

Giscard in Bonn foresees 'European renaissance'

by Susan Welsh

As French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing concludes the third day of his first official state visit to the Federal Republic of Germany, he has already set off a profound transformation in the psychology of the German population. Europe must regain its influence in world affairs, it must forge a policy of peace for all mankind, he said in speeches throughout the country. The visit continues for two days of more intensive political discussion with West German Chancellor Schmidt, followed by a television address to the nation.

The wartime wounds which have divided France and Germany for 35 years are now healed, Giscard declared in Bonn. "Yesterday was the time of reconciliation. Today is the time for deeds, to regain Europe's influence in the world." Giscard praised the Germans as "this great people, which in all areas of science, culture and art have made extraordinary contributions to our civilization." When Giscard then left the podium to shake hands with the citizens of Bonn, a shout went up: "Vive la France! Vive la France!"

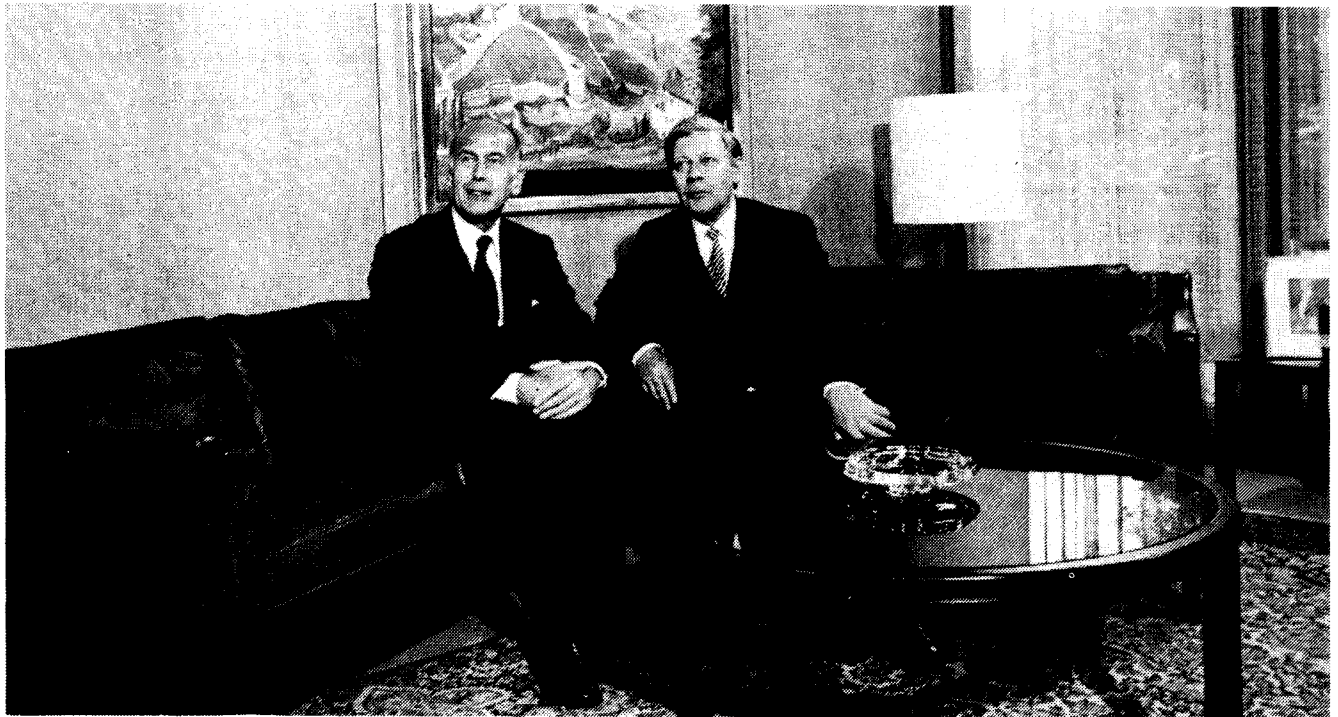
Thirty-five years ago, the people of the Federal Republic were told by the Anglo-American occupation powers that they—even the Germans yet unborn—bore the collective guilt for Hitler's crimes. This message has been dinned into the heads of a new generation of Germans by the media, which to this day is blacking out Giscard's visit and attacking West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt for his alignment with France.

Giscard is challenging the Germans to break free of this brainwashing and assert German nationhood in the

interests of world peace and progress. "I wish for the great capabilities of the German people to be combined with the great characteristics of the French people, in order to lead, in today's world, the most glorious and vital civilization that mankind has ever produced," he told the newspaper *Bild-Zeitung* July 7. Solidarity with the Atlantic Alliance "is by no means a synonym for submission," he said to the *Frankfurter Rundschau*. "In a union of sovereign states and free peoples like the Western countries, solidarity is based upon mutual principles, solidarity in action requires consultation and coordination, not subordination."

On the goals of the Franco-German alliance, Giscard said at a banquet in his honor in Bonn that "if we succeed we will have rendered a great service to peace and the balance in the world which, as we see every day, needs an independent and strong Europe. . . . Never have our countries been so bound together. Never have we been so close. . . . What I am saying is that our two peoples, reconciled and friends, could together give impulse to the renaissance of European influence."

Giscard has repeatedly located his own trip within the historical tradition of the 1962 visit of General Charles de Gaulle to West Germany, at the invitation of Chancellor Konrad Adenauer. Those leaders "established decisively the common destiny of our nations," he said in Baden-Baden July 8. But the Franco-German alliance that has emerged over the last two years goes far beyond what de Gaulle and Adenauer were able to create. "The idea that Europe can play a special role in



President Giscard and Chancellor Schmidt in Bonn

Photo: Sygma

world affairs is something which Germany did not perceive a few years ago and which it now accepts," Giscard told reporters.

No policy to deal with Washington

The Franco-German alliance has emerged in its current powerful form out of an effort to counteract the manic war-confrontation policies of the Carter administration. Since the founding of the European Monetary System in 1978, West Germany and France have tried to shape a war-avoidance policy around the principles of economic development of Europe and the Third World and detente with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Schmidt and Giscard are trying to create a kind of "safety net" to contain the dangerous follies of the Carter administration. But the Europeans have no policy for reversing the moral and political collapse of the United States itself, to draw America into their own "grand design" for peace.

Disgusted by both frontrunners Reagan and Carter, the European leaders view the prospects for the U.S. presidential elections with deep pessimism. Failing to believe that the ferment in the Democratic Party for an "open convention" provides new openings for a genuine shift in American foreign and domestic policy, Chancellor Schmidt has even agreed to meet with the new empty-headed front-man for the Trilateral Commission, "independent" John Anderson, who arrives in Europe

this week. French Foreign Minister Jean François-Poncet will also receive the candidate. At least Giscard will not.

Military cooperation

The disaster of U.S. military policy—based on confrontation backed up by nothing—has contributed to a qualitatively new aspect of the Franco-German alliance. For the first time, military cooperation between the two countries is being openly discussed as the only way to ensure both independence and security for Europe. This probably does not mean that West Germany will leave NATO as France did in 1966—partly because membership in NATO is seen as offering some possibility of leverage with Washington.

Chancellor Schmidt was unusually frank in an interview to *Le Figaro* newspaper July 7: "since France has taken some distance from the Alliance on the level of military integration since the time of Gen. de Gaulle, it is normal that Germany's influence, even though we are a non-nuclear power, is much greater within this Alliance. On the other hand, France's freedom to maneuver is much greater than ours." The complementarity of the two countries in this as well as in economic respects is one basis of their alliance, Schmidt said.

Giscard rearranged the itinerary of his visit July 8 to include joint inspection with Chancellor Schmidt of a French military parade in Baden-Baden. "My presence among you, alongside the Federal Chancellor, bears witness to the confident and friendly cooperation which

has been built up between our two commands and two armies," Giscard told the troops. "The service of many French soldiers in the Federal Republic enables them "to know the daily life of the principal partner with whom we are building Europe, so that its world role and influence are restored."

Schmidt in reply stressed that the Franco-German alliance includes defense. "Your security is indivisible from ours and our security is also yours. Both France and the Federal Republic have made a contribution to the balance of power, which is the precondition for collaboration and peace. . . . Germany and France are a factor of stability in Europe and in the whole world."

As *EIR* reported last week, President Giscard's recent announcement that France has successfully tested a "neutron bomb" is part of the emerging Franco-German defense policy. Giscard said that if a decision is made to produce and deploy the weapon, it would be done with the security of "neighboring countries" prominently in mind.

'Containment' of Carter

While shoring up their own defenses, the continental Europeans are increasingly outspoken in their opposition to the foreign policy of the Carter administration. Chancellor Schmidt in an interview to *Der Spiegel* magazine July 7 rejected out of hand the geopolitical premise of Carter's policy: the Soviet leaders are "not adventurers," he said. "Brezhnev and his colleagues fear a war as much as we do here." On the contrary, it is those who try to "isolate" the Soviet Union who are "adventurist," he said.

The French meanwhile have sharply criticized the Carter administration's plans to bolster U.S. forces in the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf. Following a meeting between Giscard d'Estaing and U.S. Defense Secretary Harold Brown, a French government official gave a press briefing recalling the statements made by Giscard during his trip to the Persian Gulf earlier this year, calling on both superpowers to stay out of the area. "There are certain regions of the world where we don't think the reinforcement of security is helped by Western military presence. We don't think the American presence is an element of stabilization," the official said.

Giscard is considering issuing a call for the demilitarization of the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean, the *Washington Post* reported July 6. He is rumored to be planning a trip to the Indian Ocean soon and "the French President has a history of using such distant countries for dramatic diplomatic statements, usually designed to refurbish France's image as the Third World's best friend in the West," commented the *Post* with evident distress.

Documentation

'Union of sovereign states'

The following is excerpted from Giscard's interview with the Frankfurter Rundschau newspaper July 7:

General de Gaulle's visit to Germany 17 years ago meant a change in the history of both our peoples. . . . The reconciliation is today an accomplished fact. It was the necessary foundation for future joint undertakings, based on our feelings of solidarity on the European continent, but also on our relations to the rest of the world, where our joint efforts must strengthen Europe's role. Franco-German relations have developed on all levels. They have experienced an upswing and have reached a quality that surpasses without a doubt all that anyone could have hoped for in 1962 [the year de Gaulle and Adenauer signed a Friendship Treaty—ed.].

My visit confirms this reality, and the solidarity of Franco-German cooperation is a testimony to the level that has been achieved in the activities of our states, and therefore is a basic dimension.

For France, independence is a natural given, rooted in history and self-evident to the overwhelming majority of Frenchmen. It is not the result of pressure, as it has appeared to be. Independence and solidarity are placed alongside one another, so that when one is excluded the other is also. Solidarity is by no means a synonym for submission, in our view. In a union of sovereign states and free peoples like the Western countries, solidarity is based upon mutual principles. Solidarity in action requires consultation and coordination, not subordination. . . . France attributes the highest possible significance to consultations with its allies, especially Bonn. When France takes a position or carries out an initiative, it does so in such a way that its actions agree with the general interests of the West.

'A will to cooperate'

Below are excerpts of an interview Chancellor Schmidt granted Le Figaro appearing July 7, as President Giscard's trip to West Germany got underway.

Q: Can we talk about "Helmut Schmidt and Valéry Giscard d'Estaing" today the way we used to talk about "Charles de Gaulle and Konrad Adenauer"?

A: Yes, I think so. There is a continuity here which must be stressed. Ever since the Elysée Treaty which is associated with the names of Adenauer and de Gaulle, Franco-German cooperation has substantially developed, and is not simply based on the friendship that unites President Giscard and myself. This cooperation embraces the broad areas of French policy, German policy, the French economy and the German economy, as well as the cultural life of the two countries. . . . I think it can be said that never in European history has the will to cooperate been as great as it is now. Since you have made the comparison with de Gaulle and Adenauer, I would say this is particularly true in the field of foreign policy.

Q: Do the French overestimate Germany's power?

A: The French know that the weight of France and Germany differs according to the area in question. . . . In the field of economics, Germany might appear particularly well-placed to certain Frenchmen. However, the French must not forget that they have an extremely wealthy economy, and that their technology ranks very high throughout the world. Nuclear plants, computers, but also traditional industries like auto or naval construction attest to this fact. France is a first-rank industrialized nation, like Germany. Both suffer from the handicap of not having their own raw materials. The two are forced to feed themselves through their brainpower and their labor.

There are three significant differences in France's favor. France is a military nuclear power, Germany is not and does not want to become one. . . .

Second, even if this point is less important, France has veto rights in the U.N. Security Council while we have neither a permanent seat, nor veto rights.

Third—and this is much more important—we Germans depend on the guarantee of other states for the freedom of Berlin. . . .

But I would also like to stress that . . . because, since the days of Gen. de Gaulle, France has taken some distance from the alliance on the level of military integration, it is normal that Germany's influence, even though we are a non-nuclear power, is much greater within this alliance. On the other hand, France's freedom to maneuver is much greater than ours. . . .

We both want to maintain the balance of power in Europe in front of the enormous power of the Soviets. I want to stress that.

I also want to stress that there is another point of convergence: a mutual will to support, on the basis of balance, with the Soviet Union and the Eastern European states, in other words, to practice what we call a policy of detente. . . .

Q: Following your trip to Moscow and Giscard's trip to Warsaw [to meet Brezhnev—ed.], French public opinion is asking: Didn't Brezhnev dupe you both?

A: President Giscard d'Estaing is too well-advised to be anyone's dupe in international affairs. And I venture to believe that the same goes for me. I would add that Leonid Brezhnev and the other Soviet leaders are also too well-advised to think that they could fool Giscard or Schmidt. . . . Neither France nor Germany think that it is a good idea to insult a world power like the Soviet Union, which must maintain its respectability. While we speak clearly and firmly, we remain polite. . . .

Q: Some fear that Germany would try to obtain its reunification at the price of neutrality.

A: . . . I think that this is a task for the coming century. I cannot see further ahead; I am neither a prophet nor a meteorologist. . . . I think rather that progress will take place in cooperation within all of Europe, which will make the present division of Germany felt less acutely.

'The task of the century'

West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt's June 30-July 1 trip to Moscow produced agreement with the Soviet leaders on the need for joint East-West development of the Third World as a primary war-avoidance measure. We present here excerpts from Schmidt's speech at a Kremlin banquet in his honor June 30, as an illustration of the policy basis upon which the new Franco-German "superpower" is operating.

This is my fifth visit to Moscow. Because of the present serious international situation I attach much importance to this visit. Mr. General Secretary, we can continue the tradition begun by your visit to the Federal Republic of Germany in 1978 and the various subsequent high-level conversations. . . .

The preamble of the Helsinki Final Act speaks about "the universality of detente" and the recognition of "close relations between peace and security in Europe and in the whole world." On May 6, 1978, we expressed ourselves jointly in Bonn for the "indivisibility of peace and for security in all parts of the world."

The disquieting direction of international relations during recent months has clearly demonstrated the significance of this pronouncement.

The Afghanistan crisis casts a broad shadow on East-West relations in Europe. It creates deep concern and great disturbance, especially in the countries of the Third

World, the non-aligned, and above all the Islamic countries.

In the Afghanistan crisis, the Federal Republic supports, in unison with France, with its partners in the European Community, and with the participants of the June 22-23 Venice summit and the overwhelming majority of the community of peoples, the resolution of the United Nations dated January 14, 1980, as well as the position of the Islamic conference at their latest two sessions.

The common goal of these resolutions and initiatives is the reestablishment of an independent, non-aligned Afghanistan, free of foreign troops, an Afghanistan which satisfies the wishes of the Afghan people and the legitimate interests of Afghanistan's neighbors.

I am sure that you, Mr. General Secretary, would substantially contribute to defusing this dangerous crisis, if you could explain that the announced pullback of Soviet troops from Afghanistan is the beginning of a continuous movement leading to complete withdrawal.

Mr. General Secretary, it is not long ago that you pointed out in a preface to the German edition of your speeches and interviews that today, crisis situations in part of the world affect international relations as a whole. I share this view.

Regional conflicts whose peaceful solution we should seek are complemented by world-scale tasks with which we can cope only by joint effort.

The necessary evening-out of interests between the North and the South, between industrial and developing states, is becoming increasingly complicated and increasingly pressing as a result of tremendous population growth in Third World countries and the soaring oil prices.

We are called upon to work on this task of the century for moral reasons and by force of our joint responsibility for peace in the world—Western industrial states alongside Eastern states, major oil-exporting countries as well as developing countries themselves. He who is concerned about peace on earth should refrain from imposing on the Third World countries his own concepts of a political, social or economic order. The Third World countries have a right to a diversity of forms, a right to internal and external self-determination, a right to freedom from hegemony.

Prime importance should be attached to the efforts to ensure sufficient energy supply on a world scale. Otherwise, a ruinous world struggle for the division of energy resources becomes imminent. Industrialized countries, oil-producing countries and developing countries which do not produce oil should come to terms with one another if they want to use their potential for economic development and prosperity. We can achieve much

through cooperation between our two countries. Mr. General Secretary, from the very beginning I welcomed your idea of holding a European conference on questions of energy, and I shall continue to come out in its favor. . . .

Unfortunately, there has been a continuing development in the area of medium-range nuclear missiles systems which jeopardizes the gains in stability from the SALT 2 treaty. Minister Genscher and I have repeatedly pointed out this dangerous development, publicly as well as in discussions with the Soviet leadership. No one could be unclear about our concern.

The Western Alliance had to prepare concrete steps, beginning in 1978, to correct an imbalance of forces in this decisive area. The result of long, very responsible deliberations is known: the NATO resolution of December 1979 contains, first, a defense decision and second, an arms limitation proposal. I appeal to our Soviet hosts not to dismiss these negotiation proposals.

We have read the May 15 declaration of the Warsaw Treaty countries. This document also speaks of readiness to negotiate on all weapons systems. This readiness would be made concrete, if you would agree to preliminary talks on medium-range systems without any preconditions.

The German and the Soviet people remember well the horrors of war: death, persecution, devastation. Mr. General Secretary, both of us have more than once spoken of the special responsibility of the generation to which you and I belong, which experienced the entire war.

We Germans, living in the center of Europe, can lose everything and gain nothing in a new war. The people in my country know this. Therefore, they unanimously share the main line of our policy, and it is precisely this which gives our political course consistency and clarity: Our course is a course of peace. . . .

It seems to me that our bilateral relations are a good example of how, given readiness for negotiations and desire for balancing the interests involved, it is possible to settle problems, remove conflicts and reduce tensions. . . . That is why I welcome the present opportunity to talk directly with you.

At the same time I would like to know the viewpoint of the Soviet leadership. I hope that, transcending the framework of our bilateral cooperation, we shall make a contribution to the solution of problems which concern us and our partners.

Mr. General Secretary, I raise my glass and drink to your health, to the health of the Soviet leadership, to good relations between the Soviet Union and the Federal Republic of Germany, to a peaceful solution of conflicts and to peace in Europe and throughout the globe, which we all need so much.