

# Franco-German defense ties have to complement, not replace, U.S. role

by Rainer Apel

Concluding the "Kecker Spatz" joint Franco-German military exercise—the first of its kind in more than 20 years—on Sept. 24, France's President François Mitterrand announced that a joint defense council will be established between both nations. The official inauguration of this council was set for Jan. 22, 1988—the 20th anniversary of the Franco-German cooperation treaty.

## De Gaulle and Adenauer in 1963

The date for the inauguration of the defense council is chosen well: In January 1963, French President Charles de Gaulle and German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer signed a treaty of friendship and cooperation that also envisioned mutual defense efforts. The original idea was that France as a nuclear power take leadership in the defense of continental Western Europe, and that Germany, relieved of certain constraints of the NATO structure, would gain more stature in European and world affairs.

One must recall that in 1963, France was still a member of NATO, and the alliance headquarters were hosted at Fontainebleau, a suburb of Paris. In 1963, Germany had not yet signed the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. This is not to say that Germany would have concentrated on building nuclear weapons, but rather, that the Germans would have worked on missile defense and space research without the many scientific-technological constraints posed by the non-proliferation treaty.

One should recall that de Gaulle's 1963 effort was the third attempt at Franco-German cooperation, after the war. In 1952, the European Defense Community (EDC) project was launched together with Britain and the Benelux countries, which failed to pass the French National Assembly in August 1954, however. In September 1954, the West European Union (WEU) was founded by the same six nations plus Italy. At both instances, the West Europeans were confronted with a dangerous debate in the United States on military disengagement from Europe. There were certain options, then, to build a European defense capable of deterring the Red Army, because U.S. military power was still far ahead of the Soviets.

But in 1963, Soviet military power was already much stronger, and the United States had backed down to Moscow's provocation in Berlin between 1958 and 1961, and over Cuba in 1962, which led to the pull-out of American

missiles from continental Europe and Turkey. De Gaulle's defense initiative received support from Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, who had grown very disappointed in the Americans, when they had ordered him to "stick it out" during the Berlin Wall crisis of August 1961, and put immense pressure on Bonn to sail along with the Kennedy administration's "new policy" of fowl strategic arrangements with Moscow.

This was the background of joint considerations in Bonn and Paris on intensified cooperation in general policy, economics, technology, and defense. The Franco-German treaty of January 1963 was, however, a rather desperate attempt to present the Kennedy administration with a strong voice of European interest.

But the treaty met resistance also in Bonn and Paris. An Atlanticist majority in the German parliament voted a clause into the treaty that stated a preference for exclusive German-American cooperation. This, again, encouraged nationalist elements in French politics to increase pressure on de Gaulle not to set hopes on the Germans, but to "go it alone." And by late 1963, the Atlanticist cabal in Bonn had ousted Adenauer from office, so that de Gaulle lost a vital German ally for his plans.

In 1966, a new constellation of forces and escalating tensions with the United States over defense, economic, and monetary issues led de Gaulle to pull France out of the military integration of NATO, and reduce commitments to the alliance only to joint consultations. As for France's commitments to the defense of Germany, however, de Gaulle signed a letter with the German government that kept 50,000 French soldiers stationed in Germany, in the southwestern state of Baden-Württemberg. But when de Gaulle was ousted from office in 1969, the project of Franco-German defense lost most of its former impulse.

The best that remained of the original project, was an institute for joint military research, based in St. Louis, France, and it was actually here that laser technology was being looked into in the early 1980s.

## Franco-German project revived

It was in the context of the renewed debate in the early 1980s on a U.S. troop withdrawal from Europe, that central aspects of the original discussion on Franco-German defense cooperation were taken up again. In February 1986, President François Mitterrand and Chancellor Helmut Kohl signed



*German machinegun man on Leopard tank, positioned for area surveillance during the exercises.*

an agreement on future joint French-German military exercises.

The first such exercise was the "Kecker Spatz" maneuver of German troops and 40% of France's rapid deployment forces (FAR) in Bavaria Sept. 21-24. For the first time, 20,000 FAR soldiers joined 55,000 Germans for an exercise that rehearsed a counterattack against strong Warsaw Pact forces invading Germany. What made the exercise especially interesting was the script that had "Redland" troops surprisingly attack "Blueland" (German state of Bavaria) through neutral "Greenland" (Austria) on Sept. 21. This attack would advance deeply into Bavaria the following day, and be driven back on Sept. 23-24 by airborne FAR reinforcements.

The exercise as a whole did not rehearse defense against an ABC (atomic-biological-chemical) attack of the Warsaw Pact, but operated within the known confines of conventional warfare.

The French contingents deployed for "Kecker Spatz" involved the 4th Airmobile Division (based at Nancy), the 6th Light Tank Division (Nimes) and the 9th Infantry Amphibious Assault Division (Nantes). The FAR advanced in two columns: one by land, through the German state of Baden-Württemberg, and the other by Puma helicopters and Transall transport aircraft. Heavy weapons deployed by the FAR were 100 Gazelle anti-tank attack helicopters and 150 armored reconnaissance tanks of the AMX 10 RC type. The FAR mobile infantry forces were equipped with Milan anti-tank missiles. Being the first big European exercise of the FAR, which was designed in 1980 for deployments outside Europe, "Kecker Spatz" was a test-case for the FAR's capability to

fight wars in Europe.

As "Kecker Spatz" was, unlike the usual NATO maneuvers, a free-play exercise, it took an unexpected turn, because Redland troops were largely relieved from the blackboard schemes that usually dominate such exercises. Thus, in the early morning hours of Sept. 22, Redland forces (performed by German paratroops) carried out an airborne attack on rear logistical supply lines of the FAR. Two hundred and fifty sabotage specialists were landed by helicopter in the region around the city of Ulm, which the main French reinforcements were to pass through. Key bridges and roads were destroyed by the "spetsnaz" in a precision operation. This left the 1,400 FAR parachutists landing several hours later southeast of Ulm without most of their heavy equipment, delaying the planned counterattack on "Red."

In an effort absorbing several precious hours, "Blueland" (German army) pioneers had to build several pontoon bridges, to reopen the main routes for the French. This slowdown allowed Redland forces to advance rapidly and force the FAR to restage some 20 kilometers farther west. The immediate lesson to be learned was clear: Efficient Western action against surprise attacks by Warsaw Pact spetsnaz is still lacking.

The other important lesson to be drawn from the exercise disaster was that trying to defend Germany without American troops and their heavy equipment against a vastly superior Red Army, wouldn't work. Since "Kecker Spatz" was designed as a strictly Franco-German exercise, the whole 7th U.S. Army Corps based in South Germany was not playing any role in the exercise scenario. Since sizable contingents of the 7th Corps are stationed in forward-based positions near

the German borders to the east, it made a clear difference also in the exercise, not to have them available, but to be dependent on FAR reinforcements from France—some 150 miles and more away. Thus, “Kecker Spatz” had the smell of a European defense after a U.S. troop pullout.

### **With, or without the Americans?**

A very important question is to be solved over the coming few months; namely, whether the new effort for Franco-German cooperation is to add strength to the existing NATO

---

*The immediate lesson to be learned was clear: Efficient Western action against surprise attacks by Warsaw Pact spetsnaz is still lacking. The other important lesson to be drawn from the exercise disaster was that trying to defend Germany without American troops and their heavy equipment against a vastly superior Red Army, wouldn't work.*

---

forces in Western Europe, or whether it is designed to become a substitute for disengaging U.S. troops.

Two main factions are at work behind the scene of Franco-German cooperation. Those who believe that Europe could do without the Americans are grouped around former French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and former Bonn Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, who stated in a speech in Paris on Feb. 24, 1987, that merging French and German military potentials would suffice to deter the Warsaw Pact in Europe.

Spokesman for the other, more realistic, faction is France's current Premier Jacques Chirac, who warned in an interview with *Le Point* magazine Oct. 5 that the revived Franco-German cooperation could, if not thoroughly planned, “contribute to a salami tactic that may even encourage a disengagement of the irreplaceable U.S. forces from Europe.”

The design for the Franco-German defense council is too vague yet, not allowing any evaluation of where the whole project is heading. If based on an effort to replace, even in part, the current U.S. role in European defense, it is definitely doomed to fail, as “Kecker Spatz” demonstrated drastically. Franco-German cooperation is of use for the West, however, if it works as a complement to U.S. presence in Europe, and if it helps to bind the Americans into new defense structures.

---

## Sweden

---

# New setback for the euthanasia lobby

by Ulf Sandmark and Göran Haglund

Trying to capitalize on developments in Holland, the Swedish euthanasia lobby sponsored a campaign meeting in Stockholm on Sept. 24. Thanks to a forceful intervention by the Anti-Drug Coalition and an organization of handicapped youth, the purpose of the meeting—relaunching efforts to legalize “mercy killing”—was effectively thwarted. Forty youngsters from the handicapped youth organization, ten of them in wheelchairs, demonstrated with placards and leaflets saying, “‘Death Help’ Is Murder.”

The youth in wheelchairs served to dramatize a very simple point. The arguments employed by the “mercy killing” lobby, and the demonstrable outcome of the policy they demand, would have nothing ultimately to do with “mercy,” but lead to mass killings of anyone deemed a “useless eater,” including such otherwise healthy individuals as the handicapped.

The big attraction at the meeting was Stockholm Bishop Krister Stendahl, former professor at Harvard University, whose recent book, *Meningar (Viewpoints)*, had called into question the central Christian concept of eternal life. Also in the panel, giving the meeting official government sanction, was Viking Falk of the National Board of Social and Medical Health.

The organizer of the meeting, Berit Hedeby, has been promoting and practicing active euthanasia since she founded the Swedish “Right to Die” organization in 1973. In her book *Yes to Death Help*, and in articles and speeches, she has advocated active killing of elderly, ill, and handicapped people, just as she herself killed a handicapped journalist, Sven-Olov Handberg. For this she was sentenced to prison, according to the law which the death lobby now wants to “reform.”

The unbalanced Hedeby, and her organization, EXIT, are just public relations frontmen of the euthanasia lobby. The real muscle is flexed by persons in the state-run TV system, at the largest Stockholm daily *Dagens Nyheter*, and in the government, as demonstrated by the promotion of state