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WHO'S AFRAID OF FRANCO-GERMAN  
MILITARY COOPERATION?

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# I

At the most recent Franco-German summit, held in late May 1992 in La Rochelle, France, President François Mitterrand and Chancellor Helmut Kohl took a decision with potentially profound implications for transatlantic relations. In agreeing to create a joint army corps (to which other European countries would be invited to adhere) the French and German leaders took a giant step toward the fulfillment of a long-term vision of a European pillar of defense fashioned along "Carolingian"--i.e., tight Franco-German--lines.<sup>1</sup> Ever since the Elysée Treaty of 1963 ostensibly committed the two historic adversaries to construct together the institutional basis of European defense, Carolingianism has simultaneously sparked hopes and fears among those who have followed transatlantic security affairs. By no means have all the foes of Carolingianism been in the United States; by the same token, more than a few Americans have associated themselves emphatically with this architectural vision for European defense and security.

That being said, it probably remains true that closer Franco-German military cooperation has not been regarded as an unmixed blessing in Washington. Indeed, to some American policymakers and defense intellectuals, it has appeared as an unmitigated danger--to transatlantic relations, to certain Western European countries, and to the United States itself. At a high-level security conference held in February 1992 in Munich, Richard Perle spoke directly to this perception of menace when he frankly and vigorously denounced France and its German supporters for being on a mission to wreck the Atlantic Alliance. Up to that moment, debate at this two-day conference had been focusing on the divisive impact a failure

in the Uruguay Round could have on transatlantic security cooperation, a message that had been stressed by a group of American participants, and a theme restated in a set of remarks made by Vice President Dan Quayle shortly before Perle offered his views.

To Perle, talk of a trade war missed the point. The real danger, he argued, came from Paris: "Let's not kid ourselves; if France had its way, there would be no NATO." What was puzzling, Perle continued, was why some Germans were apparently so willing to continue to acquiesce in a French policy based on "vanity and nostalgia." Others took up the same point, with abandon. Immediately after Perle's intervention, Martin O'Neill, defense critic for the British Labour Party, echoed the claim that closer Franco-German military linkages constituted the Alliance's biggest challenge, and certainly the one most worthy of the conferees' attention. He was supported in his position by Sir Geoffrey Pattie, Conservative member of the House of Commons, and former defense secretary of the UK.

Not surprisingly, the Perle thesis occasioned some equally vigorous rebuttals, coming mainly from French and German figures who had been most committed to the merits of Carolingianism. Serge Boidevaix, at the time France's ambassador to Germany, and Jacques Baumel, president of the atlanticist Forum du Futur, each stressed, with some passion, the value of close Franco-German integration as a self-evident good, as well as something that was consistent with the interests of the Atlantic Alliance and its members. This theme was also restated by Klaus Naumann, the inspector general of the German armed forces.<sup>2</sup>

Debate within transatlantic fora on the merits of Franco-German military cooperation is nothing new; it has been taking place for almost as

long as has the process of Franco-German reconciliation. While no one is prepared to argue that a return to earlier, nastier, patterns of bilateral interaction would be in the interests of either Europe or the United States, there has always been, on the part of many, a palpable sense of anxiety lest France and Germany draw too closely together in the realm of defense and security cooperation. A former French ambassador to Germany, François Seydoux, has written tellingly of the hostility with which news of the Elysée Treaty was received at NATO headquarters in January 1963.<sup>3</sup> As it turned out, the Treaty itself, pledging the two countries to a deepening of their foreign and defense policy cooperation, was premature, and it would take another quarter-century before the prospect of Carolingianism would once again appear on the Alliance's agenda.

It was not until the late 1980s that progress began to be registered in the area of Franco-German defense cooperation. Perhaps the most significant development in this respect was the creation in January 1988 (on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Elysée Treaty) of the Franco-German Council on Defense and Security. Among the principal tasks of this high-level entity, which groups the heads of state and government, ministers of foreign affairs and defense, and top-ranking military officials of the two countries, has been to shape a common conceptual approach to defense and security. The recent La Rochelle initiative notwithstanding, this task is far from having been accomplished.

Also worthy of note was the formation of the Franco-German joint brigade. This 4200-strong unit is headquartered in Boblingen, near Stuttgart, and has been the object of much attention (not all of it favorable) in the years since 1987, when it was conceived as a result of a

postprandial suggestion made by Kohl to Mitterrand. Its numerous opponents have labeled it variously as a "gadget" (the preferred calumny of critics in France) or a "joke" (the insult of choice for German foes); but perhaps the most memorable condemnation was made by Britain's prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, who dismissed it in 1988 as utter tokenism, an "initiative for the gallery."<sup>4</sup> But the brigade has also had its supporters, who saw in it during the last years of the Cold War some operational significance, either protecting CENTAG supply lines in the event of war on the Central Front, or perhaps supporting the French First Army's move across the Rhine into Germany. The ending of the Cold War has, if anything, led its enthusiasts to even greater heights, as it has been for two years heralded as a laboratory for the concept of multinationalism, which many see as the only means of preserving NATO's stationing regime in the altered strategic context.

What never was decided--and in the circumstances, never could have been--was the "meaning" of the brigade for the Alliance: was it good or bad for NATO? Interestingly, the same kind of question is now being asked, a fortiori, about the Franco-German corps, into which the brigade will be folded.

## II

To ask how the Franco-German corps--the mooted "Eurocorps" of 35,000 soldiers that will, initially, comprise the French first armored division stationed at Landau, Germany, as well as two German mechanized brigades and the joint brigade--will affect the Atlantic Alliance is to raise a prior question about motivation. Why should either Paris or Bonn see it as being in their interests to create such an entity, at a time when Europe seems to be brimming with defense and security structures and "architectures"? In this and the following section, we shall examine the respective interests of the two countries, starting with France.

Of France, it can be said that it has so many reasons to wish to deepen its military cooperation with Germany that the matter is "over-determined." The first, and perhaps most relevant motive for the purposes of this article, is to contribute to strengthening an autonomous European pillar of defense. In this context, the referent for autonomy is the United States, and it is no secret that France has been, for decades, the Western European country that has had the most difficulty adjusting to life in an alliance presided over by Washington. The roots of Franco-American froideur can be traced back to World War II, when Charles de Gaulle chafed at the manner in which he was treated by the administration of Franklin Roosevelt; at least part of that ideological dispensation known as Gaullism must owe its origins to a felt need to overcome the humiliation visited upon France during the war years, and France's postwar search for "grandeur" has rendered it a very difficult defense partner for Washington at the best of times.

Ironically, the best of times have in some ways been the worst of times--those moments when crises (over Cuba, Berlin, the INF deployments, or much later, the Gulf) have resulted in an unwonted degree of cooperation between Paris and Washington. But in non-crisis situations (that is, most of the time), the struggle for influence between the two capitals can proceed almost unchecked, and with blatant disregard for the damage it might cause to the security of either country, and to that of the Alliance as a whole.

It should not be imagined, however, that France is entirely or even chiefly bent on Carolingianism so as to better position itself in the struggle for influence vis-à-vis the United States. More so perhaps than the aspiration for autonomy, a striving for greater security has propelled France's efforts to construct a Franco-German pillar of defense. It must, of course, appear more than a bit ironic that Paris is prepared to take a material day's march on the road to a transatlantic rupture when it is seeking to enhance the security of itself and its European neighbors--take such a march, that is, if one accepts that the US cannot and will not live with a more coherent Western European defense entity. But the French have never really made it their purpose to "drive" the US out of Europe, nor would they wish such a development to transpire. They do have some suspicions, which may well turn out to be warranted, that the US will some day leave Europe of its own accord, and in the event that happens, they wish to have alternative arrangements in place to guarantee the security of a continent that French strategists continue to regard as troubled.

Even in the event, held not to be likely, that American forces could be deployed forever in Europe, the French have had a second security



motivation for constructing a Franco-German pillar, namely to give "Europe" the capacity to intervene militarily in conflicts that might be beyond the charter writ of the Alliance. To be sure, there is something problematical in planning one's defense more closely with the European country least likely to be given to military interventions; nevertheless, French strategists do appear to believe that by coordinating defense more closely with the Germans, they might have some leverage over the latter, and make it more rather than less likely that European units can be mustered to defend European interests outside of NATO's traditional area of operations, especially in conflicts where the US, for whatever reasons, indicates a desire neither to lead nor to be especially conspicuous.

The third major French interest in Carolingianism dates back more than four decades: it is the desire to control German power with an embrace, and in this respect bilateral defense initiatives must be seen to represent logical successors to the imaginative economic schemes for integrating the two countries, starting with the Schuman Plan of May 1950, to form the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). Carolingianism has never lacked for opponents, even in France, but it must be stated that a consensus has developed, in the years since 1950, in favor of tighter linkages with Germany, one that transcends major party lines (albeit not minor ones, thus both the Communists and the National Front remain outside it). Although the events since the Berlin Wall's crumbling might be thought to have weakened that consensus, rather the reverse has occurred. That France's defensive motivation for seeking tighter bonds with Germany seems often to be overlooked in North America is no reason for concluding that it has disappeared. In this regard, much of the current enthusiasm for a Franco-

German army corps must be chalked up to fear not self-assurance, and the initiative itself is as much a testimony to how badly things have been going between the two countries since late 1989 than to the reverse.

Finally, Carolingianism has been implicated in French visions of a "Europe" constructed along the lines of deepened interstate cooperation--an arrangement in which France's natural leadership talents would be buttressed by the economic capabilities of Germany and the other neighbors. Whatever the "federalist" leanings of the president of the European Commission, Jacques Delors (who happens to be French), it is misleading to see in the government of France champions of supranationalism in Europe. It probably still remains that the Germans are more committed to federalist solutions to Europe's integrative puzzle than the French, but the latter have for some time accepted that their own national interests do require the strengthening of European integration. Even if the French did not worry as much as they do about security, they would still have a strong reason to promote Franco-German military cooperation: to build Europe. It is a widespread view, but by no means a universal one in France, that economic integration pursued in isolation of political and security integration will prove a will-o'-the-wisp; thus many who care very little about security cooperation per se have rallied to Carolingianism not so much to build a pillar of defense that might be superfluous, but rather because it is held to be a necessary condition for the enhancement of integration in the economic realm.

### III

Some of these same rationales have been apparent in the German quest for closer bilateral cooperation in defense. That being noted, it has been and remains the case that the Germans, or their "political class," demonstrate no consensus at all on the merits of Carolingianism. Not only is there no major-party consensus on it, as in France, but it is far from clear that even the majority of the current coalition (CDU/CSU/FDP) really could be said in any sense to be Carolingians. That disposition remains the choice of a select group of military and civilian officials close to the chancellor, and it is even fair to say that the opposition SPD contains a fair number of anti-Carolingians, for reasons discussed below.

What, then, motivates the German Carolingians? A variety of factors can be adduced. First, as in the case of the French, so too do the Germans worry about the Germans. It has been a conviction of many thoughtful people in Germany since the end of the last war that the country's dynamism is safest for all concerned, Germans in particular, if it can be thoroughly embedded --or "anchored"--in cooperative structures. It was the wisdom of Konrad Adenauer to submerge nationalism and temporarily forego unification for the sake of tying German economic, political, and military fortunes to the West. But what the West meant to him was two nearly equal aspirations: reconciliation and close cooperation with France, and secure links with the United States through the Atlantic Alliance. Adenauer was most comfortable if he did not have to choose one over the other; but if a choice was unavoidable, as it was in the wake of the Elysée Treaty, he would know which anchor to drop, and which to keep on deck.

Whenever they thought they could get away with it, German leaders have preferred to argue that tightening the bonds with France has meant strengthening the Atlantic Alliance as well, because as the Germans like to imagine it, Carolingianism draws Paris closer to Washington. This preference aside, it is less clear today than it was, say, in 1983, that Carolingianism does work to the betterment of transatlantic solidarity, although a case will shortly be made that Franco-German military cooperation is, on balance, beneficial to the security of the West. Nevertheless, it bears noting that those moments in which France did seem to be aligning itself more closely with its transatlantic partner, for example during the early 1980s' crisis over the INF deployments, were triggered by a French perception of German weakness and "drift" more than by a German determination to make of the French better atlanticists. Although a significant degree of military cooperation has taken place between the allies and France since the latter left NATO's integrated military command in 1966, it is open to question whether this truly is a result of German shepherding of the lost French lamb back into the Alliance pasture. That the Germans should believe they have made the French better allies is understandable; so, too, is Chancellor Kohl's insistence that the Franco-German corps is good for NATO and for the US.

If a common fear of the Germans can inspire Carolingians in both countries, so does a common desire to build Europe. Here again, the Germans see in the European Community another dependable anchoring mechanism, in effect the economic and political analogue of NATO. Bonn has differed from Paris on the Community's ideal breadth, with Paris desiring a "deeper" Europe and Bonn, until recently, being swayed by the virtues of as

"broader" one. It also prefers, as noted above, a more federal Europe to the French confederal entity. And it shudders at the prospect of whatever Europe manages to emerge becoming a factor of division in the transatlantic context. Nevertheless, Germany is no more prepared than France to sabotage the construction of the new Europe, and for the current government it has been an article of conviction that that new Europe must have some capacities for common action in foreign and defense policy.

Finally, the German Carolingians see a virtue in Franco-German military cooperation that tends to be lost on their French partners. Such initiatives as the Franco-German corps make good sense to Bonn because they allow it to preserve the multilateral "stationing regime" in Europe, chiefly in Germany. For reasons inextricable from the German historical experience, there is a desire to maintain a reformed version of the postwar pattern under which Western forces were deployed in Germany, thereby assuring the security of Germany against the Soviet Union and reassuring Germany's Western allies against itself. In this view, multinational formations (including command structures) and cross-stationing are good in themselves, independent of the demise of the Cold War, for they contribute to the maintenance of the Western European security community.<sup>5</sup>

It is not as well-remarked as it should be that the Germans reacted with dismay following the French announcement of July 1990 that in light of the altered strategic context in Europe, Paris could see no further justification for stationing across the Rhine its 46,000-strong Forces françaises en Allemagne (FFA) once the last Soviet soldier had departed German soil.<sup>6</sup> Although many in France apparently thought the new Germany would prefer there to be no more French (or other) "occupying" forces on

its territory, the announcement did betray a fundamental lack of sensitivity to the interests of Germany, and served as a further wedge between the two countries in a period of growing bilateral disagreement. Thus the formation of the Franco-German corps has constituted a resolution of this dilemma, for not only will a French division continue to be stationed in Germany, but German units will be permanently attached to the corps headquarters, in Strasbourg, thus strengthening both the appearance and reality of reciprocal commitment to cross-national deployments.

Lastly, if the Germans aspire to military integration and cross-national stationing out of a desire to reassure allies without being unjustly "singularized" as the only host country for foreign forces, they see further merit in Carolingianism because of the reassurance it offers in the event that the US should pull its forces completely out of Europe. To reiterate: neither the French nor German governments really wish such a total departure, and to the extent opinion polls in Germany have lately been indicating growing hostility to the continuation of foreign stationing, the French can be counted upon to be more not less supportive of an ongoing US presence in Germany.<sup>7</sup>

#### IV

This last possibility, of an American withdrawal from Europe, brings us to the crux of the issue, and raises the question of how we should assess Carolingianism. It is not difficult to construct a case against Franco-German military integration, on a variety of grounds. That is the task for this section; in the following section, I examine the arguments in favor of such integration. There are two major claims made against the Franco-German Eurocorps. The first, but not necessarily most serious, worry is that it will result in a decision by Washington to leave Europe, effectively "de-linking" America's own security from that of the old continent. The second is that the Eurocorps will so disrupt transatlantic and intra-European security arrangements as to lead to the collapse of the postwar stationing regime, thereby imperiling the very existence of the Western European security community. The two worries are obviously intertwined, but let us disentangle them.

During the Cold War, it used to be accepted wisdom that the US would not, despite periodic grumbling about burden sharing and free riding, radically reduce its deployed forces in Europe, for the good reason that to do so would have been equivalent to undermining its own security interests. This assumption led some observers to conclude that the Atlantic Alliance was, if not a perpetual-motion machine, then certainly one that was "idiot-proof," in the sense that its preservation inhered in a fundamental, "structural" logic of the bipolar, Cold War world. The argument that America's physical security would suffer were the security linkage symbolized by troop stationing discontinued had been challenged even during the Cold War, but the challenge was not nor could it have been very

serious--even if to a certain degree critics were correct in citing the nuclear guarantee to European allies as the principal danger to America's physical security.

Today, it is less easy than it has been for half a century to demonstrate how the physical security of the United States would be jeopardized were it to leave Europe. Nevertheless, the demonstration can be attempted. There is, first, the argument--glimpsed in early drafts of the Pentagon's Defense Planning Guidance for Fiscal Years 1994 to 1999--that America's interests compel it to be on the alert for any potential challenger to its status as ranking world power, whether that challenger be a revived foe like Russia, or a long-time ally like Japan or Germany (the latter with or without the European Community). For those who take the view that a "hegemon's" lot is perpetually to be compelled to ward off aspirants to its position atop the global heap, there is much wisdom in keeping US military forces deployed abroad: it allows potential hegemonic challengers to refrain from translating their economic power into military power, since their basic security needs are being cared for by their superpower patron, the US.

A variant with perhaps greater plausibility holds that as the coming era will be one in which "collective security" takes on the significance for America once possessed by collective defense, it will be as much in Washington's as any other capital's interest to ensure that a viable means of resolving conflicts in Central and Eastern Europe can be found. While NATO, and US forces, may no longer be required to deter a Soviet Union that has ceased to exist, they will certainly be necessary agents in any successful application of collective security to Europe's troubled regions.



The menace of the Eurocorps, then, is to be found in the related danger that it will chase the US out of Europe, and in the process render collective security impossible. To those who take this position, the news from La Rochelle "sounded like a diplomatic version of 'Yankee Go Home'."<sup>8</sup>

The second source of concern over the Franco-German corps comes from those who fear the process of transatlantic security deconstruction will not stop at the sundering of military bonds between the US and Europe. Bad as that may be, even worse lies in store as a result of Carolingianism: Western Europe's "long peace" itself will be endangered. This will be so because without a US military presence in Europe, and especially Germany, it will prove impossible for there to be any continuing stationing regime in Europe. The British could be expected to quit the continent shortly after an American departure, and since the Canadians will have already pulled out, the only Allied forces left in Germany would be the Dutch, Belgians, and French--and only the latter could be expected to remain.

Not only would there be set in train a dangerous "renationalization" of European defense, but the Franco-German rump would constitute an even greater privileged dyad than it has heretofore been. According to this perspective, the European security architecture, in becoming marked by an even greater degree of "variable geometry," would perforce lose whatever legitimacy it had managed to attain. In that event, say these critics, it cannot be long before Carolingianism itself fell victim to the same corrosive pressures, and Europe found itself back in its familiar predicament of balance-of-power rivalries and civil war.

Interestingly, the case for Carolingianism shares the same analytical foundation as the case against. If the critics of closer Franco-German military cooperation see it as the development that will usher the United States out of Europe, supporters are inclined either to see it as a means of keeping the US in, or if that is impossible, as a way of minimizing the damage associated with a US departure.

The first argument in support of Carolingianism might be labeled the "devolutionist" thesis. In it the thrust is upon the desirability of averting or, should that prove impossible, mitigating the adverse impact of an American departure. When Chancellor Kohl indicated he saw the Eurocorps as a means of more equitably sharing the burden of defending Europe with America, there were many in the latter country who dismissed his claim as cant. But Kohl is not on slippery footing when he suggests that the corps "should be a reason to celebrate in Washington because Europeans are finally doing what they have been asked to do for a long time."<sup>9</sup> Indeed, one can date the elusive search for the Alliance's second "pillar" to President Kennedy's Independence Day address of 1962, calling upon the Europeans to share more equitably with the United States the "burdensome tasks of building and defending a community of free nations."<sup>10</sup> For some three decades, the Germans (and others) have had it repeated to them that they were not doing enough to look after their security and that of their allies. Now that they seem to be listening, should it really be in anyone's interest to condemn them, particularly when their apparent shouldering of the load is being done in harmony with the one ally that, in

the Cold War, worried so excessively about keeping them from "drifting" to the east?

Of course, the easy response to make is that in allocating resources to a corps outside of NATO's command, the Germans are in fact weakening the security of Western Europe. This claim, however, depends upon a reasonable expectation being made for an ongoing and significant US presence in Europe --or at least upon the ongoing vitality of a NATO that the US believed no longer needed its troops in Europe. And here the second component of the devolutionist argument enters: if, as the French seem to believe, an American departure from Europe is foreordained, would it not be folly to refrain from constructing an alternative mechanism for safeguarding both the Western Europeans and the security of the West writ large? What is significant about the recent La Rochelle summit is the degree to which some German political figures--perhaps not Kohl but certainly his foreign minister, Klaus Kinkel--have moved closer to the French assessment. To repeat, neither the French nor, especially, the Germans would like to see the US leave Europe altogether, but it is becoming more difficult than ever for them to resist the conclusion that a departure is inevitable, driven by forces beyond the ability of Europeans to influence, and notwithstanding official disclaimers from first the Bush then the Clinton administration that the US will stay in Europe as long as the Europeans want it to. The burgeoning federal deficit, the prospect of unabated social decay, the felt need to concentrate on "kick-starting" the economy--all these developments lead many in Europe to conclude that even if it wanted to stay committed to their security, the United States might not be able to.

Apart from the devolutionist thesis, there is a second theme that animates Carolingians: the need for ensuring the perpetuation (for that is what it amounts to) of the postwar phenomenon of reconciliation. As I noted earlier, Germans during the Cold War could never place Paris above Washington, even if they sought to the maximum extent to placate France, and keep it convinced that Germany shared in the dream of constructing the European pillar around a Franco-German core. Today, the situation is rather the reverse: if Bonn would still prefer to alienate neither of its major security partners, it now senses that it has more to lose in letting the relationship with France sour than in seeing German-American bonds slacken. The Germans may be gambling in privileging Paris over Washington, but the circumstances of the moment--and especially the tenuous nature of European Union--seem to them to require the gamble.

It must not be forgotten just how much Franco-German reconciliation is in every Western country's interests--no less for the US than for the Europeans themselves. What, after all, made it necessary for America to intervene in European wars twice in this century if not the spectacle of Franco-German armed conflict? How much can really go wrong in the Western Europe of the future if the two former adversaries remain locked in an ideological cage--namely, Carolingianism--that for all its vices has the supreme virtue of making future war between them as unlikely as a war between Pennsylvania and Virginia?

## VI

How one judges the meaning of Carolingianism, either for transatlantic security or for more narrow American interests, depends in part on the tastes of the judge. It is my view that the risks of a Carolingian defense solution for Europe are less than the risks of there not being such a solution. But whether it be good or bad for the West or the US, it should be clear that what will either facilitate or, more to the point, frustrate the creation of a Franco-German pillar of defense will not be outside pressure. Neither the US nor the European anti-Carolingians (among whose ranks must be included the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Norway, Denmark, and quite possibly Italy) have the ability, even if they possessed the desire, to derail a project thought essential in both Paris and Bonn. Instead, should Carolingianism once more fail to live up to its promise, it will be due largely to internal differences within the Franco-German concordat. It is to some of those differences that I turn my attention in this section.

At the most general conceptual level, France and Germany continue to be separated by a politico-strategic gulf. Initiatives such as that announced at La Rochelle, far from being taken to represent the strength of the bilateral relationship, must bear stark testimony to its underlying fragility. I have already remarked on the asymmetrical nature of consensus formation on the merits of Carolingianism: in France, nearly everyone supports closer bilateral defense integration; in Germany, many oppose it, and while foes of Carolingianism can be found in all parties, one party in particular, the SPD, seems to be populated by critics of a tighter security linkage with France. It is not that the SPD tends to be more atlanticist

than the ruling coalition; although some in the party are as atlanticist as anyone in Germany, the Social Democrats' primary grievance against France stems from a feeling that their neighbor across the Rhine is simply too heavily armed (especially with nuclear weapons), and too committed to an outmoded vision of realpolitik for it to be a reliable or sensible security partner for the new Germany.

These general cleavages apart, there are a trio of issue areas that have served in the past to frustrate Carolingianism. Whether they are likely to do so in the future is worth exploring. The first of these areas concerns the role of nuclear weapons in the defense of France, Germany, and Europe. During the Cold War, at least ever since it developed its force de frappe, France's nuclear weapons served as an endless source of fascination for Germans. Having given up the pretense of wishing nuclear weaponry themselves, the Germans did not adjust smoothly to the knowledge that France not only would rely heavily on its own deterrent forces, but it would do so almost spitefully on the basis of a doctrine that glorified the "national sanctuary" as the sole entity entitled to be protected by French nuclear weapons. To many Germans, the French bomb symbolized nothing so much as the rampant egoism of France and its unreliability as an ally.

German criticism of France's nuclear strategy and weaponry focused, during much of the Cold War period, on four claims: that France's "nuclear nationalism" made it impossible for Germany to count upon French protection against Soviet aggression; that France's resistance to arms control jeopardized Germany's Ostpolitik and its even more important Deutschlandpolitik; that France's so-called "prestrategic" forces (i.e., its short-range nuclear forces) directly menaced the lives of Germans

living either in the eastern portion of the former West Germany or the entire East Germany; and that the sums spent by France on its nuclear program detracted from the Alliance's ability to mount a more coherent and credible conventional defense, should the need arise.

The ending of the Cold War and the subsequent disappearance of the Soviet Union have done much to reduce the divisive impact of French nuclear forces on the Franco-German concordat. From time to time, French officials have mused publicly about "extending" France's nuclear deterrent to Germany; and it remains uncertain whether something like a European deterrent might not take shape in the coming decade. For the moment, it is clear that the German enthusiasts for nuclear umbrellas, regardless of whose fingers grasp the handle, are scarce on the ground. Nuclear deterrence no longer matters to German security elites in a way it once did; for the German public it is simply a topic not thought worthy of a dignified discussion. Germans may continue to find it odd that their neighbor invests so much money in its strategic modernization efforts, but there is no clamor to be brought within the French nuclear embrace.

The prestrategic, or SNF, issue is somewhat different, and for a while looked as if it would continue to be a major impediment to closer bilateral cooperation. Apparently it was Volker Rühe, Germany's defense minister, who coined the phrase a few years ago, apropos of SNF, "the shorter the range, the deader the German." Although the German backlash against SNF was then directed primarily at US and NATO modernization proposals, it had not gone unnoticed by specialists in Germany that France's own considerable SNF initiatives--especially the development of the Hadès missile--could present difficulties. France had initially responded to German criticism

by scaling down the numbers of Hadès to be built, from 60 to 15 launchers, which were to have been procured but not, as was originally intended, deployed by late 1992 in eastern France, in mid-1992, the Mitterrand government went much further, and cancelled the program outright.<sup>11</sup> For the moment, Chancellor Kohl has indicated his satisfaction with remaining French SNF, although it is almost certain that most Germans would prefer that France do away with all its prestrategic forces, and likely its strategic triad as well.

German displeasure with France's position on arms control, nevertheless, is not as great as it was in the late 1980s, for the good reason that in those years there was some concern that French intransigence might imperil relations with the Soviets, and that this in turn might make it more difficult for Bonn to weave a net of closer relations with the GDR. This concern vanished once the Berlin Wall did. Also vanished in the new strategic era is the German grievance about the impact of French nuclear weapons on the conventional defense of the Alliance; the race is on in Germany as elsewhere in Europe to reap peace dividends and slash military spending, and even if it wanted to (it does not) Bonn would be ill-positioned to highlight the opportunity costs of French nuclear weaponry.

Indeed, the conventional-defense issues that used to trouble the bilateral relationship during the Cold War have also mostly dissipated. It had been an article of much faith in Germany that France's Gaullism (embodied in but by no means restricted to its nuclear nationalism) rendered it impossible to be relied upon as a security partner. The French never did buy into the NATO creed of flexible response and, even worse from the German perspective, they never participated in forward defense by



stationing their troops near the Central Front, or "inner-German" border, the way all the other stationing powers except Canada did. Because of French deployment postures and doctrine, expressed through the adherence to the tenet of "non-automaticity" regarding involvement in a war in Central Europe, the Germans had a constant unfulfilled need for reassurance from Paris during the latter decades of the Cold War.

When France, in the early 1980s, decided to give Carolingianism another try, it was apparent that some means had to be found, if only in the conventional realm, of reassuring the Germans; at the same time, the country's vaunted defense consensus made it simply too risky to abandon any of the Gaullist fetishes. Unable to give doctrinal comfort to the Germans, the French sought a hardware solution of sorts, creating a Force d'action rapide (FAR) with the capability of rapid deployment to the most easterly reaches of West Germany, for combat at the side of German and NATO forces--if, that is, the French president decreed there was to be such combat. A major bilateral maneuver, Bold Sparrow, held in the autumn of 1987 was widely regarded as a test of the effectiveness of the FAR as a reassurance device. The test results were sufficiently ambiguous to permit those who doubted the French commitment to maintain their skepticism. Needless to say, the altered strategic context in Europe has resulted in the disappearance of those former German worries about the nature and utility of France's commitment to its ally, thereby rendering the operational capabilities of the FAR a moot point.

The final issue area in which controversy plagued the Franco-German tandem during the Cold War comprises defense industrial considerations. If in the realms of nuclear and conventional defense it was the Germans who

felt aggrieved as a result of France's inability to bend dogma, in this last area it has been the French who have been the demandeurs. Given the obvious and, for a time, intractable difficulties in the "high politics" of the security relationship, some analysts had come to believe that by stimulating cooperation in the "low politics" of the defense industrial base, the two countries might yet, by dint of the wonder-working properties of spillover, succeed in constructing a Carolingian Europe. To those with such a vision, the latter decades of the Cold War came as a disillusionment, characterized in the French understanding by far too many "lapses in solidarity" on the part of the Germans and other Europeans.<sup>12</sup>

Although space does not permit us to delve deeply into the reasons defense industrial cooperation failed to make much headway, it is significant that the two countries' divergent strategic interests did play a role in constraining the amount and kinds of cooperative procurement they could experience. Ironically, the decade and a half following German accession to NATO in 1955 represents a kind of golden age of bilateral procurement, for it was in this period that such conspicuous successes as the Transall military transport, Alpha-Jet trainer, and Milan and HOT antitank missiles were conceived. By contrast, the decade since the Carolingian model was resuscitated has witnessed notable failures in a major tank project and a fighter aircraft project (the EFA), as well as continuous German backing and filling in the face of French demands for participation in the latter's military observation satellite, Hélios. And the one joint project that has not been a failure, the combat helicopter, has been steeped in controversy and afflicted by cost overruns.

Two defense industrial decisions in particular have come to symbolize

the tenuous nature of Carolingianism in this realm of security cooperation: the mid-1960s choice made by Bonn to purchase as its main combat aircraft the US F-104 over the French Mirage III, and the mid-1980s calculation on Bonn's part that it had more to gain by officially participating in the US Strategic Defense Initiative than it risked by incurring the wrath of a French government that regarded SDI as little more than Europe's technological Pearl Harbor.

If the Cold War's demise promises to render less troublesome the issues that once hobbled Carolingianism in the nuclear and conventional dimensions, it is hard to see how the events since 1989 have made it any easier for Germany to follow France's lead in procurement matters. If there is one glimmer of hope for Carolingians, it inheres in the possibility that Germany, in pulling out of the EFA, as seems likely, may still wish to purchase a modern fighter aircraft, and might for reasons of state be inclined to order the French competitor to EFA, the Rafale.<sup>13</sup> Otherwise, the decline in defense spending in Bonn threatens to make it even more unlikely that the Carolingian pillar of defense can be built from the bottom up.

## VII

There may be good reasons for policy analysts in the US and elsewhere to worry about the Franco-German military relationship developing into a privileged partnership in an increasingly "two-speed" Europe, but one of these reasons is not that such a development will drive the US out of Europe. No one in Western Europe, not even the French, wants the US to pull completely out of Europe. Why should anyone? Given the experience of the past 47 years, a period in which there has been a continuing American troop presence of at least two Army divisions (and usually much more), Western Europe has enjoyed unprecedented peace and prosperity. A US withdrawal, should it come, will occur for reasons stemming from the domestic American political, social, and economic setting. Although a good, even compelling case, could be made for a permanent American security guarantee to Europe--as it were "from here to eternity"--the evolving strategic context may be such as to lead Americans to conclude the commitment to Europe, being no longer the necessity it once was, might well become a luxury that can no longer be afforded.

Should an American withdrawal occur, it will be even more necessary than before for the Europeans to take greater control of their own security--if only to keep from doing damage to themselves through a madcap dash toward renationalized defense policies. The long-term legitimacy of a Carolingian Europe would obviously be problematical, but it would seem that the long-term prospects for European security would be dimmer still were there to be no Carolingian defense pillar around which other European states could organize the common defense. Franco-German military cooperation, in this case, would be a necessary though not a sufficient

condition for a stable and enduring Western European security architecture. Especially now, in view of the uncertainties surrounding the Maastricht Treaty, there remains a need for European states to minimize the potential for centrifugation. In the past, the US military presence was the best centripetal agent. Can it seriously be imagined it will or can remain so?

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>Jacques Isnard, "La France et l'Allemagne vont créer un corps d'armée à vocation européenne," Le Monde, 21 May 1992, pp. 1, 3. "Carolingianism" refers to the reality and the myth of the Carolingian empire, which consisted of the countries ruled after 800 by Charlemagne, and which represents a vision of European unity premised upon a Franco-German kinship derived from the Franks, the west Germanic tribe that occupied much of Gaul and had its territorial base in the lands bordering the Rhine. See David G. Haglund, Alliance Within the Alliance? Franco-German Military Cooperation and the European Pillar of Defense (Boulder: Westview, 1991), pp. 64-65.

<sup>2</sup>Author's notes, "29th Munich Conference on Security Policy," Munich, 9 February 1992.

<sup>3</sup>François Seydoux, Dans l'intimité franco-allemande: une mission diplomatique (Paris: Editions Albatros, 1977), pp. 21-25.

<sup>4</sup>Quoted in Ian Gambles, "Prospects for West European Security Cooperation," Adelphi Papers, no. 244 (August 1989), pp. 49-50.

<sup>5</sup>For an elaboration of this theme, see David G. Haglund and Olaf Mager, "Homeward Bound?" in Homeward Bound? Allied Forces in the New Germany, ed. Haglund and Mager (Boulder: Westview, 1992), pp. 273-85.

<sup>6</sup>For a discussion of the French rationale, see David S. Yost, "France and West European Defence Identity," Survival 33 (July/August 1991): 328-31.

<sup>7</sup>For recent polls on the question of US forces in Germany, see Ronald D. Asmus, "Deutschland im Übergang: Nationales Selbstvertrauen und Internationale Zurückhaltung," Europa Archiv 47, 8 (25 April 1992): 199-211.

<sup>8</sup>Jeane Kirkpatrick, "Questioning Need for Eurocorps," Financial Post (Toronto), 2 June 1992, p. 12.

<sup>9</sup>Quoted in William Drozdiak, "Bonn and Paris to Deploy Euro-Corps by 1995," International Herald Tribune, 23/24 May 1992, pp. 1, 4.

<sup>10</sup>John F. Kennedy, "The Goal of an Atlantic Partnership," Department of State Bulletin 47 (23 July 1962): 131-33.

<sup>11</sup>"Guide des forces nucléaires françaises," Damoclès, no. 10 (January 1992), pp. 25-26; Jacques Isnard, "Des missiles à la casse," Le Monde, 13 June 1992, pp. 1, 13.

<sup>12</sup>The expression is that of then French defense minister, Jean-Pierre Chevènement, as quoted in Yves Boyer and Diego Ruiz Palmer, "L'Alliance atlantique et la coopération européenne en matière de sécurité: l'âge de la maturité?" Politique étrangère 54 (Spring 1989): 111.

<sup>13</sup>Giovanni de Briganti, "Germany Is Likely to Quit EFA," Defense News, 8-14 June 1992, pp. 1, 45; Christoph Bertram, "Germany Pulls Out of Euro-fighter Aircraft Project," German Tribune, 29 May 1992, p. 3.