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Switzerland

*Political report<sup>1</sup> of the Swiss Ambassador in Bonn, Alfred Hohl<sup>2</sup>*

## REUNIFICATION AND BLOC ALIGNMENT

*Confidential*

Bonn, 13 February 1990

Three fundamental processes of historic importance are currently taking place in Europe:

- (Western) European integration within the EC with the goal of a European Union
- The dissolution of the Eastern Bloc and thus the elimination of bipolarity in Europe in terms of security policy.
- German reunification.

The three processes are inextricably connected to each other. The interplay and causality of the latter two, however, are particularly pressing and acute. The dilemma can be put simply:

The developments in Germany have achieved a momentum that cannot be matched by the formation of new pan-European security structures intended to supersede bipolarity.

*Solution:*

- a) Either the process of reunification is slowed down and aligned with what can be achieved within the scope of Helsinki II or Vienna II, or
- b) the construction of the new Europe is adjusted to the speed of the process of reunification, or
- c) one accepts the fact that the two processes cannot be coordinated time-wise.

To predict only one of these three logically conceivable developments as likely would mean to categorise the dynamics of political developments in an undue manner.

It is more realistic to assume a mixture of the three options.

– The still unresolved question of bloc alignment certainly inhibits the process of reunification. Achieving state unity in combination with a twofold bloc alignment and the presence of American as well as Soviet troops is unrealistic, since this is inherently self-contradictory. Assurances to the contrary – also from the coalition – are to be understood more as “window dressing” and as “appeasement” of the Bloc protagonists’ worries.

<sup>1</sup> *Political report No. 12 and Telegram No. 34 (incoming, translated from German):* Swiss Federal Archives CH-BAR#E2010-02A#1996/400#19\* (A.21.31). Written by Jürg Leutert, [dodis.ch/P17414](https://dodis.ch/P17414).

<sup>2</sup> *Alfred Hohl (1930–2004)*, [dodis.ch/P16080](https://dodis.ch/P16080), *Swiss Ambassador in Bonn 1.9.1987–16.11.1991*.

137 – What cannot be denied is that the German development gives rise to pressure to create new European security structures. It puts Helsinki II und Vienna II under pressure to succeed.

– Ultimately, the development certainly also contains aleatory elements. This is due, amongst other things, to the uncertainties in the Soviet Union. Would it, for instance, have the capacity and the will to resist if the GDR were to pull away? After all, come 18 March, a newly elected GDR government would be free to declare its resignation from the Warsaw Pact. The USSR troops that remain on GDR territory would then be present solely in the role of a victorious power according to the Potsdam Agreement, which would put in an entirely new light the question of Bloc alignment. As speculative as such a development may be at present: it deserves to be mentioned when one considers that what was unthinkable in Europe only yesterday is today's reality. The re-sizing of the Soviet empire, the mastering of its internal problems demand a willingness to compromise, particularly in those areas where there are no direct and vital risks in terms of security policy. Once the USSR's Western glacis is on the point of dissolving, Soviet troops stationed in the GDR over the long-term may rather represent anachronistic symbolism than a necessity in terms of security policy.

The idea of making the united Germany *neutral*, which Modrow<sup>3</sup> dug out with the support of the Kremlin, bypasses reality.

A state of united Germany's size and power by definition cannot be neutral; it lacks the essential smallness that is a condition of being-able-to-be-neutral and the interests resulting from its size make it, in the international context, an agent that is relevant in terms of security policy. Moreover: letting united Germany become neutral would mean granting it a special status that allows for an independent, unswayable policy vis-à-vis the other powers. An integration into pan-European structures increases the level of control over German foreign policy.

*Other options* are also currently being discussed:

– That the GDR will become part of NATO territory is unrealistic, since unconscionable and unacceptable to the USSR.

– A – temporary – rendering neutral and demilitarisation of the GDR would probably fail for the same reasons.

Conclusion: There is currently no solution on the horizon that could overcome the conceptual incompatibility of reunification and – provisional – Bloc alignment of FRG and GDR. Nonetheless, the reunification will not fail because of this, it will – as far as the constitutive framework is concerned – be delayed at most.

<sup>3</sup> Hans Modrow (\*1928), [dodis.ch/P54796](http://dodis.ch/P54796), Chairman of the GDR Council of Ministers 13.11.1989–12.4.1990.