office, the NVA had undergone a change for the better which had been brought about by the reform contributions and attempts initiated by the military leadership. Furthermore, the two Statesmen believed that the military leaders contributed greatly to the success of overcoming many obstacles along the road to unification, such as in the dealings with the Soviets, and that

they had been a vital factor ensuring that the military conducted its missions and maintained discipline until its dissolution, the latter to which even Schönbohm gave praise to.

The other major theme revolves around the NATO alliance of a unified Germany and its impact on the structure of a united German military. The West Germans state that their position on this issue was clear from the start and that the East German position was one of 'wishful thinking' and 'self-interest' especially on the part of the military leadership of the NVA. On the other hand, the East German's defend their position on the military alliance and the 'Two-Army' concept with the facts that up until the Gorbachev-Kohl meeting in mid-July, there were no indications that the Soviets would allow a united Germany to belong to NATO. Furthermore, as Ablaß points out any signs of disloyalty by the GDR to the Warsaw Pact agreement might have caused concerns among the Soviets, which could have negatively impacted the Two-Plus-Four negotiations.

In regards to the actual numbers of former NVA members integrated into the Bundeswehr, the West German's argue that these numbers were influenced by budget constraints and force structure limitations. This and the fact the NVA had a much higher percentage of officers impacted the overall number of former NVA individuals that could be integrated. Ablaß, who from the East German side had the most dealings in these negotiations admits that he also became painfully aware of the limitations set upon the negotiators from the West and did not feel that they tried to cheat the NVA out of a fair process. Ablaß did note that even within the GDR government, there was little support for the concerns of the soldiers, partially influence by the bigger problems the GDR government faced with the high unemployment and failing economy and by the negative attitude that the civilians in the GDR had of their military. Eppelmann and the two East German military leaders feel that some of the latter was due to negative media against the NVA officers that had emitted from West Germany, which had the likings of a purposefully directed media campaign.

All of the West German authors considered the integration process to have been conducted as fair as possible, and in their opinion the Bundeswehr's involvement was one of the best in comparison to the other aspects of the German unification process, and that a lot of that credit also goes to those former NVA members that were involved in the process regardless if they stayed in the Bundeswehr or not. The East Germans, on the other hand, are not that content with the results. Ablaß believes that both the MfAV and BMVg could have done more in the

form of securing a better social safety-net for all of the former NVA members especially those who were discharged or left prior to unification. Eppelmann, Hoffmann and Patzer feel that there was a bias against the NVA officers, especially the ones of higher rank, this includes the still existing discriminations in the form of reduced retirement pay, the distinction as having served in a former military and the fact that the former NVA soldiers are legally not permitted to use the rank they retired with in any official capacity.

An interesting fact to note is that those authors, who originally had a negative perception of the NVA prior to coming into contact with the individuals of that institution, changed their view of the NVA once they had personal dealings with its members. These changes were somewhat different for the different authors with some being more lenient than others, but the general conclusion that can be derived is that one of the greatest contributors to any forms of prejudice to include the ones that existed between the NVA and those outside of that institution (GDR civilians and Bundeswehr alike) comes from knowing little to nothing of the other side.

Secondary Sources

German Scholars

The selections of this category include the works by Peter Joachim Lapp, Volker Koop, and Wilfried Hanisch, along with two empirical studies conducted by Udo Konrad and Nina Leonhard. They will be presented in accordance to the time of their publication.

Peter Joachim Lapp. He had been incarcerated in 1960 for political reasons in the GDR as a young adult until he was released to the FRG in 1964. His journalism career includes 20 years as the editor at *Deutschlandfunk*,⁷⁹ and today, he is considered to be a renowned historian on the former GDR. His article to be discussed was published in 1992 by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung research institute as part of a series dealing with the perspectives and arguments for the forum on German unity. The reference material include the primary sources by Ablaß and Eppelmann, along with a variety of military research books on the NVA and the Bundeswehr published primarily in the latter half of the 1980's. Additional sources include various German military and historical journals as well as and major German newspapers and magazines.⁸⁰

According to Lapp the results of the takeover of the NVA personnel into the Bundeswehr demonstrate that there had neither been a unification of that two German armed forces, nor could it be claimed that had there been an integration. For this to have occurred, there would have had to been two equal players, which was not the case. Instead, the old GDR regime along with its armed forces had collapsed and a new democratic-elected government had decided to become part of the FRG. It was also clear from the start that West German rules and regulations would be applied to the newly joined territory, which upon unification became the new states of the FRG. Thus, the result of German unity was that the NVA disappeared and not the Bundeswehr, which also meant that the Bundeswehr would dictate the fate of the NVA.⁸¹

Lapp states that in the process of developing the *Einigungsvertrag* between the former GDR and the FRG, the East German negotiators were not even able to secure a permanent status for any group of the NVA, i.e. lower ranking officers, in the Bundeswehr. Instead, the Bundeswehr received a freehand to decide whom they would keep and who would be released. Furthermore, the Bundeswehr leadership never had the intent takeover a large portion of the NVA, especially from the officer corps. At the most, a small amount of the younger officers would have a chance of a permanent future in the Bundeswehr, but this intent was not made officially announced until very late, possibly to keep the NVA officer corps at bay.⁸²

The fact that the Bundeswehr wanted to accept as little from the NVA as possible is understandable, especially considering the burdens of the past that the NVA members would be bringing along with them. From its beginning, the NVA had been a politically-motivated military that was part of the security doctrine of the party and the Soviet offensive strategy, and its members had been taught to hate the ‘aggressive forces of imperialism’ to which the Bundeswehr had belonged. On the other hand, Lapp argues that in the mid-80’s, the hate-education had been modified to a more realistic picture of the ‘class-enemy’ in uniform, while the political education of the soldiers was being over-shadowed by the influences of Western television and radio broadcasts.⁸³

Another biased towards the NVA came from the fact that the West German military leaders did not believe that the senior NVA officers had conducted any true internal changes. Although they may have submitted themselves to a new civilian leadership under Eppelmann, it was believed that many did so out of necessity. As a result, the Bundeswehr leadership saw the taking of a new oath-of-allegiance on the 20th of July by the NVA career and contract soldiers as

inappropriate. Furthermore, the claims of a positive contribution to the *Wende* by the senior military leaders for opposing the use of soldiers against the October and November demonstration of 1989 has been challenged under the belief that if the Soviet forces stationed in East Germany had been ordered to intervene, the NVA would have followed suit, just like its precursor the KVP (*Kasernierte Volkspolizei*) did in 1953, when this East German military-style police force assisted the Soviets in putting down a revolt by the East German people.⁸⁴

Lapp also notes that although Eppelmann officially retracted his idea of there being two German armed forces side-by-side after the meeting between Kohl and Gorbachev in the Caucasus, the East German Defense minister had still believed that approximately 60,000 NVA members would be integrated into the combined German armed forces. He also hoped that the NVA and the Bundeswehr could grow together and warned against treating the NVA soldiers like members of a 'second class'. In the end, he even failed at his attempts to achieve the situation where after a one-year trial period the individuals up to the rank of Captain, and members of a higher rank after a two-year trial, would have a chance of a longer-term employment.⁸⁵

Lapp explains how the rulings in the Einigungsvertrag in regards to the age restrictions for individuals seeking longer term employment in the military allowed the Bundeswehr an easy way to get rid of those, who had served the GDR regime for a longer period of time. He does note that the fact that the NVA had such a high officer-soldier ratio compared to the Bundeswehr, made it impossible for the latter to accept a large number of these into its ranks, but also states that those that had been affected by the ruling had a hard time in understanding why their loyal service to the new and final government of the GDR had not been rewarded. Furthermore, because the Bundeswehr desperately needed junior NCOs and enlisted soldiers, most of the lower ranks were accepted for a longer-term employment. Some of them were even able to enter into a new and extended service contract after having served for only 6 months of the initial two-year contract. The problem for the officers was, as Lapp points out, was that the BMVg had never clearly stated its intentions in regards to their future.⁸⁶

Another example showing that the Bundeswehr sometimes acted with little concern on the impact that a decision would have to the individuals is demonstrated through the higher number of officers that were given a two-year contract compared to the number of career and contract officers that the Bundeswehr planning structure for 1994 had called for. Only 4,000

former NVA officers were scheduled to receive temporary or permanent billets, but 6,000 of them had given the temporary two- year trial status of *SaZ 2*.⁸⁷ Thus, a total of 2,000 officers would have to leave the Bundeswehr, regardless of how many of them were qualified to a continue beyond *SaZ 2*. Lapp does give a lot of credit to the Bundeswehr for providing some form of assistance to the individuals that would not be able to stay in the military. Means to obtain qualifications that would help the transition to a civilian employment were offered at the professional development schools of the Bundeswehr, with over 10,000 former NVA members utilizing that opportunity.⁸⁸

Lapp argues that most of the West German officers were in support of keeping as few of the former NVA members as possible. The Bundeswehr leadership was under a lot of pressure and the acceptance of large number of the former NVA career soldiers into the Bundeswehr would have caused severe criticism. Even the small number of NVA personnel accepted cause prejudice comments such as “I won’t work with members of the former army of the party”, “I will never let a NVA officer command me”, “many of the NVA secretly served the *Stasi* or the KGB” and “considering the force reduction measures, for every NVA officer we take there will be one less slot for West German officers”. In light of the totally different political background, leadership style and treatment of soldiers that existed between the Bundeswehr and the NVA officers, some of the reservations that the Bundeswehr officers had towards their East German counterpart was understandable, but Lapp believes that the way the NVA officers were treated gave the impression as if they had nothing positive to contribute to the Bundeswehr.⁸⁹

Lapp concludes that although the force reduction dictated by international agreements placed a limit on the number of NVA members that could be accepted into the Bundeswehr, the West German military leadership had decided from the beginning to not take over the NVA. Furthermore, the feelings of being the ‘defeated’ and the acknowledgement of complicity in regards to the past, along with reductions in rank and other decreases in social status prevented the NVA soldiers, which had been accepted into the Bundeswehr from developing any sense of self-esteem.

On the other hand, Lapp believes that the Bundeswehr members from the old states (former West Germany) have proven themselves through their efforts in the new states, although there have been some problems among West German soldiers when placed in positions subordinate to former NVA soldiers. In general, the relationship between those from the West

and the East has reached normalcy; thus, a difference between the former West and East German should go away a lot faster than in other areas of comparison. Lapp is also convinced that the mixture of soldiers from the old and new German states in Bundeswehr units will ensure that a German unity occurs among the troops, which will soon be considered as totally normal.⁹⁰

Volker Koop. He is a journalist and historian, who had worked as a spokesperson for Defense Minister Rupert Scholz and then as the senior journalist in the public affairs office in the BMVg under Stoltenberg. He also contributed his expertise to the research of the 'Enquete Commission' (*Enquete-Kommission*) that had been headed by Rainer Eppelmann since 1992. The second report of this commission dealt with the measures to overcome the consequences of the East German dictatorship as part of the German unity process and was published in 1999.⁹¹

In his article on the problems of the integration of the NVA into the Bundeswehr, Koop includes references to primary sources such as those by Ablaß, Hoffmann, and Schönbohm, as well as personal interviews with Hoffmann, Schönbohm, Stoltenberg, Von Scheven and the West German State Secretary Gunnar Simon. Additional sources include reports by the regional section-East of the Bundeswehr association (*Landesverband Ost des Deutschen Bundeswehrverbandes*) and the 'Gauck' administration (*Gauck-Behörde*),⁹² along with various written material from the BMVg and the *Deutscher Bundestag*.⁹³

Koop argues that one of the first problems that the two German armed forces had to overcome was the unknown factor that existed between them, for in comparison to other departments of the two Germanys that had dealt with inter-German policies, the two Defense ministries had not had any working relationship prior to 1990. There had been some limited contact through the exchange of observers for military maneuvers as part of the 1986 Stockholm agreements, but Von Scheven recalls that the first time he had met with these NVA observers, "they had seemed more foreign to him than the Russians."⁹⁴ Thus, at the time of the opening of the Berlin Wall, the relationship between the two militaries was one in which the Bundeswehr had very little reliable information on the NVA, neither on its place in the Warsaw Pact, nor the military goals, the equipment, and the character of its personnel, while the NVA had a perception of its western counterpart that had been tainted by the GDR regime's indoctrination to hate the Bundeswehr as a representation of the 'class-enemy'.⁹⁵

The initial contacts in November 1989 were spontaneous actions by individuals of the NVA who showed up at Bundeswehr installations to find out more on the military, which had

once been their so-called enemy. The NVA leadership did not try to stop these efforts, but at this time the BMVg still did not want any non-coordinated meetings and saw these unconventional initial contacts as potential for embarrassment. It was not until June 1, 1990, that officially sanctioned meetings were established and those that were driven by the BMVg were quite restrictive and limited primarily to themes dealing leadership principles, sport and political education. According to Von Scheven, the West German actions were already mission oriented.⁹⁶

The BMVg also decided that no contact official contact would occur between the two Defense Ministries until after the GDR elections, which originally had been scheduled for early May but then were bumped-up to the middle of March. As already mentioned in several publications by West German participants, Stoltenberg reiterated in an interview with Koop that he had been quite irritated by the fact that Eppelmann had decided to keep the entire NVA military leadership and had brought several of them to that first meeting between the two MOD's. Furthermore, Eppelmann not only believed that the GDR and the NVA would continue to exist for some time to come, but he also stressed that it was imperative that the GDR continue its loyalty and commitment to the Warsaw Pact in order to support the security interests of the Soviet Union and the other Warsaw Pact states.⁹⁷

At that moment in time, the BMVg had already been set on the dissolution of the NVA and had been working towards a one German armed forces concept. The BMVg had also never planned for a complete integration of the NVA, nor were any of the senior officers to be taken into the Bundeswehr. The idea was only to accept those soldiers whose damage by 'the system' was still considered to be repairable. Koop argues that this negative attitude towards the officers and other career soldiers was understandable, since many of these individuals had been members of the SED party. Furthermore, the political view of many of the officers of the NVA had not changed by March of 1990, and a survey conducted at that time showed that 83% of the officers still trusted the PDS, which was the successor of the SED. The fact that the PDS only received 16% of the popular vote during the March elections further demonstrated that by then a major rift in the political orientation between the military and civilian population had occurred.⁹⁸

Koop points out that prior to unification the BMVg made no binding statements to the career and contract soldiers of the NVA as to what career chances they would have in the Bundeswehr. By mid-September, much of the military leadership, which at this point was no

longer included in the decision-making process, was convinced that the Bundeswehr would not accept any NVA generals or admirals. Eppelmann, who did not want to accept this decision and hoped that it would be corrected, had to finally submit to discharge the last 24 general officers on September 28. He refused to conduct the ceremony himself and let State Secretary Ablaß perform the discharge for him, which was not well received by those officers. This, along with the manner in which the NVA was dissolved and they some of the individuals were treated in the process is still today a factor of discontent among those former NVA members.⁹⁹

The general idea of even accepting any of the NVA soldiers into the Bundeswehr had been not without controversy in West Germany. Von Scheven, at that time the Commanding General of the *Führungsakademie*,¹⁰⁰ stated that heated discussions on this issue had been held at this institution. Stoltenberg also noted that some of the Bundeswehr generals expressed their reservations against taking any NVA officers, especially senior officers, but that in the end the decision on the fate of the latter was a political one. A discussion on the issue by Kohl's coalition government came to the conclusion that a few of the colonels would be accepted, but no NVA generals could continue in the Bundeswehr. In an interview with Koop, Hoffmann claimed that the senior NVA military leaders would have had no problem with an open statement by the Bundeswehr that officers above a certain rank would not be accepted. Instead, due to the Bundeswehr not disclosing its intent until the last moment, which caused a high degree of uncertainty in regards to the individual's personal and professional future, many of the NVA officers experienced great resentment towards the way had been discharged.¹⁰¹

On the other hand, Koop argues that the problems of the integration of the NVA members should not only be viewed from the political and emotional aspect, as they also need to be considered from the personnel reduction requirements set by the Two-Plus-Four treaty as well as the limitations due to financial constraints. Schönbohm claimed that many of the difficulties that he had while trying to execute the integration process as Commanding General of *Kommando Ost* were due the bureaucratic method through which the planners at the BMVg tried to deal with the problem of dissolving a former hostile military and absorbing its equipment. He further stated that the BMVg had thought in a "too technical and too organizational" manner, and had neglected that people were also involved in the process. Koop gives much credit to Stoltenberg for having done a lot to solve the problems between *Kommando Ost* and the BMVg, as he often

got personally involved in the final decision-making process and conducted a lot of visits to discuss the issues in person.¹⁰²

Another problem was that a lot more NVA personnel were needed than originally planned for, which later caused problems in the long-term personnel planning structure. Many of these NVA individuals were needed to deal with the abundant and unique equipment of the NVA and the West German military leadership applauded the NVA individuals involved in this process for the long hours and hard work. Some of these individuals, on the other hand, felt that they had been used, since all their hard work did not result in a long-term stay in the Bundeswehr. Von Scheven claims that the individuals were advised fairly, and in many cases, the former NVA career and contract soldiers, were advised to take the two-year contract, even if they were too old for a long-term career, on the grounds that the two years would give them time to find a job on the civilian economy.¹⁰³

In Koop's opinion, there had been an initial positive feeling to the Bundeswehr experience by both the East German citizens and the temporarily integrated NVA members, but that this had been almost completely overshadowed by the impact of the arrival of the 'second wave' of individuals from the West in April 1991. The initial group of Bundeswehr members, who were labeled as "pioneers of the first hour", had gone to the East in October of 1990 out of the conviction that it was their patriotic duty to help in the restructuring process. The commendable accomplishments of this first group had then been severely negated by many of those that had replaced them, for much of the second group had come to the former East motivated by totally different reasons, which primarily included career benefits and substantial financial bonuses. Koop adds that all the individuals he interviewed in reference to this matter, who at that time were in political, military or civilian positions of authority, corresponded with the impressions of the former NVA members in regards to this issue.¹⁰⁴

Koop strongly criticizes those mistakes that had psychological consequences for the former NVA members, which had caused many of the soldiers to talk of the NVA as a 'defeated' military and has left them with the feeling that they were the 'losers'. One of the factors that had damaged the self-esteem of the former NVA soldiers is an issue already addressed in the above-mentioned complaints by Patzer, where the former NVA members are not allowed to use their former rank as a title in any official capacity. The reason for this is that the military conscription law considers the military service performed in the NVA as "having served in a foreign armed

forces. On the other hand, service in the former Wehrmacht does not fall into that same category, which adds to the resentment of the former NVA individuals impacted by this rule, since they felt that it was unfair that former Wehrmacht soldiers were officially allowed the privilege of using their rank as a title, while those from the NVA were and still are not.¹⁰⁵

In his conclusion, Koop points out that Stoltenberg had considered the Bundeswehr's efforts in the time immediately preceding unification as having contributed to German unity, and that the Defense Minister had further stated that as of 1991 a relatively high number of applications for career and contract soldiers had come from the conscripts of the new States, which would continue to positively serve the integration process. On the other hand, Koop himself believes that it will have to be a matter of time, which will determine when the Bundeswehr really becomes the 'Armed Force of Unity' (*Armee der Einheit*) that it claims itself to be. Furthermore, the special contribution by the Bundeswehr to German integration process has not occurred at the level that has been claimed, although the individual efforts of many of the Bundeswehr, especially of those during the early period following unification, provided all the indications that it was heading in that direction.¹⁰⁶

Wilfried Hanisch. He is a retired LTC from the NVA and military historian, who up until 1990 was a section chief at the military history institute of the GDR. Of the German scholars discussed in this section, he is the most critical in regards to the dissolution of the NVA and integration process of its personnel into the Bundeswehr. In 2001, the Landesvorstand Ost of the Bundeswehr association published a comprehensive volume on the NVA that included works by former NVA members as well as several articles and seminars by Dr. Hanisch. A different publication of that same year also included an article by Hanisch, which summarized the dissolution and integration process of the NVA.¹⁰⁷

In the first article of the publication by the Bundeswehr association, Hanisch asks the question if there are any traditional concepts of the NVA that are worth keeping today? His argument is that although, the NVA ceased to exist after unification, the NVA along with its traditional aspects have become part of the cumulative history of Germany. Furthermore, he argues that it is unjust that while some West German historians have claimed that the majority of the soldiers of the Wehrmacht had kept themselves untainted by the crimes against humanity committed by the Third Reich, the former NVA members are still being discriminated against for their involvement as a pillar of support to the GDR dictatorship. Some of the rulings that are

causing this discrimination include the reductions in the pension for retired NVA personnel, as well as the unequal consideration of their NVA service time for those who were integrated into the Bundeswehr.¹⁰⁸

In another article of the same publication, Hanisch discusses the military reform in the GDR in 1989/90. Hanisch claims that although the military reform was incomplete, from a historical perspective it can be considered that the accomplished results and the mental changes initiated were important precursors for the success of the peaceful revolution in the GDR and the conduct of the military in its approach to German unification, which he discusses in detail in a subsequent article in the same publication. Hanisch also believes that the democratic restructuring of the NVA prevented the disintegration of the NVA during the chaotic months of the first half of 1990, which further allowed for the successful accomplishment its mission, especially in regards to maintaining security of the equipment and munitions until those were handed over to the Bundeswehr.¹⁰⁹

Hanisch's final article in the publication by the Bundeswehr association contains basically the same information and arguments as his article in the other publication printed in 2001.¹¹⁰ He also uses Egon Bahr's foreword from another book as the basis of his arguments, which Bahr himself had repeated verbatim as part of his comments during the 'Forum on German Unity' conference. Bahr is probably best associated with the concept known as 'Wandel durch Annäherung' (change through rapprochement), which he and Willy Brandt, who would go on to be West Germany's foreign minister and then chancellor, had developed in the early 60's. This concept later became the basis of the West German policy towards East Germany under the government of Brandt. Bahr had also worked as an advisor for Defense Minister Eppelmann during the last few months prior to German unification.¹¹¹

In the comments by Bahr, he argues that part of the NVA's history includes the fact that prior to the Wende its military leaders had made it clear to the political leadership that the NVA would not be used against the people of the GDR, and that this contributed to the peaceful revolution. Furthermore, it was the pride of the military that allowed it to approach its own end in an ordered and disciplined manner. Bahr believes that it may have not been such a smooth event if those NVA personnel impacted by the Unification treaty had known of their fate beforehand. He also remarks that "things did not grow together, which belonged together; instead things were taken-over, junked and melted-down. To gain distance from the GDR and to

become citizens of the Federal Republic as quick as possible was the wish of the majority of the people from the GDR. Thus, what happened to the NVA was no different then what happened to the rest of the country, its economy and its people. This also means that an opportunity was missed to use a unification of the two militaries as a model for German ‘inner unity’.¹¹²

Bahr had also criticized that none of the wives of the NVA officers were present at change-of-command (from the MfAV to the BMVg) in Strausberg on October 3, 1990, while the West German officers had brought their wives. Hanisch picks up on this criticism by adding that the final retreat ceremonies conducted on the day prior to unification were also conducted in an unjust manner. In mid-August, Stoltenberg had still directed his staff to plan a change-of-command ceremony during which the Bundeswehr flag and symbols would replace those of the NVA as a positive symbolic gesture towards the NVA, but on the day of execution none of this had happened. Instead, low key ceremonies were conducted in Strausberg and on all NVA posts, in a similar manner during which a final formation was conducted, the GDR flag hoisted and then lowered as the national anthem of the GDR was played for one last time. Afterwards, the flags and unit colors were rolled-up and sent to the military museum in Dresden.¹¹³

Hanisch also argues that after the opening of the Berlin Wall, the West German military leadership purposely limited the contact between the two militaries as it wanted to limit any legitimization of the NVA by the Bundeswehr, especially since the BMVg had always planned on getting rid of the NVA as an institution, along with the majority of its personnel after unification. Hanisch states that because of the restrictive relationship between the two militaries, the journal *Der Spiegel* note in one of its publications at that time that after the opening of the borders “...nothing in the world of the soldiers was normal anymore ... the NVA-officer, who had been raised to hate the ‘aggressive Imperialists’ suddenly had no more enemies, while the Bundeswehr officer, who have been dedicated to tolerance ad openness, had to reserve himself, because the Defense Minister Stoltenberg and Bundeswehr Chief of Staff Wellershoff were holding on to old decrees”.¹¹⁴

In defense of Eppelmann’s position of keeping the NVA as long as the Warsaw pact existed, Hanisch brings up the argument that the West German side had not always been convinced that it would be able to stick to its “one military and that being the Bundeswehr” concept. Hanisch points to the remarks made by Horst Teltschik, the national security advisor to Kohl, on the results of the Caucasus meeting between Kohl and Gorbachev. Teltschik’s comment

was that due to the meeting “situations had returned ... which had already been given up on” with relation to the military future of a unified Germany. With this argument, Hanisch contests Schönbohm’s claim that even prior to this agreement the BMVg was set on disbanding the NVA after an short interim period following unification.¹¹⁵

Hanisch also comments that during the integration process, that many of the former NVA soldiers considered their demotions in rank as discriminating, and could not understand that why they were treated so unfairly in what was supposed to be a friendly take-over. He concludes that overall very few former NVA soldiers became career or contract soldiers of the Bundeswehr, and although the dissolution of the NVA has been completed, there are still some necessary steps that need to be taken in order to have a unified German military as a contribution to the inner unity of Germany.¹¹⁶

Nina Leonhard. She is a research associate of the German Armed Forces Institute for Social Research (SOWI) located in Strausberg. Her work, which was published in 2004, is a comparative study that uses empirical data derived from SOWI surveys of both the German population and the armed forces conducted in the fall of 2002 to determine the current state of the Bundeswehr’s ‘inner unity’. The research especially focused on the Bundeswehr’s self-proclaimed description as being the *Armee der Einheit*. Furthermore, the description was only evaluated in the context as a fact and not in the sense of a model with an influence on the actions of the service members and their relationship to each other.¹¹⁷

Leonhard explains that the term *Armee der Einheit* has been used as a justification by the German military for what it considers to be the primarily successful formal and organizational dissolution of the NVA followed by a build-up of the Bundeswehr in the former East Germany. A special contribution to the ‘inner unity’ of Germany is allotted to the Bundeswehr for its function as an ‘exchange juncture’ (*Kontaktbörse*), which through universal conscription brings young men from East and West Germany together to conduct their military service in the old and new States. Furthermore, it is implied that ‘inner unity’ in this section of German society has already been attained; in other words, there are no general differences between East and West German soldiers.¹¹⁸

The first issue that the surveys addressed was in regards to of the military personnel and the general population’s perception of the Bundeswehr as the *Armee der Einheit*. Leonhard notes that from the point of view of the German political leadership there is no doubt that the

Bundeswehr contributed greatly to the unification process through an expedient dissolution of the NVA and the quick build-up of the Bundeswehr in the new States. According to the results of the SOWI surveys, almost 70% of the civilian population from both East and West Germany and almost 80% of the soldiers from both areas believe that the NVA's dissolution and the integration of its members into the Bundeswehr was a major contribution to German unity. Leonhard adds that although the numbers do not show the perception of the Bundeswehr's roll as a forerunner in the unification process, it does show that the Bundeswehr has been accepted as an *Armee der Einheit* from the bottom up.¹¹⁹

On the other hand, there are some disparities in regards to the attitude on the current condition of inner unity in the Bundeswehr. 58% of the soldiers and civilians coming from the former East compared to 83% from the West felt that there were equal conditions for all in the Bundeswehr. Among the East German soldiers, 67% of those individuals below 25 years of age and only 52% over the age of 25 believed that equality existed. This feeling of being at the disadvantage among the older soldiers, particularly the career soldiers, may be explained through their experiences of unequal treatment, especially in regards to their career advancement opportunities.¹²⁰

In reference to their memories of the GDR and the NVA, approximately 40% of the East German general population and almost 90% of the West German civilian remembered the GDR as having had more negative sides than positive ones. The majority of West Germans also believed that the NVA had played a major role in supporting the repressions of the SED party. Among the older East Germans this view was only shared by about half of the population, while that number was even lower in the younger generation from the East. Although the views of the former GDR and NVA were not the same among the soldiers, the differences between those coming from the East and those from the West were not as great as those coming from the general population. This demonstrates that there is a greater unison among the perceptions by the military members, which may be explained by the fact that the motivation and process of selection of those joining the military regardless of their point of origin, creates a much more homogenous group among the military than the civilian population. Leonhard notes that, regardless of this fact, the strong diverging remembrance of the GDR and the NVA will continue to make the internal growing-together of East and West a difficult process.¹²¹

The third issue that was analyzed was in regards to the opinions that soldiers from East and West Germany had towards their military profession. In general, there was a consensus across the board to include the levels of discontent regarding the individual aspects of military life. A surprising fact was there was not much of a difference in the attitude on pay between those that hailed from the East and those that hailed from the West, although soldiers that worked in the new States only received 92.5% of what their counterparts earned (with exceptions).¹²² Furthermore, there were differences in the attitudes between the different age groups and between those members who were either conscripts, or contract and career soldiers, but there was little difference between the East and West German members of those various groups. This can be explained by the socializing effect of life in the military, which further impacts homogeneity within that institution, along with a contribution to 'inner unity'.¹²³

The last question dealt with a comparison between the perception of the soldiers and the general population in regards to Germany's foreign and national security policies. A significant difference was noticeable among the general population, in which the former East German were more declined to disapprove of Bundeswehr deployments abroad in comparison to the civilians from the West. On the other hand, there was no major difference between the views of the East and West German soldiers. This latter fact was another example of 'inner unity' within the Bundeswehr, but it also meant that soldiers from the former East were under greater social pressure to legitimize their actions than soldier from the western part of Germany.¹²⁴

In 2004, Leonhard wrote an article that reviewed the military unification process along with its relationship to the Bundeswehr's conviction as the *Armee der Einheit*.¹²⁵ It also provided a summary of the previous study using the results of SOWI-surveys, which had determined that an ambivalent picture of the Bundeswehr's claim to that term existed.¹²⁶ Leonhard stated that the perceptions of the East and West German soldiers of the Bundeswehr and its responsibilities were generally in unison, while their interpretations of the past were not. Furthermore, the opinions of the population in the new and old States showed that the differences were even greater. Thus, the Bundeswehr's claim to having achieved an inner unity was justified since the unity among soldiers from East and West was greater than that of the general population from the different parts of Germany. The contradiction existed because the concept *Armee der Einheit* incorporates the entire unified German situation and thus should consider the relationship between the military and society. In this aspect, the differences of opinion between the West and

East German civilians on the foreign and national security made a unity between the old and new States, as well as the *Armee der Einheit*, an unfinished product.¹²⁷

In her conclusion on the legacy of the NVA, Leonhard noted that at the individual level this primarily consists of memories as part of one's own biography with both good and bad experiences. An important aspect in this regard is the desire for an acceptance by one's society of this biography and the individual performances as a soldier. In some cases this had occurred i.e. for many of those who had been integrated into the Bundeswehr, but for the NVA on the whole it has been denied, which has given many of the former NVA individuals the feeling as having been 'the losers'. This lack of acceptance by society has occurred in both material and symbolic form. In the latter, it resulted in not being allowed to officially use the former rank and in being considered as having served in a foreign military, while the material disadvantages include an only partial acceptance of NVA service time for retirement and other social benefits. On the other hand, the NVA as an institution is an issue of the past. It may still have an importance to those contemporary witnesses that had a relationship to it. Furthermore, thanks to the efforts of historians it has found a place in German military history, but only in the form of a completed history, for its role in contemporary history is basically non-existent.¹²⁸

Comparison of German Scholars

A comparison of the publications by the German Scholars shows that there are several similarities among the interpretations of the various events, albeit with some differences in the level of criticism. Lapp, whose article was written while the integration process was still ongoing, stated that there was neither a unification of the two militaries nor was there any real integration of the former NVA personnel into the Bundeswehr. The descriptions by Koop and Hanisch of the conditions after the integration had been completed confirmed Lapps argument, with both Koop and Hanisch pointing to the fact that one of the major problems was the great differences between those two armed forces, as well as the fact that the Bundeswehr had always planned on taking as few of the NVA into the Bundeswehr as possible.

Hanisch believed that this was because of the prejudice that the Bundeswehr leadership had towards the NVA as an institution and the NVA's support to the GDR regime. Furthermore, he believed that the BMVg limited the contacts between the Bundeswehr and the NVA in order to provide as little legitimacy to the NVA as possible, which would later make the dissolution of

the NVA a lot easier. Lapp and Koop concurred with the fact that the Bundeswehr leadership, as well as many of the officers, were biased against the NVA, but they also explained that there had been justified reasons for this fact, especially considering the NVA's burden of its own past. Furthermore, the personnel composition of the NVA had generally still been the same as it had been prior to the *Wende*, and while the political views of much the general population had drastically changed, many of the NVA officers at that time had still supported the PDS, which had been nothing other than the successor of the old SED party responsible for the political dictatorship.

Koop also pointed out that not all of the Bundeswehr had been negatively inclined to taking-up NVA soldiers into the Bundeswehr, and he believed that the BMVg leadership had eventually decided on a compromise solution that was dictated by both a necessity for NVA personnel on the one side and budget and personnel limitations on the other side. Koop added that because the Bundeswehr never really knew how many NVA soldiers it could or wanted to integrate, it never officially made guarantees to the NVA members on who would have what kind of future in the Bundeswehr. Lapp added that because there were competing factors such as 'needing' but 'not wanting' NVA soldiers, situations occurred where more former NVA soldiers were given the hope of a chance then had actually been scheduled for in the final planning structure.

Both Lapp and Koop point out that the first wave of Bundeswehr soldiers, who went to the former East, conducted their involvement in an exemplary manner. Lapp's article, which had been written early on, also claimed that a level of normalcy and the mixture of new recruits and soldiers from both parts of Germany should lead to an 'inner unity' among the troops. Koop, on the other hand, had the benefit of writing his article years after Lapp, and by then several of the mistakes that had been made during the integration process had shown their effect. He also faulted the second wave of Bundeswehr soldiers who had come to the East for adding to the problem, but gave high praise to some of the Bundeswehr leadership for going against the BMVg's bureaucracy in order to assist former NVA soldiers. He also believed that the Bundeswehr's claim to being the *Armee der Einheit* had not yet been settled because of such issues as 'not being able to use the former rank as a title' and the pay difference that still existed among the soldiers of different backgrounds. Hanisch believed that the reductions in rank along

with other negative experiences prior to unification confirmed Egon Bahr's claim that the Bundeswehr had missed its chance of contributing to the 'inner unity' of Germany.

Leonhard, who conducted her research with very recent data had shown that the pay difference was of a lesser problem, while some of the differential treatment experienced by the former NVA members did influence their attitudes on their chances to equal opportunities within the Bundeswehr. Furthermore, the opinions on the past from soldiers hailing from the former East was different than that from the soldiers from the former West, but this difference was not as great as what existed between the general population. As a result, the Bundeswehr's claim to having achieved 'inner unity' was justified. In regards to the term *Armee der Einheit*, Leonhard felt that it was not yet appropriate since the attitudes of the civilian population from the old and new States was quite diverse on what Germany's foreign and national security policy should be. She further concluded that the unequal treatment of former NVA soldiers as to how their biographies were acknowledged by society would continue to be a major source of irritation to those individuals impacted by it.

U.S. Scholars

The only two major publications by U.S. scholars on the dissolution of the NVA and the integration of its personnel into the NVA include a book published in 1998 by Dale R. Herspring, a professor and the head of the Department of Political Science at Kansas State University, and the book published in 1999 by Frank Zilian Jr., the chair of the History Department at Portsmouth Abbey School in Rhode Island.¹²⁹

Dale Herspring. He uses a variety of primary sources for his book to include many of the above-mentioned contemporary witnesses. He also incorporates many newspaper articles and journal publication of that period. Furthermore, through the assistance of the Deutscher BundeswehrVerband, he was able to obtain the response of sixty-nine former East German officers who filled out questionnaires concerning their experience during the period from 1989 to 1990.¹³⁰

Herspring divides the purpose of his book into two categories. One was with a focus on answering two key questions: The first being, why the political leadership of the GDR chose not to use the NVA against the populace? His second question asks why, once it became clear that the old system was collapsing, did the NVA not resort to the use of arms to protect the polity it

was sworn to serve and from which it received so many benefits? The other purpose was to understand the integration process of the former NVA individuals into the Bundeswehr. He considers this not an easy task, since the NVA had been heavily influenced by its tendency to copy the Russian idea of total obedience, and there was a lack of understanding in the NVA of how a military operates in a democratic polity, which had been the result of the isolation from society and the extensive indoctrination in the principles of Marxism-Leninism.¹³¹

Herspring argues that the East German officer corps not only did not resist the transition towards democracy, but it actually supported it. This happened because the political leadership no longer thought that it could effectively use the military against its own people, a situation that had been brought about by several factors. First, the NVA was so heavily engaged in civilian work, its combat readiness had been damaged and its sense of organizational cohesion and isolation had been undermined, while western television and contacts to civilians was also influencing the way the military began to the country was being run by the party leadership. Second, the cohesion within the party itself was being to fall apart. Due to inability grasp the true nature of the problems within the GDR and his inflexibility to adjust to changes, Honecker had alienated himself from his own party members. This also caused a rift between Honecker and Gorbachev, and without the support of the Soviet military, the NVA military leaders realized that any use of their troops against the population could result into a civil war. Third, average people were conducting the demonstrations, and as a result even the soldiers were beginning to ask themselves why. The revelation of special privileges enjoyed by the elite was another contributing factor that caused the soldiers to question the party's official line.¹³²

The issue of the military involvement in the civilian economy becomes a reoccurring theme in Herspring's analysis. He believes that it opened up the soldiers to radicalizing civilian influences and made the maintenance of discipline increasingly difficult. Even in his evaluation of the military reform initiated by Hoffmann, Herspring criticizes him for not taking a more forceful position on the issue of civilian work performed by the military. On the other hand, Herspring believes that Hoffmann probably did the best one could expect, for if he had mishandled the Beelitz strike situation, East Germany could well have fallen into a civil war and unification might have never occurred.¹³³

In regards to Eppelmann's position of there being two separate German armies until the security alliance issue was resolved, Herspring believes that the argument that makes most sense

to him is that Eppelmann decided early on to give such assurances to the NVA, otherwise it ran the risk of collapsing, which could have entailed unforeseen consequences. Furthermore, Eppelmann supposedly believed that by sticking to the two-army concept, the chances of convincing the West Germans to treat the NVA officers and NCOs in a more humane fashion and give them a chance to serve in the Bundeswehr would increase.¹³⁴

Herspring calls Eppelmann's attempts to increase the NVA's chances of continuing to exist as an independent military for the immediate future, which included sanitizing NVA officers in the eyes of the Bundeswehr leadership, as gimmicks that created a deep sense of distrust and even hatred on part of the NVA officers toward Eppelmann. One of these was Eppelmann's idea of creating a joint Polish-German brigade, which was turned down by the Polish leadership because they considered it politically unrealistic.¹³⁵ Another and the most controversial idea according to Herspring was the introduction of a new oath of allegiance on the 20th of July, and it raised hackles in both the East and the West.¹³⁶

In the end, Eppelmann's attempts failed to bring about the favorable conditions that he had promised for the NVA, and it has become subject to much criticism from the former NVA members. From the answers to the questionnaires that used he for his book, Herspring derives that although a number of former officers were unhappy with Eppelmann's leadership, few blamed him personally, but felt that his problem was that he had been unqualified for the job as well as very naïve when it came to military matters and how to deal with the FRG. There were also complaints against State Secretary Ablaß, and Herspring states that many of the military officers believed that Ablaß was primarily interested in improving his own relationship with the West Germans.¹³⁷

Some of the older NVA officers were even bitter towards Soviet politicians and military officers, for the claim was made that by satisfying their new bosses, those Soviets had betrayed their 'comrade in arms', the NVA.¹³⁸ Admiral Hoffmann was one of the few, who received positive remarks by the officers that responded to the questionnaire. He was considered the 'hero' of the period, for not only had he ensured that order and discipline were maintained, but given his limited possibilities, he worked hard to ensure that the members of the NVA were treated fairly.¹³⁹

Herspring states that after LTG Schönbohm took command of what was left of the former NVA after unification, his greatest problem was to prevent chaos. Since the NVA had almost

collapsed, there was a concern that unless the East German military had a better outlook for their future serious problems would occur. Furthermore, more former NVA officers and NCOs were needed than could be kept over the long haul, and a separation bonus was only paid to those who left prior to the end of December in 1990. Herspring questions the logic of the planners of the BMVg who created that arrangement, since it caused many of the former NVA soldiers to depart early on to receive the fairly large severance pay, although these were needed by the Bundeswehr in order to handle the problems of the first transition year.¹⁴⁰

In regards to the integration process, Herspring believes that although the process was not problem-free, it has been considered a success. He also states that the situation is far from perfect and that the Bundeswehr still has a way to go, but he considers the Bundeswehr to have done more than any other part of German society to bring about unification, both psychological and physical. The reason for this was that in comparison to other groups in society, the Bundeswehr had been more cohesive, better disciplined and better organized to focus its resources on solving whatever difficulties were presented during the integration process.¹⁴¹

Herspring also commends Schönbohm's efforts for having contributed greatly to the success of the integration of the former NVA soldiers into the Bundeswehr, and despite his earlier expressions of dislike for the NVA, he devoted all of his efforts to ensuring that its former members were given a fair chance. He even conflicted with those at the BMVg, who wanted little or nothing to do with the soldiers of a former hostile military. Herspring concludes that if it had not been for Schönbohm, the world of those NVA officers and NCOs that entered the Bundeswehr on October 3 would have looked much bleaker and probably developed quite differently. He also hopes that the former NVA officers, who have now become permanent career officers of the Bundeswehr, will recognize both their debt to Schönbohm and the other Bundeswehr officers that came to the East in 1990 and their own obligation to continue the integration process.¹⁴²

In his concluding thoughts, Herspring again credits the West German willingness to use an open hand rather than a mailed fist as a contribution to the success of the integration process. He also adds that the events of 1989-90 provided valuable information about civil-military relations in a party-army state, and warns Western observers to refrain from their assumption that just because an individual puts on a uniform in a party-state does not follow that he is prepared to use his weapons against his own people. Furthermore, those members of the party-army can

adapt to life in a democratic polity through time, willingness to change, and acceptance by those in the new polity. Herspring finishes with the thought that although most of those who were in the NVA were not saints, not all were sinners, and if the NVA leadership would have been less responsible, a different course in history such as a Civil War in the former GDR might have been the outcome. This certainly would not have seen the peaceful, united Germany of today, and for this thanks should be given, at least in part, to those who served in the NVA during the turmoil of 1989-90.¹⁴³

Frederick Zilian. This retired US Army officer was on his second tour of duty in Germany as a liaison officer from the U.S. Training and Doctrine Command to the German Army when the Berlin Wall opened in 1989. Through a wide net of German military colleagues that were involved in the takeover of the NVA by the Bundeswehr, Zilian established access and contacts that allowed him to interview government officials as well as military officers and NCOs from both the former West and East Germany. As a result, Zilian's book not only uses the many officially available publications on the topic as references, but also provides for a repertoire of unique sources, such as the interviews and many unpublished military documents, directives, briefings and letters.¹⁴⁴

Zilian's book discusses the takeover of the land forces of the NVA beginning in July 1990 and ending in summer 1993, at which time the final former NVA officers and non-commissioned officers had been integrated into the Bundeswehr, with the focus primarily from the West German perspective. The questions of his study deal with the organization used, the decisions made, and the action taken by the Bundeswehr in order to execute the takeover, as well as the effect of the takeover on the Bundeswehr's operational readiness. Additionally, the book provides an overall evaluation of the takeover and contributes to theoretical foundation for the study of takeovers and army amalgamations.¹⁴⁵

In the section dealing with case studies on the amalgamations of armies comparable to the takeover of the NVA, Zilian discusses the process of the establishment of the Bundeswehr that had began in 1955. Due to the decisive defeat in WWII and the discrediting of the German military for its alleged role in Nazi atrocities, the FRG basically had to start from scratch in the creation of its armed forces. A Personnel Screening Board was formed to review applications, but because of the high number of applicants, it had to limit itself to applicant of the rank of colonel and general, and a second agency, the Acceptance Organization handled all other

applications. Former *Waffen-SS* in the rank of colonel or higher were excluded from consideration, while the lower ranking individuals could be accepted only after a special review investigation, including an appearance before a special screening board. They also had to reject all concepts of National Socialism and the *Waffen-SS*. Furthermore, all applicants had to make a statement on the 20th of July assassination attempt on Hitler, with their recognition that the conspirators had ‘acted in good conscience’ becoming the sine qua non for acceptance.¹⁴⁶

In regards to the question of military tradition, the Bundeswehr leadership never took a definite stand on neither rejecting all past traditions nor in affirming positively what new traditions to adopt, although there were some who proposed a concept essentially rejecting all traditions of the *Wehrmacht*. According to Zilian this struggle to reach a consensus on a clear concept of what constituted a valid heritage for the Bundeswehr has continued to the present, and will probably last until the last professional soldiers of the former *Wehrmacht* have passed away. As a result, for the Bundeswehr example of the amalgamation case studies, the struggle to select the appropriate traditions from a discredited military past was more difficult and divisive than the selection of personnel to man the new force.¹⁴⁷

In his description of the character of the NVA, Zilian focuses on the NVA’s high readiness state, war mentality, operational readiness on the battlefield at the expense of soldier welfare, as well as the socialization process that consisted of the nurturing of a hate mentality toward the West. In comparison to the Bundeswehr, Zilian notes that the active duty component of the NVA was extremely top heavy, and that NVA officers were promoted earlier but had narrower latitude in their career paths than their Bundeswehr counterparts. Furthermore, while the NVA had no qualms of fighting the Bundeswehr due to the indoctrinated *Feindbild* the former had of their enemy, the West German soldiers struggled with the thought of having to combat fellow Germans as war came.

Another fundamental difference was in the method of leadership in executing a mission or task, and whereas the Bundeswehr allowed its subordinates to decide on the specific methods and tactics to attain the goal, the NVA soldiers were permitted few if any deviations of how to execute the mission. As a result, the NVA to a large degree did not possess the ability to think freely and imaginatively, nor were they able to analyze and evaluate on their own. Their opinions were constrained by the Communist system, with many NVA officers simply submitting themselves to the system and conducting a kind of self-censorship.¹⁴⁸

Zilian explains that the question to why the typical East German or the typical NVA officer lived under the totalitarian regime of the GDR for so long without taking action or at least being conscious of the deception or injustice requires a comprehensive answer that is not easy to formulate. Several of the factors that contributed to the situation include the fear of repercussions, the desire to protect one's advantage in the system, and the counter-pressure against subversive action influenced by one's upbringing in the system. The typical NVA officer also believed that the GDR was on the right side in the battle between the two competing systems of the West and the East, and that the socialist cause would ultimately prevail.¹⁴⁹

The most important aspects of Zilian's description of the Bundeswehr, that impact on how the takeover of the NVA would be conducted the concepts *Innere Führung* and *Auftragstaktik* and the force structure of the Bundeswehr prior to unification. In regards to the latter, Zilian provides the number of 495,000 as the Bundeswehr's overall personnel strength for the mid-1980's, of which 489,000 were active duty. This active duty strength was comprised of 270,000 professional (a.k.a. career) soldiers or longer serving volunteers (a.k.a. contract soldiers), whereas 219,000 were draftees (conscripts). Drafts were held quarterly and annual turnover amounted to 170,000, with the compulsory term of service being 15 months. In 1989, compulsory service was extended to 18 months in order to make up for the projected decrease in the available pool of young men eligible for conscription, which was a result of the decline in birth rate in Germany. Furthermore, the number of career and contract soldiers was to increase by approximately 10%.¹⁵⁰

In his explanation of *Innere Führung*, Zilian borrows a description by Donald Abenheim, who referred to the concept as "military leadership appropriate to the modern world, which enables the soldier to carry out his mission while assuring his rights as a citizen." The concept was developed in response to the excesses of militarism in German history; a break with the past was necessary and the new military had to correspond to the new parliamentary democracy of the FRG. The guiding model of the soldier was the 'citizen in uniform', which combined personal freedom with responsible citizenship and operational readiness as a soldier. Consequently, it was not blind obedience that was asked from the soldier, but rather his critically minded obedience. The concept of *Auftragstaktik* is in its most simplistic explanation described as a method of issuing orders with great emphasis placed on the subordinate's freedom of action

and the direct relationship of this initiative, all tempered with good judgment that has been honed by training, experience, and the guiding influence of the superior commander.¹⁵¹

According to Zilian, the concepts of *Innere Führung* and *Auftragstaktik* were integral parts of the takeover process. As democratic ideals, *Innere Führung* along with the dignity and worth of the individual were included in the very first of the formal goals given to *Kommando Ost*, and any former NVA members who wanted to become a soldier in the Bundeswehr had to internalize that concept; and a great example of *Auftragstaktik* was the fact that the organizational execution of the takeover was left to the military, since the politicians generally only gave basic guidelines to military leaders, who then formulated their own solutions to novel problems. On the other hand, the political leadership did exert pressure for a speedy deactivation of the former NVA units as this had financial implications. The faster any unneeded former NVA personnel were discharged and units were dissolved, the more money would be saved. MG Reinhardt, the director at the BMVg's planning department further stated that "time was important because the longer we had units remain active in the east, the faster we had to deactivate units in the west".¹⁵²

Zilian points out that Schönbohm was against the fast pace of dissolution dictated by political guidance. In September 1990, prior to assuming command of *Kommando Ost*, Schönbohm with the help of Defense Minister Stoltenberg was able to forestall any hasty discharges that might have caused unrest among the unhappy NVA member whose sense of identity was evaporating and whose future was unclear. Furthermore, although he sought to comply with the guidance for the rapid dissolution of units, he also needed the manpower to guard, maintain, and ultimately dispose of the abundance of NVA equipment. After Schönbohm failed to resolve the problem with the planners at the BMVg, he presented it to Stoltenberg, who then gave him more freedom of action. The Defense Minister also personally intervened the problem on the equal treatment of recruits in the east and the west. When the former complained in November 1990, that their pay and vacation was less than their western peers, Stoltenberg issued a directive that as of January 1, 1991, all recruits were to be treated equally.¹⁵³

In his discussion on the political control of the NVA prior to the takeover, Zilian states that it centered in the hands of one man, Werner E. Ablaß, who on July 5, 1990, became the single deputy under Defense Minister Rainer Eppelmann. According to Zilian, when asked about the role of East German politicians to the military between August and September 1990, Ablaß

stated that neither de Maizière nor Eppelmann were especially interested in the unification of the two armies. Furthermore, Zilian claims that several weeks after assuming his duties in April 1990, Ablaß wanted to discharge a great portion of the NVA generals, perhaps 90%, as he believed that these generals were Stalinists and had to go. He also regretted that Eppelmann did not approve this step, for he believed that “some of these generals were sand in the works. They held us back”. As it was, the generals did disrupt plans by sometimes only partially implementing the instructions that were issued to them, and on September 28, 1990, a few days prior to unification, Ablaß discharged the final twenty-four generals.¹⁵⁴

In regards to the decisions that dictated the way the takeover would be conducted, Zilian writes that after the mid-July Kohl Gorbachev meeting, Stoltenberg made the decision that there would only be one Army after unification. According to Schönbohm the undertaking was “not a leading together of two German armies but the construction of new armed forces with members of the Bundeswehr and the former NVA”, and MG Richter the chief of the Bundeswehr advance party to the MfAV stated that the number of NVA personnel to be taken over was neither a political nor a military requirement, but it became clear that it had to be done this way to achieve unity. Zilian adds that financial considerations must have played a role in the decision to maintain only one Army, which can be inferred from the comments made by Bundeswehr officers to the political pressure to maintain a certain tempo for the dissolution that had been driven by the desire to husband scarce funds.¹⁵⁵

Zilian calls the decision to allow former NVA military personnel to continue to serve in the Bundeswehr as the most important and controversial decision made by the FRG, which had been made at the political level, although it had not been fully clear who had made it. According to his interviews with senior Bundeswehr officers, one interpretation accredited the decision to Chancellor Kohl, while another interpretation believed that it had been Minister Stoltenberg. Zilian states that it was so controversial because many Bundeswehr officers believed that no former NVA personnel should have been allowed to continue to serve. However, Schönbohm argued that such a decision would have made the Bundeswehr appear to be an Army of occupation, no better than what the Soviet Army had been, and that this would have reinforced the division of east and west.¹⁵⁶

Virtually all the personnel that Zilian had interviewed who spoke on this subject noted the importance of the former NVA to the success of the takeover process, and in official

publications Senior Bundeswehr leaders commended the mass of the former NVA officers for having behaved in a loyal and cooperative fashion. Another claim was that the former NVA soldiers that remained after October 3 were not Communist ideologues; they were above all soldiers who wanted to remain in the Bundeswehr and had a very positive attitude. Credit was also given to those former NVA involved in the process of processing and disposing the former NVA equipment. Furthermore, the NVA played an important role in handling the departure of the Western Group of Soviet Forces, since former NVA members knew the Soviets and knew how to deal with many of the problems that surfaced in the process of their departure. The conscripts from the East played a special role, since taking-in these young people and showing them the values of the West became a catalyst for unity in German society, which also allowed for the Bundeswehr's claim to be ahead of other sectors of society in promoting German unity.¹⁵⁷

Zilian notes that some of the decisions that were made during the takeover process did provoke problems and hard feelings. These included reductions up to three ranks, pay differences, not counting previous service of NVA personnel for pay purposes while on active duty in the Bundeswehr, but rather only for retirement pay, as well as the inconsistency in comparison with the treatment of other civil servants, who enjoyed a much more favorable conditions after unification than the former NVA personnel. A major decision of discontent, especially for those who did not stay in the Bundeswehr, was that there was no transfer of NVA tradition. Zilian explains that because of some of the problems that were discussed in the Bundeswehr's own experience of determining its tradition and the importance of breaking with the past, the Bundeswehr leadership decided that it was imperative that former NVA personnel who wanted to stay in the Bundeswehr do the same.¹⁵⁸

Despite some of the problems and hardships placed upon the former NVA, Zilian concludes that the Bundeswehr, not only in word but also in deed, afforded the former NVA members the fair chance it had promised. The former NVA members were not simply thrown onto the streets, instead those who desired to remain were given an opportunity to stay in the Bundeswehr for a trial period to be evaluated, while most of those who had or wanted to leave were given some form of social assistance. Moreover, the Bundeswehr led the other segments of society in forging unity by establishing an early and sizeable presence in the new States, fulfilling its responsibilities and creating a positive climate that allowed for the coming together of soldiers from eastern and western Germany.¹⁵⁹

Comparison of U.S. Scholars

Herspring and Zilian present the topic of the dissolution of the NVA and the integration of its personnel from two different perspectives, which can be attributed to their different backgrounds. Herspring's background includes a primary focus on Russian and East European Studies and as a result his interpretation of the event focuses from the East German perspective, while Zilian's background as a U.S. military officer, who had a lot of dealings with the West German military, presents the topic from the perspective of how the takeover event impacted and was influenced by the Bundeswehr. Together they present an excellent overview of the various issues and results of the military aspect of German unification, albeit due to some of their specific sources and the use of those sources the explanations or descriptions of some of the events differ from those by German scholars and the official presentation by the BMVg. These differences will be discussed in subsequent chapters in which the specific issues are addressed.

Both scholars agree with the fact that the task that the Bundeswehr had to accomplish was not an easy one, and they point out the great differences between the two militaries in composition and character that existed prior to German unification, which contributed to the problems that were encountered prior to and during the integration process. However, Herspring shows much more understanding for the initial conditions that existed in the NVA, to include the contributions of the NVA military leadership during the *Wende* and the NVA's military reform process. He also explains Admiral Hoffmann's key role during that time, and the impact and intent of Defense Minister Eppelmann's Two-Army concept.

Zilian neither discusses these issues in-depth nor does he use the publication of Admiral Hoffmann as a primary source of information on the NVA. Furthermore, Zilian discusses the interactions that occurred between the two German Defense Ministers Stoltenberg and Eppelmann, but he does not delve into the motivations of Eppelmann's controversial actions. In this aspect, Zilian takes a much more West German approach, which does not place much importance on the attempts, to include the positive ones, by the East German military and civilian leadership to bring about change in the NVA prior to unification. What counted for the Bundeswehr is how the former NVA members contributed to the takeover process after October 3, 1990.

The two U.S. scholars agree on the fact that the issue on allowing former NVA members into the Bundeswehr was a controversial and highly debated one. They both give great credit to

individuals such as Schönbohm and Stoltenberg for their personal involvement, as well as the Bundeswehr soldiers that went to the East and the former NVA members who decided to stay in the Bundeswehr, for their positive contribution to the integration process. Although they both consider the military aspect of German unity to have not been without problems, they do see it an overall success. Furthermore, Herspring believes that the situation is still far from perfect and that the Bundeswehr still has a way to go, and he concludes with a reminder that the path to the positive change in German history started back when decisions were made not to use the military against the civilian population for any less responsible actions could have had a much lesser favorable outcome. Zilian, on the other hand, sticks to a purely West German focused conclusion and states that central to the Bundeswehr's success were guiding principles such as Innere Führung, the principle that the German military came as Germans to Germans and not as victors to vanquished, the fact that the former NVA had to be given a fair chance to continue to serve, and the idea that the end was an all-German force that both the former East and West Germans were building together.

Personalizing Interpretations

Introduction

A short summary of each of the individuals that was interviewed as part of the research for this thesis will be presented next. This will illustrate the many ways individuals experienced the dissolution of the NVA and the integration process differently, thereby influencing their interpretation of the events. This summary presented in alphabetical order include the comments by Hans Apitzsch, Herbert Becker, Wolfgang Dobrig, and Roland Mattern.

Individual Interpretations

Hans Apitzsch. Major Apitzsch is a former NVA officer, who is now in the Bundeswehr and currently serves as the S-3 and executive officer at the armor brigade located in the city of Lüneburg. As a young teenager, he had not been very interested in joining the NVA, for the last person in his family with military service had been his Grandfather, who had served in the

Wehrmacht during WWII. However, the fact that service in the military was mandatory in the GDR eventually prompted him to sign-up in 1983. At that time, Apitzsch was 19 and had just completed his *Abitur* (graduation from the advanced high school called *Gymnasium*), and since this was also a prerequisite to become an officer, he decided on that career track.

Apitzsch stated that the mandatory military service and the punishments for refusing to serve contributed to the bad impression that the GDR civilians had of the NVA. Another factor of conflict between the military and civilian world was the watching of T.V. programs from the West. Officially it was forbidden to watch those programs and the NVA had orders emphasizing this rule. Televisions located on military bases had seals on the dials to prevent soldiers from tuning the television to one of the forbidden channels. Nevertheless, West German channels such as ARD, ZDF, and NDR2 were received and watched in the civilian homes in almost all areas of the former East Germany. The exception was the Dresden area, which could not receive West German television and was therefore called ‘the Black Hole’.

Apitzsch did not watch the forbidden programs while at work or when he stayed in the barracks, but he had realized that he could not apply the same restrictions at home. His family lived in the Harz region, which was near the inter-German border and where West German channels could be received without any special antennas. Furthermore, due to the long work hours, he was home only one or two weekends per month and had little control over what was being watched while he was not at home. Eventually, his family refused to hide the fact that they watched those illegal programs and even did so while he was at home. Apitzsch was also convinced that contrary to what some of the former NVA officers claim, wherever it was possible to watch West German television, people generally watched it.

On the other hand, Apitzsch did not believe that this had a great impact on the East German mentality. Although seen as entertaining, most individuals considered western programs to be full of western propaganda. From his recollection, Apitzsch remembered that most of East Germans were less against the overall political system, and that it had been the broken economic system, along with the travel restrictions that isolated the GDR, which started the mass movement against the political system and brought about its downfall.

Related to the broken economic system, Apitzsch remembered that as a company commander he had some soldiers who only served for 6 months. They were conscripts, who had special skills that were desperately needed in the civilian sector (i.e. trained electricians). These

individuals only had to go through basic training and then were released back to the civilian workforce. This requirement placed a significant burden on the NVA, as it caused the loss of a significant amount of conscripts prior to the completion of their service obligation.

In November of 1989, at the time of the opening of the Berlin Wall, Apitzsch was a lieutenant on a military exchange trip to Moscow. He recalled the strange feeling of being informed of the incident through Russian television since the East German Embassy did not provide them with any information on the event. Furthermore, when the group returned from Russia via rail, the train was diverted from its Berlin destination to Königswusterhausen, a suburb of Berlin. The purpose had been to keep as many people away from the incident as possible.

Apitzsch believed that Admiral Hoffmann's reform attempts and then Rainer Eppelmann's two-army concept contributed to the fact that the NVA did not fall and that no revolt originated from within the NVA during the turbulent period in the first half of 1990. However, he considered the high rate of loss of conscripts through desertion and reduction in service time as a major problem that the NVA faced during that same time. This loss of manpower caused a shortage of guards at the various ammunition and equipment storage sites, and since only high-voltage fences secured the larger ammunition depots, the loss of conscripts forced the NVA to have NCOs and officers pull guard duty.

Apitzsch had his first taste of West Germany and the Bundeswehr in July/August of 1990, when still as an officer in the NVA. At that time, he visited the Bundeswehr Army Officer School (*Offiziersschule des Heeres* or OSH) located in Hannover, where he attended a three-week long officer professional development seminar for former company commanders of the NVA and during which the individuals that had conducted the seminar left him with a positive impression of the Bundeswehr.

At the seminar, he discovered just how much the GDR propaganda had duped him and the rest of the nation. While touring the military base in Hannover, the group of NVA officers had the opportunity to take a look at the armored vehicles stationed at that base. Apitzsch noticed that the weapons and ammunition were not with the vehicle. When he enquired why that was so, he received the reply that it was standing operation procedure (SOP) in all units of the Bundeswehr to keep the weapons and ammunition separate from the vehicles and locked-up in the unit's arms-room. Apitzsch could not believe this and further enquired how the unit's

maintained their high alert status. The reply to this really shocked him, as he was told that the Bundeswehr never really was on a high alert status. There were a few units that were able to be combat ready in a short time, but on the whole the Bundeswehr would have been hard pressed to go over to a complete combat readiness state without a substantial period of preparation; a period that would take even longer if it followed a week-end or holiday. Apitzsch could not believe his ears, since he had been convinced by the GDR regime's claim that the West was poised to strike at any time, especially on week-ends and holidays.

Apitzsch recalled that in September 1990, the first Bundeswehr officers in the form of a training support teams (*Ausbildungsteam*) came to his unit and then stayed until end of March 91. It was his positive experiences with these Bundeswehr officers and with those at the OSH that became the key factor to Apitzsch's continuation in the Bundeswehr. He had even been offered a great job in the civilian sector and his wife's parents were anti-military, but he turned that civilian job offer down and applied for applied for *SaZ 2*, which he received in December of 1990.

Not all Bundeswehr members that came to the former East Germany were considered top notch, and Apitzsch made the comment that those that showed up after March 1990 belonged to what was know as the 2nd guard. Some of these were enticed by the extra money they received, which was called *Bushgeld*, and translates to 'jungle pay', since going to the former East Germany was considered like going to the jungle. This *Bushgeld* included also included additional vacation time and vacation money.

Apitzsch thought that one of the problems of the integration process was that the Bundeswehr was subjected to a quota system, which combined with politically mandated personnel reduction requirements, prevented the admission of some of the most qualified former NVA personnel. This quota system, based on a matrix that included military operational skill (MOS), rank and years of service, was a major factor that impacted the final selection process. Apitzsch's biggest disappointment was that because of this system, it was not always the best-qualified individual that got to stay in the Bundeswehr, but the person who fit best into the needs in the personnel matrix.

Apitzsch also placed some blame of the failures of the integration process on the former NVA members themselves. He thinks that many of them failed to demonstrate their potential during their two-year *SaZ* trial period. According to his perception, they had mistaken the

concept of freedom as a cure-for-all remedy. Some NVA personnel even took it as far as equating that freedom with a lack of self-discipline, which only perpetuated the ‘loser’ image that some in the Bundeswehr and from West Germany had of the members of the NVA and the East Germans in general.¹⁶⁰

Herbert Becker. Oberstleutnant a.D. (retired lieutenant colonel) Becker was a former NVA officer, who left the military service shortly after German unification. He experienced the end of WWII as a very young child, at that time he lived with his family in the State of Thüringen. At first, that U.S. soldiers had occupied the area, but because of an exchange in territories between the Americans and the Soviets, the area he lived in became part of the Soviet controlled zone. Thus, for a moment after the end of WWII, Becker’s future did not start out with Köhler’s ‘higher price to be paid’.

Becker’s father had been incarcerated in a Nazi concentration camp, and during WWII he had spent time in one of the Wehrmacht’s penal battalions. Thus, when Becker joined the NVA for 2 years in 1956, his original regard for the soldier profession was not very high, but with only a minimum high school degree completion (10th grade), his opportunities in the civilian world were low and he decided to stay in the military. After signing up for another 4 years, he became an NCO and completed his *Abitur* to meet the qualifications to become an officer. Then as an officer, he went into the reconnaissance branch (*Aufklärer*) and made it all the way up to battalion commander. This was followed by an attendance at the military academy, after which he went to the *Aufklärer der NVA* (military intelligence branch), where he stayed until German unification.

Today, Becker is the chairman for soldiers, reservists and surviving dependants at the Bundeswehr association, region East (Deutscher BundeswehrVerband, Landesverband Ost). In that position, he deals with a lot of the problems that former NVA members have and are experiencing. He grouped these problems into three main categories: financial, legal and traditional. Becker stated that many of the financial problems have occurred because what he calls ‘policies gone wrong’, although he did not think that this was done intentionally. He stated that the rules set in the *Einigungsvertrag* created a variety of different ways in which different groups were financially impacted. Furthermore, for all those former NVA members over 50 years of age, the rules not only served to keep those individuals from continuing in the

Bundeswehr, but also removed them from the employment sector, as it was unlikely that they would pursue another full-time job.

The first group over 50 years of age consisted of those who were at retirement age and were forced into 'mandatory retirement'. In this group, the highest ranks (colonels and generals) were hit the hardest. Besides having lost their social positions and the esteem that they had along with those positions, it was also decided that these individuals should all receive a retirement pay equal to the average (minimum) pension. According to Becker, the idea of paying retired former senior NVA officers at the minimum pension level was with the intent of not rewarding, via a high retirement, anyone who under the dictatorship had a highly political-motivated position that had supported the regime. Becker argued that the injustice in this case was that the judicial law (*Strafrecht*) was being linked to the pension law (*Rentenrecht*). He stated that the last time there been such a state-imposed minimum pension that was in violation of Germany's *Rentenrecht* was under the Third Reich, at which time it had been imposed on the German Jewish population.

Becker explained that, recently, the German Supreme Court (*Verfassungsgericht*) had declared that the state-imposed minimum pension rule was unconstitutional and had to be lifted by 30 June 2005, and that the German government had one year to establish a new ruling that was not unconstitutional. The hook in the whole thing is that only those individuals, who originally turned down their pension and sued against the ruling, will receive any back pay. Also, the government has the option to limit itself to 4 years of back pay and in some cases can even refuse to grant any back pay. Currently, the German government is trying to resolve this in order to prevent any new cases, which would cause them to be sued.

The next group of those that did not stay in the Bundeswehr consisted of the individuals over the age of 50, who had not yet reached retirement age. They received a financial support that was approximately 60% of their last pay. As with all former NVA members still of working age, they could also apply for vocational training paid by the state that would help them qualify for a new job. Then, if those receiving financial support did go to work, a limit was placed on their combined income and whatever they earned above what would have been 100% of their original pay was deducted from the financial support they received from the government. Thus, most of these individuals either only took part-time jobs or worked 'under-table' so as not to forfeit any of their financial support.

As a result, the German unification for most former NVA members over the age of 50 meant a substantial drop in their financial status. An additional financial hardship arose from the fact that many of the military families were not prepared for the change in the policy on the living quarters that the NVA had owned and in which the former NVA members had lived free of cost. After unification, these families either had to buy the house or apartment that they were living in or they had to pay rent. Becker knew of some cases after unification where divorces occurred, but the couple actually stayed together. This was done so that the wives would receive their own pension or unemployment from the government, in order to contribute to the combined family income and help it survive.

The rules of the Einigungsvertrag also affected the military retirement pay of those former NVA soldiers that stayed in the Bundeswehr, because their time in the NVA counted less towards their retirement than their time in the Bundeswehr. This had the consequence that these individuals received a retirement that was less than that of their peers who had always been in the Bundeswehr. The longer the service in the NVA, the greater the pay difference; and only those individuals with the least amount of years in the former NVA would barely notice the difference in pay. Furthermore, there was a cap on the amount that those retired individuals could earn, and anything over that cap was deducted from the retirement pay. This cap naturally prevented and still prevents many of those individuals from seeking civilian employment after retirement.

One of the legal issues that some individuals from the former NVA faced was in regards to their guilt by association for the deaths of individuals that had tried to flee the GDR at the various border crossings. Approximately 400 former NVA members served a jail sentence for their involvement, among which were those who worked on the directive called *Befehl 100*, which determined the duties of the border troops and contained the ‘order to shoot’ (*Schießbefehl*). Some of those that were sent to jail included those individuals who laid mines at the location where someone had later died, as well as those that transported the mines. Although most received moderate punishments, with the highest sentences between six and seven years, Becker argued that no former GDR police officers, no former GDR judges, and no former GDR politicians, of which some are in the Bundestag today, were prosecuted for their involvements in the border situation. Furthermore, the former senior NVA officers that had to stand trial for their involvement had to pay for the court costs if they were convicted.

A financial-legal discrimination imposed on the former NVA members includes the medical benefits, especially for those that suffer from ailments as a consequence of their military service. The Bundeswehr does not see itself as legally responsible for those health problems that were cause to former NVA soldiers during their time in the NVA. According to Becker, at the time of the interview there were only six applicants from the former NVA, whose claim as victims of radar emissions had been accepted as being valid for compensation, while a much higher percentage of accepted applications existed among the former Bundeswehr soldiers.

Becker pointed top the same emotional problems already discussed in an earlier portion of this chapter that were caused by the label ‘served in a foreign military’, but he also added that this had caused another disparity in regards to retirement. As part of the civil service, time served in the Bundeswehr counts towards retirement if an individual from the military starts a career in the other civil services. On the other hand, this does not apply to the years that had been served in the NVA, because that is considered ‘time served in a foreign military’.

Becker listed a few other examples of discriminations as a result of considering the time in the NVA as foreign military service. These include such things as being denied access to the officer clubs, which retired officers normally are allowed to do, and the loss of rights to a burial with military honors. In the case of the association of former NVA paratrooper, who recently won a civilian skydiving championship, requests by the members of that group to belong to the Bundeswehr association of paratroopers have been denied. This loss of acceptance for their military service has caused some to search for it wherever they can, which as Becker explained caused more than one former NVA officer he had known to join the NDP, a right-wing political party in Germany, under the excuse that “here at least I am accepted as a former soldier”.

Becker admitted that the older group of former NVA consisted primarily of those who experienced many of the above disparities, and that as their representative he was charged to defend their position. However, Becker also stated that this did not represent all experiences that had been made by former NVA members, and that many of the individuals who had belonged to the older group were also the ones that had responded to Herspring’s questionnaire. According to Becker, this fact was important since otherwise the wrong interpretation could result. For instance, although Becker originally belonged to the group of former NVA officers who thought that State Secretary Ablaß had done more for his own career than for the NVA, his impression

since then had changed to one where he is convinced that Ablaß actually had tried to do his best for the soldiers of the former NVA.

Becker saw Germany's *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (coming to terms with the past, particularly WWII) as a source of discrimination against the NVA. He also stated that he understands that a reversal of the past policies affecting the former NAV members may not be possible nor can it be expected that the former NVA as an institution be given the same status as the Bundeswehr. However, he hopes that something will be done to ensure that those who have experienced some disparities will be treated so that they will be left with some level of satisfaction and that eventually the former NVA members will be able to find themselves within some form of a positive biography.¹⁶¹

Wolfgang Dobrig. Oberstleutnant Dobrig was a former NVA officer, who is now in the Bundeswehr and works in the public affairs office (*Pressestab*) of the BMVg in Berlin. In 1965, he was 18 years old and had successfully completed his *Abitur*, but his grades were not high enough to immediately get him a university slot. Due to the fact that military service was mandatory and that he had to wait for an opening at the university, he decided to join the military for 3 years. Initially, he wanted to go into the Navy for his father had been in that branch in the Wehrmacht, but he was offered to attend the school for translators in Leipzig because of the good grades he had received in English, Russian and Latin at the *Gymnasium*.

After completing his basic course in the field of artillery, Dobrig spent the next four years at the school for translators. In 1969, he graduated and received a translator degree in Russian and the Czech language. At that time, he was also commissioned to 2nd lieutenant and his first assignment was to the East German Ministry of Defense, where he stayed until 1984. During that time he had a variety of translation duties that included being a translator at exercises and meetings with the Russian military and acting as the translator for Erich Honecker, the leader of the GDR from 1971 until 1989.

After being promoted to lieutenant colonel, he had decided that he needed a change and applied for an assignment to the NVA's athletic organization. The GDR had several of these organizations called *Armeesportkomitee* or ASK, and the one that dealt with the military athletes was the ASK *Vorwärts*. The importance of these athletic organizations can be seen in the fact that at the 1988 Olympics, ASK *Potsdam* won more medals than the entire country of Japan. Since Dobrig knew the General of ASK *Vorwärts*, he got a job there and became the officer-in-

charge (OIC) for international relations, and during this time, he had the opportunity go to athletic events that had been held in Cuba, North Korea and many of the other Warsaw Pact countries.

Dobrig stayed at ASK *Vorwärts* until March 1990. At that time, it had become clear that such organizations would soon be a thing of the past, and he started to look for a new job. In April 1990, he returned to work for the MOD, now called MfAV, at the information and public affairs section (*Informations- und Pressestab* or *I & P-stab*) located in Strausberg. Dobrig's skills included a working knowledge of some of the East European languages and culture, and because Defense Minister Eppelmann was interested in the current developments of those countries, Dobrig became the press consultant for the MfAV on East European languages.

Dobrig had met Eppelmann personally and remembered the time when the latter had announced that there would be two separate militaries within one German state. Dobrig stated that some of the senior military commanders believed in this, especially since it meant that they would still have a chance to hold on to their careers, but Dobrig argued that most of the people, who worked with him in the *I & P-stab*, were convinced that the final result would be quite different.

Dobrig recalled an incident that occurred in early 1990's, which demonstrated the amount of restraint that the NVA had become capable of during the last year of its existence. The PDS had called for a demonstration in Strausberg and as with other demonstrations, there was a large number of 'rowdies' that had decided to participate with no other intent than to get into a conflict with representatives of the government. These individuals climbed over the fence that surrounded the ministry and broke into several government buildings, to include the printing shop, from where items were looted. Not a single shot was fired during that incident, although there was ample justification for the NVA to have done so.

On August 1, 1990, Dobrig celebrated his 25th anniversary of military service, and it was custom to receive a bonus of 5000 DM for such an accomplishment. One month prior to that day, the economic, monetary and social unity between the two Germanys occurred and because of this, to Dobrig's surprise, he was paid 5000 West German Marks for 25 years of services that he had rendered to the East German state.

By the end of August 1990, the first Bundeswehr personnel had arrived in East Germany, and according to Dobrig, his own experiences showed him that there were good and not so-good

Bundeswehr members in both the ‘first wave’ and follow-on groups. Furthermore, his motivation to stay in the Bundeswehr did not depend on the quality of the Bundeswehr officers, but more on the fact that he personally enjoyed and needed the organized structure and discipline of the military life.

After unification, Dobrig continued to work at the *I & P-stab* in Strausberg. In April of 1991, he was assigned to the Bundeswehr headquarters in Potsdam as a public affairs officer, and in 1992, he was accepted as a career officer in the Bundeswehr. Then through the help of an acquaintance, he got a position at the information and press office of the Bundeswehr in Berlin. In 1999, the BMVg moved some of its departments from Bonn to Berlin, at which time the information and press office was dissolved and replaced by the PAO of the BMVg, where Dobrig still works today.

Dobrig believed that some of the disparities experienced by the former NVA soldiers were due to the fact that some of the members of the de Maizière government had been clergy, lawyers and human rights advocates, who had a bad opinion of the NVA. They were also convinced that the NVA had supported the existence of the SED and had enforced the regime’s oppression of the East German people. He added that they “saw the military as criminal conspirators and thus wanted to give it to those *Parteisoldaten* (soldiers of the Party).”

Dobrig stated that another reason for discontent shared by both civilians and military members of the former GDR was because many of the degrees obtained in East Germany were no longer accepted as valid degrees after unification. Fortunately for Dobrig, his translator degree was one of those accepted all over Germany, but he had already decided that once he retired he would not “go to work for 325 Euros”. This cap was the result of a special ruling for former NVA personnel, which stated that after they had retired from the Bundeswehr, anything they earned above 325 Euros would be deducted from their retirement pay.¹⁶²

Roland Mattern. Major Mattern was a former NVA officer, who is now in the Bundeswehr and commands the *Panzerbataillon* 413 located near the town of Torgelau in the State of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. In 1982, Mattern joined the NVA at the age of 18. Although his father had been in the Luftwaffe and his brother was serving in a Signal unit, these were not the reasons he went to the NVA. Instead, he joined because ever since he had been a young boy, he had wanted to ride in a tank and once he was old enough he decided to fulfill that childhood

dream of his. He stayed and eventually became an officer in the NVA, because even with the long work hours he enjoyed the life as a soldier.

In 1985, Mattern was assigned to the same Friedrich Schill Kaserne, where he is currently stationed. At that time it was the home of the 9. *Panzerdivision*, a unit that had been quasi 'isolated' from the rest of the NVA, due to its remote location in the northeast part of the former GDR. The unit also represented the largest concentration of the NVA in one location, because the entire division was spread out over several bases in close proximity of each other. In that division, Mattern first served as a platoon leader, followed by company command of an armor company, and then prior to unification as the executive officer in an armor battalion of the *Panzeregiment 22*. He recalled that during the turbulent period of demonstrations in the latter half of 1989 and early part of 1990, there had only been one time during which the entire division had been put on alert against potential unrest in the town of Torgelau, but during that incident nothing major happened.

According to Mattern, in 1988, the NVA changed its doctrine, which had been based on the attack as the main type of combat to a doctrine based primarily on the defense. Mattern remembered that this had caused some serious problems during training and tank-gunner qualification. The gunners were used to hitting targets on the move, but had problems when firing from a stationary position. It took quite a while and a lot of practice to re-train the gunners to become proficient in hitting targets while in the defense.

His first contact with Bundeswehr soldiers occurred during a battalion live-fire exercise around late August early September 1990. The Bundeswehr had send trucks loaded with Bundeswehr uniforms for the NVA soldiers were to wear after unification. The drivers of these trucks had decided to stay and watch the exercise after delivering the uniforms, and it stuck in Mattern's mind because "his unit always seemed to be training, matter of fact, the entire division had trained almost until the last days prior to unification."

In September of 1990, the first training support team (*Ausbildungsteam*) of the Bundeswehr showed up at the 9. *Panzerdivision*. Then around the end of September, Mattern had been sent to Munster in West Germany to attend a course on *Innere Führung*, in order to teach the NVA officers the civic education and leadership that is inherent to the education of Bundeswehr soldiers and officers. As a result of going to this course, Mattern experienced the day of German unification in West Germany. During that time, he also experienced his own little

Wende (turning point) similar to that of MAJ Apitzsch during his first visit to a Bundeswehr base. As part of the course, the *Marder*, a Bundeswehr armored vehicle, was shown to the NVA officers. When Mattern had asked about the missing weapon systems of the vehicle, he was told that neither the weapon systems, nor the communication systems and the ammunition was stored with the vehicle. Instead, they were all locked away separately in the unit's arms- and storage-rooms.

Mattern also had the opportunity to talk to Bundeswehr officers, who had told him that the Bundeswehr and the other NATO armed forces generally worked '9 to 5' and 'Monday through Friday', with the exception being exercises and very rare alerts. On holidays, many bases were only manned at 15%, and the Bundeswehr officers added that even U.S. forces would have been hard pressed to alert any substantial amount of forces during the Thanksgiving or Christmas holidays.

Mattern had a hard time accepting this fact as it was painful for him to fathom that the propaganda had so successfully duped him and the rest of the nation. He stated that at that moment he had tears in his eyes, for he could not remember how many times he had fatefully relayed to his soldiers that it was for the defense of their nation and because of the imminent danger of an attack by NATO forces, that they all had to spend the holidays, such as Christmas, on an alert status in their bases and away from their families.

Furthermore, Mattern admitted that although most of the nation and the soldiers watched West German television, which showed a different picture from what the GDR regime had presented of the West, it did not occur to the East Germans to question the validity of their government's claims. When he returned home and told his wife about his discovery, she did not believe him and called him a *Wendehals* (this term is used to describe someone who turns his head in whatever direction the wind blows). It was not until years later when Mattern and his wife were stationed in the former West Germany, when she finally accepted that the former East German government had been full of lies and deceit.

Mattern decided to stay in the Bundeswehr after unification, which had been clear to him from the start. Prior to joining the NVA he had learned the trade of a vehicle mechanic, and he did not believe that his civilian options in this field would have been very good. Furthermore, he loved being a soldier and wanted to stay one; this fact, according to his impression, had been one of the primary reasons for those that stayed on in the Bundeswehr. The other one was the

financial security that a continuation in military offered, which was especially true for those with over 10 years of service at the time of unification.

For a short period of time after unification, all key leadership positions were occupied twice, one was the outgoing NVA officer and the other was the incoming Bundeswehr officer. The projected plan was that two of the NVA regiments would be dissolved by May 13, 1991. The NVA forces that received *SaZ 2* status from those units along with those from the third regiment would be consolidated into a new armor battalion of the Bundeswehr. During that time, Mattern was still a battalion executive officer, and he had a Bundeswehr support officer working with him during the transition period. This officer was supposed to teach the NVA officers about the Bundeswehr principles such as *Innere Führung*, but instead he focused on less important administrative things such as how to properly fill out 'requests for leave' and 'reimbursement for travel expenses'. According to Mattern, the officer also only worked from Monday to Thursday, as he went back home to West Germany almost every weekend.

Mattern pointed this out in order to demonstrate that not all Bundeswehr officers of the 'first wave' were stellar performers. On the other hand, Mattern highly praised the Bundeswehr officer, who was the counterpart of the commander of the 3rd battalion. This officer would eventually become the commander of the new armor battalion. Mattern stated that although the officer was not easy to get along with, he did turn out to be the right person for the job.

Mattern also explained the peculiar situation of how many NVA officers met their future wives. Many of these relationships were formed while the individuals attended one the officer's school of the NVA. At those locations, the GDR also had state schools for teachers, doctors and nurses. The less regimented school environment allowed for a little more free time and relationships were able to develop. Furthermore, once assigned to a unit, those officers that were married had a better chance of getting an apartment and did not have to live on base. This was another incentive to get married before leaving the officer's school. Mattern added that because of this a higher than average percentage of the NVA officers are married to teachers, doctors or nurses.¹⁶³

CHAPTER 3

THE FATE OF THE NVA WITH A FOCUS ON NUMBERS

Introduction

At the time of the October demonstrations in 1989, there were approximately 170,000 to 184,000 soldiers in the NVA,¹⁶⁴ but less than one year later, in September 1990, and weeks before the NVA ceased to exist, the estimated strength of the NVA was somewhere between 103,000 and 107, 000 soldiers.¹⁶⁵ The change the NVA underwent during the final year of its existence was not only limited to numbers, for the NVA of August/September 1990 was not the confident and combat ready NVA of 1985. Instead, it was a deeply troubled army that was not only suffering from deep internal discord and doubts, but also saw its past discredited with no future in sight.¹⁶⁶

The first part of this chapter will deal with the events that impacted the fate of the NVA in the year prior to its dissolution, and the second part will deal with the integration of the NVA individuals into the Bundeswehr after German unification. In both parts special focus will be given to the actual numbers.¹⁶⁷ This will be followed by an analysis of the changes that occurred in the NVA, specifically the use and interpretation of numbers from the period prior to and then during the integration process. The chapter will conclude with a personalization of the numbers by showing their impact of the integration process to the individuals that were interviewed as part of this research.

From Reform until Retreat

The first changes in the NVA occurred in the middle of November 1989 after Admiral Theodor Hoffmann replaced Heinz Keßler as Minister of Defense. As a consequences of Keßler's inability to change his rigid views and support for the old regime's policies, as well as the public discontent regarding his abuse of special privileges, such as vacation trips to Korea, Cuba, and Nicaragua, along with inappropriate and expensive reconstruction of his office, he was asked to resign from his post as Defense Minister by senior members from both the military and the SED party.¹⁶⁸

Only two days after being appointed to his new position, Hoffmann introduced the concept of a military reform in the GDR. At the commander's meeting held on the 20th of November, he proclaimed the necessity of a thorough change in the NVA and the border troops and a change in the Border Law, along with the need for a new democratic way of thinking that included transparency and openness among both the political and military leadership.¹⁶⁹

Hoffmann also established a 'consultation center' that dealt with suggestions and demands in regards to military reform. Some of these included requests for the reduction of military service to 12 months, the introduction of the 5-day week, the ability for units to elect representatives, an alternative to military service, stationing of conscripts near their home towns, less restrictive pass and leave regulations, increase in pay, improvement of the barracks' conditions, discontinuing the use of 'comrade', and other steps to enhance the relationship and military conduct between military leaders and their subordinates.¹⁷⁰

Although the NVA's senior leadership acknowledged the validity of some of the above-mentioned requests, only a few of these reforms or changes had reached the troop level by the end of December. This caused moral and discipline to continue to deteriorate in the units, with the growing dissent among the soldiers eventually culminating in the famous New Year's Day strike in Beelitz. During this protest demonstration, the first ever to occur in the NVA, more than 300 soldiers, which were primarily conscripts, publicly expressed their desires for a quicker implementation of the military reforms, along with specific demands that included some of those already annotated by the consultation center.¹⁷¹

Hoffmann himself went to Beelitz to talk to the soldiers, and although he could not resolve anything on the spot, his promise, to look into the soldiers' grievances, was sufficient to

defuse the situation. Nevertheless, a large amount of public television and press coverage of the incident, and Hoffmann's desire to fulfill his promise to the soldiers forced him to issue several directives that would soon bring about significant changes in the NVA,¹⁷² with the immediate reduction of conscript service from 18 to 12 months and a new minimum contract service time to 24 months having a major impact. The other changes included the discontinuation of employing the military in the civilian economy,¹⁷³ the introduction of the 5-day week, and the implementation of a 50% alert status (up until then units had to be at an 80-85% alert status) in order to allow for more a less restrictive pass and leave policy. Furthermore, the soldiers were now allowed to maintain possession of their identification papers and passports, thereby allowing them the possibility to travel throughout the GDR and abroad. Although these immediate measures were criticized by Major General Lehmann, a professor at the NVA military academy as "Perestroika at supersonic speed", they did contribute to a temporary stabilization of the chaotic situation in the NVA.¹⁷⁴

By January 16, 1990, a separation of party organizations from the NVA was initiated, which included rescinding all of the party instructions and dissolving the Secretaries of the Main Political Administrations the political administration sections for each of the armed forces, and the *Verwaltung 2000*, the latter being the organization through which the State Security Organization (*Ministerium für Staatssicherheit* a.k.a. *Stasi*) supervised the NVA. One month later on February 15, this measure was completed.¹⁷⁵

The change in the GDR's political scene in early December also had an impact on the NVA, and following the example of the Central Round Table, Hoffmann established the 'Round Table of Military Reform' at the MOD. It met for the first time on the 18th of December, with the New Forum party having the strongest delegation, and as Hoffmann noted, consisted of personnel who were quite adept in military matters, as some of these had been former NVA officers. Hoffmann reiterated his projected military reform to this group and further informed them of the major changes in the military leadership to occur on the 1st of January 1990.¹⁷⁶

One of the first decisions emitting from the Central Round Table was a demand issued by the New Forum for the dissolution of the paramilitary units known as *Kampfgruppen*. It was decided that these units would be dissolved by June 30, 1990, and their equipment, which until then had been stored at the regional police headquarters or in the arms storage facilities of local businesses and industries, would be turned over to the NVA. As a result, this would lead to an

increased burden for the NVA to store, guard and later destroy all this equipment while trying to do the same with its own equipment as part of the disarmament process (The entire scope of this endeavor will be discussed in detail in a later chapter).¹⁷⁷

In late January, the Central Round Table also succeeded in forcing the Modrow government to take seven or eight ministers (without portfolios) into the cabinet, who were not SED party members. One of these individuals was Rainer Eppelmann; he had not only spent time in prison for being a conscientious objector, but later participated in church-based peace and human rights groups as a pastor in Berlin, and was a founding member of the Democratic Awakening party in September 1989.¹⁷⁸

Since his party belonged to the coalition that won the majority in the March elections, Eppelmann was scheduled to take one of the minister positions in the new government. On April 12, under the condition that President de Maizière would allow him to add the term 'disarmament' to the name of the Ministry of Defense, Eppelmann accepted the offer to become the new Defense Minister.¹⁷⁹ He also brought three other civilians with him to the MfAV. These were the state secretary and permanent deputy Werner E. Ablaß, the parliamentary secretary Dr. Bertram Wiczorek, and the state secretary for disarmament Frank Marcinek. Furthermore, upon Eppelmann's request Admiral Hoffmann stayed on as the senior military leader of the NVA.¹⁸⁰

In a report dated March 23, 1990, the actual strength of the NVA as of March 15 was 135,000 soldiers.¹⁸¹ This number did not include 28,000 border troops (along with 3,800 civilians), who at that time still fell under the jurisdiction of the MfAV.¹⁸² These numbers also correspond to what Hoffmann briefed at the 14th meeting of Central Round Table held on the 26th of February. At that time, Hoffmann had explained that the reduction in the conscript's service time to 12 months was the reason why 1/3rd of the conscripts, approximately 25,000 soldiers, had been released from the NVA by the end January. An additional 15,000 contract soldiers (*Soldat auf Zeit*), who had met their two-year minimum, had also requested termination of their military service.¹⁸³ Thus, a loss of approximately 40,000 soldiers combined with the discharge of a substantial number of political officers¹⁸⁴ and a high rate of desertion¹⁸⁵, resulted in a reduction of NVA personnel from 183,910 on December 1, 1989 down to 135,740 on February 15, 1990; a decrease of 48,170 in only 2 ½ months. On the other hand, due to the fact that some of those who had left the military were hired back as civilian employees (most

probably the political officers), the number of civilian employees during that time frame increased by 1,030 from 31,150 to 32,180.¹⁸⁶

In his book, Undersecretary Ablaß mentions that on the 24th of April, he received an update on the strength of the NVA, which listed approximately 170,000 troops. This number included 73,000 professional soldiers, 4,100 officer candidates and 52,000 civilian employees. Subtracting the civilians from the 170,000 would put the NVA strength at approximately 120,000 for that time, demonstrating that a further decrease of 15,000 had occurred since mid-March.¹⁸⁷

On 27 April 1990, the first meeting between the West German Defense Minister Gerhard Stoltenberg and his East German counterpart, Rainer Eppelmann, occurred in the Holiday Inn at the Cologne airport. The East German delegation had requested this site instead of the Hardthöhe, which was the seat of the West German MOD a.k.a. BMVg (for *Bundesministerium der Verteidigung*), so that the meeting would be conducted on neutral ground. It was, after all, the historic first meeting between two German Defense Ministers since the creation of the two states.¹⁸⁸

According to Eppelmann, the meeting went well, but it was clear that little headway had been made on the NATO membership issue of a united Germany.¹⁸⁹ General Schönbohm, who at that time was head of the planning staff of the BMVg, stated that the West German view of “Germany remaining in NATO, since it was the Warsaw Pact, which had lost its reason for existence” was not well received by the East German delegation. He also noted that Admiral Hoffmann was set on strengthening the Warsaw Pact as long as the GDR was a member, and that as chief of the NVA he wanted to keep the Warsaw Pact as long as possible, which in his opinion had been a “stabilizing element”.¹⁹⁰ On the other hand, at the ‘Forum on German Unity’ held at the military history department of the Bundeswehr (*Militärgeschichtliche Forschungsamt* or MGFA) in the city of Potsdam in 2002, Hoffmann argued that he was misquoted by Schönbohm, as he never supported the idea that the NVA would stay part of Warsaw Pact forever. Instead, he claimed that he supported the idea of the GDR continuing to fulfill its obligations to the Warsaw Pact until officially relieved, a notion that was also proclaimed by de Maizière in his policy speech.¹⁹¹

The differences in opinion on the NATO and Warsaw Pact memberships, and the views of the impact that the memberships would have on the unification process, continued until

Gorbachev finally settled the matter was at a meeting with Kohl from 15 and 16 July, 1990, when the former agreed to a unified Germany's membership in NATO.¹⁹² The details surrounding this decision and how it impacted the fate of the NVA will be discussed in-depth in a later chapter. Nevertheless, up until this event each of the two MOD's conducted their plans in accordance with their views on the future of their alliances. On the East German side, Eppelmann supported the idea that as long as the Warsaw Pact existed, NATO could not expand into the East German territory, especially since there were approximately 360,000 Soviet troops still stationed there.¹⁹³ As a result, the NVA would remain part of the Warsaw Pact for the next few years and during that time the NVA would continue to remain its own entity. This idea is what is now labeled as Eppelmann's 'Two-Army' theory.

On the 2nd of May, Eppelmann held his first commander's conference in Strausberg, at which time he also announced this idea. Following the speech, Eppelmann received much applause from the approximately 500 officers, who had attentively listened to him.¹⁹⁴ The speech was certainly a cause for a boost in moral, for according to Eppelmann's ideas the NVA could remain in existence over the next several years with a projected force strength of 100,000. This gave the NVA officers and their subordinates the hope that they still had a few more years of service left and that maybe during that time an equitable integration of the NVA into the Bundeswehr would be developed. Furthermore, Eppelmann's speech also discussed the social and financial support for those that would not be staying in the military.¹⁹⁵ If anything, after the speech the number of desertions in the NVA was reduced to almost nothing.¹⁹⁶

On the other hand, the West German side was announcing a different view, and at the commander's conference of the Bundeswehr on June 13th, Stoltenberg announced that the aim was to create, after a short transition period, only one German army. He left no doubt about the fact that in the united Germany the NVA could no longer continue to exist.¹⁹⁷ Around the same time as the Bundeswehr conference in mid-June, a closed report by the MfAV showed that the NVA had continued to decrease and was at approximately 100,000 soldiers and 45,000 civilians.¹⁹⁸

Finally, on August 2, 1990 and already two weeks after the infamous Caucasus event, Eppelmann withdrew his Two-Army theory during a breakfast meeting with Stoltenberg.¹⁹⁹ Another two weeks later, on August 14, 1990, Stoltenberg informed Lieutenant General Jörg Schönbohm that he would be taking command of *Kommando Ost*. This headquarters would be

located in Strausberg at the headquarters of the former GDR's MOD, have a combined staff of 600 officers and NCOs from the Bundeswehr and the former NVA.²⁰⁰

After intensive discussions, Stoltenberg also presented the following guidelines for the transition process to both Schönbohm and the BMVg: With the unification of Germany, the NVA would cease to exist and its former members would temporarily become soldiers of the Bundeswehr. The old NVA units would be disbanded and new Bundeswehr units would be formed containing both Bundeswehr and NVA personnel. A total strength of 50,000 soldiers would be stationed in the former GDR, consisting of 20,000 career and contract soldiers of the former NVA, up to 5,000 soldiers from the Bundeswehr-West, and 25,000 conscripts from the territory of former East Germany. The training of the East German conscripts called-up on 1 September would be accomplished according to the guidelines of the Bundeswehr. And finally, on the day of the German unity, all armed forces in the former GDR would come under the command of *Kommando Ost*, which would be directly subordinate to the BMVg.²⁰¹

A lot still had to be accomplished in the last few months prior to unification. In the month of August several directives were issued regarding further measures for reduction of personnel in the NVA.²⁰² One of the more significant ones was a directive that Eppelmann, after having intense discussions about it with the BMVg, issued on the 15th of August. It dictated that all NVA personnel over the age of 55, to include those of the border troops, would be released from service as of September 30.²⁰³ The decision to discharge those over 50 was delayed because it would have caused such a disruption in the leadership structure that no intact chain-of command would have been left to lead the NVA during the final transition days. Nevertheless, this delay was only temporary, since a stipulation in the German unification treaty (*Einigungsvertrag*) basically forced the individuals of that age group to resign by the end of the year.²⁰⁴

Another directive releasing NVA soldiers as of the 30th of September was the one that was issued on September 7, which discharged all female soldiers, with the exception of medical officers, from the NVA. This was done because at that time, females in the Bundeswehr were only allowed to serve in the medical field. Those female NVA soldiers that had skills or had held positions similar to those conducted by civilian employees of the Bundeswehr (i.e. secretaries, supply functions, etc.) received the opportunity to continue to work in such a position in the Bundeswehr.²⁰⁵

On August 20, a liaison team under the leadership of BG Ekkehard Richter and Gunnar Simon was sent to Strausberg to prepare the MfAV for the transition. At that time, unification was still projected to occur in the later half of October, but on August 23 the GDR's parliament voted to join the FRG as of the 3rd of October 3.²⁰⁶ Time was quickly running out!

On September 12, two more events, which were demonstrating that things were coming to an end, occurred. On the international level, the Two-Plus-Four Talks concluded,²⁰⁷ and at the national level, the NVA held its last commander conference. At the later event, the Bundeswehr liaison leader BG Richter informed the NVA officers of the Bundeswehr's intent after unification. As directed by Stoltenberg back in August, the number of soldiers to be stationed on the territory of the former GDR was still 50,000. By that time, it was already clear that approximately 50,000 soldiers (excluding conscripts) would be available. 25,000 of those would have a chance of longer term employment in the Bundeswehr, which could be broken down to 3,000 career officers, 1,000 career warrant officers, 4,000 career NCOs and 15,000 NCOs on contract from 3-15 years, and 2000 NCOs on a two-year contract.²⁰⁸

Less than 10 days prior to unification, on September 24, Eppelmann and Soviet Army General P.G. Lushev signed the protocol regarding the release of the NVA from the Warsaw Pact,²⁰⁹ and on that same day, the senior military leadership of the NVA including most of the 300 general officers were discharged.²¹⁰ 24 generals and admirals remained in the NVA and became the senior leaders for those final days, only to be discharged on the 28th of September.²¹¹ Today, there are still conflicting opinions regarding that situation. During the planning phase, there had been discussions among some of the Bundeswehr leadership on keeping a few of those senior ranks as subject-matter experts, but eventually, a decision against this was made and in mid-September Stoltenberg had informed Eppelmann of his intent not to take any of those officers into the Bundeswehr.²¹² Nevertheless, there was a belief in the MfAV and among some in the BMVg that some of the generals and admirals would be kept.²¹³ Furthermore, Eppelmann had wanted to keep at least 5 handpicked generals in the Bundeswehr, which he had relayed to Stoltenberg, and he was not informed until the final week prior to unification that this would not be possible.²¹⁴

On the 2nd of October 1990, the NVA ceased to exist without much bang or hoorah. According to Wilfried Hanisch, in mid-August the West German MOD directed that, as a positive symbolic gesture towards the NVA, his staff should plan a change-of-command

ceremony during which the Bundeswehr flag and symbols would replace those of the NVA. None of this happened, and instead, ceremonies similar to the one conducted in Strausberg were held on all of the NVA posts.²¹⁵ At Strausberg, Ablaß had all of the NVA personnel come together for a final formation and, after giving a short speech, had the GDR's national anthem play while the flag was being lowered for one last time.²¹⁶ Then, as per Eppelmann's directive of September 21, all flags were rolled-up so that they could be turned over, along with other memorabilia of the NVA, such as unit colors, streamers, orders, certificates and barracks signs, to the museum for military history in Dresden by 20 October, 1990.²¹⁷ On that fateful day when the NVA played its final retreat, approximately 93,000 still served in the GDR's armed forces.²¹⁸

From Dissolution to Final Integration

Overview of the Integration Process

On 03 October 1990, approximately 90,000 NVA soldiers decided to become part of the Bundeswehr. The relationship between those former NVA personnel and the BMVg was determined by chapter IX in enclosure 1 of the *Einigungsvertrag*, specifically in section II of subject area B, which dealt with rights of the soldiers.²¹⁹ It also established the basis under which the takeover and integration of the former NVA soldiers into the Bundeswehr would occur, for clarification purposes a short summary of the relevant paragraphs follows:

§ 1. All former NVA soldiers will become Bundeswehr soldiers on the day of *Beitritt* (the day of joining, a.k.a. unification)²²⁰ Furthermore, all conscripts will become full-fledged Bundeswehr conscripts on that day, while all career and contract soldiers who had belong to the former NVA would, after unification, maintain the employment status that they had had prior to unification, but under the conditions of § 2.

§ 2. The contract of employment (employer-employee relationship) for career and contract soldiers will be put on hold. During this hold period, these soldiers have a right to a monthly payment of 70% of the average of their last six months of pay. Furthermore, if a career or contract soldier is not utilized within a 6-month grace period, 9 months for those over 50, the contract of employment will end.

§ 3. For soldiers of units determined to be dissolved § 2 will not apply. Instead, they will follow under the stipulations of § 4 through § 7.

§ 4. Soldier rights and duties of the former NVA are no longer valid; the rights and duties for career and contract soldiers of the former NVA were now IAW the soldier laws of the FRG. Furthermore, the BMVg determines the temporary rank the individual soldier may carry.

§ 6. All soldiers whose contract of employment ended IAW § 2 or who were discharged IAW § 7 are eligible for assistance in their transition to the civilian work force.

§ 7. The paragraph deals with the stipulations that allows a career or contract soldier to be discharged, to include his own desire to do so.

§ 8. Contract or career soldiers can volunteer for a two-year contract of employment (SaZ). Wages will be according to the federal salary law. The BMVg will decide on any continuation of employment, to include acceptance as career soldiers. No applicants over 50 will be accepted as career soldiers, and potential career officers will have to pass a review board.

As it can be seen from the summary of the paragraphs, the stipulations in *Einigungsvertrag* on the matters regarding the fate of the former NVA soldiers have been formulated in such a complicated manner, that incorrect or incomplete presentations of the process have resulted, especially in writings published during the first few years after unification (to be discussed more in-depth later). In a report from 1995, the BMVg presented the takeover and integration process of the former NVA soldiers in the form of three phases.²²¹ In phase one, all former NVA soldiers became Bundeswehr soldiers and were divided into different categories, which implied different statuses. In phase two, a certain amount of the former NVA career and contract soldiers, who volunteered for the two-year trial period, also known as *SaZ 2*, would be granted that status. Furthermore, all soldiers in the *SaZ 2* status could apply for a longer-term continuation in the Bundeswehr. Then, in phase three, a certain amount of the *SaZ 2* soldiers, who had allied for a further continuation in service, were selected to continue either as career (permanent) soldiers or contract soldiers on for an extended term (up to *SaZ 15*). The chart in Figure 1. provides a general overview of these phases and the corresponding number of individuals of each category.²²²

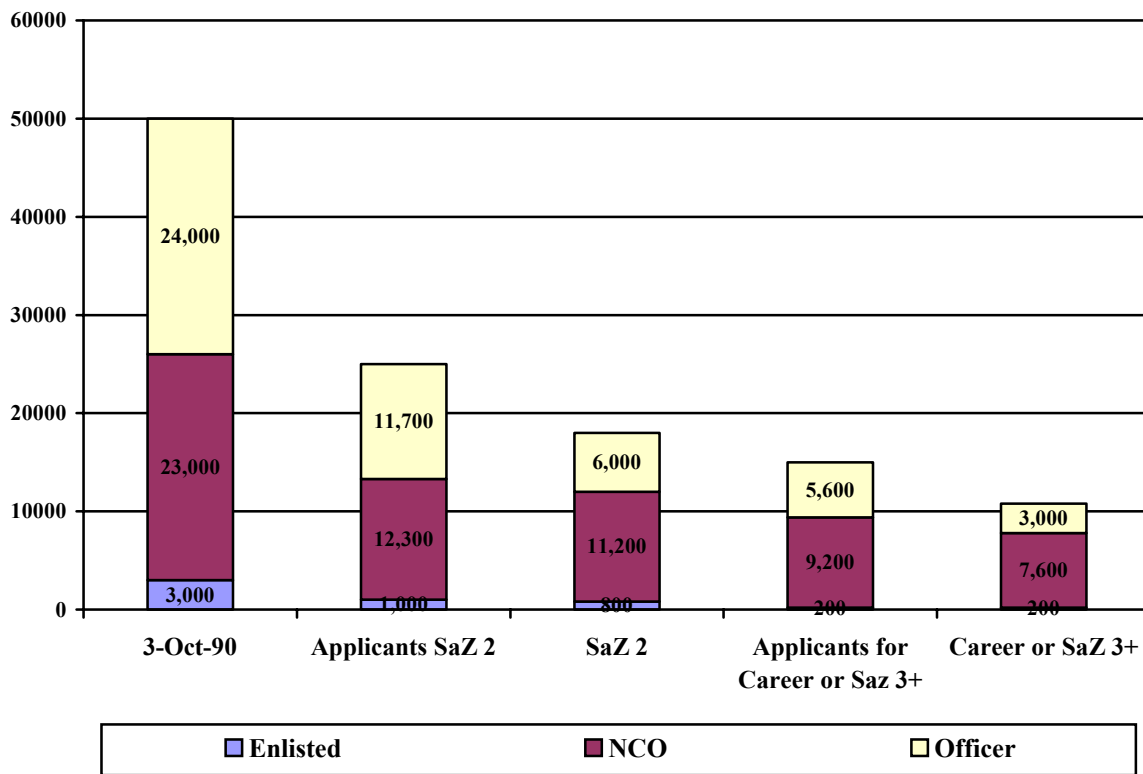


Figure 1. Initial Integration of NVA Personnel into the Bundeswehr.

Three Phases of the Integration Process

Phase One. This phase began with on October 3, when approximately 90,000 former NVA soldiers, who decided to continue, became soldiers of the Bundeswehr. This number consisted of 51,000 career or contract soldiers and 39,000 conscripts (*Wehrpflichtige*), of which the latter immediately treated as regular Bundeswehr conscripts. On the other hand, the contract of employment for the career and contract soldiers was put on hold, although they remained in the same employment-mode as they had been prior to unification. As a result, approximately 50,000 soldiers continued their duty in the Bundeswehr in a status known as ‘soldiers with duty in special employment’ (*Soldaten mit Dienst in besonderer Verwendung*). Today, the term used for those soldiers is *Weiterverwender* (employment continued),²²³ and the initial composition of this group consisted of 24,000 officers, 23,000 NCOs and 3,000 enlisted ranks.²²⁴

There also had been approximately 1,000 former career and contract soldiers who had been in a non-employed situation prior to unification and these were placed in a status called *Wartestand* (waiting period).²²⁵ This status was limited to a six-month period, for those over the age of 50 it was nine months, after which their contract of employment would be cancelled and they would be discharged from the Bundeswehr.²²⁶

The *Einigungsvertrag* also stipulated a change in the financial arrangements and soldier status for the former NVA soldiers. For the 39,000 conscripts, this meant an immediate improvement since they now enjoyed a much more beneficial status under the (West) German military service act. On the other hand, with a monthly pay of 70% of the average of their last 6 months of pay, the 51,000 former career and contract soldiers (*Weiterverwender* and *Wartestand*) received social and financial benefits that were less favorable than what they were use to. Furthermore, as already mentioned, the on-hold status of their former contract of employment, basically allowed the Bundeswehr leadership free hand on deciding which of the former career or contract soldiers could stay and which would have to go.²²⁷

As of 03 October 1990, the soldiers in both the *Weiterverwender* and *Wartestand* status could apply for a continuation in the Bundeswehr for a two-year trial period a.k.a. *SaZ 2*.²²⁸ For those who were not going to continue in the Bundeswehr, either due to their own accords or through the decisions of the Bundeswehr, the leadership of the GDR MOD had been able to secure some form of financial compensation.²²⁹ This was stipulated in the unification treaty, but came with one condition that required the recipients to leave the Bundeswehr prior to the end of December 1990. Thus, since the unification treaty dictated that no one older than 50 years of age would be allowed to stay on as a career soldier in the Bundeswehr,²³⁰ most of those over 50 also left the Bundeswehr during this time period in order to receive the financial bonus or compensation. Furthermore, through special provisions that allowed for speedy discharges, about 60% of the NVA officers that had stayed beyond the 3rd of October had decided to “take the money and run”.²³¹ In total, approximately 13,000 officers and 9,000 NCOs left the Bundeswehr on their own request before the end of the year.²³² Nevertheless, there were some individuals who forfeited the monetary bonus by staying on as *Weiterverwender* beyond the end of 1990, although they were quite aware that they would not be receiving a chance to continue as *SaZ 2*.

Phase Two. This phase consisted of the selection and initial integration process of the former NVA soldiers into the Bundeswehr for a two-year trial period. Approximately 25,000 of

the initial 51,000 career and contract soldiers applied for *SaZ 2*, from which 11,700 officers, 12,300 NCOs and 1000 in the enlisted ranks were selected.²³³ Among other things the main criteria for selection included the following: the individuals military qualifications and occupational development in comparison to the Bundeswehr; acquired civilian qualification (i.e. driving instructor); the necessary requirements and amount of time for the individual to qualified for a position in the Bundeswehr; the individuals experience and development of leadership skills; any special skills and language capabilities.²³⁴ As with any business, the primary focus on selection was the cost-benefit ratio that the individual to be selected would bring to the Bundeswehr.

On 29 October 1990, the Bundeswehr had issued a ruling that set the guidelines for adjusting the ranks of the former NVA soldiers, thus, for many the selection for continued service had also meant a reduction in rank. This had been done because the NVA's rank system clearly had been over-inflated compared to that of the Bundeswehr. For many former NVA soldiers the reduction in rank was by one grade, for some even it cost them two grades and there were even a few cases of a reduction by three grades.²³⁵

Already by 1 December 1990, the first of the applicants were granted *SaZ 2* status and by the summer of 1991 a total of about 18,000 had received the two-year contract, with the number being composed of 6,000 officers, 11,200 NCOs and 800 enlisted personnel.²³⁶ Since the NVA had consisted of the comparative lower number of NCOs than the Bundeswehr,²³⁷ almost 90% of the NCOs and enlisted applicants were granted *SaZ 2*, while only about 50% of the officers achieved received the two-year continuation status. However, the younger officers were also given the opportunity to apply to become NCOs, if their previous jobs had corresponded to that of an NCO in the Bundeswehr. In this manner the Bundeswehr was able to gain another 500 junior NCOs.²³⁸

As mentioned above, the NVA soldiers were selected based on their qualifications and the needs of the Bundeswehr, of which the latter was the main determining factor,²³⁹ but there were also members of specific groups, who were principally excluded from the selection process. These included those individuals, who had functioned as political officers within the NVA, those that had been in the NVA's military intelligence, and those that had worked for the *Stasi*, which during the last months had been renamed by the Modrow government as the Department for National Security (*Amt für Nationale Sicherheit* or *AfNS*).²⁴⁰

Due to the sensitivity of the *Stasi* issue, all the officers and NCOs that had been selected for *SaZ 2* and were eligible for further employment as career or contract soldiers had to submit a declaration stating if they had conducted any official or informal business with the *Stasi* or its successor, the *AfNS*.²⁴¹ The office that was responsible for handling this was the *Gauck-Behörde* and it conducted inquiries on more than 13,000 former NVA soldiers, of which approximately 6,100 were officers and 6,900 were senior NCOs.²⁴²

Table 1. Gauck-Behörde Inquiries and Results.

	Officers	Senior NCOs	Total
Inquiries	6,136	6,917	13,053
Responses	5,719	6,668	12,387
Indications of some form of contact	1,162	1,306	2,468

Phase Three. This began with the application for a continuation as either a career or contract soldier and ends with the acceptance and final integration step into the Bundeswehr. Approximately 14,900, which amounted to more than 80% of the 18,000 in *SaZ 2* status, applied for a continuation either as career or ‘extended’ contract soldiers,²⁴³ with the employment time of the latter being anywhere from three years (*SaZ 3*) to fifteen years (*SaZ 15*). The smallest percentile from all of these applicants came from the lower ranking NCOs and enlisted personnel. In this group there had been 3,300 NCOs and 800 enlisted as *SaZ 2*, but only 2,500 (61%) applied for a continuation. Thus, because the Bundeswehr desperately needed junior NCOs and enlisted soldiers,²⁴⁴ a total of 2,400 (96%) of the lower ranks were granted the continuation beyond *SaZ 2*.²⁴⁵ Furthermore, some of them were able to enter into a new contract after having served for only 6 months of the initial two-year contract.²⁴⁶

On the other hand, it was not until 1 October 1991, that the officers and senior NCOs of *SaZ 2* status were able to put in their requests further employment in the Bundeswehr beyond *SaZ 2*. Of the 7,900 senior NCOs there were almost 7,000 and among the officers there were 5,600 applicants.²⁴⁷ A review board conducted by members of the Bundeswehr screened all officer and senior NCO applicants utilizing several criteria. One of these was based on the evaluation reports that the applicants had received from their Bundeswehr superiors during their *SaZ 2* time. Two other criteria included security clearance background checks by the counterintelligence service of the Bundeswehr (*Militärischer Abschirmdienst* or MAD) and the results of the *Gauck-Behörde* inquiries, but since the latter of these had not been completed by the time the review board had started its screening process, the applicants had to sign a waiver regarding their contacts or dealings with the *Stasi* or *AfNS*.²⁴⁸

The Bundeswehr review board had selected 3,575 officers and 6,252 senior NCOs for a continuation in the Bundeswehr. Another 340 officers met the standards for continuation, but since they did not fit into the ‘the needs of the Bundeswehr’ matrix, they were put on a stand-by list to replace any dropouts from those already selected.²⁴⁹ A further reduction came from the results of the *Gauck-Behörde* inquiries. 1,160 officers and over 1,300 NCOs had been classified as having had dealings with the *Stasi* or *AfNS*. Since several of these individuals had already been employed as career or contract soldiers beyond *SaZ 2*, a total of 539 officers and 916 NCOs were immediately discharged under the context of ‘willful deception by providing fraudulent information on their service contract’. For another 500 officers and 530 NCO, whose records showed some form of *Stasi* related information, it was determined that an intent of ‘willful deception’ could not be proven in court. Thus, these individuals were not immediately discharged, but instead their contracts were not be renewed.²⁵⁰

In accordance with the *Einigungsvertrag*, those officers intended for continuation as career soldiers had to undergo an additional board to determine if they were qualified for that privilege. This board, called the ‘independent review board for qualifications’ (*Unabhaengiger Ausschuss Eignungspruefung*), consisted of 15 members that had been selected by factions of the *Bundestag* and other representative groups. Independently from the selections of the Bundeswehr board, this committee reviewed approximately 2,650 applicants during which 2,000 were reviewed using only their files and 650 through personal interviews, and from all of the reviews only 35 had a negative outcome.²⁵¹

By August 15, 1993, the integration process was completed. At that time, a total of 3,050 officers, 7,600 NCOs and 200 enlisted had been granted a continuation in the Bundeswehr, either as career or contract soldiers (up to 15 years),²⁵² with 600 of these individuals being former NVA officers who continued their career as NCOs of the Bundeswehr.²⁵³

After the Integration Process

A recent BMVg report lists 2,494 officers, 4,591 NCOs and 5 enlisted soldiers of the former NVA still in the Bundeswehr on June 7, 2001, and a decrease to 2,327 officers and 2,560 NCOs by August 7, 2004. Figure 2. provides an view of this reduction process from October 3, 1990 until that later date provided by the BMVg.²⁵⁴

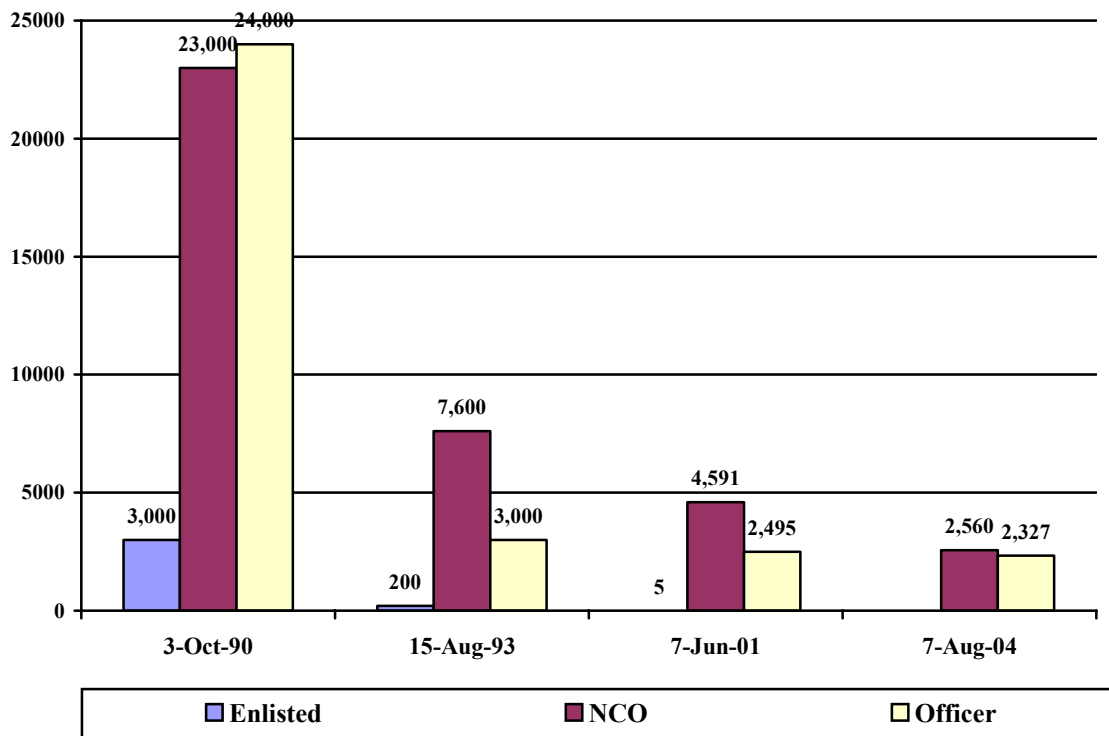


Figure 2. Overall Integration of NVA Personnel into the Bundeswehr.

The chart clearly shows that while the number of officers and NCOs was almost equal upon unification, the ratio at the end of the unification process was 2.5 : 1 in favor of the NCOs. This can be explained by the fact that the Bundeswehr had a much greater need for NCOs, especially junior NCOs than for officers. Furthermore, this same fact also explains why in 2001 the ratio dropped down to less than 2 : 1, and reached almost 1 : 1 parity in 2004. While many of the officers had become career soldiers immediately after their *SaZ 2* status, most of the NCOs had initially been accepted as contract soldiers. This occurred because of a Bundeswehr policy not to allow NCOs to become career soldiers until they are senior NCOs with a minimum rank of *Hauptfeldwebel* (Master Sergeant). Since not all of the junior NCOs may have reached the necessary rank, while others may not have wanted to apply for a career status, a larger percentage of NCOs than officers departed from the Bundeswehr, by 2001, and then 2004 as a result of their contracts expiring. As for the enlisted ranks, most of them either moved up in rank and became NCOs with time or were discharged once their contracts were up.

The Interpretation of Numbers

When attempting to analyze or interpret the data on the NVA and the integration of its former members into the Bundeswehr there are several set of problems that one may encounter. These include the incorrect documentation of data, the incomplete or manipulated presentation of the correct data, and the insufficient availability of relevant data. This section will present examples of these problems and demonstrate how this effects the overall interpretation of the data and thus the process itself.

The problem of the incorrect documentation of numbers is not such a big issue when there are sufficient sources that one can use to compare to each other. In regards to the topic surrounding the NVA and its integration into the Bundeswehr, there are numerous books, articles, documentaries and websites available to both researchers and those interested in the subject, under the condition that they are able to read or understand the German language. For the English-only reader there are only three major publications on this subject. These include an excellent translation of Schönbohm's *Zwei Armeen und ein Vaterlande*, Herspring's *Requiem for an Army* and Zilian's *From Confrontation to Cooperation*.

While describing some of the problems the NVA was facing due to problems in the economy starting in 1985, Schönbohm mentions that up 55,000 soldiers had to work in the

civilian economy, while at the same time the armed forces continued to maintain a readiness state of 85%.²⁵⁵ On the other hand, Admiral Hoffmann, who also talks about this issue in his book, mentions that in the decades prior to 1988, large numbers were only used during short periods to collect the harvest or snow removal, for example when in January of 1987, a total of 10,000 individuals were employed for a period of two weeks, and then in 1988, the Defense Minister issued order #104/88, which directed that 10,000 soldiers would be permanently employed in the civilian economy for the entire year of 1989. Thus, Hoffmann paints a somewhat milder picture than Schönbohm's version.²⁵⁶ Furthermore, with an approximate total of 180,000 soldiers in the NVA, the number Schönbohm quotes represents 30% of the total force and this would have made it impossible for the NVA to maintain the high readiness state dictated by Soviet and Warsaw Pact doctrine.²⁵⁷

The problem of presenting such numbers without any reference to sources are compounded when later researchers use these to augment their own arguments, as in the example of Herspring quoting Schönbohm "that this use of the military in the civilian economy... was the beginning of the end for the NVA as a military force".²⁵⁸ Zilian also uses the example of the high amount of soldiers working in the civilian economy in his book by stating "a remarkably high number of military personnel (55,000) was estimated to be performing such work after 1988, and despite the strain this placed on units, the 85 percent alert requirements remained in force."²⁵⁹

In an example regarding the decay of discipline and increase of desertions in the NVA shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Herspring makes a translation error that strongly supports his view that the NVA was 'falling apart'. In the original text, Admiral Hoffmann stated that between the dates of 1.12.1989 and 11.5.1990, there were a total of 1,507 successful desertions.²⁶⁰ Since Europeans write the day before the month, this should translate to December 1, 1989 to May 11, 1990. Although this is a high amount of desertions over a six-month period, it is not the same as Herspring's interpretation that "the reality was that the army seemed to be melting away. Between December 1, 1989, and January 5, an additional 1,507 officers and soldiers deserted," after which Herspring lists Hoffmann's source of the original text as reference.²⁶¹

Herspring and Zilian also err in their presentations of the integration process, which could present the wrong picture to those not intricately familiar with the integration process. This may either be because of a translation error, or because the original publications at that time also

presented the process not as clear as it is presented in recent publications.²⁶² Herspring bases his information on a source from 1990 by Hermann Hagen,²⁶³ and Zilian takes most of his information on the integration process from interviews that he held with senior Bundeswehr officers, a presentation by MG Reinhardt given at the Naval War College in 1992, and a lecture by LTG Von Scheven given in March 1993.²⁶⁴

Herspring divides the NVA soldiers into several categories where in the first category there were the conscripts, and in the second category there were the short-term regular and professional soldiers, who were then divided into subcategories. These subcategories included the *Weiterverwender*, those who were in 'reserve' *Wartestand*, and a group that consisted of short-term regular soldiers (*Soldaten auf Zeit*). Herspring's final category contained short-term regular soldiers and professionals, who would serve more than two years and have the opportunity to become professional soldiers. Then he adds "any individuals from the third group who wanted to serve for an additional two years and then become a professional soldier had from October 1 to December 15 to apply".²⁶⁵

The information regarding the terminology of these categories is correct, but a problem lies in the sequencing of Herspring's description, which does not show that the categories belonged to different phases and how they fit in those phases. For instance, only the first and second subcategories in Herspring's second category were part of the initial phase after unification, while his third subcategory were actually those who had been accepted to the *SaZ* status of the next phase. The members of Herspring's final category were actually only those individuals who during the final phase of integration had been selected for a longer continuation in the Bundeswehr. Thus, without explaining how the terms and categories fit into the phasing process, it is much more likely for misinterpretations or confusion on the process to occur.

Zilian's description of the process uses a total of four phases, with his first phase occurring prior to unification. Since Zilian's phases two through four correspond to the three phases of the BMVg's model from 1995 (see section 2 of this chapter), this format presents no problems to the overall picture. Instead, the error in Zilian's presentation lies in the manner that he classifies the two categories in his third phase. He identifies one group as 'volunteers' for two years (*Soldat auf Zeit-2*) and the other as *Weiterverwender*. Zilian is correct in this description, since those individuals who were not accepted to the *SaZ 2* status remained *Weiterverwender*. The problem with Zilian's explanation is that it is not until his third phase that he first introduces

the term *Weiterverwender*.²⁶⁶ In all current official presentations, the term *Weiterverwender* is used for all non-conscript NVA soldiers who became temporary Bundeswehr soldiers in an employed status (a total of 50,000) following unification (Zilian's phase two). Thus, if the reader has only read Zilian's description of the process and then is informed from a different publication that there were 50,000 *Weiterverwender* after unification, the chance of confusion or misinterpretation is likely.

It is important to note that the information in the previous section of this chapter represents the integration process in the same manner that the BMVg has presented it in various BMVg publications to include the report "Fünf Jahre Armee der Einheit – eine Bilanz", published in 1995.²⁶⁷ Furthermore, in his 1992 publication, the historian Lapp presents the terms and phases almost the same format as the BMVg. Thus, since both Herspring and Zilian list sources dated as late as 1998, Lapp's publication and the 1995 BMVg report should have been available to them to cross-reference the information with that of their other sources.

The intent of pointing out some of the discrepancies in Herspring and Zilian's books is not to discredit their otherwise excellent and well-researched works, but it is necessary for the researcher or reader interested in this subject to know that unless more and up-dated publications become available in English, misinterpretations will likely occur, since it is especially difficult to all those limited to English-language sources to compare data and interpretations, which may represent only the author's point of view.

Another problem in the interpretation of data can occur through incorrect presentation of otherwise correct data. One of the most common occurrences of this is the issue surrounding the reduction measures that were required to achieve the final strength of 370,000 German forces in a unified Germany. This number was set at the meeting in the Caucasus between Gorbachev and Kohl, when the two heads of state agreed upon that limit for the Bundeswehr to be met within a specified time after unification.²⁶⁸ The number was then incorporated in the negotiations on Conventional Armed Forces (CFE) held in Vienna on August 30, 1990, and finally stipulated in Article 3 of the Two Plus Four treaty, where it stated that the armed forces of the united Germany would be reduced to 370,000 within three to four years.²⁶⁹

The misrepresentation occurs when the combined strength of the Bundeswehr and the NVA is mentioned, which ranges in various publications from 500,000 to 670,000. In introduction portion of his book, Herspring uses the number 500,000, but later quotes one of his

sources with the statement “when the NVA personnel were added to the Bundeswehr’s on October 3, the size of the Bundeswehr would rise to about 590,000 soldiers.”²⁷⁰ Von Scheven, in one of his publication, mentions the number of 600,000 in relation to the drastic reduction to 370,000 that had to occur by the end of 1994,²⁷¹ but then lists 590,000 in his introduction to Zilian’s book,²⁷² while Zilian himself writes that “the Bundeswehr would be reduced from its current size of 480,000 and limited to 370,000, including any additions from the NVA after Unification.”²⁷³ Schönbohm also presents different numbers in different publications, in one he uses 521,000,²⁷⁴ while in his book, he places the number at 670,000 through his statement “at the Caucasus [meeting] in mid-July, it was decided that from 1995 on the unified Germany would have 370,000 soldiers instead of the existing 495,000 soldiers in the Bundeswehr and the 175,000 soldiers in the NVA.”²⁷⁵ Finally, the BMVg lists the number 585,000 soldiers in its publication *Armee der Einheit 1990 – 2000*.²⁷⁶

One of the key reasons behind these various numbers, especially the higher ones is because of the difference between ‘authorized strength’ and ‘on-hand strength’. The former is the maximum number that is allowed either due to treaty limitations or through the countries officially set limits. Thus, the 370,000 listed in the Two Plus Four treaty is an authorized strength. In the discussions during the ‘Forum on German Unity’, Dr. Carl actually used the term *Sollstärke* (authorized strength) and mentioned that the number for the Bundeswehr was approximately 500,000, and that for the NVA was about 170,000, but then he stated “...together that was 670,000, which we then also had upon unification on October 3, 1990.”²⁷⁷ As already mentioned, that number is correct for the combined authorized strength of the two armed forces, but not as their on-hand or actual strength.

In a printout from the FüS I 2 dated February 11, 2004, the average on-hand strength for the Bundeswehr in 1990 was approximately 454,000.²⁷⁸ Furthermore, the on-hand strength of the NVA on unification day was approximately 90,000. Thus, by using those numbers, the total on-hand strength at the time of unification should have been around 544,000, a number that closely corresponds to the 538,000 listed in a publication by Strategic Studies Institute of the U.S. Army War College.²⁷⁹

Since the reported on-hand strength was the average number for the year, the total strength could have been higher or lower on any specific date, and thus technically speaking the lower numbers presented by Schönbohm and Herspring could be correct. The same goes for the

higher numbers, since higher on-hand numbers of the NVA prior to unification such as 135,000 in mid-March make the strength listings of up to 600,000 a possibility, but only up until the middle of 1990.

On the other hand, when talking about the actual numbers upon unification, the higher values certainly represent exaggerations since as already mentioned the estimated NVA and Bundeswehr strengths for that time have been well documented. A possible reason for the purposeful manipulation may be in order to justify the large number of NVA officers that did not make it into the Bundeswehr. Although there may have been valid other reasons (which will be discussed later in this dissertation) the number of 670,000 or even 600,000 increases the shock value of the reduction measures that had to be accomplished by the Bundeswehr, which in turn would allow for a simplified response to a question that would otherwise require a complex explanation. Thus, when arguments are made based on these personnel strength, the numbers should be presented so that the difference between authorized and on-hand strength can easily be determined. Anything else would be misleading and would cause further misinterpretations of an already complex integration process. It also discredits the source.

Along similar lines, another misrepresentation occurs when omitting the fact that the personnel strength numbers include conscripts. Using the number of 544,000 at unification, a reduction to 370,000 would require the discharge of 174,000 soldiers. Without the presenting the percentage of conscripts this number would be misleading, since they only serve for a minimum period of time and a majority only because it is mandatory. Thus, reducing the amount of individuals to be drafted would reduce the on-hand strength without causing discontent by forcing individuals to leave the military. A better representation of required reductions would be to only use the number of career and contract soldiers. For example, the Bundeswehr had an average of 454,000 soldiers with 197,000 conscripts and 256,000 career and contract soldiers in 1990. In 1994, when the Bundeswehr had reached its reduction goal of an average of 360,000 soldiers, there were 148,000 conscripts and 212,000 career or contract soldiers. The calculations show that the percentage of conscripts dropped from 56% down to 41%, which should have also helped reduce the burden of the overall reduction process.

Individuals criticizing the integration process have also misrepresented numbers in order to justify their claims. In an article by Wilfried Hanisch, the author concludes that through the dissolution of the NVA, the major part of the reduction process to 370,000 was accomplished.

Citing a claim made by Egon Bahr in 1992, Hanisch states that as a result the Bundeswehr only was reduced by 32%, while the NVA was reduced by 78%. Furthermore, he states that if one considers only the numbers of the career and contract soldiers, the relationship is even more extreme, since the Bundeswehr was only reduced by 10% and the NVA only retained 10%.²⁸⁰ Egon Bahr also reiterated the same argument during the discussions at the 'Forum on German Unity' conference.²⁸¹

The problem with determining these percentages is that although of the original 50,000 former career and contract soldiers only 10,800 (which is actually 20%) were left at the end of the integration process in mid August 1993, it omits the amount of career and contract from the territory of the former GDR, who joined the Bundeswehr in the time frame between 1991 and 1994. Furthermore, the claims also do not take into account the argument made by Von Scheven at the same conference in which he notes that one of the biggest problems was that the former NVA was officer heavy (the reason for this will be discussed later). Von Scheven also states that at unification the Bundeswehr only had 40,000 officers, while the former NVA officer strength was 25,000, with many of those of higher rank (i.e. MAJ and LTC).²⁸²

Former Bundeswehr general Ekkehard Richter also made a strong argument against Bahr and Hanisch's claim. He stated that according to the Stoltenberg's directive, the total number of forces in the territories of the former GDR would be 50,000. In keeping with the officer to soldier ratio of that time, this number would translate to approximately 5,000 officers.²⁸³ Thus, if one considers that a percentage of the 5,000 would have to be newly recruited officers of junior grade, it is understandable how the personnel management department of the BMVg had come up with the number of 4,000 for former NVA officers, which they had planned to integrate.²⁸⁴

On the other hand, this number of 4,000 is one of the arguments that Lapp uses to criticize the claimed successes of the integration process. He argues that because 6,000 officers had been given *SaZ 2* status, it was evident that a total of 2,000 officers would have to leave the Bundeswehr regardless of how many were qualified to a continue.²⁸⁵ Thus, Lapp's argument directs suspicion on the results of the Bundeswehr review board and the various selection criteria, through which only 3,575 officers were selected with another 340 on a stand-by list.

Another factor that adds to the problems of correctly interpreting the integration process is the lack of necessary data available for both readers and research. One reason that it is so difficult to get relevant and up-to-date numbers and information is because some of this data falls

under the German ‘*Datenschutz Gesetz*’ (Privacy Act), i.e. the results of the evaluations conducted on the officers during the review boards.²⁸⁶ The other problem is that often the information can only be found in official documents, which the Bundeswehr classifies as ‘For Official Use Only’ (*Nur für den Dienstgebrauch* or NfD). Although this information itself is not considered classified, researchers may and often do run into the problem of finding the sources for the information, as it is generally not available to the public, neither through the Internet nor via mail requests to the German government.²⁸⁷

Some of this data that would help future research include the actual numbers of new career and contract soldiers who came from the former territories of the GDR (Neue Länder) and the old states (Alte Länder) of the FRG. Furthermore, it would be helpful to know the number of career and contract soldiers, who utilized the opportunities to get out of the Bundeswehr through the changes in the personnel management regulations from December 1991, which were conducted to entice members of the Bundeswehr to leave in order to meet the reduction quota of 1994 (the impact of this will be discussed in a later chapter).

Personalizing Numbers

Introduction

A short summary of several of individuals interview as part of the research for this thesis will be presented next, in order to demonstrate how these individuals fell into the various categories and phases of the integration process, which in turn may have influenced their interpretation of the events. This is done to illustrate through personal experiences the otherwise impersonal numbers and events that have been described up to this point. It also serves as a reminder that there are individual people behind each and every one of those numbers, which too often are used or manipulated like inanimate objects only to support an interpretation or argument through the use of the number.

Individual Experiences

Hans Apitzsch. At the time of unification, Apitzsch had reached the rank of Captain, but because he had not held the rank for at least two years, he was reduced back to 1st Lieutenant once the Bundeswehr took-over. He received confirmation to his *SaZ 2* status in December of 1990, and then because he was attending another officer's professional development course in the former West Germany when he received his acceptance as a career soldier, he belong to one of the first former NVA service members, who were immediately put into the 100% pay category.

A ruling in the German federal pay regulation (*Bundesbesoldungsgesetz*) stipulated that the percentage would be based on where that individual was initiated into the Bundeswehr; if it was in the former West Germany, that individual would get 100%, but if it was in the former GDR, he would get a lower percentage (started at 70% and today it is at 92.5%). As soon as a soldier was stationed in the former West Germany, the percentage would be raised to 100% and would permanently remain at that level. This was used as incentive by the Bundeswehr to get the former NVA soldiers to take job positions at former West German military bases.

Apitzsch also recalled that the Bundeswehr had provided incentives in order to get former NVA service members to voluntarily leave the Bundeswehr early. NCOs were offered a one-time separation bonus of 3000 DM and officers were offered up to 7000 DM. Furthermore, those that discontinued their military service prior to the end of December 1990, could apply for and generally received free vocational training (*Berufsförderung*), which was helpful for achieving a level of competitiveness in the civilian work sector.²⁸⁸

Herbert Becker. In 1989, Becker was over 50 years of age, which made him one of those individuals that had no long-term future in the Bundeswehr. The fact that he had been in the military intelligence branch also would have disqualified him from a continuation, as it was one of those groups from which no members were kept in the Bundeswehr. Thus, Becker decided to stay until the day of unification and then departed with the guarantee of financial security through what was known as *befristete erweiterte Versorgung* (time-limited and amplified Provision). This was called so because it was limited until the individual reached pension age and was amplified since it was more than what those who were unemployed received. For his age it was 60% of his previous salary and for those over 55 it was 65%.

Becker considered the monthly 900 DM (Deutsche Mark) income that he received as a provision until he reached his pension age as quite generous, since many from the East German civilian work force were getting a lot less than that. His major complaint in this area was that once he reached pension age his income dropped down to the level of the minimum (average) pension. He felt that this was somewhat unfair, since the pension of soldiers at the time when the NVA had still existed, was above the average pension, especially for officers, which is still the case for the career soldiers of the Bundeswehr.²⁸⁹

Wolfgang Dobrig. As a result of deciding to stay in the Bundeswehr after unification, Dobrig had to swear an oath of allegiance to the Bundeswehr three times and had been a LTC three times. The first oath was when the Bundeswehr took over after unification; the second oath was when he received the *SaZ 2* status, and the final oath was when he became a career soldier of the Bundeswehr. Up until October 2, 1990, he had been a LTC of the NVA, and then on the next day, he became a LTC of the Bundeswehr. On January 12, 1991, he was reduced to the rank of a MAJ, and finally in July of 1992, he was promoted back to LTC. He personally did not have a problem with the reduction in rank since he knew that the rank structure of the NVA had been out of proportion, and he admitted that in the NVA, there had been many officer positions that were being held by NCOs in the Bundeswehr. Furthermore, he felt that his reduction in rank had been appropriate to the age of his counterparts in the Bundeswehr.

During the integration period, Dobrig was not certain if he was going to make the selection process. As part of a background check for his security clearance, he had to fill out forms listing all his contacts or dealings with the *Stasi*. During his time with *ASK Vorwärts*, Dobrig had to deal with the *Stasi* whenever he took the athletes outside of the country for competitions, and he was worried that this would bar him from further employment in the Bundeswehr. His superior, who was a Bundeswehr officer, advised him to list everything since those types of contact with the *Stasi* would not have a negative impact on his continuation in the Bundeswehr, but lying on the form would.

Dobrig's files were sufficient to determine his innocence in regards to his *Stasi* contacts during the selection process through the independent review board, and he was awarded a career status in the Bundeswehr without having to appear before the board. On the other hand, he had a friend who was not that fortunate. His friend had studied at a military institute in the Soviet Union, and in order to qualify for this, the individual's superior had justified it by claiming that

Dobrig's friend had "stood with both feet firmly in support of the Socialist State". This had been noted in the individual's records and when his file had been checked, he had to appear before the board to make the case that the statement had only been a formality, which had been required to grant him the opportunity to study abroad.

Dobrig will retire from the Bundeswehr in 2005, and although he is happy that he chose to continue in the Bundeswehr, he does have strong feelings against the unjust calculation for his retirement pay. The policy is that every year of military service in the Bundeswehr counts as 1.8333% towards retirement, while each year in the former NVA only counts as 1%. Thus, because Dobrig was in the NVA for 25 years prior to unification, he will receive a retirement that is 20.8 % ($25 \times 0.8333\%$) less what his peers that had always been in the Bundeswehr receive.²⁹⁰

Roland Mattern. When German unification finally occurred, Mattern was four days away from being promoted to Captain, and as a result he kept his rank of lieutenant when taken into the Bundeswehr. However, his wish to become a career officer almost did not come true. During his *SaZ 2* status, he had a health incident that classified him as physically unfit for continued service. Although the problem went away, it had been impossible for him to get a doctor to complete his health waiver.

He was fortunate that both his battalion- and brigade commander supported him, and they made certain that a *Besoldungsstelle* (assigned position of pay) would remain open for him for the next three years. Without this assigned position, his request to become a career soldier in the Bundeswehr would have been denied. In 1994, Mattern got a doctor to declare him fit for duty and soon thereafter he was sworn into the Bundeswehr as a career officer. After that he was promoted to the rank of Captain and took command of a Bundeswehr armor company. In 1997, he was stationed at a West German base at which time his pay was raised to 100%.

This example of having to have an open *Besoldungsstelle* is key to understanding the selection process of the former NVA soldiers, and had been touched on in an earlier section of this chapter. The important thing to note here is that each former NVA soldier, who was going to be selected beyond *SaZ 2*, had to be assigned a certain position within the 'assigned position of pay matrix' of the Bundeswehr. This was based on factors such as age, rank and time in service. Thus, if there were too many applicants of similar status, some of those individuals would not be selected for a continuation in the Bundeswehr, regardless if all of them had been stellar performers.²⁹¹

CHAPTER 4

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCED THE FATE OF THE NVA

Introduction

In their book on German unification, Gert-Joachim Glaeßner and Rolf Reißig discussed the complexity of the interpretations of the unification event. They stated that while the whole world spoke of a non-violent revolution within the GDR, the international community viewed it with amazement and surprise, and more often with skepticism and worries that the Germans had taken matters in their own hands. Furthermore, the East and the West Germans, who embraced each other on the evening of November 9, discovered just how different they were from each other, but they never learned to appreciate those differences. And, although a lot of claims to heroic acts during the turbulent October and November revolutions had been made in retrospect, the fact remained that it had been a few hundred thousands, and not millions, who had demonstrated on the streets of East Germany. The authors concluded, "...due to the complex political, social, national and international situations that was imbedded in the [unification] process, it is understandable that the interpretations of the original motives of the [East German] revolution vary."²⁹²

The fate of the NVA was also intractably linked to the situation that influenced the German unification process as it determined the framework through which the NVA was dissolved and its personnel integrated into the Bundeswehr. Furthermore, both the unification and its military aspect were impacted by a variety of competing factors that included a complex international environment and a rapid pace towards German unity. Given the interplay of the rush to German unity with the complex issues that had to be solved in a very short time, the outcome of the military aspect could be considered the best one possible at that time. However,

this interpretation also depends on an individual's perspective on the importance of the various competing factors. Furthermore, had a priority been given to other factors rather than the time issue, this might have allowed for necessary changes that would have caused a less negative impact on the individuals of the NVA.

This chapter will discuss the external and internal environment and the NVA-specific factors. First, it will analyze the international situation, specifically the military alliances of the two Germanys and the Two-plus-Four treaty, followed by the national issues that led to East Germany, in the form of the new States, joining the old States of West Germany. The second part deals with the issues specific to the NVA, such as its character and composition, as well as the NVA's relationships to the East German people and the Bundeswehr. The chapter will conclude with an analysis of the final framework as a result of the competing issues and demonstrate that in the end, it was because the Bundeswehr did not need the NVA, which was the reason why the West German military was able to set up a selection process according to their own standards. This in turn, resulted in only a small percentage of the former NVA members from becoming permanent Bundeswehr soldiers, and has been seen by some critics as an unfair process especially against the older and more senior members of the former NVA.

The International Environment

According to the historian Stephen Szabo the international aspects of the German unification process can be divided into four phases. Phase one began with the opening of the Hungarian border with Austria in September 1990 and ended with the collapse of the Modrow government's authority in the middle of January. Highlights include the opening of the Berlin Wall and Kohl's Ten Point Plan on German unity. The second phase ran through the Camp David meeting between President George Bush and Chancellor Helmut Kohl in late February. Other highlights included the meetings between Secretary of State James Baker and West German Foreign Minister Hans Genscher in early February, the Kohl-Genscher-Gorbachev meeting in Moscow on February 10, and the Ottawa Open Skies meeting in mid-February. During this phase the Two-Plus-Four mechanism was developed and accepted by all key players.

Phase three ran from late-February until the Caucasus Agreement between Kohl and Gorbachev in mid-July, and during this period of active negotiations a settlement on German unification was reached. The final phase was the ceremonial phase that ran from the conclusion of the Caucasus Agreement through the final signing of the Two-Plus-Four treaty in Moscow on September 12 to the signing of the Trans-Atlantic Charter in Paris in November.²⁹³

On the other hand, according to Hans Ehlert the military aspect of the final year leading up to German unification is divided into either two or three phases, depending on who is interpreting that period of time. From the Bundeswehr perspective there were only two phases. Phase one ran from January until in July, and was a period marked by a carefully reserved position on all military planning related to German unification. At the most, preparations were conducted behind closed doors, since the intent was not to endanger the unification process through any potentially disturbing military-related issues. Official contacts between the Bundeswehr and the NVA remained limited until an official framework was initiated in June. The second phase began with the Caucasus Agreement, which had settled the fact that after unification there would only be one German military. This phase was characterized by tremendous efforts to convert all of the previously limited ideas into concrete plans. Furthermore, definite steps were initiated to prepare for the takeover of personnel and equipment of the NVA upon unification day.²⁹⁴

From the East German perspective there were three phases. The first phase began in October 89 and lasted until the elections of March 90. This was a period of chaos within the NVA that included signs of self-dissolution, the paralysis among the old political and military leaders and an increased loss in discipline, but in November, the new leadership's efforts on military reforms reestablished internal order and provided for a hopeful perspective of a 'new' NVA. The second phase ran from April until July, during which time efforts to stabilize the East German armed forces were reinforced through the hopes of an independent future of a strongly reduced NVA within a unified Germany. The NVA was to model itself according to the Bundeswehr, and the framework for official contacts between the armed forces was developed. Phase three began with the Caucasus Agreement, after which time the morale within the NVA took a turn for the worse. However, the military leadership that was committed to the proper execution of its duties and now loyal to the new civilian government was able to ensure a disciplined handover of the NVA to the Bundeswehr.²⁹⁵

The common factor among all three interpretations is the Caucasus Agreement between Kohl and Gorbachev in mid-July. For Szabo this event finalized the ongoing discussions between the West Germans, Soviets and Americans in reference to the unified Germany's future alliance status. After that agreement the next phase was primarily a wrap-up period with the signing of the Two-plus-Four treaty and the Trans-Atlantic Charter. For the West German military, the Caucasus Agreement finalized that there would only be one German military after unification, a plan that the Bundeswehr had been 'quietly' pursuing since the very beginning. After the agreement made it official concrete plans were developed for the dissolution of the NVA and the takeover of its personnel and equipment. However, to the East German military the Caucasus agreement meant an end to the hopes of an independent, if only limited, future for NVA. The agreement changed the mood of the East German career and contract soldiers with resignation and concerns for one's future becoming commonplace. These various interpretations demonstrate how the same event can mean different things to a different audience.

Another factor influencing the interpretation of such events like the Caucasus Agreement lies in the differences between public/official perceptions in comparison to the insider knowledge that is not officially released until much later. Even several years after German unification, Horst Teltschik, the foreign policy advisor to Kohl, used the expressions 'the miracle of Moscow' and the 'breakthrough in the Caucasus' in his memoir-like diary to describe the decisions that resulted from the Soviet-German summit talks.²⁹⁶ There are however some historians, who do not believe that the Caucasus event was that miraculous as it has so often been portrayed for the settlement on the final alliance status of the unified Germany had been determined at a much earlier date. This section will look at the various events that lead-up to the infamous Kohl-Gorbachev meeting mid-July of 1990 as mentioned in Szabo's portrayal of the international environment, and will incorporate the different perspectives by the primary actors and historians. An analysis will then follow which will discuss the impact on both the actions and interpretations of those individuals that were subjects of those events.

NATO and Warsaw Pact Alliances

That the alliance issue would become the focal point of the international aspects of German unification was understandable for the membership of the two German states to their respective alliances were approaching their 35th anniversary within six months after the opening

of the Berlin Wall. The West German participation in NATO had been a result of a long process that had already begun in March of 1948, when Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom (UK) signed a treaty of mutual defense, creating the Brussels Treaty Organization. This was followed by talks between the Brussels Treaty powers and the US and Canada that led to the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty in April of 1949. Denmark, Iceland, Italy, Norway and Portugal were also invited, and shortly thereafter the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was formed. In December 1950, the Brussels Treaty powers merged their military organization into NATO, and in 1954, the Brussels Treaty added the FRG, which eventually led to its NATO membership on May 5, 1955.²⁹⁷

As a response to West Germany's acceptance to NATO, the Warsaw Pact treaty was signed on May 14, 1955, with the GDR being one of the eight founding members. The mutual support requirements were limited to aggression conducted in Europe against any of the treaty members. In time of war, the majority of the East German armed forces would have been integrated into the Warsaw Pact forces, which at that time would have immediately become subordinate to the Soviet military command.²⁹⁸

The East and West German armed forces were considered among the shock troops of their respective alliances, and it was presumed that those two countries would become the battleground if a war between the alliances broke out. Both the U.S. and the Soviet Union also maintained powerful forces based in the two Germanys. On the Soviet side there were more than 400,000 troops in East Germany. This was the Warsaw Pact's most potent force outside of the Soviet Union and was much larger than the NVA with a peacetime strength of 170,000 and wartime strength of 350,000. On the other hand, the U.S. only had a small portion of its total military force based in West Germany and Europe. The Bundeswehr made up the largest NATO force in Europe with a little less than ½ million troops in the mid-80's, which could grow in the case of a war to a force of almost 1.3 million.²⁹⁹

Ten Point Plan

On November 28, 1989, less than three weeks after the opening of the Berlin Wall, Helmut Kohl announced his Ten Point Plan. Although it was still a relatively modest proposal for the establishment of a number of joint commissions, it was the first official West German government statement on the potential of a reunified Germany. Kohl's plan was not only a

reaction to the developments in the GDR, but also to the West Germans and the European. Since France's president François Mitterrand had announced his intention to visit the GDR a few days prior to Kohl's speech, and an upcoming Malta summit between the superpowers might have slowed down the drive to unification, the West German chancellor was concerned that if he did not get out in front on the issue, the Four Powers, especially France and the Soviet Union, might attempt to stabilize the GDR in pursuit of a two-nation solution.³⁰⁰

The day after Kohl announced the Ten Point Plan, Secretary of State Baker briefed the White House press corps on the upcoming Malta summit between Bush and Gorbachev to be held on December 02. In response to a question about German unification, Baker "suggested" four points, with one of those stating that unification should occur in the context of Germany's continued commitment to NATO. On the day following the Malta summit, President Bush officially announced those points as the four principles of U.S. policy on German unification.³⁰¹

Bush's national security advisor Brent Scowcroft argued that although Kohl's ten points provided a basic approach to cooperation and possible unification for the two German states, it had ignored the international and security aspects, especially a united Germany's relationship to NATO and the issue of boundaries. Scowcroft also believed that Germany had to remain firmly within the alliance, not just because it was important to anchor it to the West, but also because Germany, as the geographical center of the alliance and the second largest economy and military power, was crucial to NATO. Thus, careful consideration concludes that the U.S. demand of a NATO membership for a unified Germany as one of the main requirements was in response to the absence of such remarks in Kohl's Ten Point Plan.³⁰²

On the other hand, in his biography on the German unification process, Kohl stated that he knew that the alliance question would eventually become a major issue, and that he would have never allowed the price for unification to become a German withdrawal from NATO. However, at that point in time, he believed that any West German statements on the issue might have resulted in a counteraction by the Soviet government that would have been detrimental to the unification process.³⁰³ In fact, it had not been until after Teltschik had met with Nikolai Portugalow, a senior member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, that Kohl had decided to go on the offensive. During that meeting Teltschik had learned that Gorbachev and his advisors were discussing issues related to a possibility of a German unification, after which Teltschik informed Kohl and the Ten Point plan was developed.³⁰⁴

The Soviet response towards Kohl's plan was not that reserved. A day after the speech by Kohl, the Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney had given President Bush his impressions of Gorbachev's attitude on the German situation. During a visit to Moscow, Mulroney had explained to Gorbachev that Kohl had been primarily appealing to his own electorate. Gorbachev responded that he understood this point, but that there would be no reunification. He had warned, "people have died eating un-ripened fruit" and added that one day there might be reunification, but "not in my life time". In Gorbachev's opinion, if the Germans wanted progress toward reunification, they should not prematurely put it on the table.³⁰⁵

On December 5, Genscher went to Moscow to meet with Gorbachev. During the meeting, Gorbachev criticized Kohl's plan and the fact that Kohl he had not discussed it with the Soviet leadership prior to announcing it. Gorbachev also argued against Kohl's support for a confederation, since it would mean a unified national defense and foreign policy, bringing up the question of Germany's alliance. Would it be in NATO, the Warsaw Pact, or maybe even neutral? According to Gorbachev, West Germany's allies showed dissatisfaction with Kohl's attempt to go at it alone. He also added that even Bush agreed that no hasty steps or attempts should be taken in order to unnaturally speed up the reunification process.³⁰⁶

Genscher called it the most unpleasant meeting with Gorbachev that he ever had, but remarked that at the end of the meeting, Gorbachev had told him that if the pan-European process and relationships between the Soviet Union and the federal government developed positively, new developments on the German question would also be possible. Genscher saw this as a message stating that the door to German unity was open. Although Gorbachev wanted to keep a firm grip on the events, he had accepted that German unification was inevitable; the question was how and when.³⁰⁷

On December 9, Gorbachev told his Central Committee, that the Soviet Union was determined not to abandon the GDR. They were a strategic ally and a member of the Warsaw Pact. He reiterated that the results of WWII, which included the existence of to sovereign German states, were a reality that would continue and any deviations could destabilize Europe, but a change in the internal situation of the GDR would also change the Soviet position. By mid-January the Modrow government's authority was disintegrating and by the end of the month the government agreed with the Round Table proposition to bump-up the date for national elections to March 18. The result of these changes was that on January 30, after a meeting between

Modrow and Gorbachev, the latter stated that the Soviet Union did not object to German unification, but that a unified Germany would have to be neutral.³⁰⁸

Two-plus-Four Talks

According to Gorbachev it was in a meeting with his advisors in late-January meeting that a decision was made to propose a six-member group consisting of the four victors in WWII and the two Germanys to discuss all external aspects connected with unification.³⁰⁹ However, Baker states that the solution to dealing with those external aspects was developed by the State Department's Policy Planning Staff, that combined the German-only approach favored by Bonn and the White House with the Four Powers forum suggested by Moscow, and supported by London and Paris. It was called Two-plus-Four and the aim was for the U.S. to use the Two-plus-Four power talks to bring German unity to fruition. After getting the approval from West German, Great Britain and France, Baker traveled to Moscow, where on February 9 he got the assent for the concept from the Soviet leadership.³¹⁰

On that same day, an agreement between West Germany and the Soviet Union was signed, in which the West Germans pledged to help-out the Soviets with their food shortage. By mid-February, the FRG would deliver 52,000 tons of beef, 50,000 tons of pork, 20,000 tons of butter, 15,000 tons of powdered milk and 5,000 tons of cheese, valued at 220 million DM's, to the Soviet Union. This probably had a substantial impact on the Kohl-Genscher-Gorbachev meeting on the following day, during which the Soviet leader proclaimed his support for a German unification. Gorbachev had also given his acquiescence to the Two-plus-Four talks.³¹¹

On February 13, at the "open skies" conference in Ottawa, Canada, Baker and Genscher issued the Two-plus-Four statement, after receiving the acquiescence from Gorbachev through his Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze. The statement declared that a series of talks would be conducted at the foreign ministry level between the two Germanys and the Four Powers in order to discuss and determine the external aspects of the German unification process to include the issues of security of the neighboring states.³¹²

Camp David German-American Summit

President Bush and Chancellor Kohl met at Camp David for two days of talks on February 24 and 25. Kohl had brought along Teltschik and two other advisors, while on the U.S.

side Bush had Baker, Scowcroft and Bob Blackwill, Special Assistant to the President in European Affairs.

According to Teltschik, Baker had discussed his meeting with Gorbachev and had commented that the Soviet statements during that meeting were only the first moves of a chess-game and that by the end of the game the Soviets would certainly have agreed to a unified Germany in NATO, since they knew that U.S. troop presence in Europe would be a stabilizing factor.³¹³

In his memoirs, Kohl added that Baker had included the statement that “on the other hand, Gorbachev and Shevardnadze could not actively support the NATO membership for a united Germany”. Kohl’s comment to this was that what the Soviets were doing was a form of “poker politics” and in the end the main question would revolve around how high the West German financial commitment to the Soviets would be. Furthermore, he added “the fact that Moscow did not want to officially comment on this was part of their national pride. In truth, the Soviets did not have a problem with the NATO membership of a unified Germany – they had a price for it.” To this, Bush responded jokingly that after all the West German Chancellor had deep pockets, and “the Soviet Union was not in the position to dictate to the West, if Germany could stay in NATO or not. Everything would be done to ensure that the Soviets would be able to maintain their dignity and not lose face in the process”.³¹⁴

The Breakthrough in the Caucasus

On July 15, Kohl met with Gorbachev in Moscow during which the two heads of state discussed the future of a unified Germany and the requirements that would be necessary in order to ensure that the two parties reach an agreement. Although Teltschik writes that the ‘breakthrough’ occurred during that meeting, the recollections of the other participants such as Kohl, Genscher and Gorbachev show that the meeting had not yet finalized the issue. This would not occur until the next day at Gorbachev’s retreat in the town of Arkhits in the Caucasus, and here once again, there are various descriptions by the participants on what occurred during the discussions between the Soviet and the West German delegates.³¹⁵

During a joint press-conference following the meeting, Gorbachev allowed Kohl the honor of presenting the details of the agreement, which the German Chancellor summarized in the following eight points:

1. German unification encompassed the FRG, the GDR and the city of Berlin.
2. After unification, the Four Power' rights and responsibilities would cease and the unified Germany would obtain full and unrestricted sovereignty.
3. Within the context of that sovereignty, Germany could freely decide which alliance it wanted to belong to.
4. There will be a bilateral agreement between the unified Germany and the Soviet Union on the departure of the Soviet troops still stationed in the GDR, which should be completed within the next three to four years.
5. NATO military structures will not be expanded to the territory of the former GDR, as long as Soviet troops are still stationed there, but NATO's security guarantees (article 5 and 6) will apply to the territories of the former GDR. Non-NATO aligned units of the Bundeswehr can be stationed in that area immediately upon unification
6. As long as Soviet troops are in the former GDR, the troops of the three Western Allies will remain in Berlin.
7. At the on-going CFE talks in Vienna, the FRG will declare to reduce its troop strength of a unified Germany to 370,000 within three to four years.
8. A unified Germany will renounce the production, possession and utilization of Nuclear, Biological and Chemical (NBC) weapons, and will continue to remain a member of the non-proliferation treaty.³¹⁶

The terms mentioned during the press conference were then implemented in the Two-plus-Four talks, which culminate in the formation of the Two-plus-Four treaty during what Szabo termed as the wrap-up phase. Baker's comments on the meeting include "everyone declared the statement an historic breakthrough", and in Bush and Scowcroft's *A World Transformed*, the narrative section describe the event as: "With the breakthrough at Stravapol, the terms of German reunification were set."³¹⁷

Events that led up to the 'Breakthrough'

Andreas Rödder explains that the term 'breakthrough in the Caucasus' was used because it was believed that the crucial obstacle in the path towards German unification after the collapse of the GDR was the Soviet rejection of the NATO membership for the whole of a united Germany, and thus the overcoming of this rejection was seen as the 'breakthrough'. On the other hand, Rödder is also one of the historians, who argued that the Caucasus meeting between Kohl and Gorbachev was not the 'breakthrough', since that had actually occurred at the American-Soviet summit held in Washington six weeks earlier. Furthermore, Rödder believes that it was the discussion between the Washington-Bonn-Moscow triangle and not the Two-plus-Four talks that determined the path of German unification.³¹⁸

On the latter matter, a disagreement within West German administration served as a prelude to the strong U.S. engagement in the international aspects of the unification process. A dispute had developed between Genscher, who was prepared to accept a neutral GDR territory and Defense Minister Stoltenberg and Secretary General of NATO Wörner, who insisted on a full NATO membership for a unified Germany. On February 19, Kohl settled the disagreement with an official declaration that stated that no Bundeswehr forces, neither the ones assigned to NATO or those non-assigned would be stationed on the territories of the GDR.³¹⁹

This statement led to considerable doubts on the part of the U.S. on the FRG's loyalty to the alliance, and as a result, Scowcroft's suggested a 'historic bargain'. Kohl would pledge to continue Germany's security commitment to the alliance while the U.S. promised to ensure that the Two-plus-Four process would not interfere in German unity. According to Rödder, these talks held at Camp David were of high significance to the German unification process because this is where the two governments decided that the FRG would handle the national and economic issues, while the U.S. would handle the international and security policy issues. This at the latest was when the decisions on the unification process was made at the Two-plus-One level between Washington, Bonn and Moscow. The Two-plus-Four process, on the other hand, never really shaped the developments.³²⁰

Rödder argued that the real 'breakthrough' had occurred at the American-Soviet summit held in Washington on May 31, when in a meeting between the Soviet and U.S. presidents, the latter had stated that Germany had the right to decide which alliance it wanted to join, and to the surprise of Bush, Gorbachev had confirmed that statement. The U.S. participants were so surprised that before the final press conference, they checked with the Soviets whether they could incorporate the formulation agreed with Gorbachev into the U.S. declaration and again the Soviet response was a positive affirmation. Gorbachev's advisor Chernyaev later described the meeting as the moment when Moscow agreed to a NATO membership for a unified Germany. Rödder also believed that the reason for this can be found in the minutes of the Camp David talks between Kohl and Bush, when Kohl stated that Gorbachev believed the Soviet Union only had one true partner, the U.S., and that Gorbachev thus wanted to come to terms on the issue only with that other world power.³²¹

The NATO summit in London on July 5, which resulted in the transformation of NATO to include a change in the East-West relationship from one of confrontation to one of

cooperation, and a nuclear strategy with the use of nuclear weapons as a last resort,³²² as well as Gorbachev's success during the Communist Party conference in early July, were positive steps that had an impact on the NATO membership issue. Thus, the most crucial issues were resolved by the two events that occurred between the Washington and the Caucasus summits, but because some of the issues included Germany's financial contribution, Rödder believed that "it was certainly the subjective perception of those involved on the German side that the 'breakthrough' had occurred in the Caucasus." However, Rödder also added that once Gorbachev had given the green light in Washington, he was not going to switch it back to red.³²³

Analysis of the International Factors

Because the East German leaders of the NVA were kept in the dark on the behind the scenes negotiations between the U.S., West Germany and the Soviets, they were ill-prepared for the drastic change in the situation that resulted from the official agreement made between Gorbachev and Kohl in mid-July. This was counter-productive to many of their efforts to stabilize and reform the NVA, as well as promising the NVA soldiers a near-term future, implementing a gradual and steady reduction plan, and maintaining friendly their commitments to the Warsaw Pact in order to not up-set the Soviet military leadership. The negative consequences included a major impact on morale in the NVA and a significant loss in faith and respect of the East German military members for their civilian leadership.

During the 'Forum on German Unity' conference, Werner Ablaß mentioned that he was also believed that the Bush-Gorbachev meeting had settled the decision on Germany's future alliance and the Caucasus event was only secondary. He further argued that when Eppelmann had made his speech on May 2, 1990, which included the Two-Army concept, he was fully justified since no one could predict the results of the Bush-Gorbachev meeting one month later.³²⁴

Careful consideration concludes that already from early on the West German leadership believed the Soviets would eventually concede to a NATO membership of a unified Germany. Kohl certainly settled the argument between Stoltenberg and Genscher in favor of the latter in order not to anger the Soviets, and decided that no further claims were to be made by West German officials on the NATO membership issue before the Soviet leadership was prepared to officially sanction such a decision. However, at Camp David, Kohl was quite confident that the

Soviets would eventually give in, and it can also be presumed that the Defense Minister was privy to Kohl's ideas or that at a minimum Teltschik shared this information with the Defense Minister, especially since Kohl's advisor did not get along very well with Foreign Minister Genscher.³²⁵

Furthermore, Wörner may have also been informed of the U.S.-German intentions from the U.S. side through his contacts in NATO and to the U.S. leadership.³²⁶ On June 13, which was more than a month prior to the Caucasus meeting, Stoltenberg officially announced that a united Germany would, after a short transition period, only have one military.³²⁷ A memorandum of the BMVg issued on that same day showed that the West German Defense Ministry was conducting its planning considerations under the following three premises: 1. The GDR would withdraw from the Warsaw Pact; 2. A unified Germany will belong to NATO; 3. No NATO troops will be stationed on the territory of the former GDR.³²⁸

Although the Caucasus agreement validated each one of these premises, it can be assumed that the East German Defense Ministry did not know of the considerations and intentions by the West German leadership and planners. Thus, any frustration that the leadership of the BMVg felt towards the loyal support that the East German's were continuing to show to the Warsaw Pact was unwarranted, since the latter had no other option then to act as they did. When Eppelmann assumed his position as Defense Minister, there were specific foreign policy constellations that he inherited and one of them included the fact that the Soviets were still officially claiming that at the most they would accept a neutral Germany, but never the NATO membership for a unified Germany. Additionally, Eppelmann felt that it was important to not create a 'Versailles condition for the Soviets' in the process of German unification. He used the term to describe a potentially unfavorable condition for the Soviets, which later on might have caused them to attempt to fix the situation by force.³²⁹

Thus, Eppelmann stuck to his Two-Army concept, especially since the signals he was getting from the Soviets did not correspond with what was being worked-out between Washington, Bonn and Moscow. This official Soviet position is supported through the observations made by State Secretary Ablaß during a dinner meeting between the Defense Ministers of the Warsaw Pact countries in Strausberg on June 14. He stated that during the discussion on the future of the Warsaw Pact, the Soviet reaction did not indicate that there had been any changes in Moscow's position on the GDR's future alliance status.³³⁰

As mentioned earlier, Eppelmann and Ablaß were heavily criticized by some of the senior officers of the NVA, with claims that Eppelmann's Two-Army concept might have only been a ploy to keep the military officers in check. Some individuals even called both of the senior civilian leaders liars for not being able to come through with their initial promises that had made on the future of the NVA. However, this criticism is not warranted, since whatever good intentions Eppelmann and Ablaß had, their execution was supplanted by the international events and the plans of the West German side.³³¹

Another reason that the East Germans may have been told by the Soviets that they would not agree to the NATO membership up until very late in the game might have had to do with the fact that Gorbachev was not communicating his intent with his military commanders. He may have done this to placate them until he felt that the time had come to officially announce his position to the Soviet people. Furthermore, the East Germans argument for the existence of two militaries at that time of German unification, if the alliance issue had not been solved by then, was a factor that was favorable to the Soviet cause. The Soviet leadership probably assumed that this would allow them to increase the price the West German's were willing to pay for as Kohl had said to Bush: "the Soviets were playing poker politics".

In early September, Soviet negotiators stated that they needed 3.5 billion for the cost to maintain their troops in East Germany for the next few years, 3.0 billion for transportation costs to take them home, 11.5 billion for the construction of housing and the necessary infrastructure in the Soviet Union for those returning forces, 0.5 billion for re-schooling program for those troops and 17 to 17.5 billion DM's for the Soviet owned real estate in the GDR. As a response, Kohl offered 8 billion primarily for the construction of housing in the Soviet Union, to which Gorbachev responded negatively. He told Kohl that without satisfactory results in the Soviet-German bilateral agreements and a solution to the financial issues the final Two-plus-Four treaty could be endangered.³³²

On September 10, in a telephone conversation between Gorbachev and Kohl, the latter offered a financial commitment between 11-12 billion DM. Gorbachev countered that because of the economic reforms the Soviet Union was in a difficult position, and he hoped that Kohl could come up with a sum between 15-16 billion. After further back and forth discussion Gorbachev stated that 15 billion was the last offer, to which Kohl responded with an offer of 12 billion along with an interest-free financial credit of 3 billion.³³³ Gorbachev seemed to be satisfied with that

proposition and that same afternoon, the Soviet ambassador Yuli Kvitsinsky called Teltschik to advise him that Gorbachev had agreed to Kohl's offer and that nothing further would stand in the way of the conclusion of Two-plus-Four talks that were to be held in Moscow on 12 September.³³⁴

When reflecting on the amount of money that the West German state paid directly to the Soviets as well as the fact that the FRG gave the USSR interest-free credit and vouched for the Soviet Union so that it could also receive credit from the international community, it is understandable that the West German's believed that it was the money out their pockets that paid for the freedom of their East German compatriots. This feeling caused some FRG citizens to expect that West Germany should be able to dictate the future of the unified Germany and that the East German's should be content and grateful. However, East German's probably felt resentful towards such an outlook as the circumstances of Soviet rule was not something they had chosen voluntarily, but had been dictated upon them as a result of WWII and a chance of fate where one lived as the Cold War borders were drawn. The same conflict in interpretation of who had more right to determine the way the process of unification should occur can also be extended to the feelings and disagreements between the members of the Bundeswehr and the NVA.

The Internal Environment

The historian Konrad Jarausch stated that the opening of the Berlin Wall and the resulting unification came rather unexpectedly for none of the Eastern experts had foreseen the collapse of the GDR or predicted its timing, speed, or consequence. Especially, the rapidity and the extent of the unification was confounding, because within just one year, two competing nations with different systems of government, opposing military alliances, as well as contradictory economic systems, incompatible social structure, and conflicting ideologies merged into one. Furthermore, despite repeated crises, the process continued to accelerate and at times threatened to escape control.³³⁵ This section will discuss those factors of the internal environment that contributed to

what Jarausch called the ‘rush to German unity’, particularly those that had an influence on the military aspects of the process, and are subject to a variety of interpretations.

Background Information

In the early part of December 1989, less than one month after the opening of the Berlin Wall, the first Round Table talks with the Modrow government determined that democratic elections would be held by early May, but by the end of January, the Modrow government itself proposed a change to March 18.³³⁶ By the early summer of 1990, there was an agreement between the two German governments that the first joint elections would be held in December of that year, but on August 2, de Maizière visited Kohl to inform him that his government could not contain the situation in the GDR until December, and he was proposing to bump-up of the date to October 14. In the latter half of August, the East German parliament voted with a two-third majority that October 3 would be the date to join the FRG.

The failing Economy and the Elections in March, 1990

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, one of the main reasons of continued discontent among the East German people was the failing economy. In 1989, the GDR’s per capita GNP was only one-third of the level of the West (~12,000 versus ~36,000 DM), and had a foreign debt of \$20.6 billion, and this took a turn for the worse in the early part of 1990. Thus, German unification and the rush to it can primarily be viewed as a result of the desires of the East German people to join the West German state in order to enjoy the financial prosperity of a Western market economy. This was visible through not only through the mass exodus of East Germans to the FRG after the opening of the Berlin Wall, but also through the change in the slogans of the demonstrations from “We are the people” during the last months of 1989 to “We are one people” leading-up until the March elections, and finally culminating in “If the (Deutsche) Mark does not come to us, we will go to her” as part of the demands for a rapid monetary merger.³³⁷

Even the results of the March elections were impacted by the fact that the majority of the people of the GDR wanted a quick route toward unification. The Alliance for Germany coalition ran on the platform of a German unity as soon as possible and according to Article 23 of the West German Basic Law (constitution), while the SPD called for a deliberate approach and according to Article 146.³³⁸

Article 23 was a provision in the Basic Law that enabled the future accession of the Saar region, an area that had been placed under the French administration after WWII. On the other hand, those who wrote the Basic Law intended for Article 146 to be the actual means through which German unity was to be achieved. This article called for the drafting of a new constitution after unification, while Article 23 allowed for the continuation of the West German constitution and its application to the areas and the people of the territory that joined the FRG. Supporters for Article 146 believed that it alone could enable the East German people to participate in the formation of a future state order, while advocates for Article 23 argued that the restoration of state unity would be better served on the basis of a stable and trusted (West German) constitution than in any new legal order.³³⁹

The West Germans were also motivated to a rush to unity through the economic collapse of the GDR. As in the international aspects, the internal issues of the unification process were being solved at the expense of the West German taxpayers. Thus, many of the West Germans officials wanted to get through the unification process as quickly as possible, since they were already paying to uphold the infrastructure of the GDR. During the last months of its existence the East German government was completely broke and needed money from the FRG to pay its employees, such as police and the military.³⁴⁰

The Rush to Unity

Helmut Kohl stated that if he had been asked in October of November 1989 the question when he thought German unity would occur, his answered would have been that there would be a European Union before a German unification. Kohl further stated that even at the end of that year, which was after he had given his Ten Point Plan speech, he did not envision the unification occurring within the year of 1990. These comments on the speed of the unification process by Kohl serve as a good indicator that even those individuals involved in pushing the unification process along were themselves surprised by the tempo in which the events occurred.³⁴¹

The rush to German unity was not limited as a surprise to the primary actors of the process, but also caused problems for those individuals and the institutions of both German states, especially their armed forces. Some of these issues have already been mentioned earlier, but as a refresher a summary of the problems will be listed again.

On the West German side the main difficulty was in the fact that it was not until after the official announcement by Kohl following the Caucasus meeting that the planners of the BMVg could convert all of the previously limited ideas on how to conduct the take over of the NVA by the Bundeswehr into concrete plans. This basically gave the West German planners as well as the negotiators from both East and West only two months to work out the details of the dissolution of the NVA and the integration of both its personnel and equipment into the Bundeswehr. The difficulties of the time-crunch were magnified by the fact that the Bundeswehr had little information on the size and composition of the NVA to include the amount of equipment and ammunition.

On the East German side, the constantly changing environment had an impact almost from the very beginning. Reform plans developed in early December had to be implemented at the beginning of January before their effects on the NVA were tested and analyzed. Although some the reforms were carried on, the change of the government in March 1990 prevented most of those initiated plans from coming to fruition. Some of the proposed changes were shelved at the government level, since the new administration itself was overwhelmed with the pace of the events. Furthermore, the new civilian leadership of the MfAV had brought along its own plans on how to change the NVA.

Analysis of the Problems caused by the Rush to Unity

The problem that the Bundeswehr knew little to none about the NVA was in part self-induced. As already noted earlier it was not until June that the Bundeswehr and NVA agreed to conduct seminars and meetings on information as well as in the areas of sport and culture as an exchange between the two militaries. Combined exercises, military competitions and exchange sponsorships were not allowed. Contacts were limited in order to calm both West German allies and the Soviets from their worries that the contacts between the two militaries were getting ahead of political agreements. As a result, it was not until all international issues were settled followed by the GDR's *Volkskammer* voting on August 23 for the GDR to join the FRG that the first BMVg liaison team went to set-up shop with the MfAV in Strausberg in the latter part of August.³⁴²

This lack of information brought about two problems. The first was that the BMVg did not provide information on their plans for the future of the NVA until very late. This may have

been due to the unknown factor of the NVA and because of that the Bundeswehr did not have enough information to formulate definite plans. The second problem included the fact that once plans had been announced, modifications or new superceding plans caused a lot of discontent especially to those negatively impacted by the changes. In these cases, it did not matter that new data may have required the change. Thus, it was a lot easier for the BMVg to not present the plans until their execution was quite certain. However, this caused worries of an uncertain future among the NVA, and resulted in the negative interpretation of the BMVg's actions and conduct on this issue.³⁴³

In preparation for unification, the MfAV was caught in a juggling act of trying to manage its alliance requirements with necessary personnel and large equipment reductions as well as structural changes in order to adapt the NVA to the Bundeswehr and ease the projected integration of the two militaries. The MfAV also had to cancel defense contracts that the GDR had with its Warsaw Pact partners. Furthermore, prior to the establishment of the de Maizière government, the old GDR regime had committed itself to participate in several Warsaw Pact exercises. In order not to upset the Soviets, Eppelmann agreed to uphold these commitments, albeit with a greatly reduced number of NVA participants. Nevertheless, this brought about severe criticism from the West, especially in the Western media, that Eppelmann had wasted FRG taxpayer money to conduct this exercise in late August of 1990.³⁴⁴

In May, Eppelmann reported that the first CFE treaty limitations required that the NVA reduce its personnel strength to approximately 100,000 by 1992/1993, and by June, new planning documents for projected reductions contained a future force strength of 56,200 soldiers and civilians in the NVA land forces.³⁴⁵ However, the rapid change in events prevented these reductions from being implemented and from having any significant impact on the final force structure prior to the dissolution of the NVA. It is probable that if German unity had occurred at a date after the planned reductions had taken effect, the take-over of a smaller NVA force would have allowed the Bundeswehr to absorb a larger percentage, which would have presented a more favorable picture of the integration process. Furthermore, many of the older and senior officers were forced to retire by demands of the Bundeswehr just prior to or after unification. On the other hand, a later date might have allowed for a more gradual and honorable dismissal of those officers from the NVA, once again providing for a more palatable situation to those affected by that process. A later unification would have not only reduced the burden of the number of NVA

personnel that the Bundeswehr had to absorb, but it would also have allowed the MfAV to dispose of more of the NVA's equipment prior to its dissolution, which in turn would have made the process a lot less complicated for the Bundeswehr.

Factors specific to the NVA

By now it should be evident that the rush to unification prevented the MfAV from implementing many of the projected changes it had for the NVA, and that some of these changes were especially designed to deal with many of the factors that were specific to the NVA in the hope of reducing their impact on the unification process. These factors included the large amount of equipment, which produced a rather ironic consequence for the fate of the NVA. The MfAV's intent was to substantially reduce the large inventory of the NVA, but reduction measures cost money and time, and the MfAV ran out of both of these before it could achieve the reductions it had set out to accomplish. In the end, the large amount of equipment and munitions became a factor that forced the Bundeswehr to take on more former NVA individuals, if only for a short period, than it originally had expected to do, which also had an impact on the interpretation of that process.

The other factor specific to the NVA included the general image of the NVA, which can be sub-divided into the perception of the NVA by the East German population, the relationship between the Bundeswehr and the NVA, and the actual personnel composition of the NVA. It is important to note that the image factor was not limited to the NVA, since the people's perception of all the armed organs of the state that supported its existence, such as the police, the border troops and the *Stasi* had an impact on how they were dealt with during the German unification process. Although there are both similarities and differences in the fates of these various state organs, this thesis will limited itself to the image factors that specifically impacted the NVA.

Equipment & Munitions

In September, with less than a month prior to unification, the Bundeswehr sent out survey teams in order to determine the amount and types of equipment. At first, an assessment was

made of all the active units and then in the second half of the month a total of 51 surveys teams went to the NVA reserve units to enquire on the equipment status at those locations. What these surveys soon discovered was that the NVA had more firepower than the entire Bundeswehr, even though the latter was four times as large.³⁴⁶

One reason for this large amount of equipment in relation to the active duty personnel strength was because of the plan for a rapid mobilization in the case of war, which was dictated by the Warsaw Pact agreements. In the time period of 1986-1989, an authorized strength between 148,000 and 153,000 NVA troops was assigned to the Warsaw Pact during peacetime conditions. In the case of conflict, there was a planned increase of 430,000 to 460,000 NVA soldiers through mobilization. This numbers do not account for the increase in forces not assigned to the Warsaw Pact. A report from late January 1990 showed that 26 battalions of the NVA active units only had 806 tanks and that there were 125 tanks at the military schools, while a total of 1,611 tanks were at the storage sites of 43 armor battalions that were part of the mobilization units.³⁴⁷

The NVA also acquired a vast amount of equipment from the *Kampfgruppen* and the *Stasi* when those units were disbanded. In a briefing by Hoffmann to the Round Table, he informed them that the NVA would be collecting approximately 1,000 armored wheeled-vehicles, 2,300 anti-aircraft and 2,100 standard machine guns, approximately 50,000 anti-tank weapons with 500,000 munitions, over 360,000 automatic rifles and about 135,000 pistols, and over 300 million bullets.³⁴⁸

The table below compares the amount of equipment listed, which the NVA possessed as of March 15, 1990, in comparison to the amount the Bundeswehr had to take-over and dispose of after October 3, 1990. The March numbers were in the summary by Defense Minister Theodor Hoffmann as a hand-over report to his successor Defense Minister Eppelmann. The equipment numbers that the Bundeswehr had to dispose of came from a 1997 report by the BMVg.³⁴⁹

Table 2. Summary of NVA Equipment.

	March 15, 1989	October 3, 1990
Main Battle Tanks	2,570	2,761
Armored & Special Purpose Vehicles	6,440	9,467
Artillery Systems	2,390	2,199
Antitank systems	1240	*
Anti-aircraft systems	3330	*
Planes	299 (combat only)	446 (transportation & combat aircraft)
Helicopters	187	185
Ships	79 (main ships)	82 (main ships) 126 (small crafts)
Vehicles & Trailers	*	133,900
Small Arms	*	1.38 million
Ammunition	*	304,000 tons

* No numbers listed in this category.

The 15th of March numbers do not include the equipment that the NVA had collected from the border troops, the *Kampfgruppen* and the *Stasis*, which had been held at central storage sites of the NVA until destruction. Since this equipment was collected during a time when there was a lot of chaos in the NVA and under conditions of time constraints, there was a high degree of disorganization and a general lack of accountability. This is a contributing factor to why there is a discrepancy in some of the numbers listed for March 15, for it is highly improbable that the amount of equipment increased between March and October 1990. By early summer, the GDR's own defense industries had greatly reduced or discontinued their productions, and many of the defense contracts had been or were in the process of being cancelled, a clear indication that the GDR was pursuing a policy of equipment reduction by all means possible.³⁵⁰

The NVA's accountability system may have also been flawed because of the high secrecy and stove-type style of reporting information. A sign of evidence can be found in Eppelmann's discussion on the impact of the withdrawal of the NVA from the Warsaw Pact, where he lists

equipment numbers in June that are higher than those listed by Hoffmann in March. The problem that this presents is that when the senior leaders of the MfAV discuss their efforts of conducting equipment reductions. When a comparison is made between the numbers listed in old NVA reports and what is later listed in the BMVg report, the increase in the number of some of the equipment puts the seriousness of the reduction efforts into question and may incorrectly influence the overall interpretation of those individuals' intent.³⁵¹

When interpreting the difficulty of the reduction process, it is necessary to consider more than just the time constraints that handicapped many of the efforts attempts, for the GDR was further handicapped by the financial limitations of its failing economy. According to Eppelmann, the complete dismantling and disposal of a main battle tank costs approximately 70,000 DM. As already noted, during the final period prior to unification, the GDR was so financially broke that it had to request money from the BMVg to pay the NVA soldiers. Thus, the failing economy once again impacted the MfAV positive attempts of reducing the equipment to lessen the complexity of the unification process.³⁵²

The BMVg had its own problems with the tempo of the unification process in regards to the equipment issue. Because of the lack of official contact until after the BMVg liaison team went to Strausberg, the planning process for the disposal of the former NVA equipment remained limited until Kommando Ost took command of all the equipment and munitions. The guarding and accountability became a high priority for LTG Schönbohm and his soldiers. At the same time, the Bundeswehr lacked the experience in the handling and disposition of the equipment and the munitions. West German officers, who had to deal with the disposal of hazardous material, noted that in some areas the NVA had specialists that had already developed procedures that were very efficient in that area. The argument also added that if more emphasis had been placed on retaining those assets, the Bundeswehr might have had an easier time in handling the disposal of environmental unfriendly and hazardous material and equipment.³⁵³

Another consequence of not having enough people to handle the disposition of the equipment was that some of the former NVA personnel were asked to stay-on as *Weiterverwender* without a guarantee for their future. In spite of the need for the services of these men, no one could promise them that if they stayed, they would be able to stay in the Bundeswehr. Many of these NVA soldiers contributed to the material reductions, to include the transfer of a substantial amount of equipment to the U.S. and other allies in support of Desert

Shield/Storm, but only a few would eventually be taken into the Bundeswehr permanently. Nevertheless, they all worked loyally until the day they were discharged.

There were senior Bundeswehr officers, who felt that the former NVA soldiers that decided to stay were fully aware of their chances of not receiving a long-term career; Schönbohm himself stated, “We needed the help of officers and NCOs from the NVA, but we could not hide the fact that in the long run we could only take a limited number of them into the Bundeswehr”. However, there were several senior West German officers who expressed feelings of guilt for not being able to do more for those of the NVA, who served loyally until the end of their time. Those officers as well as others were frustrated that they were helpless against the projected planning structure and integration process set by the BMVg. In some cases, the efforts of the West German were successful, such as in what was known as ‘Schönbohm’s donation’. In this situation, LTG Schönbohm had been able to retain up to 1,500 more personnel under the justification that they were key personnel. On the other hand, those former NVA members that did not receive a continuation probably had a biased interpretation of that incident and the overall integration process, since it must have seem unfair to them that others were picked as ‘key personnel’, while they were not.³⁵⁴

The NVA – Perception and Realities

Perceptions by the East German people. Many East Germans had a negative or apathetic attitude towards the NVA, which was in part due to the isolation of the NVA from the general population. There were several reasons for this isolation, with one of these being that the contact between the civilian world and the NVA was very limited. The NVA members and their families generally lived in residential areas built especially for them, which created a form of a state within a state. This was reinforced by the high level of secrecy that existed around the NVA and within it.³⁵⁵

This secrecy was something the NVA had acquired from the Soviet forces, which until June of 1986 still had sectioned off almost 40% of the GDR. These restricted areas were used to mask flight training areas, equipment testing, exercises; they were also used for deception purposes and to keep their own soldiers away from the civilian population. Although the area was later reduced to 25%, these restrictive areas contributed to the discontent that the East

German had for the Soviets. As a result, they were un-welcomed guests, with the NVA not fairsing much better as they were tolerated as unpopular relatives.³⁵⁶

Another reason for the isolation was the heavy workload and constant high readiness state of the NVA anywhere from 75% to 85%. This combat readiness was standard throughout the NVA, which meant that most soldiers had to live and spend their time-off close to their bases, regardless of whether it was a weekend or over the holidays. In short, the NVA was an “Army for war—a war machine. While in the Bundeswehr the individual occupied center stage, in the NVA everything was sacrificed for combat readiness.” Furthermore, workdays lasted at least ten to eleven hours, often they were even longer, which meant that time with the family was limited and for most being able to leave the base on a Saturday by two o’clock was considered a privilege.³⁵⁷

According to Herspring the reasons behind this high level of combat readiness was to help convince the Soviets that the NVA was an indispensable ally in the event of war. It also kept the NVA officers from having time to think about political questions, while convincing the rank and file of the danger presented by the imperialistic West. After all, the NVA would not be in such a high state of alert, if it was not under the constant threat of an attack by NATO and the FRG. On the other hand, German historians disagree with that interpretation, since they believe that the NVA never was a true partner in the eyes of the Soviets, but only a subordinate who was forced to carry out Soviet orders in a time of conflict. This also contributed to the success of the propaganda that the West was a constant and imminent threat to the Socialist countries, since the high level of secrecy that the Soviets practice towards the East German military leadership, limited the amount of individuals who really were aware of the actual threat from the West.³⁵⁸

The most probable reason that the East Germans initially disliked the NVA was because they saw them as one of the pillars that supported the party regime. However, Ablaß believed that during the revolution in the fall of 1989, the actions of the NVA made it a true ‘Armed Forces of the People’ and that at that time the popularity of the NVA had risen substantially among the East German people. It was not until the economic and financial crisis in the months leading up to unification that the NVA’s popularity dropped substantially. The reason for this change can be understood in the fact that while the unemployment rate among the civilians was on a constant increase, the members of the NVA were still employed and getting paid their full salary, which in itself had always been much higher than the average pay in the GDR. This factor

along with the negative press, which the NVA was receiving primarily in the Western media in the months leading up unification, resulted in the situation that the NVA did not have much of a lobby when it came to the decisions on their fate that were stipulated in the unification treaty.³⁵⁹

Bundeswehr – NVA relationship. In a previous chapter most of the perceived differences between the NVA and Bundeswehr were presented in the interpretations of the various authors. The table below will summarize the most common perceived differences between the two armed forces.³⁶⁰

The importance of this comparison does not lie in the factual truth of the various aspects of the differences between the two armed forces. Instead, it is primarily a representation of the perception of the differences between the Bundeswehr and the NVA that existed in the minds of most of the officers of the Bundeswehr and the planners and leadership at the BMVg, who were involved in the unification process, since these perceptions became factors that influenced the final framework of the integration process.³⁶¹

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that personal contact and experience of the Bundeswehr leaders with the former NVA members modified their views and provided for a different outlook on the NVA in general. Comparisons between early comments by West German officers, especially prior to unification, with those of recent publications show a differences and variations of how the character and composition of the NVA has been interpreted.³⁶²

Table 3. A Comparison between the Bundeswehr and the NVA.

	Bundeswehr	NVA
Political-Moral Attitude	- Citizen in Uniform - <i>Innere Führung</i> ³⁶³ (core concept)	- Almost no separation between party & military consciousness - <i>Feindbild</i> ³⁶⁴
Leadership Style	- <i>Auftragstaktik</i> ³⁶⁵	- Used highly directed principles (<i>Befehlstaktik</i>)
Officer Corps	- enlisted/officers ratio (low % of officers) - versatile career path	- top heavy (higher % of officers) - highly specialized careers

Table 3. Continued

NCO Corps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - strong NCA corps - known for independence and self-confident character 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no genuine NCO corps - minimum delegation of authority to NCOs
Soldiers' Quality of Life (QOL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - strong focus on QOL - high level of freedom even during conscription period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - deficient living conditions - extremely restricted; very little leave or time off
Equipment and Readiness State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - minimum alert status (30%) - combat equipment and ammunition stored in arms room 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - high combat readiness (85%) - weapons and munitions stored w. vehicles in heated buildings

NVA Personnel Composition. One factor that deserves specific consideration is the personnel composition of the NVA. According to Herspring the normal enlisted-officer ratio was approximately 8:1;³⁶⁶ this ratio decreased drastically after the reform changes in the early months of 1990. In his report, Hoffmann had stated that as of March 15 there were 135,000 soldiers in the NVA with 36,000 of those being were officers, which changed the ration to 3.75 enlisted per every officer. Upon unification, the 24,000 officers among the 90,000 soldiers that decided to stay gave the same ratio. Thus, if it had not been for the discharge of the officers over 55 and those of senior rank, as well as all the political officers, the amount of officers might have been even higher.³⁶⁷

As already noted earlier, Hoffmann attributed the drop in the number of enlisted soldiers by March of 1990 to the changes in enlistment and conscript requirements. These changes further contributed to the reduction of enlisted forces up until unification. Furthermore, many of the younger NCO probably saw better chances in the civilian economy with most of those leaving during the last few months prior to unification while jobs were still available. It can be presumed that this also affected the younger officers of the NVA, for even after the discharge of the senior officers in September 90, the number of *Stabsoffiziere* (field grade officers, usually Major and above) upon unification was 9,000, which was more than one third of the total amount of officers.³⁶⁸

By the second phase, at which time the former NVA were either selected as *SaZ 2* or were allowed to stay as *Weiterverwender*, the number of *Stabsoffiziere* who received *SaZ 2* was

only 1,000 (almost a 90% decrease), while the junior officers' total went from 15,000 to 5,000 (a decrease of 66%). This can be explained through several factors such as that those over 50 had to leave and that a large number of senior NVA officers were reduced in rank; this in turn moved them from field grade category to company grade (Captain and below). In the end, 300 *Stabsoffiziere* became career officers, while only 65 became contract soldiers. Among the lower ranking officers, 2,050 became career soldiers and 635 were selected for continuation as officers in contract status.³⁶⁹

Von Scheven explained that the Bundeswehr only had a total of 40,000 officers and thus it was impossible to keep all of the former NVA officer. Key was that the projected number of Bundeswehr to be stationed in the territories of the former GDR was 50,000. At a 10:1 ratio, this would require 5,000 officers, with some of these projected to be from the Bundeswehr-West and some to be individuals newly commissioned as officers. Thus, initially the 3,050 officers selected for a continuation beyond *SaZ 2* may have seemed a low overall number, but considering the Bundeswehr needs and method of planning, this number is more justifiable. On the other hand, the BMVg had originally planned to accept approximately former NVA 4,000 officers beyond *SaZ 2*, but with almost 1,000 officers less being selected than projected, an individual who was not selected would interpret this result as a severe injustice on the part of the Bundeswehr.³⁷⁰

The Impact and Final Outcome determined by the Competing Factors

The fate of the NVA can be summarized as the result of a variety of factors acting with and competing against each other. These factors can be grouped according to how they impacted the need and desire for the participation of former NVA members in the post-unification German armed forces. One category included those factors that caused the individuals from West Germany to 'not need/not want' the NVA individuals in the Bundeswehr, while the other category consisted of the factors that created a 'need/want' situation for a NVA participation in the military of a unified Germany.

The primary 'did not need' factor was the Two-plus-Four treaty limitation of 380,000 soldiers for a unified Germany. Thus, with troop strength at 480,000 prior to unification, the

Bundeswehr was going to have to reduce its forces, even without the addition of the former NVA troops. This in turn caused some concern among the Bundeswehr personnel that for every extra NVA individual accepted, one soldier from the Bundeswehr would have to be discharged.

The NVA's top heaviness, which had increased during the final months of its existence, became another issue that contributed to the 'did not need' category. The Bundeswehr had sufficient senior officers and since they probably had a strong influence on the decision making process, they were not going to let any of their own be replaced by one of the senior officers of that 'military of the Party'. As a result, agreements were made with the still existing East German Defense Ministry to 'retire' all officer's over 55 years of age and of senior rank. Originally, this policy was also supposed to affect those between 50 and 54, but due to the negative consequences this would have had on the stability of the NVA during the transition process, it was decided to post-pone the discharge of the 50-54 age group until after unification.

After unification, the Bundeswehr conducted some changes to its personnel regulations that allowed military members to retire at a younger age or change their career status to that of a contract status in order to be discharged early. This helped further reduce the Bundeswehr personnel strength, but had no impact on the number of former NVA projected for acceptance, since that decision had preceded the personnel regulation changes.

The factors of the 'did not want' category included all the differences between the Bundeswehr and the NVA listed in the previous chapter. As already noted, the unknown situation that existed between the two armed forces added to the exaggeration of the NVA stereotype, and although several of these characteristics may have been appropriate for some members of the NVA, they were not applicable across the board to all East German soldiers. However, this negative stereotype was a view shared by many from the West, and their dissatisfaction with the potential of taking NVA members into the Bundeswehr became the subject of heated debates; the negative press coverage on the NVA in the Western media during the months leading up to unity further added fuel to the fire. On the other hand, major changes in perception became commonplace among Bundeswehr officers, when these had to work with former NVA soldiers after unification. Thus, a period of 'getting to know each other' might have reduced prejudicial attitudes, but the rush to unity never allowed for such a situation to take place.

There were several reasons that caused a ‘need’ or ‘want’ for an NVA participation in the post-unification Bundeswehr with one of the key factors being the necessity for soldiers to guard and draw-down all of the NVA’s facilities and equipment. Technically, this could have been accomplished with only Bundeswehr soldiers from the West, but this might have caused further complications the entire unification process. First, the Two-plus-Four stipulated that no NATO-assigned Bundeswehr units were allowed to deploy or be stationed in the former East German territories until all Soviet forces had departed that area. Had the West Germans decided to discharge all of the NVA soldiers and put Bundeswehr-West troops in their place, the BMVg would have had to withdraw some of its forces from their NATO alliance.

After the West German forces had been disassociated from the NATO status, they could have gone East to occupy the facilities of the former NVA, but with the presence of approximately 400,000 Soviet soldiers still in the GDR, it would have been against all military principles to send the Bundeswehr units to the former East Germany without the means to protect themselves. Since very few West German soldiers were trained on the NVA weapon-systems, the Bundeswehr units would have had to take along their own weapon-systems and ammunition. The perception of a deployment of armed West German forces to the former GDR might have had implications at both the international and national level. The Soviet Union could have read this incorrectly as an aggressive move by the West and it might have detrimentally affected the positive relations that had been developing between the East and the West. Furthermore, the East Germans might have viewed the act as less-than-favorable since it might have given them the impression that it was a semi-occupation of their former territory by the Bundeswehr.

The exclusion of the NVA soldiers from post-unification German armed forces would also have been counter to the government’s efforts to give the East Germans the feeling that it was not a one-sided take-over by the FRG, especially since there had been some East Germans, who had complained against the way the entire process had occurred. Thus, in the attempt to achieve inner-German unity, the West German policy makers were looking for as many opportunities as possible to demonstrate equality in the unification process. Furthermore, Chancellor Kohl believed that positive feelings among the East Germans were a necessary precondition in order to appeal to the majority of the citizens of the new States to get their vote at the first all-German elections in December of 1990.

This is not to say that some of the West German's involved in determining the fate of the NVA were not motivated by humanitarian factors such as compassion and feelings of brotherhood to their East German compatriots. However, considering the fact that even the change in feelings among the senior leadership of the military involved in the integration process did not cause much of a change in the final outcome of the pre-set goals, it is highly unlikely that the humanitarian factors had much of a chance in competing against the other factors that had an influence on both the dissolution of the NVA and the integration of its personnel into the Bundeswehr.

In comparing the competing factors and the resulting out-come, the impression that develops is that the first priorities of the West German government and the Bundeswehr were of national security and in meeting the guidelines of the Two-plus-Four treaty, followed by taking care of their own troops. Then as a last priority and primarily because of a necessity to show compliance with the spirit of German unity, the welfare of selected individuals of the NVA became a factor of importance to the senior German political and military leadership. Thus, as a result of the interplay of the various influential factors a framework was developed to guide the military aspect of the unification process. This framework also supported the projected personnel matrix, which in turn determined the maximum number of NVA soldiers that would have a long-term opportunity in the Bundeswehr. Although a few number adjustments were conducted during the process to ease the transition period for both the Bundeswehr and the individuals involved, this only allowed for a temporary continuation of a larger number of NVA members, as it did not change the final pre-set goal of the personnel matrix. Furthermore, the step-wise dissolution and integration of the NVA soldiers into the Bundeswehr, made it possible to maintain the necessary force in the GDR to deal with the equipment and munitions issues. After the need for those individuals had passed, they were discharged, which was to the dislike of many of those individuals concerned and was not interpreted very positively.

The question of how fair or equitable the result was will be answered according to the impact that the final result had on the individual answering that question. This is another reason for the different viewpoints on the way the Bundeswehr handle the fate of the NVA, for those individuals impacted negatively will have a more negative interpretation, while those that had a better experience will see the process in a more favorable light. Individuals involved in the execution process may also have a different perspective than those only involved in the planning

process. Furthermore, an individual's position on the individual factors that influenced the unification process will definitely have an impact on the interpretation of the entire process.

The explanation that could decide the fairness of the process would have to determine if there had been any other possible path to unification and integration than the one that was taken. Some of these answers are locked away in documents that will remain undisclosed until they have met the 30-year period after which they are declassified and made available for research purposes. In the meantime, those interested in the topic, especially those individuals who did not experience any or only a very small amount of the events, may end up basing their interpretations of the fate of the NVA on which writer or historian was able to present his or her point of view and arguments most convincingly.

In regards to the success of the dissolution of the NVA and the integration of its personnel into the Bundeswehr, an applicable analogy would be Wolfgang Zapf's evaluation of the entire unification event. Utilizing Winston's Churchill's famous dictum on democracy, Zapf replaced the word 'democracy' with the term 'unification' and coined the following statement: "Among the many uncertain possibilities of the unification process the achieved result is the least negative."³⁷¹ The analogy to German unification is actually appropriate for two reasons. First, both events were impacted by a variety of factors that included a complex international environment and a rapid pace that made the results of the processes the best that was available at that time. Second, although for analysis purposes it is possible to isolate the military aspect of German unification, it is nevertheless intractably linked to the entire process, and if the latter is not considered a success than none of the individual aspects will be. Thus, with German unity still not complete fifteen years later, the results need to be re-evaluated and some of the decisions that impacted the former military personnel of the GDR require changes in order to improve the overall situation that currently exists between the people of the two former Germanys. A summary of these problems will be addressed next in the epilogue.

EPILOGUE

UNRESOLVED ISSUES

Introduction

“Fifteen years after the Wall came down, there are still two Germanys.”³⁷²

The above quote is from an article in *the Economist* on the problems that still exist between the former East and West Germany as a result of some of the decisions that were made during the unification process. The issues include an economy in the new states that has failed to become self-sustaining, an unemployment that is higher than the German average, and an exodus of young people to the old states. Instead of “flourishing landscapes” and “now comes together what belongs together”, many former East Germans have become discontent with the fact that unification did not produce the quick and prosperous results that were initially expected; some have even taken to the streets to protest against economic reforms that hit them much harder than the fellow compatriots from western Germany.³⁷³

Under these circumstances every minor incident becomes another issue that illustrates the unequal conditions that still exist between the eastern and western parts of Germany. This also means that certain issues, which may only have had an impact on a small percentage of the former GDR population, have now become factors that contribute to the East German’s overall feeling of being “second-class citizens”. As a result, it is irrelevant that the NVA with approximately 100,000 members prior to unity represented less than 1% of the East German population. On the other hand, perception has been influenced by the fact that most of the policies had some form of negative impact on the former NVA soldiers, to include those individuals that were integrated into the Bundeswehr.

Former NVA members and government officials have continuously been challenging many of the military specific policies and procedures that were implemented during the unification process, with the argument that they represent a serious discrimination to many from the former East German armed forces and have had an unfair impact on the lives of those soldiers. These unresolved issues specific to the military include the rejection of NVA awards or decorations, the lack of acknowledgement of military training and professional degrees granted during the existence of East Germany, the unequal salaries that still exist today within the Bundeswehr, and the unequal retirement pay for former NVA soldiers. The final and most contested issue deals with the use of the former NVA rank as an official title.

As already noted, by themselves these issues would probably not amount to much discontent among the people living in the former GDR. However, the issues now reinforce other factors that until they are resolved will continue to have a negative emotional-psychological impact, on not just former NVA soldiers, but also on the former East German population as a whole. Furthermore, all of these issues are also factors that have influenced both the past and present interpretations of the fate of the NVA.

Open Issues

No Recognition of NVA Decorations and Badges of Honor

The former NVA soldiers, who had become members of the Bundeswehr, were not and still may not wear decorations or badges of honor that were given to them during their time in the NVA. Although it impacted almost every former NVA member that decided to join the Bundeswehr, it is also one the least contested and has caused the least amount of uproar. One reason for this is the small number of individuals that still are impacted by this policy. Today, it applies to less than 5,000 former NVA individuals who are currently in the Bundeswehr. Furthermore, these soldiers have spent approximately 15 years in the unified military and during this time they probably received decorations and badges from the Bundeswehr, which they can now wear on their uniform.

The aspect of this issue that did cause some discontent among former East German military members was the BMVg's justification for the policy. The BMVg argued that because the NVA was a party and class army of a communist system, one could assume that political motivations were among the top prerequisites for awarding decorations. Furthermore, in the NVA there was no separation between purely military and political decorations. On the other hand, such a distinction existed in the badges and medals of the former Wehrmacht.

The justification additionally argues that comparisons to the past procedures that were applied to former Wehrmacht decorations are only minimally applicable to those of the NVA. The FRG had always seen itself as the legal descendant of the German Reich, and as such the authorization arose to allow the wearing of certain Wehrmacht decorations. However, the GDR not only never saw itself as the legal descendant of the German Reich, its elected parliament freely decided to join the FRG, whereby the GDR government and all its laws and regulations ceased to exist. As a result, its former soldiers had no authorization to wear any of their medals once they joined the Bundeswehr.

The BMVg further argued that any comparison with the decorations of the Wehrmacht overlooked the fact that it was possible (and mandatory) to wear former Wehrmacht decoration only in the modified form without the swastika. The same was not possible with NVA badges and medals, since those were created in such a manner that by leaving out the GDR-typical emblems or writings, there would hardly have been anything left except for a bare metal disk. Other decorations, above all the badges of merit of the NVA looked so similar to the West German national merit badges that there could have been the confusion to which was which. Thus, according to the BMVg, if the above-mentioned concerns had been applied, a mixture of permissive and forbidden decorations could have caused further confusion and discontent within the military.

Difference in Salary

In the FRG, military personnel are considered to be public officials (civil servants), and the *Einigungsvertrag* stipulated that all such individuals in the new States would only receive a certain percentage of what their counterparts in the old States were receiving. Thus, after unification the standard percentage of pay for the former NVA soldiers who joined the Bundeswehr was 60% of what their West German colleagues received, and the justification was

that the new States could not afford to pay their public officials at the same level as those from the old States. Furthermore, due to a continuation in the lower financial capabilities of the new States, the equalization process occurred in a slow and gradual manner. Today, the percentage has reached 92.5%.

Shortly after unification, LTG Jörg Schönbohm and MG Werner Von Scheven had actually viewed the difference in pay as a good example of equality. They believed that whereas the members of the NVA through a much higher income had been privileged compared to the East German civilians, the former NVA soldiers were now receiving no more and no less than all other public officials in the new States. On the other hand, there were some historians and most of the former NVA members, especially those that were not integrated, who interpreted the difference in pay as a fact that proved the Bundeswehr was and still is not truly an 'armed forces of unity'.³⁷⁴

Volker Koop argued that shortly after unification, the difference between the former NVA members and the Bundeswehr-West soldiers was even greater than just 40%. The West German soldiers received an additional pay for being stationed in the former East called 'Bush-Geld'. As of April 1, 1990, these bonuses ranged from 1,500 to 2,500 DM depending on the individual's pay-grade. Adding the bonus to the pay of the individuals from the West, a comparison to that of the former NVA individuals put the latter's pay at 40% and lower to that of the Bundeswehr-West soldiers. Experiences of such financial disparities had certainly left the former NVA individuals impacted by pay disparity with permanent negative memories of the overall integration event.³⁷⁵

Today, the percentage rule applies to all Bundeswehr soldiers who receive their military appointment in the new States. The location where the individual receives the appointment is the only criteria whether the full salary is paid or not; the individual's origin or the home of residence does not play any role. However, as soon as a soldier is stationed in the old States, that individual will receive 100% of his pay and this claim to full pay will remain permanent for the individual even after returning to the new States. As a result, there are soldiers with different pay levels stationed in the units located in the new States. Anyone previously appointed or stationed in the old States receives 100%, while those individuals who were never appointed or stationed in the old States receive 92.5%.

As noted by the researcher Nina Leonhard, a recent survey showed that this difference did not cause much of a challenge to the ‘inner unity’ of the Bundeswehr.³⁷⁶ This was especially true among the younger members of the Bundeswehr, where there was a consensus across the board in regards to the attitude on pay between those that hailed from the East and those that hailed from the West. However, a difference in attitudes existed between the career/contract soldiers and the conscripts, demonstrating that conscripts in general, regardless if they received 100% or 92.5%, consider their pay to be inadequate. Thus, the complaints on the differences in pay probably was and still is being voiced by those individuals, who experienced the period during which there was a major pay disparity. Furthermore, complaints are certainly being voiced by individuals who continue to interpret every difference as an argument against the Bundeswehr’s claim of having contributed to Germany’s ‘inner unity’.

Unequal Retirement Pay

This issue has already been addressed in the earlier chapter on the various interpretations, especially in the ones by LTC Becker and LTC Dobrig, and it affects both former NVA soldiers who stayed in the Bundeswehr and those who did not. The members of the latter group received a lower retirement percentage than what had been allotted to them in the regulations of the former East Germany. Instead, many former NVA soldiers, in particular the senior officers, receive the bare minimum, and it is a common belief that this ruling is a form of punishment for the NVA cadre’s loyalty to the former GDR regime. However, even those individuals who stayed in the Bundeswehr have received and still receive a lower retirement percentage compared to their West German peers.

According to the Chapter East of the Bundeswehr association (DBwV-Ost), a recent court ruling stated that this difference was unconstitutional and that the German government had to rectify this situation in the near future. However, the DBwV-Ost does not believe that the individuals, who had been financially discriminated against by unfair treatment, will receive any back pay. As a result, these individuals will always feel that they were treated unfairly, and it can be expected that these unpleasant memories will continue to contribute to the negative interpretation of the unification process.

No Recognition of Former Military or Academic Training

In accordance with article 37, section I of the unification treaty, all nationally acknowledged or awarded academic professional identifiers were only to be used if they were of equal value to West German training. Since many of the educational achievements acquired at institutes of the NVA and other East German military academies were considered to be lacking compatibility with the training at Bundeswehr institutions, the BMVg decided not to recognize most of the previous military or academic training that the former NVA soldiers had conducted in the East German armed forces, as well as most of the academic professional identifiers of the GDR.³⁷⁷

Initially, this decision was highly criticized by many of the NVA officers, especially those who had received significant training and education while in the NVA. On the other hand, today the issue only applies to a small number of less than 5,000 former NVA individuals who still serve in the Bundeswehr. With almost 15 years in the Bundeswehr, many of these individuals have probably had the opportunity to attend classes and courses for which they have received official recognition. Thus, as with the previous issues, most of the discontent is probably voiced by those individuals, who did not remain in the Bundeswehr and experienced a lack of recognition of their military and academic training in the civilian world; they are certainly more prone to seeing the unification process as a generally negative event.

No Use of Former NVA Rank

The regulations of wearing a rank as a title, to include the use of the rank after public service, can be found in § 132a of the German Penal code and the relevant ordinance on the rights of civil servants, judges and soldier. In the regulations it is stipulated that titles may not be used indiscriminately and that a legal basis must exist in order to wear a rank as a title. This legal basis exists for all Bundeswehr soldiers who have been honorably discharged, and those that departed for retirement purposes are allowed to use the last rank as an official title followed by “retired” (*ausser Dienst* or a.D.), while those individuals that have been discharged prior to retirement age (i.e. contract soldiers) can use their rank as a title followed by “in the reserves” (*der Reserve* or d.R.). Once the latter reaches retirement age the ‘d.R.’ changes to ‘a.D.’

The BMVg argues that no such basis exists in the case of the former NVA. As a result, it is illegal for individuals of the former East German military to use their former rank as an

official title. The BMVg justifies this with the following. First, the NVA's legal basis was stipulated in the appropriate laws of the GDR, but in accordance to the unification treaty those rights became invalid upon German unity. Furthermore, service in the NVA is classified as "served in a foreign military". This is stipulated in the German conscription law that acted as a waiver for individuals who had conducted service in a foreign military in order to prevent them from having to join the Bundeswehr to meet their required conscription obligation dictated by German law. The term did not apply to those that had served in the Wehrmacht, because the Wehrmacht and the Bundeswehr had not existed simultaneously. As a result, service in the Wehrmacht was not considered as service-time in a foreign military, and former Wehrmacht soldiers were allowed to use their former rank in an official capacity.³⁷⁸

In 1994, the SPD argued that using the term "served in a foreign military" showed a serious lack of compassion. The SPD's attempts to change the status of the former NVA members to one of "served in the NVA" as well as allowing the use of the rank as a title along with "*a.D. der ehem. NVA*" (retired from the former NVA) were unsuccessful. The BMVg's position was that it did not have the authority to officially permit the use of the title, since this would require a change in the conscription law that governed that regulation. It did not support this change, since it felt that the recognition of NVA ranks would cause a multitude of problems in the Bundeswehr. One of these was the fact that upon becoming longer-term members of the Bundeswehr, some of the former NVA officers became NCOs, while other officers as well as NCOs were reduced in rank. The BMVg believed that allowing the former NVA colleagues of these now-Bundeswehr soldiers the right to use their rank as a title would be considered as unfair by those individuals and could cause moral problems within the Bundeswehr.³⁷⁹

The BMVg further claimed that it would be absurd to allow former NVA soldiers, who had become Bundeswehr members, to use their former NVA rank after they were discharged or retired from the Bundeswehr. Another concern was that by allowing former NVA members the right to use their rank as a title, these individuals would demand to be treated according to their former rank, to include retirement pay and the other support that is received after being discharged from the military. The BMVg believed that this factor alone would have had serious financial consequences to the German government. There was also the fear that any special ruling for former NVA members could cause even more demands that would eventually lead to a complete equalization of the service performed in the NVA to that of the Bundeswehr.

A claim by the BMVg states that it is up to the individual former NVA soldier to decide if he wants to make reference to his former service and rank in the NVA. This in turn brings up an interesting question on the BMVg's position regarding a related issue. When writing about former NVA officers that worked for the *Kommando-Ost*, LTG Schönbohm used their former rank every time he mentioned those individuals. He had published his book in 1992, which was the same year that he retired and went to work for the BMVg as a State Secretary. Thus, he technically wrote the book while still in the official capacity as a representative of the BMVg. It can only be assumed that this caused some conflict with those defending the official position of the BMVg, and may have resulted in the BMVg's claim that individuals can decide on when to make reference to the former NVA's rank. Otherwise, the perception would have developed that the BMVg's position was in conflict with the actions of one of the Bundeswehr's former top military officers involved in the integration process. It is further interesting to note that nothing has been written on this peculiar situation, and it certainly deserves research once the official documents on the internal activities of the BMVg are declassified after the 30-year grace period.³⁸⁰

Conclusion

All of the unresolved issues have been used by critics as justifications for the claim that there was no equal and fair treatment for the former NVA soldiers during the military aspect of unification process. However, the issue that has received the most criticism is the one of "no use of former rank as title/ served in foreign military". The other three issues primarily affect those that are still in the Bundeswehr, and the reasons these have not caused such a great amount of discontent in general is because 1) they only had an impact on a comparatively small number of individuals, 2) these individuals had achieved their primary goal of staying in the military and as a result those issues only had a minor impact on their emotional and financial state of well-being. Thus, the soldiers impacted by the "no use of former rank as title/ served in foreign military" were those that left prior to or shortly after the integration process; they not only lost their employment, but also their biography that went along with that employment.

In the discussion of the various interpretations most of former East German contemporary witnesses and several of the German historians addressed the “use of rank and foreign military” issue. Among the latter group, Koop considered that issue to be one of the major factors that caused substantial psychological damage to the self-esteem of the former NVA soldiers. Werner Ablaß, the former State Secretary for the GDR, stated that the official retirement certificates he had given to the NVA generals, only days prior to unification, authorized those individuals to use their rank in the retired status. He further claimed that he had received approval by the BMVg to award these documents to the appropriate individuals.³⁸¹ The GDR’s last Minister of Defense, Rainer Eppelmann, argued that not being able to use the rank as a title as well as the label of having served in a foreign military negated much of the biographies of the former NVA soldiers, especially those that had spent most of their life in the military. He has continuously argued for an approval of the distinction “served in the NVA” as it would be free of judgment and would help alleviate the current injustice.³⁸²

On the other hand, not all pro-NVA lobbying-groups are in agreement with Eppelmann. The board members at Chapter East of the Bundeswehr association (DBwV-Ost) argued that the term “served in the NVA” would only cause further discrimination for the former NVA soldiers. This, they say, was the result of the BMVg’s continuous unfavorable statements on the NVA, which in the meantime had led to the development of a negative stigma on the former East German military. Although there is some validity to the latter statement, it is highly unlikely that Eppelmann’s proposal would lead to an increased discrimination. On the other hand, getting some form of official recognition would be the first step in the right direction. Instead, the BMVg has now used the statement of the DBwV-Ost as a justification for its own claim that only a complete equalization of the NVA with that of the Bundeswehr would satisfy the demands of the organizations lobbying for the NVA.

In September 2004, *Der Spiegel* published an article on some of the problems of German unification. It also addressed the fact that even former Chancellor Kohl admitted to have also committed some mistakes during the process. Kohl further stated that in retrospect it was a mistake to have deprived the former NVA soldiers of their rank.³⁸³ In the same year, the FDP tried to push a change in the ruling similar to what the SPD tried to do in 1994. The FDP argued that in recent years many of the former Warsaw Pact states have become NATO members, and now all of their senior soldiers have the same privileges in NATO just as the soldiers of the

Bundeswehr. Furthermore, there is no distinction between the officers that were in those armed forces prior to 1991 and the officers that came after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. Thus, it is no longer applicable that the former NVA soldiers are not allowed the honor to carry their former rank as a title.³⁸⁴

There is also a serious fallacy with the BMVg's argument that a change to the ruling would cause problems for those NVA members who are still in the Bundeswehr. It does not take into account that during integration only 600 former NVA officers became NCOs, and that with almost 15 years having passed since unification, many of the senior officers or NCOs that were reduced in rank have since retired. Today, most of those former NVA soldiers who are still in the Bundeswehr (~5000) were of junior rank at the time of unification and by now they have surpassed the rank that they held in the NVA. As a result, there should only be a small number of former NVA individuals who would consider the change in the ruling as unfair. This number is minuscule compared to the number of individuals, who have negative feelings because they are denied a part of their biographies. As mentioned earlier, the majority of the NVA individuals, who were able to stay in the Bundeswehr, probably consider themselves very fortunate, and many of them would not see it as a personal loss by allowing their former comrades some psychological satisfaction.

The strongest disagreement to a change in the ruling comes from Bundeswehr officers of the former West, who are generally in the rank of Major and above. They are individuals, who were junior officers during the unification process, and were probably influenced to some degree by the negative propaganda on the NVA during that time. Furthermore, part of the desire to be a soldier, especially an officer, is the pride and distinction that comes with that profession. This is shared among soldiers of Germany and the U.S. as well as most militaries in the world, and this pride of belonging to a unique group also causes its members to almost jealously protect all aspects of that distinction. A recent example of this occurred in the U.S. Army, when the decision was made that the non-field headgear of all Army personnel would be the black beret.³⁸⁵

Furthermore, the members of the Bundeswehr do not receive the same financial compensation as their peers in the U.S. military and the popularity of the military is much lower among the German population than among that of the U.S. As a result, the German officers probably compensate this with a stronger affiliation to their other privileges. Thus, it is understandable that the members of the Bundeswehr would strongly guard the distinction of

being able to use their former military rank as a title. Another reason why the higher ranking officers would have stronger feelings to the issue than the lower ranking members could be attributed to the socializing effect of life in the military.

The Bundeswehr officers probably have strong emotional feelings in regards to this issue, but there are arguments of similar weight that may influence their opinion in the other direction. As servants of the state, soldiers have an obligation to support the nation's defense and security interests. It naturally follows that this should also include the country's national interest, and in Germany's case, this would include a greater harmony between the people of the former East and West Germany. Since every little aspect of disparity is currently contributing to the emotional problems in an compounding fashion, it should be the moral duty of all Bundeswehr soldiers to truly contribute to the Bundeswehr's claim of being "an armed forces of unity". This requires putting aside individual pride for the sake of a larger good, and may yet prove to be the biggest challenge to military aspect of the German unification process.

NOTES

¹ This is a translation of part of a speech by Bundespräsident Horst Köhler commemorating the day of German unity in Erfurt on October 3, 2004. The German original version is provided below and can be found at

http://www.bundespraesident.de/-,11057,1/Reden-und-Interviews.htm?link=bpr_liste

“Die Deutschen haben ihr Land nach dem Dreißigjährigen Krieg wieder aufgerichtet und zu einem Hort der Bildung und der Kultur gemacht, sie haben es in den Freiheitskriegen von Grund auf reformiert und im 19. Jahrhundert die besten Universitäten der Welt aufgebaut, sie waren führend in allen Bereichen von Wissenschaft und Technik. Durch eigene größte Schuld und durch das Versagen vor allem der deutschen Eliten ist das alles dann zweimal verspielt worden, und Deutsche haben furchtbare Verbrechen begangen. Den höheren Preis dafür haben nach Kriegsende die Deutschen im Osten gezahlt.”

² Eric Solsten, ed., *Germany – A Country Study*, 3rd Edition. (Washington, D.C, 1996), pp. 76-96 & 118.

³ Bernd Linder, *Die Demokratische Revolution in der DDR 1989/90*, (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung, 2001), pp. 25-32; also, see Solsten, ed., *Germany – A Country Study*, pp. 120-124; and Hermann Weber, *Geschichte de DDR*, (München, Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1999), p. 468.

⁴ Werner Weidenfeld & Karl-Rudolf Korte (eds.), *Handbuch zur deutschen Einheit: 1949-1989-1999*. (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung, 1999), p. 160; also, see Weber, *Geschichte de DDR*, p. 469; and Solsten, ed., *Germany – A Country Study*, p. 123.

⁵ Stefan Wolle, *Die heile Welt der Diktatur – Alltag und Herrschaft in der DDR: 1971-1989*. (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung, 1999), pp. 320-321; also, see Weidenfeld, *Handbuch zur deutschen Einheit*, p.161. Benno Zanetti, *Der Weg zur Deutschen Einheit*. (München: Goldmann Verlag, 1991), p. 12.

⁶ Robert Grünbaum, *Deutsche Einheit* (Oplade: Leske + Budrich, 2000), p. 46; also, see Linder, *Die Demokratische Revolution in der DDR 1989/90*, pp. 77-88; Weber, *Geschichte de DDR*, pp. 476-477; and Solsten, ed., *Germany – A Country Study*, p. 124.

⁷ Gert-Joachim Glaessner, *The Unification Process in Germany. From Dictatorship to Democracy*. Translated by Colin B. Grant. (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1992), p. 117. The number 500,000 is listed in Linder, *Die Demokratische Revolution in der DDR 1989/90*, p. 89; and ~ 1,000,000 is listed in both Solsten, ed., *Germany – A Country Study*, p. 124, and Weber, *Geschichte de DDR*, p. 479.

⁸ Weidenfeld, *Handbuch zur deutschen Einheit*, p.161; also, see Weber, *Geschichte de DDR*, p. 480; Solsten, ed., *Germany – A Country Study* p. 124, and Linder, *Die Demokratische Revolution in der DDR 1989/90*, pp. 89 & 109.

⁹ Wolle, *Die heile Welt der Diktatur*, p. 326; also, see Linder, *Die Demokratische Revolution in der DDR 1989/90*, p. 106

¹⁰ Linder, *Die Demokratische Revolution in der DDR 1989/90*, pp. 106-108; also, see Wolle, *Die heile Welt der Diktatur*, pp. 326-327.

¹¹ Rainer Eppelmann, the last Defense Minister of the GDR, states in his book that the movement *Neue Forum* (New Forum) was not intended to become a party, but instead was to remain a people’s movement; see Rainer Eppelmann, *Wendewege. Briefe an die Familie*. (Berlin: Bouvier Verlag, 1992), p. 5.

¹² Benno Zanetti, *Der Weg zur Deutschen Einheit*. (München: Goldmann Verlag, 1991), p. 12; also, see Solsten, ed., *Germany – A Country Study* p. 126; Weidenfeld, *Handbuch zur deutschen Einheit*, p.161. For more on the role of the Round Table see Grünbaum, *Deutsche Einheit*, pp. 63-67.

¹³ For table showing numbers of the exodus in 1989 and 1990, see Grünbaum, *Deutsche Einheit*, p. 45.

¹⁴ Konrad H. Jarausch, *The Rush to German Unity*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 125; also, see Grünbaum, *Deutsche Einheit*, pp. 75-88; and Linder, *Die Demokratische Revolution in der DDR 1989/90*, p. 136.

¹⁵ Solsten, ed., *Germany – A Country Study* pp. 126-128; also, see Weidenfeld, *Handbuch zur deutschen Einheit*, pp. 189-190; and Zanetti, *Der Weg zur Deutschen Einheit*, pp. 16-21.

¹⁶ The first article is in Dieter Farwick, *Ein Staat - Eine Armee*. (Bonn: Report Verlag, 1992), pp. 30-57. The second article can be found in Bruno Thoß (ed.), *Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit. Analysen und Zeitzeugenberichte zur deutschen Militärgeschichte 1945 bis 1995*. (München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1995), pp. 405-418. For the book itself see Jörg Schönbohm, *Zwei Armeen und ein Vaterland. Das Ende der Nationalen Volksarmee*. (Berlin: Siedler Verlag GmbH, 1992).

¹⁷ The translation to English was done by Peter and Elfi Johnson and published by Berghahn Books in 1996 as Jörg Schönbohm, *Two Armies and One Fatherland. The End of the Nationale Volksarmee*. A caution to the reader: The English version was published in 1996, but is a direct translation of the original from 1992; thus, the reader, should not make the false assumption that the information presented has already stood the test of time.

¹⁸ In this portion, Schönbohm describes some of the conversation that occurred during the meetings between the senior West and East German leadership showing the differences in opinion regarding the future alliance and its impact on the military structure of a unified Germany; see Schönbohm, *Zwei Armeen und ein Vaterland*, pp. 24-28. Frederick Zilian uses some of this text in order to quote Admiral Hoffmann in his book as part of the description that shows the close relationship between the NVA cadre and the Warsaw Pact, see Frederick Jr. Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation. The Takeover of the National People's (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*. (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1999), p. 32. On the other hand, it is interesting to note that Zilian chooses not to use Hoffmann's book as a source of reference.

¹⁹ The quote can be found in Schönbohm, *Zwei Armeen und ein Vaterland*, p. 26; the event surrounding the oath taken on the 20th of July is presented in pp. 28-29.

²⁰ Schönbohm, *Zwei Armeen und ein Vaterland*. The description of the NVA can be found on pp. 41-45, and a letter by a Bundeswehr officer describing the incompatibilities between the two armies is reprinted on pp.36-37. For an excellent description of the terms *Innere Führung* and *Auftragstaktik* see Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, pp. 42-44.

²¹ In regards to maintaining discipline until the end see p.30 and for the initial reforms see p. 46 in Schönbohm, *Zwei Armeen und ein Vaterland*.

²² On Schönbohm's differences with Bonn see pp. 86, 91, 93, 107, 152, 173 & 242. For the increase of an additional 1500 officers then set in the planning structure as key personnel, see Dieter Farwick, *Ein Staat - Eine Armee*. (Bonn: Report Verlag, 1992), p. 187.

²³ Schönbohm, *Zwei Armeen und ein Vaterland*, p. 249.

²⁴ The specific numbers presented in the various articles and their problems will be discussed later in detail in the chapter "The Fate of the NVA with Specific Focus on Numbers".

²⁵ Schönbohm, "Die Bundeswehr im deutschen Einigungsprozeß 1989/1990" in Thoß, *Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit*, pp. 410.

²⁶ Werner Von Scheven "Die Bundeswehr und der Aufbau Ost" in Thoß, *Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit*, pp. 473-503. Von Scheven also provides the Foreword in Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, pp. ix-xv.

²⁷ Von Scheven, "Die Bundeswehr und der Aufbau Ost", pp. 486-489.

²⁸ Von Scheven, "Die Bundeswehr und der Aufbau Ost", pp. 487 & 489-490. The conference was held in 2002 at the *Militärgeschichtliche Forschungsamt (MGFA)*, which is the military history department of the Bundeswehr, located in Potsdam, Germany. The discussions held at that forum have been reprinted in Hans Ehlert (ed.), *Armee ohne Zukunft. Das Ende der NVA und die deutsche Einheit. Zeitzeugenberichte und Dokumente*. (Berlin: Christoph Links Verlag, 2002), pp. 77-280. For Von Scheven's remarks see pp. 230 & 277.

²⁹ Von Scheven "Die Bundeswehr und der Aufbau Ost", p. 498.

³⁰ Von Scheven "Die Bundeswehr und der Aufbau Ost", pp. 500-501.

³¹ For the comments on German unification in his book, see Gerhard Stoltenberg, *Wendepunkte. Stationen Deutscher Politik 1947-1990*. (Berlin: Siedler Verlag GmbH, 1997), pp. 308-311; for the article see Gerhard Stoltenberg, "Sicherheitspolitische Verantwortung" in Thoß, *Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit*, pp. 447-452.

³² Stoltenberg, "Sicherheitspolitische Verantwortung", p. 447.

³³ Stoltenberg, "Sicherheitspolitische Verantwortung", p. 448.

³⁴ Stoltenberg, "Sicherheitspolitische Verantwortung", p. 449

³⁵ For more Schönbohm's version on the oath-taking ceremony see Schönbohm, *Zwei Armeen und ein Vaterland*, p. 92; for Stoltenberg's comments on the overall success of the Bundeswehr and the BMVg, and the oath-taking ceremony see Stoltenberg, "Sicherheitspolitische Verantwortung", p. 451.

³⁶ Stoltenberg, "Sicherheitspolitische Verantwortung", p. 452.

³⁷ Karl-Heinz Carl, "Wie die Wiedervereinigung die Hardthöhe erreichte!" in Thoß, *Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit*, pp. 455-458.

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- ³⁸ For the quote and his version of the meetings, see Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, pp. 139-140; for comments on the financial situation, see p. 153; for his reiteration that no one of the BMVg tried to deceive the other side, see p. 160.
- ³⁹ Theodor Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando. Ein Minister erinnert sich.* (Herford: Verlag E.S. Mittler Sohn GmbH, 1994). For his appointment to Minister of Defense see pp. 32-36; for his appointment to Chief of the NVA see p. 204. Also, see Werner E. Ablaß, *Zapfenstreich: von der NVA zur Bundeswehr.* (Düsseldorf, Germany: Kommunal-Verlag GmbH, 1992), p. 24.; and Eppelmann, *Wendewege*, p. 77.
- ⁴⁰ Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*, p. 292. For the minutes on the meetings see his attachments on pp. 310-312, 315-319; for the projected and implemented changes see pp. 69, 98-103, 114, 118, & 123. For a complete copy of the directive see Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, pp. 340-341. Also, a list of the implemented changes can be found in Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 13.
- ⁴¹ Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*, p. 210. For de Maizière's complete statement, see Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, pp. 377-378
- ⁴² Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 177. For De Maizière's statement, see pp. 377-378.
- ⁴³ Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*, pp. 217 –218, 223. For Gorbachev's position in March, see p.188; furthermore, even at the end of April, Gorbachev was still firm on the position, see p. 221.
- ⁴⁴ For Eppelmann's comments, see Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*, p. 241; for the BMVg's original concept, see Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*, p. 261.
- ⁴⁵ For the social benefits of soldiers departing the services see pp. 182-183; for reports showing that the situation in the NVA had stabilized in early March see p. 191, for the effect of Eppelmann's speech on May 2, 1990, that included his commitment of keeping the NVA in existence for at least a few years see pp. 221-229
- ⁴⁶ Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*. pp. 252-254; on the seclusion of the military leadership see pp. 253, 283 & 285.
- ⁴⁷ For some of the media reports see pp. 213-215, 235-236, 285, 286; for comments by West Germans see pp. 256-257, 262-263 in Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*. The consequences of a lack of a support base will be discussed in a later section of this thesis.
- ⁴⁸ Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, pp. 193-194, 201.
- ⁴⁹ Werner Patzer, "Vom NVA-General zum Wachmann" in Arbeitsgruppe Geschichte der NVA und Integration ehemaliger NVA-Angehöriger in Gesellschaft und Bundeswehr beim Landesvorstand Ost des Deutschen Bundeswehrverbandes, *Information Nr. 9*, pp. 65 – 79. (Berlin, 2001), p. 65. One of the reasons for the increased need of young people in the civilian economy was the large drop in birth rate, which also impacted availability of military personnel by year-group. The 1963 year-group consisted of 149,000, while the 1972 year-group only had 89,000 individuals eligible for service.
- ⁵⁰ Patzer, "Vom NVA-General zum Wachmann" in *Information Nr. 9*, p. 71.
- ⁵¹ Patzer, "Vom NVA-General zum Wachmann" in *Information Nr. 9*, pp. 73-74.
- ⁵² Patzer, "Vom NVA-General zum Wachmann" in *Information Nr. 9*, p. 72.
- ⁵³ Patzer, "Vom NVA-General zum Wachmann" in *Information Nr. 9*, pp. 74-75.
- ⁵⁴ Patzer, "Vom NVA-General zum Wachmann" in *Information Nr. 9*, pp. 76-77.
- ⁵⁵ For the story on how the name change to the MfAV occurred see Eppelmann, *Wendewege*, p. 16.
- ⁵⁶ Eppelmann, *Wendewege*, p. 20. Credit given to Hoffmann can be found on p. 76.
- ⁵⁷ For his intent to win the soldiers trust see Eppelmann, *Wendewege*, pp. 27; on stabilizing the NVA see p. 77.
- ⁵⁸ For his Two-Army theory and the Soviets security concerns see Eppelmann, *Wendewege*, pp. 23 & 60. For his concerns on the disarmament talks see p. 71. On Gorbachev's consent to NATO alliance see p. 115.
- ⁵⁹ For most of the incidents with the press see Eppelmann, *Wendewege*, pp. 132-147&172. On the omission of his speech, see p. 184.
- ⁶⁰ The entire interview is presented in Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, pp. 291-330; on the involvement of the NVA leaders who prevented the misuse of the NVA see p. 293 and Eppelmann, *Wendewege*, p. 127
- ⁶¹ For his previous perception on the NVA see Eppelmann, *Wendewege*, p. 42; and for his appeal to judge individuals according to context see p. 67.
- ⁶² In German Armed Forces the service members are considered to be members of the civil or public services.
- ⁶³ Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, pp. 325-326.
- ⁶⁴ Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, pp. 328-330.
- ⁶⁵ Ablaß, *Zapfenstreich*. For his specific involvement in the negotiations surrounding the Warsaw Pact agreement see pp. 125-128; for his participation on the Soviet withdrawal see pp. 116-124.
- ⁶⁶ Ablaß, *Zapfenstreich: von der NVA zur Bundeswehr*, pp. 8,9, 21 & 23. He reiterated his change in feelings on the NVA during an interview with the author on August 19, 2004. The author holds a copy of this interview.
- ⁶⁷ Ablaß, *Zapfenstreich: von der NVA zur Bundeswehr*, pp. 20-22 & 24.

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- ⁶⁸ Ablaß, *Zapfenstreich: von der NVA zur Bundeswehr*, pp. 28 & 30. For the issue surrounding the pay increase, see p. 137; for the civilian groups making demands, see p. 138.
- ⁶⁹ These remarks were made during the ‘Forum on German Unity’ in Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, pp. 150-151; and reiterated during the August 19 interview.
- ⁷⁰ For the various meetings, see Ablaß, *Zapfenstreich: von der NVA zur Bundeswehr*, pp. 55-56 & 98; for the negotiation procedures and limitations by the Finance Ministry, see Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 142.
- ⁷¹ Ablaß, *Zapfenstreich: von der NVA zur Bundeswehr*, pp. 140-141.
- ⁷² For the May 4 meeting see p. 56 and for the later letter from the BMVg see pp. 102-104 in Ablaß, *Zapfenstreich: von der NVA zur Bundeswehr*.
- ⁷³ For Ablaß’ description of Eppelmann’s statement at the first MOD meeting, see Ablaß, *Zapfenstreich: von der NVA zur Bundeswehr*, pp. 36-37; for Ablaß’ comments on the May 2 conference, see Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 143.
- ⁷⁴ Ablaß, *Zapfenstreich: von der NVA zur Bundeswehr*, p. 68.
- ⁷⁵ Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, pp 143-144, and reiterated during the August 19 interview.
- ⁷⁶ In the August 19 interview, Ablaß stated that several in the GDR leadership were aware of this threat, which also drove their efforts for a rush to German unification. For more on Ablaß impression of the Soviets, see Ablaß, *Zapfenstreich: von der NVA zur Bundeswehr*, p. 59 & 184.
- ⁷⁷ Quote can be found in Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 159; also, see Ablaß, *Zapfenstreich: von der NVA zur Bundeswehr* p. 185.
- ^{78/78} Ablaß, *Zapfenstreich: von der NVA zur Bundeswehr* p. 186.
- ⁷⁹ Deutschlandfunk (DLF) is the term for the information-oriented radio program of the radio station Deutschland Radio located in Cologne, Germany.
- ⁸⁰ Peter Joachim Lapp, “Ein Staat – Eine Armee, Von der NVA zur Bundeswehr” in *Forum Deutsche Einheit, Perspektiven und Argumente Nr. 9*. (Bonn-Bad Godesberg: Forschungsinstitut der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 1992).
- ⁸¹ Lapp “Ein Staat – Eine Armee” in *Forum Deutsche Einheit*, p. 26.
- ⁸² Lapp “Ein Staat – Eine Armee” in *Forum Deutsche Einheit*, pp. 6, 10 & 26.
- ⁸³ Lapp “Ein Staat – Eine Armee” in *Forum Deutsche Einheit*, pp. 12-13 & 33.
- ⁸⁴ For an in-depth explanation of the KVP see Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, p. 17. On the attitudes and arguments of the Bundeswehr leadership against the NVA, see Lapp “Ein Staat – Eine Armee” in *Forum Deutsche Einheit*, pp. 14-17 & 35.
- ⁸⁵ Lapp “Ein Staat – Eine Armee” in *Forum Deutsche Einheit*, pp. 10-11.
- ⁸⁶ Lapp “Ein Staat – Eine Armee” in *Forum Deutsche Einheit*, pp. 18-19.
- ⁸⁷ *SaZ 2* stands for “Soldat auf Zeit” (soldier under contract) with the number corresponding to the length of the contract of two years.
- ⁸⁸ Lapp “Ein Staat – Eine Armee” in *Forum Deutsche Einheit*, pp. 22 & 24-25.
- ⁸⁹ Lapp “Ein Staat – Eine Armee” in *Forum Deutsche Einheit*, pp. 25-26
- ⁹⁰ Lapp “Ein Staat – Eine Armee” in *Forum Deutsche Einheit*, pp. 36 & 49-50.
- ⁹¹ Volker Koop, “Die National Volksarmee-Probleme der Integration in die Bundeswehr”, in *Deutscher Bundestag, Band II/1, Materialien der Enquete-Kommission “Überwindung der Folgen der SED-Diktatur im Prozeß der Deutschen Einheit”*, pp. 508-543. (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Taschenbuch Nomos, 1999). Eppelmann was the chairman of the Enquete- Kommission, which started its enquiries in 1992 and presented its first of two reports in 1994 as “Aufarbeitung der Geschichte und Folgen der SED-Diktatur”. The second report published in 1999 consists of 8 Volumes spread over 14 books that deal with “overcoming the aftermath of the SED dictatorship” (*Überwindung der Folgen der SED-Diktatur*). Vol.2 Book 1 contains two articles that specifically deal with the integration process of the NVA into the Bundeswehr. Furthermore, this report is a great public source for both in-depth and up-to-date information on the unification process. Further references will be listed as Koop, “Die National Volksarmee” in *Enquete-Kommission*.
- ⁹² The ‘Gauck’ administration was the office that was responsible for researching and handling past information on any *Stasi* involvements of former government and military officials of the GDR. The full name of this administration was the *Bundesbeauftragter für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen DDR* (federal representative for the documents of the state security service of the former GDR), but was better known by the name of the head of that department which was ‘Gauck’, as such it is called the *Gauck-Behörde* which translates to the ‘Gauck administration’ or ‘Gauck department’.
- ⁹³ The *Deutscher Bundestag* is the lower house of the German parliament.

- ⁹⁴ From an interview between Koop and Von Scheven in Koop, “Die National Volksarmee” in *Enquete-Kommission*, p. 512
- ⁹⁵ Koop, “Die National Volksarmee” in *Enquete-Kommission*, pp. 508-509.
- ⁹⁶ Koop, “Die National Volksarmee” in *Enquete-Kommission*, p. 513
- ⁹⁷ Koop, “Die National Volksarmee” in *Enquete-Kommission*, p. 514
- ⁹⁸ On the BMVg’s intent for the NVA see pp. 509 & 515; for the political orientation of the NVA to include the March survey see pp. 509-510 in Koop, “Die National Volksarmee” in *Enquete-Kommission*.
- ⁹⁹ Koop, “Die National Volksarmee” in *Enquete-Kommission*, pp. 519-520
- ¹⁰⁰ This is the leadership academy of the Bundeswehr located in Hamburg. Here the Bundeswehr conducts its Command and General Staff college and the Combined Arms and Services Staff School.
- ¹⁰¹ Koop, “Die National Volksarmee” in *Enquete-Kommission*, pp. 521-522.
- ¹⁰² Koop, “Die National Volksarmee” in *Enquete-Kommission*, pp. 522-524.
- ¹⁰³ Koop, “Die National Volksarmee” in *Enquete-Kommission*, pp. 526-527.
- ¹⁰⁴ Although the first group also received some financial bonuses, this was not set at the time these individuals volunteered for duty in the former East. Furthermore, the bonuses were lower than that received by the second wave, in Koop, “Die National Volksarmee” in *Enquete-Kommission*, pp. 511 & 529-530.
- ¹⁰⁵ Koop, “Die National Volksarmee” in *Enquete-Kommission*, pp. 533-534.
- ¹⁰⁶ Koop, “Die National Volksarmee” in *Enquete-Kommission*, pp. 538-539.
- ¹⁰⁷ The first set of articles appeared in Arbeitsgruppe Geschichte der NVA und Integration ehemaliger NVA-Angehöriger in Gesellschaft und Bundeswehr beim Landesvorstand Ost des DBwV. *Was war die NVA? Studien-Analysen-Berichte. Zur Geschichte der Nationalen Volksarmee*. (Berlin: Offsetdruckerei Gerhard Weinert GmbH, 2001); the latter article can be found in Walter Jablonsky & Wolfgang Wünsche, (ed.) *Im Gleichschritt? Zur Geschichte der NVA*. (Berlin: Das Neue Berlin Verlagsgesellschaft, 2001), pp. 271-306.
- ¹⁰⁸ Hanisch, “Was ist heute noch bewahrenswert aus der Traditionsauffassung der NVA” in *Was war die NVA?*, pp. 150-161.
- ¹⁰⁹ Hanisch, “Reformen für den Soldatenalltag. Erreichtes und Unerfülltes in der Militärreform der DDR 1989/90” in *Was war die NVA?*, pp. 377-395. The roll of the NVA played during the Wende and leading up to German unification are discussed in Hanisch, “Die NVA während der zugespitzten Krise in der DDR im Herbst 1989. Wende, Vereinigungsprozeß und Rolle der NVA” in *Was war die NVA?*, pp. 508-526, as well as articles on specific issues during that period found at pp. 535-567, pp. 568-580, and pp. 584-587.
- ¹¹⁰ The article in the Bundeswehr association publication is Hanisch, “Die NVA auf dem Weg in die Armee der Einheit? Tatsachen aus dem Jahre 1990” in *Was war die NVA?*, pp. 624-653. In Jablonsky’s publication it is Hanisch, “NVA 1990 – auf dem Weg in die Armee der Einheit”, in *Im Gleichschritt?*, pp. 271-306.
- ¹¹¹ For a summarized biography on Bahr see Hans Ehlert (ed.), *Armee ohne Zukunft*, pp. 557-558. For more on Brandt and his foreign policy see <http://www.dhm.de/lemo/html/biografien/BrandtWilly/>
- ¹¹² Hanisch, “Die NVA auf dem Weg in die Armee der Einheit”, p. 625, and Hanisch, “NVA 1990 – auf dem Weg in die Armee der Einheit”, pp. 271-272. Bahr’s speech at the ‘Forum on German Unity’ conference containing the same comments can be found in Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 264, as well as, in his foreword in Hans-Joachim Gießmann, *Das unbeliebte Erbe. Die Auflösung der Militärstruktur der DDR*. (Baden-Baden: 1992), p. 10.
- ¹¹³ Hanisch, “NVA 1990 – auf dem Weg in die Armee der Einheit”, pp. 302-303; and Hanisch, “Die NVA auf dem Weg in die Armee der Einheit”, pp. 648-649.
- ¹¹⁴ Hanisch, “NVA 1990 – auf dem Weg in die Armee der Einheit”, pp. 272-275; also see, Hanisch, “Die NVA auf dem Weg in die Armee der Einheit”, p. 628.
- ¹¹⁵ For the original remark by Teltschik see Horst Teltschik, *329 Tage. Innenansichten der Einigung*. (Berlin: Siedler Verlag GmbH, 1991), p. 338. For Hanisch’s version to include that on Schönbohm, see Hanisch, “NVA 1990 – auf dem Weg in die Armee der Einheit”, pp. 277-278.
- ¹¹⁶ Hanisch, “NVA 1990 – auf dem Weg in die Armee der Einheit”, p. 304; also see, Hanisch, “Die NVA auf dem Weg in die Armee der Einheit”, pp. 649-650.
- ¹¹⁷ The German name for the institute is the *Sozialwissenschaftliches Institut der Bundeswehr* (social science institute of the Bundeswehr), abbreviated as SOWI. The study has been published in Nina Leonhard, *Die Bundeswehr und die „innere Einheit“: Einstellungen von ost- und westdeutschen Soldaten im Vergleich. Problemaufriss und erste Ergebnisse des Forschungsprojektes „Armee der Einheit“* in SOWI-Arbeitspapier Nr. 136. (Strausberg: Wehrbereichsverwaltung Ost, 2004). A copy of the publication can be found at http://www.sowi-bundeswehr.de/ap_136.pdf
- ¹¹⁸ Leonhard, *Die Bundeswehr und die „innere Einheit“*, p. 8

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- ¹¹⁹ Leonhard, *Die Bundeswehr und die „innere Einheit“*, p. 16.
- ¹²⁰ Leonhard, *Die Bundeswehr und die „innere Einheit“*, pp. 17-19
- ¹²¹ Leonhard, *Die Bundeswehr und die „innere Einheit“*, pp. 21-27.
- ¹²² This can only be explained in part by the generally higher financial expectations in the former West Germany compared to the former East Germany. Furthermore, the reason for the differences in pay is because the status of a soldier in Germany is that of a public servant. The *Einigungsvertrag* stipulated that public servants in the new States would only receive a percentage of what the counterparts in the old States received; this was because the new States could not afford to equate the wages of their employees to that of the richer states of the former West Germany. After unification, the percentage was 60%, but since then it has slowly been increased and is now at 92.5%. The ruling for the former NVA members, who integrated into the Bundeswehr was that once they had served in the former West or if their appointment to career or contract soldier had occurred in the West, their pay would automatically be 100% and remain that way even after returning to the former East. For the new conscripts in the Bundeswehr, the ruling is that regardless of where they had originated from, their pay would be in accordance with the location in which they fulfilled their conscription duty. Thus, a conscript born in the former West, who had been called-up to serve in the former East Germany would receive the 92.5% pay rate.
- ¹²³ Leonhard, *Die Bundeswehr und die „innere Einheit“*, pp. 28-42.
- ¹²⁴ Leonhard, *Die Bundeswehr und die „innere Einheit“*, pp. 43-47.
- ¹²⁵ Nina Leonhard, „*Armee der Einheit*“: *Zur Integration von NVA-Soldaten in die Bundeswehr*. (Strausberg: 2004). The article was provided to the author in October 20004 by Mrs. Leonhard via e-mail correspondence. The author maintains a copy of this article in his possession.
- ¹²⁶ Leonhard, *Die Bundeswehr und die „innere Einheit“*, p. 5.
- ¹²⁷ Leonhard, „*Armee der Einheit*“, p. 9.
- ¹²⁸ Leonhard, „*Armee der Einheit*“, p. 10.
- ¹²⁹ Dale R. Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*. (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998); Herspring also wrote an article with the same title as his book, which can be found in Andrew A. Michta, ed., *America's New Allies: Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic in NATO*, Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1999, pp. 12–39. With the exception of a few additions and modifications the information is an abstract of that presented in his book, and will therefore, not be discussed here. The work by Zilian can be found as Frederick Jr. Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation. The Takeover of the National People's (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*. (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1999).
- ¹³⁰ Herspring developed the questionnaires, which were then passed on to the individuals through the Deutscher Bundeswehrverband.
- ¹³¹ Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, pp. 1-2.
- ¹³² Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, pp. 53-57 & 197-198.
- ¹³³ For Herspring's discussion on the military's involvement in the civilian economy see Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, pp. 26-27, 78 & 90. For his comments on the military reform see p. 109.
- ¹³⁴ Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, pp. 123-124.
- ¹³⁵ In his endnote, Herspring mentions that this idea was eventually taken over by NATO's Partnership for Peace arrangement, which demonstrated the fact that Eppelmann was ahead of his time. See endnote #106 for chapter five in Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, p. 233.
- ¹³⁶ For more on these 'gimmicks' see Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, pp. 134-136.
- ¹³⁷ Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, pp. 137-138. Also see footnote #10 in this thesis.
- ¹³⁸ Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, p. 134. It is important to note that the responses of the questionnaires primarily came from senior NVA officers (LTC and above), who had not stayed on in the Bundeswehr after unification. During an interview with Oberstleutnant a.D. Becker at the Landesvorstand Ost of the Bundeswehr association, the author of this thesis was informed that although the Landesvorstand Ost appreciated Herspring's primarily favorable comments on the NVA; they realize that because most of the individuals that had responded were those who had been negatively impacted by the unification process, the results and conclusions derived from the questionnaires are slanted and do not represent an entirely correct picture of the all of the former officers of the NVA. This especially includes the relationship to the Soviets, and the feelings to the actions by individuals such as Eppelmann and Ablaß.
- ¹³⁹ Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, pp. 139-140.
- ¹⁴⁰ Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, pp. 148 & 153
- ¹⁴¹ Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, pp. 187-188.
- ¹⁴² Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, pp. 155 & 189.
- ¹⁴³ Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, pp. 203-204.

¹⁴⁴ These unpublished documentations and interviews provide for an impressive collection of information generally not available to someone that does not have such military contacts. On the other hand, it has been noticed that Zilian refers primarily to his interviews, when citing numbers of NVA individuals at the various stages of the integration process. The problem of this will be discussed in more detail in a subsequent chapter.

¹⁴⁵ Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, pp. 4-5. In his introduction on p. 1, Zilian writes “Formidable indeed, was this undertaking, which German military officers initially described as an ‘integration’ but later called a ‘takeover’. Thus, Zilian uses the term ‘takeover’ for the same event that the author of this thesis calls ‘the dissolution of the NVA and the integration of its personnel into the Bundeswehr’. In order to present Zilian’s publication as factual as possible, the term ‘takeover’ will be used when presenting that authors work.

¹⁴⁶ Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, pp. 16-17. For specifics on the 20th of July statements see David Clay Large, “Uses of the Past: The Anti-Nazi Resistance Legacy in The Federal Republic of Germany” in *Contending with Hitler*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 175-176

¹⁴⁷ Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, pp. 18-19. For more on the struggle to determine the traditions of the Bundeswehr see Large, “Uses of the Past” in *Contending with Hitler*, pp. 176-177. Also, since the Bundeswehr leadership remained vague in its position on what traditional link existed between the Wehrmacht and the Bundeswehr, it was left up to individual units and commanders to interpret this as they saw fit. Certain questionable units and military leaders, such as Manstein, became objects of tradition in the Bundeswehr. Even after the German society went through a fundamental change in the late 60’s on its outlook to Germany’s past, the Bundeswehr failed to define its position on its tradition. Then in 1995, when right-wing attitudes started to appear in alarming numbers among Bundeswehr units, which was in part attributed to the large influx of conscripts from the former East Germany who had started to enter the Bundeswehr in the early 1990’s, the German civilian and military leadership was compelled to crack down on all things that could contribute to an increase in right-wing tendencies. This included the removal of all pictures and memorabilia of Wehrmacht origin that were being displayed in the halls and offices of the Bundeswehr units and the renaming of some of the Bundeswehr installations that had been named after Wehrmacht leaders. The fact that the German military was also facing its first major operation on foreign soil since World War II, in support of the UN-led Bosnia peacekeeping mission, certainly contributed to this change in policy. In 1998, a directive was published that dealt with the subject “What is tradition for the Bundeswehr.” It stated that tradition contained military values that were still applicable today and it included three components that were acceptable to the Bundeswehr: The Prussian military reform of the early 19th century; the activities of the military resistance that culminated in the 20th of July plot; and the operations and deployment in which the Bundeswehr has participated since its creation. Studies of Wehrmacht leadership and operations would continue to belong to German military history but were no longer part of the Bundeswehr tradition.

¹⁴⁸ Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, pp. 32-37.

¹⁴⁹ Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, p. 38.

¹⁵⁰ Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, p. 47.

¹⁵¹ These presentations of Zilian’s explanations on the two concepts have been kept to a minimum and do not do the excellent explanations provided by Zilian any justice; for his full explanations see, Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, pp. 42-44.

¹⁵² On Reinhardt’s statement and the push for the quick dissolution of the NVA units and the discharge of NVA personnel, see Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, p. 74; on the overall incorporation of the two concepts in the takeover process, see pp. 59, 73-75 & 140-141; for the official order highlighting the importance of *Innere Führung* and its implication, see pp. 66-68.

¹⁵³ Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, p. 76-77.

¹⁵⁴ Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, pp. 77-78 & 97. In footnote #13 on page 126, Zilian states that the information on Ablaß was drawn from an interview with him, but that Ablaß gave a different and somewhat contradictory view in his book. The author of this thesis also held an interview with Ablaß during which no contradictory statements to the information in his book were made. Furthermore, during that interview Ablaß stressed the fact that his opinion on the NVA leadership was negative prior to arriving to his post as State Secretary, but that within a very short time he not only changed his opinion, and he realized that the civilian leadership was dependant upon the help and advice of the NVA generals. Zilian also fails to mention that the reason why Ablaß had to discharge the final twenty-four generals was because Eppelmann refused to do it. Eppelmann had thought that those generals would be kept by the Bundeswehr after unification and because the issue was not settled his way and not until very late he protested the action by refusing to do discharge them himself.

¹⁵⁵ Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, pp. 86-87.

¹⁵⁶ Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, p. 98.

¹⁵⁷ Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, pp. 108-109.

¹⁵⁸ Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, pp. 118-124.

¹⁵⁹ Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, pp. 125 & 191.

¹⁶⁰ Major Hans Apitzsch on August 11, 2004; the author holds a copy of this interview.

¹⁶¹ Herbert Becker on August 04, 2004; a copy of this interview is held by the author.

¹⁶² LTC Wolfgang Dobrig on August 18, 2004; a copy of this interview is held by the author.

¹⁶³ Major Mattern on August 20, 2004; a copy of this interview is held by the author.

¹⁶⁴ The uncertainty of this number is due to several facts. The first being the difference between authorized and on-hand strength, a problem that will be dealt with in the text itself in the latter part of this chapter. The second reason is because sometimes the numbers include only the forces of the different services and sometimes they also include those forces assigned to joint positions. In the U.S. military the joint positions are part of the overall strength of the respective service; this is also the case for the Bundeswehr, which assigns those joint forces to its combat services or medical service. This was not the case with the NVA, since there the joint positions were assigned directly under the Defense Ministry (MOD); these include special units, major commands (MACOM) or schools and military institutions. Furthermore, sometimes numbers that are presented also add the border troops, which were assigned to the GDR's MOD, but were not considered as part of NVA. For instance, a total number of 260,000 troops for 1989, which includes troops from the various services of the NVA, border troops, and the joint troops assigned to the MOD can be found in attachment #1 in Walter Jablonsky, "Zur Stellung der DDR und ihrer Streitkräfte in der Warschauer Vertragsorganisation", in Jablonsky & Wünsche, *Im Gleichschritt?*, p. 86. In another publication by the same author the number of approximately 171,000 without border troops is listed; see Walter Jablonsky, "Die NVA in den Vereinten Streitkräften des Warschauer Paktes", in Klaus Naumann, (ed.), *NVA – Anspruch und Wirklichkeit*. (Berlin: Verlag E.S. Mittler Sohn GmbH, 1993), pp. 67 & 71. Two sources list the strength of approximately 184,000 on December 1, 1989; see Eberhard Haueis, "Die führende Rolle der SED in der Nationalen Volksarmee" in Landesvorstand Ost des DBwV, *Was war die NVA?*, p. 352; and Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*, pp. 163. Furthermore, on page 15 in that book by Admiral Hoffmann, the author cites the strength of 152,100, in his comparison of NVA forces in the main combat services to those of the Bundeswehr for 1988. Since in the NVA the authorized strength for the MOD assigned troops was approximately 20,000, this number combined with the one that Hoffmann listed for the services would give a total of 172,000, which seems to correspond with some of the estimates from other sources. Another confusion occurs, when dealing with NVA strength assigned to the Warsaw Pact, this number is also lower than the total force strength and if it is not properly annotated a false presentation may occur. For instance in 1987, the force strength of 155,000 was committed to the Warsaw Pact. Again, this number corresponds to authorized forces assigned to the Warsaw Pact and not on-hand numbers. More information on the NVA forces assigned to the alliance and their composition and strength can be found in Naumann, *NVA – Anspruch und Wirklichkeit*, pp. 29-76 & 301-316; and in Jablonsky & Wünsche, *Im Gleichschritt?*, pp. 68-89.

¹⁶⁵ 107,000 in Karl-Heinz Carl "Wie die Wiedervereinigung die Hardthöhe erreichte!" in Thoß, *Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit*, p. 457; and 103,000 in Schönbohm, *Zwei Armeen und ein Vaterland*, p. 46.

¹⁶⁶ Walter Jablonsky, "Die NVA im Staat der SED", in Naumann, *NVA – Anspruch und Wirklichkeit*, p. 25.

¹⁶⁷ Although there are many books and articles that have been written on the dissolution of the NVA, some of the numbers found in the various publications are in conflict with each other. Furthermore, there are only three books in the English language, and these, along with other German publications written in the first decade after unification contain out-dated data that often does not correspond with some of the recent publications, especially those that have access to official sources. Thus, it may often difficult to decipher the accuracy of the 'personnel' numbers, especially for the English language reader. Fortunately, as a member of the US military with close contacts to the Bundeswehr, I have been able to obtain recent numbers and information through military channels and by visiting the source sites. Hopefully, this will contribute towards improving the overall accuracy on the subject along with providing up-to-date facts to the English-only reader.

¹⁶⁸ Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*, pp. 30-36.

¹⁶⁹ Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*, p. 39.

¹⁷⁰ Hans Ehlert (ed.), *Armee ohne Zukunft. Das Ende der NVA und die deutsche Einheit. Zeitzeugenberichte und Dokumente*. (Berlin: Christoph Links Verlag, 2002), p. 13.

¹⁷¹ Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*, pp. 90-91.

¹⁷² Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*, pp. 93-96.

¹⁷³ In January 1990, this number amounted to 21,000 soldiers, see Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 15; and Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, p. 90.

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- ¹⁷⁴ For a complete copy of the directive see, Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, pp. 340-341. For the quote see, Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*, p. 98.
- ¹⁷⁵ Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*, pp. 117-119 & 316.
- ¹⁷⁶ Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*, pp. 66-69.
- ¹⁷⁷ Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*, p. 79.
- ¹⁷⁸ <http://www.dhm.de/lemo/html/biografien/EppelmannRainer/>
- ¹⁷⁹ Eppelmann, *Wendewege*, p. 16.
- ¹⁸⁰ Ablaß, *Zapfenstreich*, p. 24. Eppelmann comments on the strange composition of this team of undersecretaries, advisors and military subordinates, calling the group an “exotic” construction. See, Eppelmann, *Wendewege*, p. 77.
- ¹⁸¹ For a complete copy of this document see Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*, p. 320-323.
- ¹⁸² A directive issued on 21 September 1990 discharged approximately 40,000 soldiers and civilians of the border troops, who up until that date had been under the jurisdiction of the NVA. On 3 October, a special task force led by COL Rolf Ocken (Bundeswehr) was created out of a reduced number of those border troops. This task force was responsible for the removal of the inner-German border obstruction and the Berlin Wall, to include the mines along both locations, until 30 September 1991, after which two civilian firms continued those operations until completion; see text and Footnote 105 in Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, pp. 55-56.
- ¹⁸³ Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*, p. 100.
- ¹⁸⁴ Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 17.
- ¹⁸⁵ Between December 89 and May 90, there were a total of 1, 507 desertions in the NVA; see Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*, p. 143.
- ¹⁸⁶ Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*, pp. 161-163.
- ¹⁸⁷ Ablaß, *Zapfenstreich*, p. 34.
- ¹⁸⁸ Schönbohm, *Zwei Armeen und ein Vaterland*, p. 24.
- ¹⁸⁹ Eppelmann, *Wendewege*, p. 36.
- ¹⁹⁰ Schönbohm, *Zwei Armeen und ein Vaterland*, pp. 25-26. In this portion, Schönbohm describes some of the conversation that occurred during this meeting, and Zilian used some of Schönbohm observations in order to the quote Admiral Hoffmann as part of his description in showing the close relationship between the NVA cadre and the Warsaw Pact, see Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, p. 32. On the other hand, it is interesting to note that Zilian choose not to use Hoffmann’s book as a source of reference.
- ¹⁹¹ Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 177. For De Maizièrè’s statement, see pp. 377-378. Zilian uses some of the quotes Admiral Hoffmann
- ¹⁹² Michail Gorbatschow, *Wie es war. Die deutsche Wiedervereinigung*, translated by Kurt Baudisch. (München: Econ Taschenbuch Verlag, 2000), p. 146.
- ¹⁹³ In 1990, there following numbers were reported as being in the GDR: 363.690 Soviets in 17 divisions with 5,880 tanks, 9,790 armored fighting vehicles, 4,624 heavy artillery pieces, 625 combat planes and 698 combat helicopters, see Hans Frank “Die Westgruppe der Truppen (WGT)” in Naumann, *NVA – Anspruch und Wirklichkeit*, p. 332.
- ¹⁹⁴ For speech excerpts, see Ablaß, *Zapfenstreich*, pp. 36-46. and Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*, pp. 221-229.
- ¹⁹⁵ Ablaß, *Zapfenstreich*, pp. 40-42.
- ¹⁹⁶ Eppelmann, *Wendewege*, p. 77.
- ¹⁹⁷ Schönbohm, *Zwei Armeen und ein Vaterland*, pp. 26-27.
- ¹⁹⁸ Koop, “Die National Volksarmee” in *Enquete-Kommission*, pp. 541-542.
- ¹⁹⁹ Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 143.
- ²⁰⁰ Stoltenberg, “Sicherheitspolitische Verantwortung”, p. 450.
- ²⁰¹ Jörg Schönbohm, “Die Bundeswehr im deutschen Einigungsprozeß 1989/90” in Thoß, *Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit*, p. 410.
- ²⁰² For two of these directives, see Ablaß, *Zapfenstreich: von der NVA zur Bundeswehr*. pp. 149-150 & 154.
- ²⁰³ Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 48. For the directive itself, see p. 462.
- ²⁰⁴ Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*, pp. 290- 291. Also, see comments by BG Ekkehard Richter during the ‘Forum on German Unity’ regarding this decision, in Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 250.
- ²⁰⁵ Ablaß, *Zapfenstreich*, pp. 159-160; also, Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*, p. 303; and, Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 483.
- ²⁰⁶ Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, pp. 43-44. Another source lists the day the liaison team went to Strausberg as 28 August, see Edgar Trost, “Probleme der Personalauswahl,” in Dieter Farwick, *Ein Staat - Eine Armee*, p. 192.
- ²⁰⁷ Stephen F. Szabo, *The Diplomacy of German Unification*. (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1992), p. 109.

- ²⁰⁸ Hanisch, “NVA 1990 – auf dem Weg in die Armee der Einheit”, p. 299. Also, Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 51. For all the speeches of that day, see Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, pp. 484-497.
- ²⁰⁹ Eppelmann, *Wendewege*, p.148. For the entire protocol, see Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, pp. 511-512.
- ²¹⁰ Ablaß, *Zapfenstreich: von der NVA zur Bundeswehr*, p. 172.
- ²¹¹ Statement made by Ablaß during the ‘Forum on German Unity’ in Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 151
- ²¹² Schönbohm, *Zwei Armeen und ein Vaterland*, p. 34; also, Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*, pp. 305-306.
- ²¹³ See Footnote 103 in Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 54.
- ²¹⁴ From an interview with Rainer Eppelmann in Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 328.
- ²¹⁵ Hanisch, “NVA 1990 – auf dem Weg in die Armee der Einheit”, p. 302.
- ²¹⁶ Ablaß, *Zapfenstreich: von der NVA zur Bundeswehr*, pp. 178-179.
- ²¹⁷ Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 503.
- ²¹⁸ The number 93,000 is listed on the CD-ROM “Auftrag: Frieden”, dated as of November 1997. It is an official publication produced by the BMVg, and the specific information can be found in the section “Armee der Einheit”, as part of the historical background on the Bundeswehr. Due to the fact that there was a large amount of discharges during the last weeks in September, 1990, it is understandable that among the various publications there is also a large disparity regarding this number, which ranges from ~100,000 down to 89,000. The higher number of ~100,000 is listed in Schönbohm, “Deutsche kommen zu Deutsche” in Dieter Farwick, *Ein Staat - Eine Armee* (Bonn: Report Verlag, 1992), p. 44, in Eppelmann, *Wendewege. Briefe an die Familie*, p.179; and in an official report dated September 24, 1990, by Admiral Dieter Wellersdorf found in Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 509. The amount of ‘more than 90,000’ can be found in Hanisch, “NVA 1990 – auf dem Weg in die Armee der Einheit”, in Jablonsky & Wünsche (eds.), *Im Gleichschritt? Zur Geschichte der NVA*, p. 303, and 89,000 is reported by Werner von Scheven in “Die Bundeswehr und der Aufbau Ost” in Thoß, *Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit. Analysen und Zeitzeugenberichte zur deutschen Militärgeschichte 1945 bis 1995*, p. 476. In the same book, Dr. Carl had mentioned the number 107,000, but it can be assumed that this is a planning number that may have been established in July or August, certainly prior to the discharges that occurred in September, see Karl-Heinz Carl “Wie die Wiedervereinigung die Hardthöhe erreichte!” in Thoß, *Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit. Analysen und Zeitzeugenberichte zur deutschen Militärgeschichte 1945 bis 1995*, p. 457.
- ²¹⁹ *Der Einigungsvertrag. Vertrag zwischen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik über die Herstellung der Einheit Deutschlands*. Reprinted by Goldmann Verlag, 10/90, pp. 1010-1012.
- ²²⁰ *Beitritt* can be translated as accession, admittance or joining. Furthermore, it was the five ‘States’ of the GDR territory that joined or acceded to the FRG, and not the GDR since it ceased to exist upon ‘unification’, ‘accession’, ‘day of joining’, etc.
- ²²¹ A copy of this report by the BMVg can be found in Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, pp. 521-525. A similar report by the BMVg can be found in Bundesministerium der Verteidigung (BMVg), “Bericht: Die Praxis der Entscheidung über die Übernahme von Personal in den öffentlichen Dienst im Beitrittsgebiet während der Übergangsphase nach 1990 im Bereich der Bundeswehr”, in Deutscher Bundestag, *Band II/1, Materialien der Enquete-Kommission “Überwindung der Folgen der SED-Diktatur im Prozeß der Deutschen Einheit”* pp. 491-507. Both reports are very similar in format, numbers and information as they are from the same source. Thus, from this point on, reference will only be made to the latter as ‘BMVg report in *Enquete-Kommission*’.
- ²²² Although most of these numbers have been extracted from the BMVg report in *Enquete-Kommission*, a comparison has been conducted between these numbers with those of a print-out received from a meeting at the military history department of the Bundeswehr (MGFA) on 03 August 2004 and a report by the Personnel Department (Fü S I 2) of the BMVg from 07 August 2004. The former will be listed as ‘MGFA print-out’, while the later will be annotated as ‘Fü S I 2 report’. The author maintains possession of both publications. Disparities or differences between the BMVg report and the two printouts will be listed in the references; other source will also be utilized for comparison and noted as such.
- ²²³ As an additional source for an explanation of the usage of *Weiterverwender*, *Wartestand* and *SaZ 2*, see Edgar Trost, “Probleme der Personalauswahl,” in Dieter Farwick, *Ein Staat - Eine Armee* (Bonn: Report Verlag, 1992), pp. 184-185.
- ²²⁴ BMVg report in *Enquete-Kommission*, p. 498. Also, the same numbers are listed in the ‘Fü S I 2 report’ and in Hanisch, “NVA 1990 – auf dem Weg in die Armee der Einheit”, in Jablonsky & Wünsche (eds.), *Im Gleichschritt? Zur Geschichte der NVA*, p. 303. The ‘MGFA print-out’ presents the following numbers: 24,230 officers and candidates, 24,749 NCOs and 1,049 enlisted, while Werner von Scheven reports a number of 23,354 officers, see Von Scheven in “Die Bundeswehr und der Aufbau Ost” in Bruno Thoß (ed.), *Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit*, p. 491.

- ²²⁵ These were usually individuals who had started their training for a transition to a civilian job, but had not yet complete the process after the day of unification. See Ablaß, *Zapfenstreich: von der NVA zur Bundeswehr*, pp. 164-165. Also, some of these were military individuals, whose position and unit had been dissolved and were awaiting a new assignment, see Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 218.
- ²²⁶ Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 470.
- ²²⁷ Peter Joachim Lapp “Ein Staat – eine Armee, Von der NVA zur Bundeswehr”. *Forum Deutsche Einheit, Perspektiven und Argumente Nr. 9*. (Bonn-Bad Godesberg: Forschungsinstitut der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 1992), p. 8.
- ²²⁸ BMVg report in *Enquete-Kommission*, p. 499.
- ²²⁹ Schönbohm, “Deutsche kommen zu Deutsche” in Dieter Farwick, *Ein Staat - Eine Armee* pp. 44-45.
- ²³⁰ *Der Einigungsvertrag. Vertrag zwischen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik über die Herstellung der Einheit Deutschlands*. Paragraph 8 (4).
- ²³¹ Lapp “Ein Staat – eine Armee, Von der NVA zur Bundeswehr”. *Forum Deutsche Einheit, Perspektiven und Argumente Nr. 9*, pp. 8-19. The financial support received by all those over 50 was called “befristete erweiterte Versorgung” (time limited, expanded financial support) see Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 217.
- ²³² Hanisch, “NVA 1990 – auf dem Weg in die Armee der Einheit”, in Walter Jablonsky & Wolfgang Wünsche (eds.), *Im Gleichschritt? Zur Geschichte der NVA*, p. 303. Von Scheven on the other hand claims that there were still 12,700 officers in March 1991, see Von Scheven “Die Bundeswehr und der Aufbau Ost” in Bruno Thoß (ed.), *Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit*, p. 491.
- ²³³ BMVg report in *Enquete-Kommission*, p. 499. Also, see ‘FüS S I 2 report’; ‘MGFA print-out’. In Von Scheven “Die Bundeswehr und der Aufbau Ost” in Bruno Thoß (ed.), *Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit*, the SaZ 2 applicants are listed as 11,500 officers (p. 491) and 11,500 NCOs (p. 492).
- ²³⁴ Trost, “Probleme der Personalauswahl,” in Dieter Farwick, *Ein Staat - Eine Armee*, p. 190.
- ²³⁵ BMVg report in *Enquete-Kommission*, p. 499. Also, see Von Scheven “Die Bundeswehr und der Aufbau Ost” in Bruno Thoß (ed.), *Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit*, p. 492.
- ²³⁶ BMVg report in *Enquete-Kommission*, p. 499. Also, see ‘FüS S I 2 report’; ‘MGFA print-out’; Hanisch, “NVA 1990 – auf dem Weg in die Armee der Einheit”, in Walter Jablonsky & Wolfgang Wünsche (eds.), *Im Gleichschritt? Zur Geschichte der NVA*, p. 304, and in BMVg, Presse- und Informationsstab, *Armee der Einheit 1990-2000* (Bonn: 2000), p. 15. Bonn. The total number of 18,000 is also listed in Schönbohm, “Deutsche kommen zu Deutsche” in Dieter Farwick, *Ein Staat - Eine Armee* p. 45; and the number of 6,056 officers are listed in Von Scheven “Die Bundeswehr und der Aufbau Ost” in Bruno Thoß (ed.), *Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit*, p. 491.
- ²³⁷ Von Scheven “Die Bundeswehr und der Aufbau Ost” in Bruno Thoß (ed.), *Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit*, p. 490. This difference between the NVA and the Bundeswehr is also reiterated several times during the ‘Forum on German Unity’; see Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, pp. 230 & 270.
- ²³⁸ BMVg report in *Enquete-Kommission*, p. 500; and ‘FüS S I 2 report’. The number 600 is listed in Von Scheven “Die Bundeswehr und der Aufbau Ost” in Bruno Thoß (ed.), *Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit*, p. 493.
- ²³⁹ Schönbohm, “Deutsche kommen zu Deutsche” in Dieter Farwick, *Ein Staat - Eine Armee* p. 43.
- ²⁴⁰ BMVg report in *Enquete-Kommission*, p. 499.
- ²⁴¹ Von Scheven “Die Bundeswehr und der Aufbau Ost” in Bruno Thoß (ed.), *Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit*, p. 491.
- ²⁴² BMVg report in *Enquete-Kommission*, pp. 500 & 506-507. Note: The author of this thesis has not been able to determine why there is a discrepancy between the higher number of inquiries for officers (6,136) and the lower number of officers in SaZ 2 status (6,000), listed in the report by the BMVg.
- ²⁴³ ‘FüS S I 2 report’; ‘MGFA print-out’. A total of 15,000 are listed in the BMVg report in *Enquete-Kommission*, p. 503.
- ²⁴⁴ See endnote 76.
- ²⁴⁵ BMVg report in *Enquete-Kommission*, p. 500
- ²⁴⁶ Lapp “Ein Staat – eine Armee, Von der NVA zur Bundeswehr”. *Forum Deutsche Einheit, Perspektiven und Argumente Nr. 9*, pp. 8-19.
- ²⁴⁷ BMVg report in *Enquete-Kommission*, p. 501; ‘FüS S I 2 report’; ‘MGFA print-out’. Von Scheven lists the of officers at 5,662 in “Die Bundeswehr und der Aufbau Ost” in Bruno Thoß (ed.), *Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit*, p. 493.
- ²⁴⁸ BMVg report in *Enquete-Kommission*, pp. 500 - 501.
- ²⁴⁹ BMVg report in *Enquete-Kommission*, p. 501; Von Scheven “Die Bundeswehr und der Aufbau Ost” in Bruno Thoß (ed.), *Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit*, p. 493.

- ²⁵⁰ BMVg report in *Enquete-Kommission*, p. 502.
- ²⁵¹ BMVg report in *Enquete-Kommission*, p. 501.
- ²⁵² 'FüS S I 2 report'; 'MGFA print-out'. The number of 3,000 officers is listed both in BMVg report in *Enquete-Kommission*, p. 503, and in BMVg, Presse- und Informationsstab, *Armee der Einheit 1990-2000*, p. 15. Hanisch lists the numbers as 3,027 officers, 7,639 NCOs and 207 enlisted in Hanisch, "NVA 1990 – auf dem Weg in die Armee der Einheit", in Walter Jablonsky & Wolfgang Wünsche (eds.), *Im Gleichschritt? Zur Geschichte der NVA*, p. 304.
- ²⁵³ Von Scheven "Die Bundeswehr und der Aufbau Ost" in Bruno Thoß (ed.), *Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit*, p. 493.
- ²⁵⁴ 'FüS S I 2 report'. According to another source, the number for April 1994 was 2,811 officers and 5,702 NCOs, and that by June 1999, the total number of former NVA soldiers in the Bundeswehr only consisted of 4,200 individuals Hanisch, "NVA 1990 – auf dem Weg in die Armee der Einheit", in Walter Jablonsky & Wolfgang Wünsche (eds.), *Im Gleichschritt? Zur Geschichte der NVA*, p. 304. The numbers for June 1999 present a disparity with those of the BMVg, since the latter report lists a total of approximately 6,100 still remaining in 2001.
- ²⁵⁵ Schönbohm, *Zwei Armeen und ein Vaterland*, p.44.
- ²⁵⁶ Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando. Ein Minister erinnert sich*, p.17. On the other hand, at the 'Forum on German Unity', Hoffmann quoted the number of 40,000 service members as having been employed in the civilian economy.
- ²⁵⁷ Jablonsky, "Die NVA in den Vereinten Streitkräften des Warschauer Paktes", in Naumann, *NVA – Anspruch und Wirklichkeit*, p. 59.
- ²⁵⁸ Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, p.42. Herspring uses Hoffmann's statement from his book on the use of the military in the civilian economy in order to support Schönbohm's and his own (Herspring) argument that the NVA was falling apart. On the other hand, he does not make note of the substantial difference between Schönbohm and Hoffmann's description of the event. Furthermore, Schönbohm used the example to demonstrate that the NVA was beginning to break apart internally, while Herspring uses Schönbohm's original statement to claim that it was the beginning of the end for the NVA. Note: Herspring made an error in the reference, since he notes that the information hails from page 38 in Schönbohm's book, where in fact it should be page 44.
- ²⁵⁹ Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, p. 39. Zilian does use several source as references for the 55,000, to include page 44 and page 135 from Schönbohm's book. The author of this thesis was not able to determine if the other sources, which include Von Scheven and MG Richter (both Bundeswehr officers) also list the actual number of 55,000 or if they only mention that a high number of soldiers were used. Since Zilian had chosen not to use Hoffmann's book as a source of reference, he may not have been aware of the disparity between that book and the claims of the Bundeswehr officers.
- ²⁶⁰ Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando. Ein Minister erinnert sich*, p.143.
- ²⁶¹ Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*. (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998), p.95.
- ²⁶² Edgar Trost shows the various categories in his article on the subject, but fails to provide the relationship to each other and to the various phases of integration; see Trost, "Probleme der Personalauswahl," in Dieter Farwick, *Ein Staat - Eine Armee*, p. 184.
- ²⁶³ See endnote #23 in Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, p. 235.
- ²⁶⁴ See footnotes #69 through #74 in Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, p. 129.
- ²⁶⁵ Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, p. 151.
- ²⁶⁶ Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, p. 104.
- ²⁶⁷ The BMVg report from 1995 can be found in Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, pp. 521-525. Also, see the BMVg report in *Enquete-Kommission*, pp. 498-507.
- ²⁶⁸ Stephen F. Szabo, *The Diplomacy of German Unification*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), pp. 105-107.
- ²⁶⁹ Stephen F. Szabo, *The Diplomacy of German Unification*, p. 131. Also, see Schönbohm, "Deutsche kommen zu Deutsche" in Dieter Farwick, *Ein Staat - Eine Armee* p. 48.
- ²⁷⁰ 500,000 are listed on page 3 and 590,000 on page 148 in Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*.
- ²⁷¹ Von Scheven "Die Bundeswehr und der Aufbau Ost" in Bruno Thoß (ed.), *Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit*, p. 486.
- ²⁷² Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, p. 2.
- ²⁷³ Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, p. 24.
- ²⁷⁴ Schönbohm, "Die Bundeswehr im deutschen Einigungsprozeß 1989/90" in Bruno Thoß (ed.), *Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit. Analysen und Zeitzeugenberichte zur deutschen Militärgeschichte 1945 bis 1995*. p. 406.
- ²⁷⁵ Schönbohm, *Zwei Armeen und ein Vaterland. Das Ende der Nationalen Volksarmee*, p. 27.
- ²⁷⁶ BMVg, Presse- und Informationsstab, *Armee der Einheit 1990-2000*, p. 11.

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- ²⁷⁷ In Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 139.
- ²⁷⁸ FüS S I 2 dated February 11, 2004; the author holds a copy of the printout.
- ²⁷⁹ Thomas-Durell Young (ed), *Force, Statecraft And German Unity: The Struggle To Adapt Institutions And Practices*. (Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania: Strategic Studies Institute - U.S. Army War College, 1996), p. 51.
- ²⁸⁰ Hanish, "NVA 1990 – auf dem Weg in die Armee der Einheit", in Walter Jablonsky & Wolfgang Wünsche (eds.), *Im Gleichschritt? Zur Geschichte der NVA*, p. 304.
- ²⁸¹ In Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 265.
- ²⁸² In Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 277.
- ²⁸³ Schönbohm, "Die Bundeswehr im deutschen Einigungsprozeß 1989/90" in Thoß, *Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit*, p. 410. Also see, Schönbohm, "Deutsche kommen zu Deutsche" in Dieter Farwick, *Ein Staat - Eine Armee*, p. 40; Hanisch, "NVA 1990 – auf dem Weg in die Armee der Einheit", in Walter Jablonsky & Wolfgang Wünsche (eds.), *Im Gleichschritt? Zur Geschichte der NVA*, p. 299. For Richter's argument during the conference see Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 270.
- ²⁸⁴ Von Scheven "Die Bundeswehr und der Aufbau Ost" in Thoß, *Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit*, p. 491.
- ²⁸⁵ Peter Joachim Lapp "Ein Staat – eine Armee, Von der NVA zur Bundeswehr". *Forum Deutsche Einheit, Perspektiven und Argumente Nr. 9*. (Bonn-Bad Godesberg: Forschungsinstitut der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 1992), p. 22.
- ²⁸⁶ In the discussions during the 'Forum on German Unity', Christoph links makes the argument that although a special law has allowed most of the information from the former GDR to be made available to the public, much of the relevant information on the West German side remains classified for a period of 30 years; see Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 139.
- ²⁸⁷ This over-classification also occurs in the U.S. military, although the Germans are much stricter. Their policy is to consider all documents containing official data as NfD, and only after inspection by appropriate personnel, it may get downgraded for public dissemination.
- ²⁸⁸ Major Hans Apitzsch on August 11, 2004; the author holds a copy of this interview.
- ²⁸⁹ Herbert Becker on August 04, 2004; a copy of this interview is held by the author.
- ²⁹⁰ LTC Wolfgang Dobrig on August 18, 2004; a copy of this interview is held by the author.
- ²⁹¹ Major Mattern on August 20, 2004; a copy of this interview is held by the author.
- ²⁹² Gert-Joachim Glaebner and Rolf Reißig, p. 7
- ²⁹³ Stephen F. Szabo, *The Diplomacy of German Unification*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), pp. 31-32.
- ²⁹⁴ Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 6.
- ²⁹⁵ Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 7. Horst Teltschik, *329 Tage. Innenansichten der Einigung*. (Berlin: Siedler Verlag GmbH, 1991), pp. 313 & 324.
- ²⁹⁶ Horst Teltschik, *329 Tage. Innenansichten der Einigung*. (Berlin: Siedler Verlag GmbH, 1991), pp. 313 & 324.
- ²⁹⁷ NATO Handbook
- ²⁹⁸ Jablonsky, pp. 29 & 47-48.
- ²⁹⁹ Solsten, *Germany – A Country Study*, p. 459; and Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, pp.32 & 45
- ³⁰⁰ George Bush & Brent Scowcroft, *A World Transformed*. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1998), p. 194; also, see Szabo, *The Diplomacy of German Unification*, pp. 38-39.
- ³⁰¹ James A. Baker III, *The Politics of Diplomacy: Revolution, War and Peace, 1989-1992*. (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1995), pp. 167-168.
- ³⁰² Bush & Scowcroft, *A World Transformed*, pp. 196-197.
- ³⁰³ Helmut Kohl, *Ich wollte Deutschlands Einheit*, edited by Kai Diekmann & Ralf Georg Reuth. (München: Ullstein Taschenbuchverlag), 2000, p. 149.
- ³⁰⁴ Teltschik, *329 Tage*, pp. 42-44.
- ³⁰⁵ Bush & Scowcroft, *A World Transformed*, p. 196.
- ³⁰⁶ Michail Gorbatschow, *Wie es war. Die deutsche Wiedervereinigung*, translated by Kurt Baudisch. (München: Econ Taschenbuch Verlag, 2000), pp. 91 & 93; also, see Mikhail Gorbachev, *On my Country and the World*, translated by George Shriver. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), p. 202.
- ³⁰⁷ Hans-Dietrich Genscher, *Rebuilding A House Divided*, translated by Thomas Thornton. New York: Broadway Books, 1998, pp. 315-317.
- ³⁰⁸ Kohl, *Ich wollte Deutschlands Einheit*, p. 173 & 227-228.
- ³⁰⁹ Gorbatschow, *Wie es war*, pp. 95-96; and Gorbachev, *On my Country and the World*, p. 202.
- ³¹⁰ Baker, *The Politics of Diplomacy*, pp. 198-205.
- ³¹¹ Kohl, *Ich wollte Deutschlands Einheit*, pp. 245-252.

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- ³¹² Baker, *The Politics of Diplomacy*, pp. 214-216
- ³¹³ Teltschik, *329 Tage*, p. 161.
- ³¹⁴ Kohl, *Ich wollte Deutschlands Einheit*, pp. 276-277. In his own biography of the Camp David meeting, Baker does not mention those comments by either Kohl or Bush. Baker's biography was published in 1992, and although the Warsaw Pact had been officially come to an end by July 1, 1991 and Gorbachev had dissolved the Soviet Union by Christmas 1991, there was still an existing sensitivity in the relationship between the U.S. and Russia. For Baker's recollection of the Camp David meeting see Baker, *The Politics of Diplomacy*, pp. 232-234. In regards to Bush's version of his jokingly statement see Bush & Scowcroft, *A World Transformed*, p. 253.
- ³¹⁵ The various descriptions of the events during the Soviet-West German summit can be found in Genscher, *Rebuilding A House Divided*, pp. 421-431, Gorbatschow, *Wie es war*, pp. 140-150, Kohl, *Ich wollte Deutschlands Einheit*, pp. 375-393, and Teltschik, *329 Tage*, pp. 319-342.
- ³¹⁶ Kohl, *Ich wollte Deutschlands Einheit*, 390-392; Teltschik, *329 Tage*, 340-341; and Szabo, *The Diplomacy of German Unification*, p. 102.
- ³¹⁷ Baker, *The Politics of Diplomacy*, p. 259; and Bush & Scowcroft, *A World Transformed*, p. 298. Note, the reference to Stravapol is incorrect, since this location was actually only a stop-over with a short visit through the city conducted on July 15, in which the delegations changed from aircraft to helicopters on their way to Arkhitz; see Genscher, *Rebuilding A House Divided*, p. 424; Kohl, *Ich wollte Deutschlands Einheit*, pp. 382-383; and Teltschik, *329 Tage*, p. 327.
- ³¹⁸ Andreas Rödder, "Breakthrough in the Caucasus? German Reunification as a Challenge to Contemporary Historiography" in German Historical Institute London, Bulletin XXIV/2 (November 2002), pp. 9-17.
- ³¹⁹ Teltschik, *329 Tage*, pp. 151-152; and Bush & Scowcroft, *A World Transformed*, p. 246.
- ³²⁰ Rödder, "Breakthrough in the Caucasus?", pp. 11-14
- ³²¹ Rödder, "Breakthrough in the Caucasus?", pp. 18-19; for Kohl's comments at Camp David see Bush & Scowcroft, *A World Transformed*, pp. 254; for the U.S. version on the Bush-Gorbachev meeting see Bush & Scowcroft, *A World Transformed*, pp. 283-289; for Gorbachev's version see Gorbatschow, *Wie es war*, pp. 136-138.
- ³²² Szabo, *The Diplomacy of German Unification*, pp. 88-92.
- ³²³ Rödder, "Breakthrough in the Caucasus?", p. 20
- ³²⁴ Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, pp. 118 & 143
- ³²⁵ The fact that Genscher and Teltschik did not get along was also known by the U.S. leadership, see Baker, *The Politics of Diplomacy*, p. 213. Furthermore, in Teltschik's description of the meeting during which the dispute between Stoltenberg and Genscher erupted, the author mentions that "Genscher surprisingly argued against Stoltenberg's comments..." Since, Teltschik used 'surprisingly', it can be assumed that Teltschik was in agreement with Stoltenberg's concept. Teltschik also criticizes the resulting official statement, because in his opinion a confirmation had been given to the Soviets, although it had not yet been demanded by them; see Teltschik, *329 Tage*, pp. 148 & 152.
- ³²⁶ For Wörner's close relationship to the U.S. administration see Bush & Scowcroft, *A World Transformed*, pp. 242-243.
- ³²⁷ Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 30.
- ³²⁸ Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 408.
- ³²⁹ Eppelmann, *Wendewege*, p. 159; also see Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, pp. 297- 298 & 319-320.
- ³³⁰ Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, pp. 188-189.
- ³³¹ Frithjof H. Knabe, *Unter der Flagge des Gegners. Wertewandel im Umbruch in den Streitkräften – Von der NVA zur Bundeswehr*. (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1994), pp. 119-120; also, see Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, pp. 136-139.
- ³³² Teltschik, *329 Tage*, pp. 358-360; also, see Kohl, *Ich wollte Deutschlands Einheit*, pp. 415-416.
- ³³³ Teltschik, *329 Tage*, pp. 361-363; also, see Kohl, *Ich wollte Deutschlands Einheit*, pp. 417-418.
- ³³⁴ The treaty was signed on that day in Moscow; however, the treaty did not officially go into effect until all parties ratified it, and the 'instruments of ratification' were delivered to Germany. The Soviet Union was the last to ratify the treaty, which it did on March 4, 1991. The process was then completed after those 'instruments of ratification' were deposited in Bonn, Germany on March 15, 1991. Not until after this event did the rights of the Four Powers formally end. Nevertheless, Germany celebrates October 3, 1990, as its 'Day of German Unity' and the day of having achieved full sovereignty.
- ³³⁵ Jarausch, *The Rush to German Unity*, pp. 3-4.
- ³³⁶ Zanetti, *Der Weg zur Deutschen Einheit*, pp. 12 & 14.

- ³³⁷ Linder, *Die Demokratische Revolution in der DDR 1989/90*, p. 145; also, see Jaraus, *The Rush to German Unity*, pp. 97-101
- ³³⁸ Linder, *Die Demokratische Revolution in der DDR 1989/90*, p. 136.
- ³³⁹ Glaeßner, *The Unification Process in Germany*, pp. 16-17
- ³⁴⁰ Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 153.
- ³⁴¹ Kohl, *Ich wollte Deutschlands Einheit*, p. 203
- ³⁴² Hans-Peter von Kirchbach, *Abenteuer Einheit. Zum Aufbau der Bundeswehr in den neuen Ländern*. (Frankfurt am Main: Report Verlag, 1992), pp. 18-19. Also, see Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, pp. 27, 44 & 525-526; and Schönbohm, *Zwei Armeen und ein Vaterland*, p. 26.
- ³⁴³ Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, pp. 39 & 43.
- ³⁴⁴ Eppelmann, *Wendewege*, pp. 144-146. Ablaß stated that the MfAV was able to cancel the defense contracts valued at 2.3 billion DM, see Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 147.
- ³⁴⁵ Helmut Göpel, "NVA-Landstreitkräfte" in Naumann, *NVA – Anspruch und Wirklichkeit*, p. 105; also, see Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*, pp. 225-226.
- ³⁴⁶ Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, p. 163; and Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, p. 156.
- ³⁴⁷ See attachment #8 in Jablonsky, "Zur Stellung der DDR und ihrer Streitkräfte in der Warschauer Vertragsorganisation", p. 89; also, see Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*, p. 137.
- ³⁴⁸ Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*, p. 121.
- ³⁴⁹ For Admiral Hoffmann's hand-over report see Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, pp. 359-369. For the BMVg report see Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, pp. 525-528. Both Herspring and Zilian list different and lower numbers than the 1997 BMVg report. Since even the BMVg admits that it took a long time to obtain a final status report, it can be assumed that the numbers presented by Herspring and Zilian are incorrect as they were derived from sources from the early part of the 90's.
- ³⁵⁰ Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 363. Furthermore, the out-put reduction of the GDR's arms industry, became a problem in itself that impacted the failing economy. In the past, this sector was one of the industries that had done very well, but the demands for the quick reduction process resulted in the fact that within one year this sector had cut production by 50% without converting to any alternative civilian products; see Ablaß, *Zapfenstreich*, pp. 86-87. Ablaß also played a key role in the reduction of projected imports of weapons systems from the other Warsaw Pact states. This included the cancellation of contracts valued at 2,8 billion GDR Marks; in Ablaß, *Zapfenstreich*, pp. 107-108; also, see Eppelmann *Wendewege*, p. 106; the former Defense Minister lists that number at 2,3 billion.
- ³⁵¹ Eppelmann, *Wendewege*, p. 87.
- ³⁵² Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 153; also, see Eppelmann, *Wendewege*, p. 106.
- ³⁵³ Hans Joachim Wagner, "Hauptarten der Technik", in Farwick, *Ein Staat - Eine Armee*, p. 82; also, see Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, pp. 167-168; and Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, p. 525.
- ³⁵⁴ Hans Peter von Kirchbach, "Personalfragen" in *Abenteuer Einheit*, pp. 71-86. For Schönbohm's comment see Schönbohm, *Zwei Armeen*, p. 33. For his battles with the planners at the BMVg in regards to the numbers of NVA personnel to retain, see pp. 86, 91, 93, 107, 152, 173 & 242. For 'Schönbohm's donation' see Farwick, *Ein Staat - Eine Armee*, p. 187, and Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, p. 176. For the comments by an officer, who wish he could have done more for the NVA personnel, see Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, p. 110.
- ³⁵⁵ Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, pp. 159 & 162.
- ³⁵⁶ Gerhard Mahler "Die Einheit von operativer Planung, Logistik und Infrastruktur" in Farwick, *Ein Staat - Eine Armee*, pp. 120-121
- ³⁵⁷ Karl-Heinz Marschner, "Dienen bis zum Ende," p. 208 and Dieter Farwick, "Einige Antworten" p. 304, both in Farwick, *Ein Staat—Eine Armee*; also, see Schönbohm, *Zwei Armeen und ein Vaterland*, p. 100; Von Scheven "Die Bundeswehr und der Aufbau Ost", p. 496; Von Kirchbach, "Personalfragen" in *Abenteuer Einheit*, p. 85; and Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, pp. 33-34.
- ³⁵⁸ Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, p. 160; and Mahler "Die Einheit von operativer Planung, Logistik und Infrastruktur", pp. 112-113.
- ³⁵⁹ Interview with Werner Ablaß
- ³⁶⁰ Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, pp. 158-165; also, see Von Scheven "Die Bundeswehr und der Aufbau Ost", pp. 486-500; and Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, pp. 32-45.
- ³⁶¹ Examples of these have already been presented in the chapter on interpretations; also, see remarks by Schönbohm and Stoltenberg in Thoß, *Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit*, pp. 410 & 449.
- ³⁶² Paul Heider, "Nicht Feind, nicht Gegner, sondern Partner", in Thoß, *Vom Kalten Krieg zur deutschen Einheit*, p. 439. Furthermore, a good example of the changes in perception is a comparison between Schönbohm's *Zwei Armeen*

und ein Vaterland published in 1992 and the comments by West German contemporary witnesses in 2002 in Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*.

³⁶³ See Zilian's explanation of these terms in Ch. 2 as well as endnote # 151.

³⁶⁴ For explanation of term see section on Werner Patzer in Ch. 2.

³⁶⁵ Same as endnote on *Innere Führung*

³⁶⁶ Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, p.163. Note: Herspring lists the Bundeswehr ratio at 40:1; this does not sound possible since that would not correspond to Von Scheven's claim that the Bundeswehr had 40,000 officers. Using Herspring's calculation 40:1 at 480,000 troops would only give the Bundeswehr a total of 12,000 officers.

³⁶⁷ For March 15 numbers see Hoffmann, *Das letzte Kommando*, p. 320.

³⁶⁸ BMVg, *Fünf Jahre Armee der Einheit – eine Bilanz*. (Bonn, 1995), p. 17.

³⁶⁹ BMVg report in *Enquete-Kommission*, pp. 504 – 505.

³⁷⁰ Ehlert, pp. 270 & 277; and Von Scheven "Die Bundeswehr und der Aufbau Ost", p. 491.

³⁷¹ Wolfgang Zapf, *How to evaluate German Unification?* Publication by Abteilung Sozialstruktur und Sozialberichterstattung des Forschungsschwerpunktes Sozialer Wandel, Institutionen und Vermittlungsprozesses des Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung (Berlin, September 2000), p. 14.

³⁷² "Getting back together is so hard" in *The Economist*, Volume 372 Number 8398, (Sept.18–24, 2004), p. 58.

³⁷³ The two quotes of this paragraph can be found in the opening paragraphs of the article "Getting back together is so hard" in *The Economist* print edition, Sep 16, 2004. The former quote is by Helmut Kohl and the latter quote was coined by Willy Brandt in late 1989

³⁷⁴ See Volker Koop and Peter Lapp in Chapter 2 of this thesis.

³⁷⁵ Koop, "Die National Volksarmee" in *Enquete-Kommission*, pp. 530-531.

³⁷⁶ See the section on Nina Leonhard in Chapter 2 of this thesis.

³⁷⁷ Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, p. 146.

³⁷⁸ Koop, "Die National Volksarmee" in *Enquete-Kommission*, pp. 533-534.

³⁷⁹ Koop, "Die National Volksarmee" in *Enquete-Kommission*, pp. 534-536.

³⁸⁰ Schönbohm, *Zwei Armeen und ein Vaterland*.

³⁸¹ A copy of one of those certificates was given to the author during the interview held on August 19, 2004.

³⁸² Ehlert, *Armee ohne Zukunft*, pp. 328-330.

³⁸³ "Trübsal in der Zwischenwelt" in *Der Spiegel*, Nr. 39, (September 20, 2004), p. 46.

³⁸⁴ Petition by FDP to the Bundestag; available at http://www.bundestag.de/bic/hib/2004/2004_165/05

³⁸⁵ Former Chief of Staff of the Army General Eric K. Shinseki was the individual responsible for that change in policy. His decision was certainly a result of his previous position as the Commanding General of USAREUR. At that time he attended joint parades/formations with U.S. forces and those of European militaries, during which he was able to conduct a side-by-side comparison and probably realized that soldiers in berets present a better image and look sharper. Furthermore, since image is an important factor among the younger generation, this would also help against the Army's low recruitment numbers. Up until that time, one of the Army's elite combat units known as the Rangers used the black beret as their non-field head-gear, but unlike the green beret of the Special Forces, the black beret was never officially assigned to the Rangers. As a result, prior to the change in policy, there was an uproar among some in the Army, especially those in the Rangers, that this new policy was inappropriate. These individuals saw the black beret as a sign of distinction, and they believed that it was not warranted for the personnel of the non-elite units of the regular Army to wear such a symbol of distinction. After the policy took effect, the Rangers changed their beret to a light-brown color and the voices of discontent soon disappeared. Today, only four years later, the wear of the black beret for the personnel of the regular Army has become so much part of their self-image that taking the black beret away from them would probably cause more up-roar than the initial change in policy. Even the Rangers no longer complain about the color change of their berets.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Roy R. Weidanz was born in Fayetteville, North Carolina on December 25, 1959. As the son of an U.S. Army NCO, he spent most of his childhood overseas, especially in Germany. In 1986, he enlisted in the U.S. Army and served as an infantryman with the 101st Air Assault Division. In 1989, he was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in the Military Police (MP) Corps through the UCLA ROTC program and graduated *Summa Cum Laude* with a B.A. in General Biology from the University of California, Northridge. Following successful completion of the MP Officer Basic Course, Airborne School and Ranger School, he served as a platoon leader and executive officer in a MP company in Germany from 1990 to 1993, and then returned with his unit to Fort Hood, Texas, where he served on the staff of III Corps. After the Infantry Officer Advanced Course and the Special Forces Qualification Course, he served as a detachment commander and company executive officer in 1st Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group in Böblingen, Germany from 1995 to 2000. He then attended and graduated from the French language course at the U.S. Defense Language Institute in Monterey, CA, and in January of 2001, he began his Foreign Area Officer (FAO) training in Berlin, Germany. From November 2001 to June 2002, he served as the first US LNO to the Bundeswehr Einsatzführungskommando (Operations Command) in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. In 2003, he graduated from the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Following the completion of his Master of Arts for the program in Russian and East European Studies in the spring of 2005, the author will be assigned as a staff officer to the European Command (EUCOM) in Stuttgart, Germany. Major Weidanz is also a native German speaker.