

West Germany and the Year of Europe

A coalition under pressure, West German – American relations in 1973 – 1974.

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Introduction

The years leading up to 1973 were turbulent years for American and West German foreign policy. The relations with China were improving thanks to the efforts of National Security Advisor Kissinger and President Nixon and the Cold War had reached a period of détente, combined with the SALT I agreements. These were great achievements in foreign policy. However, the war in Vietnam was still in progress, exhausting most of the resources of the State Department. A year later the internal situation had vastly shifted. The Watergate scandal had started to unfold, leaving Nixon occupied with internal affairs. Henry Kissinger managed most of the foreign affairs, even though he was not yet Secretary of State, but only the National Security Advisor. In West Germany Willy Brandt and his social-democratic government were overhauling West German foreign policy, opting for renewed relations with the communist countries and their other half, the German Democratic Republic. This was a massive shift from the Hallstein doctrine of the Christian-democratic governments that preceded them, which had forbidden the recognition of East Germany.

Subsequently there was an American plan to make 1973 the Year of Europe. The initiative was publicly announced by Kissinger on April 23.¹ The original Atlantic Charter was a document drafted during World War II by the United States and the United Kingdom, and later approved by the other Allied nations. The original document sketched out ideas for after World War II, such as self-determination and global cooperation on economic and social issues. These were not detailed plans, but only rough outlines for the post-war world.² The new Atlantic Charter was supposed to be its spiritual successor, which reaffirmed the values that the original Charter proposed. The name would later be changed to ‘Declaration of Principles’ because of German opposition to the term Atlantic Charter, as they had not been part of the Allies.

The European countries involved, the nine countries that formed the European Economic Community (EEC), nicknamed ‘the Nine’, did not initially take too well to this initiative. Willy Brandt and Walter Scheel, who had already planned a trip to meet with Nixon

¹ Henry Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval* (Boston, 1982), 152.

² John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War, A New History* (New York, 2005) 20 – 22.

and Kissinger in the White House in May, were the first who were able to discuss the Year of Europe in person.³

The primary reason for the Year of Europe project was the rebuilding of relations with Western Europe. Although the ties with China and Russia had been renewed in the previous years, the alliances with European countries had been neglected by the United States.⁴ Europe on the other hand had been a growing continent, after recovering from World War II. The European Economic Community had been founded and was growing, having admitted Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom at the beginning of 1973. One of the key nations of the EEC was the Federal Republic of Germany. Though the country had suffered during World War II, by 1973 it had wholly recuperated, having experienced a so called “Wirtschaftswunder”, an economic revival, in the 1950s. This would not have been possible without the American Marshall Plan.⁵ Next to the economic assistance, the United States provided Germany and Western Europe with military assistance. This came in multiple ways, for example, by having troops in the area, but also by having a nuclear guarantee, neither of which Germany had.⁶ This cooperation and assistance were all combined in multiple organizations and agreements that had been set up after World War II. The Marshall Plan (or the European Recovery Plan) was organized in 1947 to help Europe recover by providing them with money and materials. On the military end the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was established in 1949, an organization to unite Western Europe, the USA and Canada against attacks from the communist world and later on especially the Warsaw Pact. Within Europe there were developments between countries such as the European Coal and Steel Community, European Atomic Energy Community and the European Economic Community. These were designed, respectively, to create a common market for coal and steel so Europe would be a more united front, to create a European organization and market for nuclear power, and to integrate Europe economically.⁷

³ Daniel Möckli, “Asserting Europe’s Distinct Identity: The EC Nine and Kissinger’s Year of Europe” 199 – 200, in *The Strained Alliance, U.S.-European Relations from Nixon to Carter*, ed. Matthias Schulz and Thomas A. Schwarz. (Cambridge, 2010).

⁴ J. Robert Schaetzel, *The Unhinged Alliance: America and the European Community* (New York, 1975)

⁵ Hans-Jürgen Schröder, “USA und westdeutscher Wiederaufstieg (1945-1952)” in *Deutschland und die USA im 20. Jahrhundert, Geschichte der politische Beziehungen* (Darmstadt, 1997), 95 – 118.

⁶ Germany had neither, no nuclear stockpile nor a strong military, only founding the Bundeswehr in 1955 after the dissolving of the Wehrmacht in 1945. Geir Lundestad, *The United States and Western Europe since 1945, From “Empire” by Invitation to Transatlantic Drift* (Oxford, 2003), 69 – 72.

⁷ Lundestad, *The United States and Western Europe since 1945*, 77 – 86.

Though West Germany had relied on the United States for assistance during these early years, by 1973, almost thirty years after the end of World War II, their relationship was in a recession.⁸ When Willy Brandt was elected in West Germany in 1969, he started working on a new *Ostpolitik*, through which he sought to better the relations with the communist world, in particular East Germany and the Soviet Union. *Ostpolitik* in short was the active engagement with the communist countries and the German Democratic Republic, and will be explained in more detail later in this thesis. This was extraordinary, because up to 1970 the West German government in Bonn had not recognized the East German capital in Berlin under the Hallstein doctrine.⁹ During the Nixon years West Germany was mostly ignored from the American side, as their focus was elsewhere.¹⁰ For the United States, cooperation between the Soviet Union and West Germany or even a unified Germany was not a positive scenario, because a strong – potentially unified – Germany, allied with the Soviet Union, could spell a lot of difficulties for them.

But in 1973 West Germany still relied on the United States to guarantee them that they did not have to fear the Soviet Union. During the Year of Europe, which overlapped into 1974, attempts were made to rekindle the bond with Europe. Certain people played an important role in this year: Henry Kissinger, the American National Security Advisor, the German Chancellor Willy Brandt, the Vice Chancellor and Foreign Minister of Germany Walter Scheel and the German ambassador in Washington, Berndt von Staden, amongst others. President Nixon was not an important participant of the Year, having most of his time occupied by the Watergate Scandal at home, though he did leave a mark on it, because of his absence.

This thesis focuses on how the relations between the United States and West Germany changed in 1973 and 1974. The main question is then: how did the United States – West German relations change in 1973 and 1974 during the Year of Europe? Subsequent questions are: were the United States – West German relations affected by the Year of Europe as proposed in the speech by Henry Kissinger? How did West Germany react to this, as they needed the United States as an ally? And how did West Germany react through the European Economic Community and NATO?

⁸ Schaetzel, *The Unhinged Alliance*, 37 – 47.

⁹ Carole Fink and Bernd Schaefer, “*Ostpolitik* and the World, 1969-1974: Introduction” in *Ostpolitik 1969 – 1974, European and Global Responses*, ed. Carole Fink and Bernd Schaefer (Cambridge, 2009), 1 – 14.

¹⁰ Schaetzel, *The Unhinged Alliance*, 52.

A lot has been written about the relation between the United States and Germany, but this part of history seems to not yet be fully documented. Works have been written on both the Netherlands and France during the Year of Europe, but Germany is left out. This is odd because secondary literature certainly indicates that there were communications between Germany, the United States, and European countries concerning the Year of Europe, after Kissinger had given his speech.¹¹ Secondly, as stated before, Germany had become a stable power on the European stage in 1973. The country was blossoming again, economically and politically, thirty years after World War II. They were also part of the EEC, which was a growing organization. But on their eastern border they could still be threatened by the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact, despite the politics of détente and *Ostpolitik*.¹² However, the principal indication that the Year of Europe had an impact in Germany can be derived from a speech by chancellor Brandt in the Bundestag in 1974. When provoked by the opposition in the Bundestag, mostly comprised of the Christian democratic parties CDU/CSU, in the meeting of 28 March 1974, he replied viciously. Brandt asserted that, contradictory to what his predecessors in the debate said, there had been a West German reaction to Kissinger's speech, and not just one that was drafted shortly after the speech and quickly done with, but a project that by then had been in the attention of the German government constantly. Since Scheel and he had visited the White House, not a week had passed where the Year of Europe had not been treated, and it was supported by German initiatives and proposals. Yet this was not just be a West German – United States affair, but all the EEC countries should be involved.¹³ It will become clear in this thesis that Brandt had a valid point and that the Year of Europe was taken seriously in West Germany.

When it concerns the Year of Europe much has been written, both during and shortly after the project, but also later in secondary literature. For example, *The Strained Alliance* has a number of essays that specifically deal with the Year of Europe and were written with the year itself as a subject, both in relation to Germany as to Europe, such as *Asserting Europe's Distinct Identity: The EC Nine and Kissinger's Year of Europe*, *Kissinger's Year of Europe*, *Britain's Year of Choice* and *West Germany's Long Year of Europe: Bonn between Europe and the United States*.¹⁴ Especially the last chapter of these three about West Germany by

¹¹ Marloes C. Beers, "European Unity and the Transatlantic Gulf in 1973" in *Atlantic, Euratlantic or Europe-America?*, ed. Giles Scott-Smith and Valérie Aubourg (Paris, 2011). Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, 152 – 183.

¹² Walther Kiep, *A New Challenge for Western Europe, A View from Bonn* (New York, 1974), 64 – 65.

¹³ Deutscher Bundestag – 7. Wahlperiode – 91. Sitzung. Bonn, Donnerstag den 28. März 1974.

¹⁴ Daniel Möckli, "Asserting Europe's Distinct Identity: The EC Nine and Kissinger's Year of Europe" 195 – 220; Alastair Noble, "Kissinger's Year of Europe, Britain's Year of Choice", 221 – 236; Fabian Hilfrich, "West

Fabian Hilfrich tells a lot about the German approach to the Year of Europe. He argues that West Germany played a key role in the power-struggle between the Western countries and for a great part decided the outcome of this struggle. Acting as a mediator between France and the United States, Bonn was willing to estrange themselves from Washington, so Europe had a greater chance to integrate in 1973. This made them a target for the scorn of both the United States and France.¹⁵ Daniel Möckli has written about the initiative in both the bundle above and in his own book. He summarized the project in *European Foreign Policy During the Cold War: Heath, Brandt, Pompidou and the Dream of Political Unity* and focused on the actions individual countries undertook. For Germany he described their attitudes toward the Year of Europe at the beginning of the project, taking Brandt's visit to the White House as a focal point. Next to this Möckli focuses on France and Britain, and especially West Germany's interactions with them. However, he is reluctant to concentrate on West German – American communications and puts the end of the Year of Europe in October 1973.¹⁶ The chapters by Möckli and Hilfrich and Möckli's book are certainly valuable additions to understanding how the Year of Europe played out in West Germany. Yet their position is not the commonly accepted view of the Year of Europe. It also lacks a profound explanation of how the German officials took to the project. The PhD dissertation "The Year of Europe: 1973/74, A Study in Alliance Diplomacy" by Richard Moon is also a very valuable asset with regards to the Year of Europe, but regrettably concentrates mostly on the French and British opposition to the project. However, because of this it does open a window to the German handling of the drafting of a declaration, mostly as a counterpart to French opposition to involvement of the United States in Europe.¹⁷ Another work that focuses on the Year of Europe as a separate entity is Kissinger's autobiographical work *Years of Upheaval*, where a part of the book is dedicated to the initiative and what happened during this year, as experienced by Kissinger. In this chapter Kissinger described how he worked with the various European parties, explaining the diplomatic process and the difficulties that came with the Year of Europe project.¹⁸ *A New Challenge for Western Europe* by Walther Kiep elaborates on the relations between Germany and the United States during the Nixon administrations and the Year of Europe, but this is one

Germany's Long Year of Europe: Bonn between Europe and the United States", 237 – 257, in *The Strained Alliance*.

¹⁵ Hilfrich, "West Germany's Long Year of Europe", 237 – 238.

¹⁶ Daniel Möckli, *European Foreign Policy During the Cold War: Heath, Brandt, Pompidou and the Dream of Political Unity* (London, 2009), 153 – 183.

¹⁷ Richard Moon, "The Year of Europe: 1973/74, A Study in Alliance Diplomacy" (PhD diss., London School of Economics and Political Science, 1994).

¹⁸ Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, 128 – 194.

of the only German autobiographical ones that does so.¹⁹ Most works that have been written about these years focus on the Nixon years, 1969 – 1973, and touch upon the Year of Europe in a couple of pages, or a chapter at most. Prime examples are *A Tangled Web* by Ted Bundy, *The Unhinged Alliance* by John Robert Schaetzel and *The Flawed Architect* by Jussi Hanhimäki.²⁰ While they are great books on American foreign policy and transatlantic relations, they only dedicate a few words to the Year of Europe, often regarding Europe as a single region, without considering the regional and mutual relations the European countries had. This makes them of less use for the main arguments of this thesis, but they do provide a copious amount of background information regarding the events that also developed in 1973.

Overall the Year of Europe in West Germany received recognition, but not everything concerning the relation between West Germany and the United States in this year has been researched and explained yet. Because of this, there is no consensus on what effect it had on West Germany and its relations with the United States. Though many works have been written, they generally concern literature written from an American point of view. West German secondary sources are rare, yet Kiep's work and the chapters in *The Strained Alliance* provide some insight into the German perception of the Year of Europe and West German – American relations. To summarize, the commonly accepted view is that the Year of Europe in general did not meet the expected results and did not have a lot of influence on foreign policy decisions and the West German side is mostly neglected, even by German writers. However, the objective of this thesis is not to refute the already existing theories concerning the Year of Europe or to devalue the research scholars have done before. The goal is to contribute to an understanding of West Germany's role during the year, to adjust the opinion that prevails concerning West Germany and its relations with the United States.

The research done in this thesis is based on three types of sources. The first are those of the German Foreign Ministry's archives, based in Berlin, and the documents of the Office of the Historian during the Nixon-Ford administrations. This concerns documents that were written during the Year of Europe and subsequently published and made available in the archives. These documents uncover a solid idea of how German politicians approached and acted in relation to Kissinger's initiative. The archive of the German Foreign Ministry, *das Politische Archiv des Auswärtiges Amt*, has ample documents regarding West German foreign

¹⁹ Kiep, *A New Challenge for Western Europe*, 66.

²⁰ William Bundy, *A Tangled Web, The Making of Foreign Policy in the Nixon Presidency* (New York, 1998); Jussi Hanhimäki, *The Flawed Architect, Henry Kissinger and American Foreign Policy* (Oxford, 2004).

policy, both with the United States and Europe. Written sources have been kept from 1973, including those that concern the Year of Europe, the new Atlantic Charter, the Declaration of Principles and the European identity. This ranges from interviews and conversations to letters and telegrams, from people and committees all through the government. Secondly, there are the sources from the American side, which are available online, such as telegrams and other correspondence with governments and embassies. Lastly autobiographical and other works published by people such as Kissinger and Brandt, to show the perspective of the people who participated in the Year of Europe. This thesis will also be grounded in secondary literature, which is necessary to explain the relations between the United States, West Germany, the European Economic Community and other parties in the Year of Europe, and to explain how the positions of the various actors came to be in 1973. Concerning the primary sources, it is important to distinguish documents that describe 'regular' foreign politics and documents that focus on the Year of Europe, the Atlantic Charter and the Declaration on Principles. The sources that have been used are those that presume that the subject is the Year of Europe and not sources describing 'business as usual'. The involvement of West Germany in the Year of Europe can be seen in primary sources throughout the year. From April through March the following year, there were always letters and telegrams being sent, meetings summarized and interviews being given. From both the West German side and the American side various notes can be found as to how both sides viewed a certain meeting or visit. This is quite practical as it grants a more insightful view into the opinions of the two nations, both towards the project and each other.

The general outline and topics this thesis will touch upon are the following: An introduction to American – German relations prior to 1973. Though the described period ranges from 1945 to 1972, the emphasis will lie on the last couple of years from 1969 to 1972, the Nixon/Brandt years. This will be continued with the Year of Europe, during which the focus is on the position of Germany in Europe and the European Economic Community and the American stance toward Europe. Furthermore, it will be examined how and if American – German relations changed during and because of the Year of Europe initiative. This will be finished with an explanation of how the Year of Europe fitted in American – German relations. At the end of this there will be a clear view of American – German relations from 1945 to 1973, to clear up how Germany handled the Year of Europe with regard to the United States and Europe and how the Year of Europe fitted into American – German relations overall.

Chapter 1: From foes to friends? German-American relations from 1945 to 1972.

World War II had left Germany in ruins, but the settling of the conflict did not yield the same sort of consequences that World War I had. The Treaty of Versailles had brought with it, amongst others, enormous compensations from Germany, the ceding of territory such as the Alsace-Lorraine, which the Germans had claimed for their own, and the stab-in-the-back legend, which contributed to Hitler's rise to power.²¹

Keeping this in mind, World War II was worked out quite differently, which started with the implementation of the Marshall Plan in 1948. Whereas Germany was severely punished after World War I, leaving the Weimar Republic bankrupt and doomed to fail, this time there was an incentive to rebuild first, and let West Germany and other countries that received Marshall Aid repay their debts to the United States afterwards. Another goal of the United States was to bind Western Europe to themselves through the Marshall Plan and keep the Russians and communism at bay.

The Marshall Plan led to a rapid rebuilding of West European industry, including West Germany, all of which profited greatly from the initiative. Even though the country and Berlin were officially divided into four zones of occupation, with the help of the Americans an independent West Germany was founded in 1949, the Federal Republic of Germany. Aided by the United States it could rebuild its economy and start recruiting an army, the Bundeswehr, though this was only meant for self-defense. The support given by the United States was not only based on economic/monetary aid, but also on military assistance. Even after the Allied Control Council, a military governing body tasked with governing Germany after the Third Reich had fallen, stopped functioning, Allied troops remained within the German borders. Most of these were American troops.²² Though initially posted as a force to ensure the power changes in Germany would go according to plan, they later stayed to give assurance against the Warsaw Pact. This was combined with a nuclear guarantee from the United States against the Soviet Union.

Economy-wise, the Marshall Plan contributed to the so called 'Wirtschaftswunder', the economic miracle that ensued in West Germany. Erhard, who was the Minister of Economics under the Adenauer administration, worked to implement the new currency, the Deutschmark, abolished rationing and fixed prices, and cut tax rates. This way, the German

²¹ Gaddis Lewis, *The Cold War*, 16; 89 – 90.

²² Lundestad, *The United States and Western Europe since 1945*, 69 – 72.

free market was opened for the first time in years and it proved to be a huge success. From 1948 to 1958 industrial production had increased fourfold and was three times as high per capita as it was before.²³

Konrad Adenauer played a huge role in the postwar years, working together with Presidents Truman, Eisenhower and Kennedy. He was chancellor of Germany from 1949 to 1963, oriented on Western Europe, an anti-communist, and he sought good relations with NATO and the United States to oppose East Germany and the Warsaw Pact.²⁴ The United States were not only dealing with West Europe after World War II. Their relation with the Soviet Union and communism worsened rapidly. This led to an international position that the United States did not have nor wanted before, but they still saw communism as a threat to the international community to which they had to respond. Acting according to the Truman Doctrine, the United States initiated a policy of actively containing communism, starting with Greece and Turkey.

During the first years of the Cold War, the results to contain communism were also more important than the way in which they were reached. This made the United States willing to cooperate with social democrats in Europe.²⁵ Officials from the United States were not especially keen to do this, but valued the goal of containing communism above working together with social democrats. Geir Lundestad asserts that Germany was a necessity in the NATO for the same reasons.²⁶ Though they were not included in the Treaty of Washington in 1949, they joined in 1955.²⁷ Having West Germany join them was necessary because the United States and NATO needed the German forces as a safeguard in Central Europe. Next to that, they could not have West Germany as an independent power in the middle of Europe, which could have made them vulnerable to Soviet intervention.²⁸ In the middle of the 1950s the founding of NATO was a reinvigoration of the Atlantic community, designed to contain Western Europe from falling into the hands of communist Russia. The Atlantic community was *de facto* led by the United States, who supplied the Supreme Allied Commander for Europe and a great number of troops and materiel.

²³ Kiep, *A New Challenge for Western Europe*, 111 – 123.

²⁴ Klaus Larres, “Eisenhower, Dulles und Adenauer” in *Deutschland und die USA im 20. Jahrhundert*, 119 – 150.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, 103.

²⁶ Lundestad, *The United States and Western Europe since 1945*, 63 – 65.

²⁷ The North Atlantic Treaty, Washington D.C., April 4, 1949.

²⁸ Lundestad, *The United States and Western Europe since 1945*, 63 – 65.

According to Lundestad, there were multiple reasons to integrate Germany into Europe. To the United States it was important to keep the democratic capitalist governments that already existed in Western Europe in that form and to prevent them from slipping into authoritarianism, or communism. They also wanted Europe to be more efficient, as to relieve their own burden concerning military expenses. This was of course in the best interests of the United States, because they could benefit from an efficient Europe that could take care of itself. Next to these economic interests they wanted to integrate Western Europe because the Soviet Union needed to be contained. Communism was not to be given a chance, certainly not in Western Europe. If Europe could fall for communism, the United States might be vulnerable too. Lastly, Germany needed to be contained. In the past, they had shown they were able to start international conflicts on such a scale, that they could only be stopped through intervention by a strong international coalition. That is why (West) Germany was not contained through punishment and sanctions, but by aid and rebuilding of the country.²⁹ It was possible to achieve the aforementioned points not only because the United States wanted to implement this, but also because Adenauer and his government were very pro-American, up until the end of the 1950s. The goals pointed out by Lundestad are similar to the objectives that Kissinger would set in 1973, highly valuing cooperation as opposed to an adversary relationship.

Despite the fact that the United States was one of the strongest nations in the world, certainly in the Western Hemisphere, they were not omnipotent. They still needed the assistance and cooperation of other countries to execute their agenda.³⁰ Part of this can be attributed to the ideological way in which the United States wanted to propagate and execute their targets. Contrary to the authoritarian Soviet Union and China, they adhered to an ideology in which free choice was of the utmost importance, though the choices other nations made were preferably to their advantage.³¹ To make these decisions they were dependent on Konrad Adenauer. Though West Germany was experiencing an economic resurgence, they were not on par with the international superpowers, neither economically nor militarily. This did not make Adenauer the lap dog of the United States, because they were not able to force their policies upon him and West Germany, and he acted according to a role that was to be expected in a junior-senior relationship. The loss of the cooperation with this pro-American chancellor could have led to a Germany that sought to connect with Russia, the resurgence of

²⁹ Lundestad, *The United States and Europe Since 1945*, 86 – 91.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, 99 – 102.

³¹ *Ibidem*, 103 – 106.

a nationalistic Germany, or the loss of a good military association with West Germany. These were not scenarios that the United States wanted to happen.³²

Schröder and Larres offer a German perspective on this subject. From their chapters concerning the Adenauer years can be distilled that the mood was pro-American until 1958, with Adenauer even being called ‘Kanzler der Amerikaner’, chancellor of the Americans.³³ They also asserted that the United States wanted to rebuild the power of Germany, to build a third power next to Russia and themselves. Klaus Larres argues that the United States did not originally intend to bring West Germany under their sphere of influence, as long as they were not communist, because the United States was unable to exert this much influence on another country, nor implement a self-regulating system in Europe.³⁴ And while the United States called for a stronger military in Europe, European weakness and a fear of communism made the United States take matters into its own hands and keep enough troops stationed in Europe. Though West Germany was in a relatively good position and could influence the United States, Konrad Adenauer was experienced enough to know not to overplay his hand: “Der Kanzler war sich bewußt, daß Westdeutschland nur gemeinsam mit den Alliierten, insbesondere den USA, und nicht in Opposition zu ihnen, allmählich wieder die Souveränität, die Gleichberechtigung und internationales Vertrauen gewinnen konnte.” This “Bündnis des Vertrauens”, a bond of trust, was employed by Adenauer in his years of dealing with President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Dulles. Together they sought to integrate Germany into Europe again and while the United States was the senior partner, they weren’t able to coerce Bonn into doing their bidding. This trust in Adenauer remained, even after he set up diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in 1955. Regardless, Adenauer did not take too kindly to the Soviet Union, as they recognized East Germany. The visit to Moscow then also led to the creation of the Hallstein doctrine, under which West Germany did not recognize East Germany, next to their goal of reunification.³⁵

The relation between West Germany and the United States countries only changed after 1958, with the second Berlin Crisis and Adenauer taking on a more Gaullist stance, oriented on Europe and a good Franco-German relationship. Adenauer sought to do this because he started to look for an alternative to American hegemony. This was reinforced by the Berlin Crisis of 1958 – 1961, which started with an ultimatum by Khrushchev, who

³² Lundestad, *The United States and Europe Since 1945*, 106.

³³ Schröder, “USA und westdeutscher Wiederaufstieg”, 103 – 107.

³⁴ Larres, “Eisenhower, Dulles und Adenauer”, 121.

³⁵ Hans-Peter Schwarz, *Adenauer. Der Staatsmann: 1952 – 1967* (Stuttgart, 1991), 207 – 222.

demanded the retreat of allied troops from West Berlin. Though Eisenhower and Kennedy tried to discuss the issues with Khrushchev, they were not successful. The crisis eventually led to the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961 and a standoff with tanks in Berlin. This last event only barely evaded escalation and luckily did not lead to a bigger conflict.³⁶ Aside from this, Adenauer developed a strong bond of trust with Charles de Gaulle, who was President of France from 1959 to 1969, developed in these years.³⁷ De Gaulle executed a policy called Gaullism. He wanted a strong French state in the middle of Europe and combined this with a mistrust of the power that the United States wielded. It was a kind of nationalism revised for the late twentieth century, as it also incorporated strong bonds with other countries such as West Germany.³⁸ This pull to France and Europe led to a depression in the relation with the United States, because West Germany was now making decisions on its own, instead of strictly following the policies that the United States wanted. As already explained by Lundestad, the United States were quite wary of this, because they wanted to keep Germany in check. A Germany that was not dependent on the United States could spell trouble not only for them, but for the international community.

Under Erhard, Adenauer's successor, the relation between West Germany and the United States recovered. Erhard was also a member of Adenauer's CDU/CSU and was able to quickly reshape the bond with Johnson, both of whom came to office at almost the same time. Already in the Autumn of 1963 the two men met in the United States and decided to continue the American – West German dialogue. After Erhard came Kiesinger, who also tried to continue a professional relationship with the United States. The chancellors did not deviate from the Hallstein doctrine, nor did they execute other policies that radically changed West German foreign affairs. However, there were the necessary disturbances and frictions during these years, which can be attributed to the Vietnam war, which became an increasingly sensitive issue for the Bonn government and Adenauer, who became more anti-American after his chancellorship. However, though this put pressure on the relationship, it was far from a crisis or a break between the two countries.³⁹

³⁶ "The Berlin Crisis, 1958 – 1961", *Office of the Historian*.

³⁷ Schwarz, *Adenauer. Der Staatsmann*, 367 – 368; 439 – 467.

³⁸ Serge Bernstein, "Gaullism", in *The Oxford Companion to Politics of the World*, ed. Joel Krieger (Oxford, 2001), 307 – 308.

³⁹ Joachim Arenth, "Die Bewährungsprobe der Special Relationship" in *Deutschland und die USA im 20. Jahrhundert*, 160 – 172.

1969 up to 1973, the first Brandt and Nixon governments

The years leading up to and including the Year of Europe can be singled out, because Germany and the United States were both led by one president or chancellor, who both had their own particular ideas regarding foreign policy, which differed from the governments that preceded them. In the United States Richard Nixon was inaugurated and several months later Germany followed, where Willy Brandt became chancellor after the Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (SPD) got the most votes in Germany. These men were not closely related through politics and Nixon disliked the leftist German chancellor.⁴⁰

The struggles between both countries stemmed mostly from their respective positions towards the communist bloc, Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and China. While both were starting to conduct policies that were designed to cool down the Cold War, they disagreed on the implementation and details. The United States had been working on détente since the middle of the 1960s. Détente was the American strategy that was designed to relax tensions in the Cold War. Though early signs of it can be seen in the Johnson years, it was put into action under the Nixon administration in 1969, who sought improved relations with the communist countries.⁴¹ It was a strategy that was not specifically designed to roll back communism, but it was used to drive a wedge between the communist bloc, explicitly between the Soviet Union and China.⁴² By doing this, the United States stood to gain more influence in the countries, lessen the risk of starting a conflict, and open the way to a more peaceful relationship, including better trade relations. These were also the biggest differences from the rollback and containment policies the United States had executed from the end of World War II until now. Under rollback they had tried to actively drive communism back as far as possible. Though this had been given up when they implemented containment, which had meant that they would not allow communism to spread further, they still held a hostile relationship with the communist countries, barely communicating or trading with them.⁴³

In 1969 the Brandt government started implementing *Ostpolitik*, which was also intended to start working on better relations with the German Democratic Republic and the Soviet Union. *Ostpolitik* was the form of foreign policy that had been designed by Egon Bahr, the Federal Minister for Special Affairs of Germany in Brandt's cabinet. While only

⁴⁰ Oliver Bange "'Scenes from a Marriage': East-West Détente and its Impact on the Atlantic Community, 1961 – 1977" in *Atlantic, Euratlantic or Europe-America?*, 271.

⁴¹ Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War*, 180 – 184.

⁴² Jean-François Juneau, "The Limits of Linkage: The Nixon Administration and Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik, 1969-72", *The International History Review*, 33:2 (2011), 286 – 292.

⁴³ Schulz and Schwartz, "The Superpower and the Union in the Making" in *The Strained Alliance*, 356 – 360.

implemented once Brandt and Bahr were seated in the Chancellery, Ostpolitik could be seen as long coming. In the early 1960s, when Brandt was Mayor of Berlin, Bahr was the head of the Press and Information Office for the region. Both men witnessed the raising of the Berlin Wall and the lack of a response from any of the parties involved in the city to stop this. It was also during Brandt's years as chancellor that the German Democratic Republic was acknowledged by the Federal Republic and its allies for the first time.⁴⁴ A foreign policy was designed that led to a repeal of the Hallstein Doctrine, under which West Germany did not recognize their Eastern counterpart. The CDU/CSU, the Christian Democratic coalition of Konrad Adenauer,⁴⁵ that had governed from 1948 to 1966, and from 1967 to 1969 in a 'Grand Coalition' with the SPD, had always refrained from doing so. Brandt and Bahr tried to normalize the relation and to bring the two countries together, as they had the opinion that this was the only way to change something, instead of the impasse that had been omnipresent during the CDU/CSU years.⁴⁶

Egon Bahr had developed a strategy of 'Wandel durch Annäherung', change through rapprochement. The goals of this new *Ostpolitik* were to stabilize the relations with the Kremlin, the Democratic Republic and the Soviet Union's other allies in Eastern Europe. But *Ostpolitik* also had a very important western part. Because Bonn feared that the Soviets could immediately take advantage of any discrepancies between *Ostpolitik* and the Atlantic idea of détente, practicing *Westpolitik* with the Atlantic allies remained fundamental. Through its nature of being an idea that invoked change, it held the promise of greatly reducing the tensions that had existed for twenty years, but also to cause a great deal of upheaval in the middle of Europe.⁴⁷

Ostpolitik had a place in the already existing ideology of détente, and was made possible because of it. Hans Arnold, a German diplomat for Brandt's government, explained it as follows: since the United States and the Soviet Union, the "Superpowers", had already entered a state of relaxation, only then could the West Germans implement *Ostpolitik*, without fear of some kind of retaliation from either the Russians or the Americans.⁴⁸ Whereas *Ostpolitik* could be seen as a regional strategy, détente was between all the Cold War rivals. It

⁴⁴ David C. Geyer and Bernd Schaefer, "Preface" in *American Détente and German Ostpolitik, 1969-1972*, ed. David C. Geyer and Bernd Schaefer (Washington DC, 2004), 5 – 7.

⁴⁵ Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands and Christlich-Soziale Union in Bayern, who sit together in the German Bundestag.

⁴⁶ Juneau, "The Limits of Linkage", 278.

⁴⁷ Ibidem, 279 – 280.

⁴⁸ Hans Arnold "Willy Brandt und Europa" (lecture at the Bundeskanzler-Willy-Brandt-Stiftung to the bestowal of the Willy-Brandt-Preises 2005, Schöneberg, October 6, 2005), 26.

was designed to ease tensions between the parties, but not to secure an end to the Cold War. One of the major differences was that this policy was led by the United States. This resulted in friction between the two allies. While both sought to improve the relations with the East, there were crucial differences and details that need to be understood. On a personal level, Brandt and Bahr were not liked by Nixon and Kissinger. Kissinger was mistrustful of Bahr, mostly because he thought Bahr was a German nationalist who did not want to seek the best position for the Atlantic Alliance or the United States, but only for Germany, by negotiating with both sides and coming out with the best deal for himself. According to Kissinger, Bahr was not as dedicated to Western unity as the government that came before. In private conversations he even called Bahr a ‘reptile’ and a ‘little bastard’.⁴⁹ Regardless of these personal issues, in 1969 Kissinger had already set up a “backchannel” with Bahr, a secretive communications channel, always wanting to know what happened in Bonn, just as he had with other allies.⁵⁰ Nixon had other personal concerns however, fearing that Brandt stole his role as the icon of détente, even going so far as to disagree with the State Department’s support of *Ostpolitik* because of a grudge.⁵¹

Aside from these very personal feuds, there were other issues that played during the Nixon/Brandt administrations. The White House was very wary when *Ostpolitik* was announced.⁵² Détente was designed to relax tensions and bring the Cold War to a standstill, but it was not a final resolution. Despite détente there was still a rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union.⁵³ *Ostpolitik* was designed on the basis of rapprochement. This startled the United States, because though they were seeking better connections, they were not willing to simply ‘make friends’ with the Soviet Union, nor to let West Germany walk into the arms of the Russians. But if and when this process would be started, the United States all but demanded to be the ones who would lead it. Kissinger and Nixon were not keen on West Germany taking the lead in negotiations with the communist world. They wanted to have these communications take place in the framework of a United States – Soviet Union – China triangle. This did not leave a lot of space for other, smaller, parties to interfere and to work with the biggest actors on the international stage.⁵⁴ The White House also was not fond of the

⁴⁹ Juneau, “The Limits of Linkage”, 282 – 283.

⁵⁰ Ibidem.

⁵¹ Ibidem, 290 – 291.

⁵² Holger Klitzing, “The Nixon Administration and *Ostpolitik*” in *Ostpolitik, 1969-1974, European and Global Responses*, ed. Carole Fink and Bernd Schaefer (Cambridge, 2009), 100 – 101.

⁵³ Gottfried Niedhart, “U.S. Détente and West German *Ostpolitik*, Parallels and Frictions” in *The Strained Alliance*, 23 – 24.

⁵⁴ Juneau, “The Limits of Linkage”, 278.

fact that West Germany took a differing role from détente. Kissinger wanted it to be an undivided strategy and in particular one where the United States took the absolute lead in deciding the tone and pace. This was of course combined with the unrelenting fear that West Germany could drift off into the hands of the Soviet Union if they were not careful.⁵⁵

Though the strategies showed similarities, they were quite discernable. As discussed before, there were differences concerning the scale of the policies, regional *Ostpolitik* versus global détente, the fact that détente was more set on easing tensions, instead of really resolving differences, and the determination of the United States that they should be in charge of a global détente, to which *Ostpolitik* should be subordinate. Apart from these differences was the way in which the goals of détente and *Ostpolitik* should be attained. Bonn wanted to challenge the status quo, the uneasy standstill that had existed for years, and after that to confer with the Soviet Union, of whom they thought were ready to compromise and cooperate. The United States feared this and wanted to maintain the status quo, fearing that this might set off events that they could not fully control and thus not regulate the speed of the process.⁵⁶ The incompatibilities between the two strategies caused friction between the United States and Germany.⁵⁷

However, apart from Nixon and Kissinger's issues with *Ostpolitik*, it was actually well received at the State Department. The State Department saw *Ostpolitik* as a valuable addition to détente. They too were cautious, but not as personally involved as Nixon and Kissinger. As Ray S. Cline wrote: "If our best efforts should fail, and the FRG should move nevertheless towards limited security concessions or an even more costly bargain with the Soviets, we would have no alternative but to acquiesce. However, we should participate to the extent possible in any negotiations with the Soviets to obtain maximum advantage for the FRG and the West."⁵⁸

The Bonn government picked up the negative ambiance that Nixon and Kissinger brought with them. Because of this, Horst Ehmke, a minister in Brandt's government, was sent to Washington to discuss the United States' point of view. When he was at the White House, Kissinger said that while there were 'minor points of difference', there were 'no major quarrels' with regard to *Ostpolitik*. Though not a blatant lie, it certainly was not Kissinger's

⁵⁵ Juneau, "The Limits of Linkage", 282 – 288.

⁵⁶ Klitzing, "The Nixon Administration and *Ostpolitik*", 80 – 86.

⁵⁷ Juneau, "The Limits of Linkage", 277 – 282.

⁵⁸ *Ibidem*, 280 – 283; 291.

own opinion, who is also known to have said to a West German official: “If there is to be a policy of détente, then we will do it and not you.”⁵⁹

However, numerous significant diplomatic goals were achieved through *Ostpolitik*. The most important and tangible were the Treaty of Moscow, the Treaty of Warsaw, the Four Power Agreement on Berlin and the Basic Treaty. The Treaty of Moscow resulted in a compact document aimed to create a formal peacekeeping system and relations based on the principles as stated in the United Nations Charter. The treaty also accounted for the recognition of European borders as they were in 1970.⁶⁰ The Treaty of Warsaw was set up in the same spirit, but featured an introduction that stressed the fact that World War II had been over for 25 years and that now, a durable relation between West Germany and Poland had to be established, in the best interest of a new generation that had not known war. Just like the treaty of Moscow it was an agreement to maintain peaceful relationships, but even more important for Poland, it also approved the Oder-Neisse line as the official border between Germany and Poland.⁶¹ At the same day as signing the treaty in Warsaw, Brandt visited and knelt at the monument to the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, further showing humility and willingness to seek closer relations with Eastern Europe.⁶² With regards to German oriented issues, the Four Power Agreement on Berlin and the Basic Treaty were even more important. Though the Four Power Agreement was not an official treaty, it was an important document that reaffirmed the division of Berlin and the existing borders and barriers.⁶³ The Basic Treaty, drafted a year later, used this reaffirmation to let the two German states formally recognize each other, letting go of the Hallstein doctrine that had been in place for years.⁶⁴ Considering that the Brandt administration struck four very important deals in four years, including these first steps toward reconciliation with the German Democratic Republic, it can be said that *Ostpolitik* was promising to be a success.

A number of things should be taken into considering while discussing *Ostpolitik* and détente. While West Germany was opening to the East, they were also organizing in the West, being part of the growing EEC. Though *Ostpolitik* played a major role in German foreign

⁵⁹ Geyer and Schaefer, “Preface”, 1 – 2.

⁶⁰ Treaty Between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Soviet Union, Signed at Moscow, August 12, 1970.

⁶¹ Treaty Between the Federal Republic of Germany and Poland Concerning the Basis for Normalizing Their Mutual Relations, Signed at Warsaw, December 7, 1970.

⁶² Henry Kissinger, Statement on the Unveiling of a Willy Brandt Portrait by Johannes Heisig. German Historical Institute, Washington D.C., March 18, 2003.

⁶³ Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin, Signed at Berlin, September 3, 1971.

⁶⁴ The Basic Treaty, December 21, 1972.

policy, they were also busy integrating into the rest of Western Europe.⁶⁵ Yet while *Ostpolitik* was crucial for West Germany, to the United States West Germany was only a minor player in their global foreign policy strategy.⁶⁶ Nonetheless, after his inauguration in 1969, Nixon said he had plans to revitalize NATO, but he was not able to deliver on this promise.⁶⁷ From the start of the administration through 1972, they were mostly dealing with Vietnam, China and Russia, hoping to end the war and seek closer relations with the communist countries, favoring détente over Europe and West German *Ostpolitik*.⁶⁸

To summarize: during the almost thirty years after World War II the relations between the United States and West Germany went through various phases. These were the tenures of the pro-American Adenauer, who later switched to a more Gaullist and Europe centered stance. After fourteen years as chancellor Adenauer was succeeded by Erhard and then Kiesinger, who both aimed to uphold a good connection with the United States, but of which certainly the latter was troubled by the United States' involvement in Vietnam. Lastly there was Brandt's government, which had an international focus and tried to maintain a good relationship with the United States, but which did not succeed, partially because of personal struggles between the president and chancellor. The relationship was never hostile, but did change based on the priority both countries gave one another. Easy examples are the boom in the 1950s, which was quite contrary to the late 1960s when the focus of the United States was with Vietnam, the Soviet Union and communist China instead of West Europe, let alone West Germany. In 1972 and 1973 the problems of the United States got worse, because Nixon was unable to perform a number of his duties due to the unraveling of the Watergate scandal. At the same time, West Germany was busy normalizing their relations with the East German state and setting up the European Community. Even seen apart from the transatlantic community in general, it is obvious that the relation between the two countries was not at a peak.

On a purely political level it was also caused by two apparently similar approaches to dealing with communist countries. The United States acted out détente and West Germany under Brandt had employed *Ostpolitik*. Both theories were based on the improvement of bonds with other countries. This occurred with the communist countries. The usually smooth

⁶⁵ Lundestad, *The United States and Western Europe*, 172 – 175.

⁶⁶ Juneau, "The Limits of Linkage", 291; Schaetzel, *The Unhinged Alliance*, 52; Klitzing, "The Nixon Administration and *Ostpolitik*", 100 – 101.

⁶⁷ Memorandum of Conversation, January 31, 1969, *Foreign Relations of the United States 1969 – 1973, Volume XL, Germany and Berlin, 1969 – 1972*, doc. 5.

⁶⁸ Bundy, *The Making of Foreign Policy*, 57 – 399.

connection between the two countries had hit a bump in the road, not only because of professional differing opinions on foreign policy, but also due to personal issues between their top officials.

Chapter 2: The Year of Europe in Germany

As explained in the previous chapter, German-American relations had its ups and downs during the almost thirty years since the end of World War II. The same was true for European-American relations, though this had been complicated due to the European nations moving through a multitude of organizations and did not generally speak or act as a single entity. At the same time, Western Europe did not have the Nixon administration its attention. This had resulted in a severe degradation of the relation between the two parties. At the same time, Kissinger and Nixon had been working to restore the bonds with two of their sworn rivals, the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, the two biggest communist nations. They were also trying to put an end to the Vietnam conflict, which is very clear in Kissinger's biographies and memoirs, but of course also in the corpus of material that has been written about it during the past fifty years.⁶⁹ This chapter will first provide an overview of the Year of Europe and then provide an analysis under the heading 'Breakdown of the project'.

April through September

On April 23, 1973 Kissinger gave a speech during a meeting with the Associated Press at the Waldorf-Astoria hotel in New York. He started by declaring that this year was not supposed to be the Year of Europe, because Europe had been less important in the previous years and that an important alliance between the United States and Europe had existed since the end of the war. However, that alliance was weakening because of various reasons. Europe had had a revival and was unifying economically. The strategic military balance had shifted from American power to near equality, so international security had to be rethought. Neither the speech nor Kissinger's memoirs make it clear what he meant exactly. Japan had to be part of the new alliance and the term "Atlantic" had to be expanded as to include them in the community. Kissinger did not explain this in the speech, only in his memoirs. Japan had become an important region and for "Atlantic" solutions to be viable it had to be included.⁷⁰ Due to détente, an opportunity was created for new sorts of nationalism to rise internationally.

⁶⁹ Schaetzel, *The Unhinged Alliance*, 48 – 58.

⁷⁰ Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, 152.

This, in combination with a multitude of other issues that had not been foreseen a generation ago, had given Kissinger an impulse to start the Year of Europe. He foresaw a challenge for the Atlantic Community that had to be faced together and in cooperation, so that the Atlantic alliance would not be destroyed. For this to be achieved President Nixon himself would be involved in the project, with Kissinger all but promising a trip of Nixon to Europe in 1973. This was bound to the condition that toward the end of the year, a new Atlantic Charter had to have been designed. The new Atlantic Charter should be a blueprint for the Atlantic Community that: “Builds on the past without becoming its prisoner. Deals with the problems our success had created. Creates for the Atlantic nations a new relationship in whose progress Japan can share. We ask our friends in Europe, Canada and ultimately Japan to join us in this effort. This is what we mean by the Year of Europe.”

Kissinger proceeded to elaborate on the issues he saw in the Atlantic alliance, pointing out economic relations with the European Community, collective defense, in which the European nations and the United States were organized in NATO, and diplomacy, which did not usually happen multilaterally, but bilaterally. Economically the European nations had a regional character, while the United States had to act on a larger international scale and in a bigger monetary system. Diplomatically the European nations were also functioning as traditional nation states, working on a regional scale. This did not overlap with the United States, but was not immediately a cause for problems. What Kissinger emphasized was that the European nations in all their affairs had regional interests and the United States had global interests. If the Atlantic nations were to be more united these problems had to be confronted.⁷¹

He wanted to do this by having the European nations draw up the aforementioned new Atlantic Charter. Just like the original Atlantic Charter this new initiative did not have goals that were set in stone, but were only outlines for what the United States wanted to achieve together with its European allies. The nations were supposed to work together, moving jointly instead of by themselves or by only communicating with the United States regarding the Year of Europe. European cooperation had the possibility to seriously alleviate Kissinger’s job, if he only had to work with one diplomat (or a specific group) that was able to speak and debate for the various European nations. Next to making it easier for Kissinger or other diplomats to debate with Europe, this would have made Europe more effective in international politics.

⁷¹ Address by the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger), April 23, 1973, *Foreign Relations of the United States 1969 – 1976, Volume XXXVIII, Part 1, Foundations of Foreign Policy, 1973-1976*, doc. 8.

However, just like with *Ostpolitik* and détente, Kissinger did not like other actors having too much influence or disturbing his plans.

The speech came quite unexpected and contrary to regular texts only a couple of countries had received the speech beforehand. West Germany was not one of these countries.⁷² Almost immediately a reaction was asked from them, but they did not know yet how to exactly formulate their answers.⁷³ This also had to do with the fact that an official visit by Willy Brandt and Walter Scheel had already been planned for the first week of May, just a week after Kissinger's speech. In another conversation between Brandt and Hillenbrand, the American ambassador in Bonn, Brandt was quite critical about the project and worried about the time provided to draft a new declaration. Hillenbrand responded by reminding Brandt that the United States did not want to wait ten years again for a result, as had happened with Kennedy's proposal for an Atlantic partnership.⁷⁴ The chancellor was critical, but believed the United States and West Germany still had the same goals, in forming a strong connection in which they could trust one another. On the evening of that day, April 26, Berndt von Staden, the West German ambassador in Washington, sent a letter to Bonn outlining the speech and interpretation thereof by the German embassy. According to von Staden the American officials were not able to explain the speech, so the Germans made their own first draft analysis for the government in Bonn. In a summary and analysis, von Staden clarified what the German embassy thought Kissinger meant with the speech and how this related to West Germany.

The ambassador was critical about the speech, remarking that it gave more questions than answers. The main goal was to improve the relations between the US and Europe, though Europe had to fill in how to engage in this project. Next to this von Staden mentioned a couple of things specifically, apart from the general summary. He spotted rhetoric in Kissinger's speech, especially contradictions regarding the progress and expectations the United States, a nostalgic longing to the decades from 1950 to 1970, when the United States was the hegemon of the Western world. Von Staden was positive about the initiative, not willing to go against the United States, but nonetheless he was confused and surprised by

⁷² Möckli, *European Foreign Policy During the Cold War*, 145.

⁷³ Telegram to Scheel from Christopher Emmet, Auswärtiges Amt, Betreff: USA, Band 8 vom 1971 bis 1974. Politisches Archiv, Zwischenarchiv 101374, Geschäftszeigen der abgegebenen Registratur, 204, 321.00.

⁷⁴ Gespräch des Bundeskanzlers Brandt mit dem amerikanischen Botschafter Hillenbrand, April 26, 1973, *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (hereafter AAPD)1973, doc. 115.

Kissinger's speech.⁷⁵ On the other hand, the United States sent a telegram to its European embassies, explaining that the gist of the speech was to be that the United States wanted to write a new Atlantic Charter in 1973 with its European allies. It was supposed to be a joint effort outlining a set of objectives and principles to help guide them in the future, that ideally would be written before the president visited Europe.⁷⁶ Because it was such a speech that was open for interpretation, it is logical that West Germany did not know how to position itself. Kissinger had given a speech in which Japan was dragged into the Atlantic Community and in which he asserted a certain military equality without explaining why he thought this. This caused the need for a telegram from the United States to clarify the speech.

In the following days, Brandt was interviewed in anticipation to his visit to the White House. During this interview, he elaborated on the German-American relations in general, the East – West issues and the West German *Ostpolitik*, but when the new Atlantic Charter came into question he tried to evade the subject. Questions on the Charter and Kissinger's speech were withheld an answer as Brandt did not yet seem able to answer them. Reiterating this stance, Brandt wrote in the *New York Times* that the United States should already regard Europe as a single partner and urged for a better cooperation between the two fronts, proposing a multilateral summit on top of the bilateral summits that already existed. Any mention of the Atlantic Charter and the Year of Europe however were omitted.⁷⁷

When Brandt and Scheel visited the United States in May, it became clear that Nixon did not want to be associated too much with the Year of Europe. Nixon already had other matters to deal with, with Watergate being the main issue. He also stated that the Year of Europe should not be the only way to improve relations, but should be one of the many ties between the United States and Europe. The visit did yield one valuable document: a draft of a Common German-American Declaration.⁷⁸ This declaration was meant to establish a new official platform to improve the relations between the two countries. The president, chancellor, and both foreign ministers intended to sign an agreement to support each other with regards to foreign policy, defense politics and East-West relations, but also opened the way to discussing a new declaration as they opposed the concept of Atlantic Charter. However, there is no evidence that it has been signed and put into effect. After the conversations with Kissinger

⁷⁵ Botschafter von Staden, Washington, an das Auswärtige Amt, April 26, 1973, AAPD 1973, doc. 118.

⁷⁶ Rogers to Islamabad et al., telegram 252026 Z, April 25, 1973, National Archives.

⁷⁷ Moon, "The Year of Europe: 1973/74", 87.

⁷⁸ Entwurf: Gemeinsame deutsch-amerikanische Erklärung, Mai. 1973; Auswärtiges Amt 4, Betreff: 1) Reisen des Bundeskanzlers und des Bundesministers in das Ausland, 1973. Politisches Archiv, Zwischenarchiv 105604. Geschäftszeigen der abgegebenen Registratur, 410, 301, 18.

and Nixon, Brandt sent two letters to Prime Minister Heath of Great Britain and to President Pompidou of France. These were letters explaining the meetings Brandt had had. He urged both statesmen to meet with Nixon individually and to steer onto a ‘constructive dialogue’ with Europe, as Brandt did not want to disturb the relation with the United States. He also stated to both heads of state that West Germany could not work with the term Atlantic Charter. While the exchange of letters between heads of state was very normal, it is telling that these letters so explicitly state the importance of better relations between European countries and the United States. France did not take too kindly to Brandt’s suggestions and ruled out the option of a multilateral summit as Brandt had suggested in the *New York Times*. In his statement France saw an involvement of the United States in Europe that they did not want.⁷⁹

After this visit, other German officials started to get involved with the project. Even though the material shows that the Year of Europe was not a real priority, enough has been written about it to show that it was not ignored in West Germany. Walter Scheel and the Foreign Minister of the United Kingdom, Alec Douglas-Home, discussed the speech and the Atlantic Charter, what was correct and what was false in Kissinger’s speech and how it should be approached.⁸⁰ Brandt and Heath had a similar conversation, with Brandt assuming that Nixon did not fully support the plan proposed by Kissinger. However, both were prepared to work on a declaration, stating that it was more important to clarify the relations between the European Community and the United States, than to focus on the problems that existed between the United States and NATO.⁸¹ A few weeks later there was a conference of German and American officials, one of which was the official spokesman of the German government, Rüdger von Wechmar. He gave an overview of German foreign policy, amongst other things the speech of Kissinger and the importance of Nixon’s visit, which would be favorable concerning German-American relations. Von Wechmar stated quite clearly that West Germany treasured the German-American dialogue and that instead of a Year of Europe, a “Decade of Europe” would be needed.⁸² This last part might be a bit overenthusiastic, but the meeting once again made it clear that the West Germans deeply valued the relationship and

⁷⁹ Willy Brandt, “The Old World, the New Strength”, *New York Times*, April 29, 1973; Moon, “The Year of Europe: 1973/74, A Study in Alliance Diplomacy”, 88 – 89.

⁸⁰ “Gespräch des Bundesaußenministers mit dem britischen Außenminister Douglas-Home am 16.5.1973 in Bonn.” Auswärtiges Amt 4, Betreff: 1) Integrationspolitik, Wirtschaftsentwicklung der EG, Band I vom 1. 1. 1973 bis 31. 3. 1974. Politisches Archiv, Zwischenarchiv 105664, Geschäftszeigen der abgegebenen Registratur, 410, 423, 00.

⁸¹ Gespräch des Bundeskanzler Brandt mit Premierminister Heath, May 29, 1973, *AAPD* 1973, doc. 164.

⁸² “Protokoll der Deutsch-Amerikanischen Informationsgespräche vom 30. Mai bis 31. Mai 1973 in San Clemente und Laguna Beach, Kalifornien, U.S.A.”, Auswärtiges Amt, Betreff: USA, Band 8, vom 1971 bis 1974, Politisches Archiv, Zwischenarchiv 101374, Geschäftszeigen der abgegebenen Registratur, 204, 321.00, USA.

did not want to see it deteriorate. However, this meeting was before there was mention of a declaration and refers to the position that West Germany wanted to keep nonetheless.

A small but significant change in presentation was also made in June when Kissinger started to refer to the new Atlantic Charter as a Declaration of Principles. This had been a specific request of West Germany since Kissinger had given his speech. Germany had not been a part of the Atlantic Charter in 1941 as they were the enemy of the Allies, making up the most important part of the Axis powers in World War II. This change would not have happened if there had been no complaint or lobby from the German side, as they were the only ones who opposed this term because of its connotation with World War II. However, Kissinger did not care much for superficialities and was not interested in the name of the document, but only found it necessary that a document should be drafted.⁸³ Contrary to the West German engagement, France opposed the American Year of Europe and Brandt's willingness to respond to it. They did not want a multilateral approach to it, nor to institutionalize the relations with the United States.⁸⁴

The speech was discussed by Brandt and Pompidou in June, as they picked it apart and conversed about an idea for the declaration. They argued about the importance of the European nations working together and that it was important that the nine European Community members spoke with one voice.⁸⁵ As Brandt conversed with Pompidou, Scheel sat with Jobert, the French foreign minister. They too discussed the address, but focused more on the importance of security and defense, and how it could be improved through better relations, both within Europe and with the United States.⁸⁶ These conversations explicitly state that shortly after the speech West Germany's top officials, contrary to the French, were willing to start on the project initialized by Kissinger. This was made clear through direct conversations with the United States, in the conference between officials of both countries, but also through Europe, with letters being sent on behalf of the chancellor to other Heads of State, and meetings where Kissinger's speech was discussed and foreign policy was decided upon.

In July Brandt officially asked Scheel to represent West Germany in the negotiations on the declaration, seeing the need for a good negotiator that worked for a more united Europe,

⁸³ Willy Brandt, "The Old World, the New Strength", *New York Times*, April 29, 1973; Moon, "The Year of Europe: 1973/74, A Study in Alliance Diplomacy", 89 – 90.

⁸⁴ Moon, "The Year of Europe: 1973/74, A Study in Alliance Diplomacy", 89 – 90.

⁸⁵ Gespräch des Bundeskanzlers Brandt mit Staatspräsident Pompidou, June 22, 1973, *AAPD* 1973, doc. 199.

⁸⁶ Aufzeichnung des Vortragenden Legationsrats I. Klasse Hansen, June 26, 1973, *AAPD* 1973, doc. 201.

but also for the relation with the United States.⁸⁷ This was shortly after Scheel had met with Hillenbrand to confer about the German-American relations and the goals that were set. Political unity in Western Europa, solidifying the cooperation with the United States and Canada and setting up numerous East-West contacts. Scheel wanted to settle this in a document, but he was uncertain whether this should be done pragmatically or systematically and if there was enough time to do this before the (not yet planned) trip of Nixon to Europe.⁸⁸

Later that month Scheel went to Washington again to debate the Atlantic cooperation with Kissinger. Kissinger proposed that his speech might have been a mistake, that the tone had been incorrect, by appointing Europe a regional role and by putting economic pressure on the relations. But he did insist that it was important for both sides of the Atlantic that a document was drafted. For this meeting Scheel had already brought drafts for an Atlantic declaration, which was called Teil III (Gliederung und Inhalt der Atlantick-Erklärung).⁸⁹ Kissinger replied to the document by saying it was one of the most useful texts he had ever seen, as it was in line with what the United States had originally wanted for the declaration. According to him it could be transformed into a fully-fledged declaration in just two or three weeks. But it could not end up in the NATO-machinery for then it would be “discussed to death”. It was all still based on Nixon’s eventual visit to Europe however, which was the final goal of the Year of Europe in the document that Scheel proposed.⁹⁰ In his memoirs, Kissinger confirmed that Scheel’s proposal was a good one and that it was the document that most corresponded with what the United States had initially suggested.⁹¹

During this month there was a lot of correspondence about the Year of Europe between European officials too. This was for example due to Scheel’s work, who discussed with Douglas-Home how the British wanted to work with the European Commission, but also a letter from Ambassador von Hase in London, who had spoken with his British colleague Brimlow. Aside from discussing the project itself, they emphasized that it was ‘five minutes to twelve’, to make the Year of Europe a success. It had become an urgent matter to take the momentum that had been gained by Scheel’s visit to the White House and not let it end up as an endlessly dragged out project. The sights were set on the Copenhagen summit, where the possibility to make real progress existed. In the words of Walter Scheel “In Kopenhagen

⁸⁷ Bundeskanzler Brandt an Bundesminister Scheel, zur Zeit Helsinki, July 4, 1973, AAPD 1973, doc. 216.

⁸⁸ Aufzeichnung des Vortragenden Legationsrats I. Klasse Ruth, July 2, 1973, AAPD 1973, doc. 212.

⁸⁹ Part III (Structure and contents of the Atlantic declaration). Regrettably the document itself was not included, nor available.

⁹⁰ Aufzeichnung des Ministerialdirigenten Brunner, July 16, 1973, AAPD 1973, doc. 222.

⁹¹ Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, 185 – 187.

konnte ein Schritt nach vorne getan werden”.⁹² Until the start of the summer recess of the German Bundestag, there was certainly no lack of evidence that West German officials were not influenced by Kissinger’s speech. As Brandt would go on to say in March 1974, it seemed that almost every week someone had been working on the initiative, whether it was the drafting of the working papers that had been presented to Kissinger and Nixon or meeting with other European statesmen.

These were not low-level officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but ambassadors and the West German Minister of Foreign Affairs. Scheel was continuously involved in the project as the person primarily responsible for the project. The West German Secretary of Foreign Affairs reaffirmed this to Ambassador von Staden: “Unsererseits wird die Bedeutung einer atlantische Erklärung nicht unterschätzt. Außenminister Scheel hat sich persönlich im Neuner-Kreis in Kopenhagen energisch dafür verwendet. Wir sehen darin eine Möglichkeit, die amerikanische Präsenz in Europa stärker zu verwurzeln. Eine solche Erklärung würde daher nach unserer Ansicht gerade auch im Interesse Europas liegen.” The declaration was of such an importance that the highest German official on this subject personally defended the necessity of drafting one in front of his eight European colleagues.⁹³

One month later, Kissinger and Scheel decided that it was best to let the progress on the declaration go on through both the European Community and the NATO. Scheel explained this was because it was easier to assemble the heads of government to talk about defense policy in NATO and to discuss economic subjects and European-American relations without the heads of state being present.⁹⁴ A plausible complementing theory is that the split came through insistence by France, who did not want this kind of linkage with NATO.⁹⁵ Kissinger was no fan of this idea and found it absurd that the heads of state would not discuss anything apart from defense, and that they delegate this to their ministers. He nevertheless agreed to the plan.⁹⁶ Scheel asserted that they would think about what would be the best way to further the declaration, but also that West Germany would continue to work on proposals as part of both the Nine and NATO. He stated that they did not want a weak reprise of previous texts or declarations, but one that was rich in content, repeating that better ties with the United

⁹² Botschafter von Hase, London, an das Auswärtige Amt, July 20, 1973, *AAPD* 1973, doc. 225; Bundesminister Scheel an den Sicherheitsberater des amerikanischen Präsidenten, Kissinger, July 25, 1973, *AAPD* 1973, doc. 230.

⁹³ Staatssekretär Frank an Botschafter von Staden, Washington, July 31, 1973, *AAPD* 1973, doc. 234.

⁹⁴ Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, 186 – 187.

⁹⁵ Moon, “The Year of Europe, 1973/1974”, 94 – 95.

⁹⁶ Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, 186 – 187.

States were in the best interests of Europe. What was repeated was the question of when President Nixon was planning to visit Europe.⁹⁷ Just as the Germans, so too the Americans were becoming impatient, but for a different reason. According to Secretary Frank they had made a mistake by starting the project without the Europeans being involved from the start, as he stated in a conversation with the British ambassador. Because of this they should wait for the Copenhagen conference, when a statement should be ready. Only if this went wrong it would be time to start worrying. At the same time, they argued that it had to be made clear to Jobert that the Copenhagen summit had to be a success and that the key to a successful year was not in Washington, but in Paris.⁹⁸ The Year of Europe was not yet lost, but this did depend on the participation of the parties involved. The project was now three months underway and had not yet delivered anything to really work with yet. Though it did not make Kissinger very happy, no real damage was done to the relations with Europe yet, nor the relation with West Germany in particular.

NATO announced that the declaration had to be split into two parts in August. One for NATO and one for the European Community, almost literally cutting it into two pieces. For the NATO declaration, only the first part was required. Included with the summary van Well had written was a draft for a NATO declaration, already split into two parts, “Political basis and goal of the alliance” and “Defense policy”. While it was not a very shocking or groundbreaking document according to Secretary Frank, it was the only one that would be able satisfy the Americans, because the Dutch draft was deemed unsuitable and the British design was too short and aimed too much at pleasing France, so it would not live up to the expectations of the United States. The document stated that the alliance that had been formed had to guarantee freedom, peace and cooperation between and for the countries involved. It also provided for more unity in the European Community and better communications between them and the United States. The part that discusses defense policy was an official reaffirmation of the NATO principles, that tried to maintain peace and prohibit nuclear warfare.⁹⁹ West Germany tried to draft a declaration that would satisfy both the United States and the Community. This would prove to be a weak move and they eventually accepted the British proposal under pressure from France.¹⁰⁰ The West German minister of finance Schmidt evaluated the situation in an interview with the *General-Anzeiger*, a paper in Bonn,

⁹⁷ Bundesminister Scheel an den Sicherheitsberater des amerikanischen Präsidenten, Kissinger, August 3, 1973, AAPD 1973, doc. 240.

⁹⁸ Aufzeichnung des Vortragenden Legationsrats I. Klasse Dannenbring, August 5, 1973, AAPD 1973, doc. 241.

⁹⁹ Aufzeichnung des Ministerialdirektors van Well, August 13, 1973, AAPD 1973, doc. 245.

¹⁰⁰ Hilfrich, “West Germany’s Long Year of Europe” in *The Strained Alliance*, 254 – 255.

by saying that though he thought that the United States had not started the Year of Europe correctly, he was even less pleased with the fact that the European Community had not yet been able to offer a response. Not wanting to point fingers, he nonetheless was upset by the attempt of one or multiple nations that tried to force their ‘favorite ideas of individual national foreign policy’ on the common foreign policy of the European Community.¹⁰¹ Amongst other he must have meant France, who were trying to impose their Euro-centric politics on the declaration. However, by not explicitly condemning France, West Germany did not change the problem as it already was.

The declaration for the EEC was presented at the next European summit in Copenhagen, where European cooperation was discussed by the foreign ministers of the nine members of the EC. The main point of discussion was the visit of President Nixon, still expected in the autumn of 1973. The Nine felt they had met the prerequisites for a meeting and they also had a design for a political declaration. However, France steered the Copenhagen meeting in their own way. They pushed the proposal that the Nine would not support US changes to the declaration, only by consensus. In Copenhagen, they also made sure that the list of subjects that would be discussed, could only be communicated with the United States orally.¹⁰² Yet again, they tried to make sure that the Year of Europe would progress on their terms and not those of the United States.

The draft on US-EEC relations, which contained economic and diplomatic issues and a draft on the European identity, which outlined the general position of Europe towards the United States, would be given to Kissinger and discussed by Andersen, the chairman of the Council of Ministers, on September 24.¹⁰³ It would be followed by a discussion of the nine political directors with their American counterparts.¹⁰⁴ This potentially created an unprecedented situation in which Europe spoke through a single person instead of having to discuss everything with each country one by one. Regrettably for Kissinger, it did not unfold this way. Instead of having one interlocutor, he only got a presenter, who could state, but not discuss on behalf of the other European countries.

According to Kissinger, as said during a meeting with the Dutch ambassador, the EEC Nine had a wrong approach concerning the Year of Europe. He stated that the project was not

¹⁰¹ Cash to the Secretary of State et al., telegram 221906Z, August 22, 1973, National Archives.

¹⁰² Möckli, *European Foreign Policy*, 175 – 179.

¹⁰³ Moon, “The Year of Europe: 1973/74, A Study in Alliance Diplomacy”, 97 – 99.

¹⁰⁴ Runderlaß des Hilfreferenten Hiesl, September 12, 1973, AAPD 1973, doc. 280.

designed to distract from the Watergate scandal, nor that the United States needed the declaration because of that. They just wanted to counter the erosion of NATO, restore friendships and consolidate the base of Congress regarding the relation with Europe, to prevent the retreat of American troops from Europe. Yet Kissinger started to be more and more reluctant regarding Nixon's visit to Europe, demanding a full declaration in October as a prerequisite.¹⁰⁵ This came shortly after an official message from the State Department, sent to the European embassies, emphasizing that the Year of Europe was still in progress, but that no detailed assessment of Nixon's trip could be made yet.¹⁰⁶

Regardless of this news, Brandt and Scheel were still in the middle of the process of drafting a declaration. At the end of September they visited the United States again, meeting with the president and Kissinger, who had been promoted to Secretary of State. Both Brandt and Scheel emphasized the necessity of Nixon's visit to Europe in conversations with their counterparts. During his meeting with the president, which Brandt started by stating that "since May, real steps have been made regarding the Atlantic dialogue", Nixon seemed to be optimistic about the Year of Europe as it was going so far.¹⁰⁷ Though seemingly enthusiastic, he did not reveal an intention of visiting Europe in the near future.

October through December, the Yom Kippur War and NATO summit of December

In October 1973, the Yom Kippur War started in the Middle East, followed by an energy crisis, fueled by the lack of oil from the OPEC nations. In the Yom Kippur War Israel was attacked by the Arab countries surrounding it. Though it was not assisted militarily by the United States, they did supply Israel with the necessary materiel to wage war. To do this, they flew supplies to Israel from bases located in Germany. In a conversation with Hillenbrand, ten days after the Yom Kippur War had started, Scheel condemned this airbridge to Israel. A hard shift in priority and a dip in the tone at which the two countries had communicated can be perceived. Where the talks beforehand had focused on peace in Europe and the transatlantic alliance, the discussions between the heads of state, foreign ministers and ambassadors currently had a different character.¹⁰⁸ For the West Germans, it was of utmost importance that the conflict was resolved as quickly as possible. A conversation between Egon Bahr, Heath,

¹⁰⁵ Botschafter von Staden, Washington, an das Auswärtige Amt, September 21, 1973, AAPD 1973, doc. 290.

¹⁰⁶ Rush to the American Embassy in Bonn et al., telegram 121642Z, September 12, 1973, National Archives.

¹⁰⁷ Gespräch des Bundeskanzlers Brandt mit Präsident Nixon in Washington, September 29, 1973, AAPD 1973, doc. 298.

¹⁰⁸ Gespräch des Bundesministers Scheel mit dem amerikanischen Botschafter Hillenbrand, October 16, 1973, AAPD 1973, doc. 322.

Douglas-Home and other officials from the British Foreign Office revealed that the European capacity to help ending the war was very limited. With no American officials in attendance, the ministers discussed the changing roles of their countries, the European continent, and the position the United States occupied since World War II. While Britain was a former global power, their strength had declined, and Europe altogether was weak militarily, though it had built a solid economy. Therefore, the Americans had to admit that Europe was not able to defend itself, so they had to help guard the Western World. Bahr concluded this part of the conversation with a remark that the United States could not permit itself to retreat from the alliance with Europe.¹⁰⁹ Bahr tried to have the British affirm the European weakness, luring them into approving of a strong relationship with the United States instead of France's European-centric worldview. This was difficult for Britain, who had only just entered the European Community and also tried to prove themselves as Europeans. They were stuck between deciding to side with the French, who followed a Euro-centrist line, or to work together with the United States, with whom they had had a 'special relationship' since World War II.¹¹⁰ The fact that Heath, contrary to other British officials, did not highly value this 'special relationship' only complicated the situation.¹¹¹ Britain did not choose between either side in 1973, which did not help in making the Year of Europe a success.

The crisis in the Middle East was not picked up in foreign policy talks between West Germany and other parties immediately, as talks with Britain and France about the transatlantic dialogue continued as they had in the months before. This would be to no avail, the French primarily opposed the idea of working together with the United States and would not take a different stance, regardless of persuasion by their peers.¹¹² While the near-East conflict was paramount during the Yom Kippur War, regular foreign policy was still discussed. Of course, this was not abnormal, as the conflict was fought outside of Europe, with no active involvement of European troops, and daily business continued. To Kissinger the Yom Kippur War and the Energy Crisis were of much more importance than what happened in Europe.¹¹³

In November, the Yom Kippur War had come to an end through a ceasefire brokered by the United Nations, with a lot of help from Kissinger, who had shuttled between the

¹⁰⁹ Botschafter von Hase, London, an das Auswärtige Amt, AAPD 1973, doc. 348.

¹¹⁰ Noble, "Kissinger's Year of Europe, Britain's Year of Choice" in *The Strained Alliance*, 221 – 235.

¹¹¹ Moon, "The Year of Europe: 1973/1974", 93 – 94.

¹¹² Beers, "European Unity and the Transatlantic Gulf", 498 – 501.

¹¹³ Bundy, *A Tangled Web*, 444 – 451.

different parties to intermediate between the different contenders.¹¹⁴ The Energy Crisis also contributed to the friction between the various countries. They all tried to solve the crisis in their own way: France and the United Kingdom worked around it and struck bilateral deals with the Arab countries, West Germany wanted a central solution through the EEC and the United States wanted to work together with all oil-consuming countries.¹¹⁵ For the Transatlantic discussion this was a significant month because of a new meeting in Copenhagen for European political cooperation. Declarations of the Nine with the US, Canada and Japan were discussed, which were presented as European declarations instead of declarations drafted up by separate countries.¹¹⁶ After months of bilateral and multilateral discussions between the European countries, it seemed like steps were made to remake the Atlantic alliance, between a more unified and organized Europe and the United States. It was decided that Denmark would present the co-designed, new, proposal to the Americans, so it could be discussed next to the NATO summit that was planned a week later. More importantly were the identity papers that had been drafted and were presented this month. These documents focused on the European identity as something separate from the United States – European relations, whereas this had been a part of the general debate beforehand.¹¹⁷ France continued to obstruct the Atlantic coalition again in November. Pompidou made it clear in a conversation with Brandt, where he explained that France did not want to institutionalize the relation between the European Community and the United States. Formalizing the relations would have given the United States an opportunity to influence the relations and thus, Europe. Brandt tried to reason with Pompidou and explained that he and his government still wished to continue the project, seeing the added value of it.¹¹⁸ This was already a repetition of what Brandt had done just a week before, when he went in front of the European Parliament and stressed before his peers West Germany's commitment to both a unified Europe and Europe's relations with the United States.¹¹⁹ This can be seen as a breach between France and West Germany again. France had a lot of influence in the EEC too,

¹¹⁴ Bundy, *A Tangled Web*, 444 – 451.

¹¹⁵ Lundestad, *The United States and Western Europe since 1945*, 184 – 185.

¹¹⁶ Runderlaß des Ministerialdirektors van Well, November 15, 1973, *AAPD* 1973, doc. 377.

¹¹⁷ Runderlaß des Ministerialdirektors van Well, November 15, 1973, *AAPD* 1973, doc. 377; Aufzeichnung des Vortragenden Legationsrats von der Gablentz, November 21, 1973, *AAPD* 1973, doc. 383, but also the sources in folder 1973-11.

¹¹⁸ Botschafter von Hase, London, an das Auswärtige Amt, November 23, 1973, *AAPD* 1973, doc. 388; Gespräch des Bundeskanzlers Brandt mit Staatspräsident Pompidou in Paris, November 27, 1973, *AAPD* 1973, doc. 394.

¹¹⁹ Greenwald to the Secretary of State et al., telegram 132156Z, November 13, 1973, National Archives.

forcing West Germany to compromise. West Germany could not risk a real break with France or the other European nations, even when it concerned the alliance with the United States.

The NATO summit in December was the last meeting of foreign ministers and other officials in 1973. Before the summit, Kissinger, Douglas-Home, Jobert and Scheel had a conversation in which Kissinger accused the Europeans, and Jobert and Douglas-Home in particular, of working together against the United States. A good cooperation was needed, to make sure no animosity developed in the relation. And while France and Britain gave priority to Europe above the United States, Germany still supported a strong bond with the US and some sort of document to formally constitute this. As Ambassador van Well remarked: "...daß es für die Bundesregierung von besonderer Bedeutung sei, während der Entwicklung auf eine Identität der Neun hin das gute Verhältnis mit den Vereinigten Staaten zu erhalten und zu stärken. In welcher Art von Dokument dieses seinen Niederschlag fände, bleibe noch zu entscheiden. Wichtig sei auch, daß die Neun in ihrem Verhältnis zu den Vereinigten Staaten die Entwicklung im Atlantischen Bündnis berücksichtigten. Der Öffentlichkeit müsse der Fortschritt der Beziehungen zwischen den Neun und den Vereinigten Staaten deutlich zu Kenntnis gebracht werden."¹²⁰ But this defense of the Year of Europe had been too little, too late. In a meeting just days later, the three positions that Kissinger had taken during the NATO meetings were discussed by van Well and Hillenbrand, as explained next. The Secretary of State had given quite mixed signals: when having dinner on December 10 with Jobert, Scheel and Douglas-Home he had said that the United States was not interested in a declaration of the Nine anymore and that the present version was not sufficient. The day after he told assembled officials at the NATO summit that both versions, the one of the EEC and NATO, should be developed later. The nine ministers of the EEC were told that the declaration had to be completely redone. It was now too long, too legalistic, should be more politically oriented and more inclusive instead of divisive. Regardless of this setback the West Germans still wanted to proceed with the plan, according to the summary that was written of this conversation.¹²¹ However, the various documents that should be drafted were now diffused into half-products that did not bear much resemblance to the new Atlantic charter that Kissinger had originally proposed, just eight months earlier. 1973 thus ended without a

¹²⁰ "...that it is of special importance to the Federal government, during the development of an identity of the Nine, to keep and strengthen a good relation with the United States. In what kind of document this will be put down, still has to be decided. It is also important, that the Nine in their relation with the United States take into consideration the development of the Atlantic alliance. The progress of the relations between the Nine and the United States has to be publicly brought to notice." Botschafter Krapf, Brüssel (NATO), an das Auswärtige Amt, AAPD 1973, doc. 414.

¹²¹ Aufzeichnung der Vortragenden Legationsrätin Steffler, December 19, 1973, AAPD 1973, doc. 424.

declaration and with relations between the various European nations and the United States in a recession.

The last canto. January through March 1974.

The first months of 1974 showed a reduced interest in the project. Compared to 1973, far fewer documents were dedicated to the Year of Europe. In January, February and March Kissinger and Scheel corresponded about the project. According to Scheel, work was still being done on the West German declaration, but it had now become exactly what Kissinger had hoped to prevent, an endlessly dragged out project, with no clear end in sight. Something that should have taken just a couple of months was still in progress, almost a year later.¹²² The American Ambassador Bruce remarked that from an American point of view, the relations with Europe and West Germany had become worse due to the Year of Europe.¹²³ Scheel nonetheless tried to propose a declaration, that could be discussed in March and signed in April, when Nixon should have come to visit.¹²⁴ Scheel's attitude was also propagated by the SPD's spokesman, Grünewald. While the failure of the project was already evident, he told the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* that Bonn did not consider 1973 a failure concerning American-European relations and hoped that 1974 would bring it to a fitting conclusion.¹²⁵

However, there was opposition to the Year of Europe and the way the Brandt government handled it in West Germany too. At the Bundestag meeting of March 28, the opposition parties strongly attacked Kissinger's speech of the year before and the American initiative, which they saw, like the French, as a way of the United States to gain more influence. According to the CDU/CSU opposition the relations with the United States were now at its worst since World War II. Both Scheel and Brandt got time to respond. Scheel defended the project and pointed out that it was important that the cohesion between Europe and the United States was retained. Brandt was even more passionate in his defense, claiming that the government had and continued to work on better relations with the United States and Europe and that the project had been a mainstay of the government since its announcement in April.¹²⁶

¹²² Aufzeichnung des Ministerialdirigenten Simon, March 3, 1974, *AAPD* 1974, doc. 67.

¹²³ Gespräch des Bundesministers Scheel mit dem amerikanischen Außenminister Kissinger in Washington, February 10, 1974, *AAPD* 1974, doc. 42.

¹²⁴ Gespräch des Bundesministers Scheel mit dem amerikanischen Außenminister Kissinger in Brüssel, March 4, 1974, *AAPD* 1974, doc. 69.

¹²⁵ Hillenbrand to the Secretary of State, telegram 291256Z, January 1, 1974, National Archives.

¹²⁶ Deutscher Bundestag – 7. Wahlperiode – 91. Sitzung. Bonn, Donnerstag den 28. März 1974.

The defense of the project by Brandt and Scheel had already been in vain. A striking end to the Year of Europe, that embodied the frustration Kissinger had had with the project, was the telegram he sent on March 27, 1974, almost a year after his original speech. In this he wrote: “I have noted press statements to the effect that we are no longer interested in the Year of Europe declarations.”¹²⁷ The frustration was not strange, because while the West Germans were still maintaining the project, Jobert was thwarting renewed consultations with the United States, which the Nine and the European Commission were trying to revive at Castle Gymnich.¹²⁸ Though there was no official end to the Year of Europe, and what the end date should be is interpreted differently by historians, the date on which this telegram was sent is a fitting moment to end the project. Kissinger had finally thrown in the towel, expecting no viable proceeds from it. Until the last moment, West Germany had tried, and failed, to produce a usable document. Yet they were continuously being opposed by France, who kept focusing on excluding the United States.

Breakdown of the project

The German sources show that Bonn was actually willing to cooperate with both the United States and the European nations, but that this proved quite difficult. Because the declaration had to be formed on behalf of all the European nations, the West Germans could not simply negotiate their own renewed alliance with the United States, but had to work through the EEC and the NATO. Even though West Germany was not immediately convinced by the project, as could be seen through the reluctance of Brandt and von Staden, they engaged with it nevertheless. After a few months a German declaration was developed and shown to Kissinger and Nixon, who were pleased to see that the West Germans put this effort into the project. The documents that Scheel presented were a declaration that could actually have progressed the Year of Europe, showing furthermore that West Germany wanted this project to succeed. Kissinger asked the Germans to keep the documents to themselves, so it would not get bogged down in the European bureaucracy. Only a few months later, exactly this had happened. Kissinger’s request can be attributed to a number of factors: for one, the European way of discussing and compromising was exasperatingly slow. Combined with the practice of a single spokesman, who was not allowed to do anything but present the European plans, this reduced working speed even more. Secondly there was the way in which countries had the power to block affairs of being executed, with in this particular case, the hesitance of France to work with the United States. Though West Germany did propose to work with the

¹²⁷ Kissinger to NATO et al., Telegram P 272028Z MAR 74, March 27, 1974, National Archives.

¹²⁸ Hilfrich, “West Germany’s Long Year of Europe”, 249 – 250.

United States and engage in the project, they did not actively stop France from stalling. They wanted to make the Year of Europe a success, but at the same time they did not want to create aversion from France, as good relations with France were needed in the European Community.

As the Yom Kippur War was fought, political priorities shifted with regard to European-American relations. It also caused a bilateral conflict between West Germany and the United States, because Bonn did not approve of the airbridge from Germany to Israel, as they wished to remain impartial. The United States thus complicated the situation by supplying Israel from West Germany. With only November and December left, there were two more occasions where European politics were discussed face-to-face. These were the meeting of the Political Committee and the NATO summit. Though the declaration was debated, there was no more clear West German declaration, nor input. The officials dealing with West Germany's foreign affairs kept telling, as they had done all year, that Bonn put great value in a strong connection with the United States. This was true for officials in the United States, such as the ambassadors, but also for relations with the European countries, especially the Nine. In no way did officials ever truly speak out against the United States, nor against a more united Europe. By trying to balance between these two blocs the West Germans were not able to decisively put forward a proposal in either NATO or the EEC. As Kissinger also remarked in December, other European countries, especially France, were reluctant to tie themselves closer to the United States than West Germany was. Whereas the European identity at first had been part of their discourse with the United States, this was torn from the original designs of the declaration and had become a stand-alone entity, putting the interests of Europe before those of the transatlantic alliance. West Germany also participated in this, not wanting to do anything that would go against the grain of either party. The way in which a design for a European identity disrupted the relations between the United States and Europe showed the limit to how much could be accomplished at the moment. As the European nations were being incorporated into the EEC as individual nations, it sparked an internal struggle as to how they should interact with the United States. In this debate, France took a strong Euro-centric position and West Germany and Great Britain were not able to change this to a moderate stance, which they seemed to prefer, dealing with both Europe and the United States.

When the relation between Europe and the United States dropped to a low point, the West German relation with the United States was dragged down with them. Throughout the project West Germany kept attempting to draft a proposal that included both a stronger and

more united Europe, and a stronger and more united Transatlantic Alliance. The French did not support this, because it would have given the United States more influence in Europe. Throughout the year they stalled Kissinger's initiative. For example, in June, when the Nine had already decided to draft a document for September, Jobert remarked that they should not feel pressured, stating that "there is plenty of time. This is a long term-matter, and in forming its own identity Europe must act independently of America. It is not necessary for the EEC to rush ahead to break its own identity simply because it is going to have contacts with the Americans."¹²⁹ The June incident was only one of the many ways in which Jobert tried to disrupt the project and to keep the United States out of Europe. France wanted to use the Year of Europe for their own benefit and tried to shift the project, so it could be used to strengthen Europe itself, instead of the relation with the United States.¹³⁰

It is not strange then that Kissinger blamed Jobert personally for a great part of the stress he experienced during the year.¹³¹ The pressure exerted by France and the United States led to a situation in which the West Germans tried to 'have their cake and eat it', valuing both parties as important and thus being unable to make Europe move more towards the United States or invest more in Europe. From the West German side there was always the need to balance *Ostpolitik* with a strong *Westpolitik*, to make sure that they did not disrupt the relations with their allies in Europe and the United States. The necessity for this of course flowed from a multitude of reasons. They were still located between superpowers and could be the first to be attacked should the Soviet Union choose to make a move. So they chose to engage in communications with the Warsaw Pact, to diplomatically decrease the risk of such an event. Secondly, they had to strengthen their own position within the EEC. For this they needed to deal with eight other countries, with the biggest partners being France and Great Britain. It was in West Germany's best interest not to upset any of these parties, lest it influence trade or diplomatic relations. Thirdly, they had to stay in a coalition with the United States, for economic, political and military reasons. This also coincides with the fourth reason that required West Germany to engage in a solid *Westpolitik*, NATO, to which the United States contributed the most. But as their *Ostpolitik* was working well, problems arose on the other side. To strengthen the EEC they had to give in to France, who focused on Europe and rejected intervention by the United States. But to meet the concerns of the United States, West Germany now needed to have both a bilateral relationship with the United States, but also

¹²⁹ Moon, "The Year of Europe: 1973/74, A Study in Alliance Diplomacy", 96.

¹³⁰ Möckli, *European Foreign Policy*, 160 – 162.

¹³¹ Henry Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, 174.

promote multilateral bonds, such as happened in the Year of Europe. This was complicated even more because West Germany, Great Britain, and numerous other European countries, but not France, were organized in NATO. This was together with the United States and this organization required cooperation. Being pulled on from multiple sides caused the lack of a hard decision from West Germany, who did not decide between choosing the European or American side in the Year of Europe, which contributed to the failure of the Year of Europe. And this failure of the Year of Europe had led to deteriorated relations between West Germany and the United States.

Fabian Hilfrich argues that West Germany took a key role in the Year of Europe, functioning as a buffer between France and the United States. The Federal Republic had interests with both parties, to both keep the United States as a strong ally, but also France was needed to ensure more European integration. He explains this in *The Strained Alliance*, but comes short in his disquisition of the year, certainly in comparison to how it has been done in this thesis.¹³² Because what is important to notice, is that the relation with the United States actually became worse because Bonn did not manage to convey the importance they put in the relation with the United States to the other European nations, including France. Contrary to what Hilfrich argues, Bonn was not able to fulfill a buffer-role. While they were situated between the United States and France, they acted weakly on behalf of either of those countries. This led to angered American officials, who thought the West Germans did not put enough effort in the Year of Europe. So while Walter Scheel and Willy Brandt might have felt like they were on the barricades, the other nations did not notice this. Because they kept compromising with France on a bilateral level, they could not make it to a multilateral level that could have been part of the Year of Europe and of global politics. While the year could have become a success if this had been accomplished, it now remains to be seen as a failed attempt to change global politics.

Counterarguments

What is very important to notice, is how small of a part the Year of Europe played in German politics. Apart from the meetings that Brandt, Scheel and other politicians had, it is hardly mentioned. This goes for both business trips and official visits, but also for the German press, in which it is hardly mentioned, save for some news coverage shortly after the speech and during the year. Immediately after the speech these were positive cover stories, but already two weeks later, after Brandt and Scheel had visited Washington, political

¹³² Hilfrich, “West Germany’s Long Year of Europe”, 240 – 242; 250 – 254.

commentators added to the coverage of the project, stating that it would not be an easy task to accomplish.¹³³ Afterwards it was only brought to attention a few more times and did not play an important role in the media.

Kissinger was also occupied with more issues during the Year of Europe, than just focusing on this project: in Hanhimäki's book the few pages that focus on it are heavily embedded in paragraphs about the peace talks with Vietnam, visits to China, détente discussions with Russia, shuttle diplomacy in the Middle East and meetings with foreign officials in the United States.¹³⁴

Concerning France and Great Britain it can also be said that they were already too much involved in the project of trying to bring Europe together before the Year of Europe started. France was already quite Eurocentric and Great Britain had joined the EEC in 1973, with a Prime Minister who did not care as much for the 'special relationship' between the United States and Great Britain as Prime Ministers before him had done. They also wanted to prove that they were really committed to Europe, and not to the United States.¹³⁵ Because of these pre-existing conditions the United States could not get real solid footing with two of the most important members of the European Community in 1973, regardless of what they would have done.

Only exceptionally was the Year of Europe discerned outside of foreign politics, for example when Carsten Dubber, a member of the Evangelical Academy in Loccum, wrote to the deputy head of the United States department at the Foreign Ministry, dr. Citron. Through the Evangelical Academy he wanted to plan an event regarding the relations between the European Community and the United States and wanted to invite dr. Citron to be part of it.¹³⁶ Though a very enthusiastic letter that showed that there were people who took interest to the Year of Europe outside of the ministries, this is a rarity. The fact that there are very few of these letters in the archives of the Foreign Ministry shows a lack of public engagement.

¹³³ Hillenbrand to Secretary of State et al., telegram 251711Z, April 25, 1973; Telegram from US Embassy in Bonn to the Secretary of State et al., telegram 072123Z, May 7, 1973.

¹³⁴ Hanhimäki, *The Flawed Architect*, 260 – 290.

¹³⁵ Noble, "Kissinger's Year of Europe, Britain's Year of Choice", 220 – 235.

¹³⁶ Letter of Carsten Th. Dubber to dr. Claus-Jürgen Citron, July 25, 1973, (Betreff: Allgemein, Band 47, vom 1. Jan. 1973 bis 31 Dez. 1974. Politisches Archiv, Zwischenarchiv, 101413 (Geschäftszeichen der abgegebene Registratur: 204, 110.-, 260.-))

Yet, Brandt's statement from the Bundestag in 1974 was still true.¹³⁷ The discussion about European – American relations was always present in West German foreign politics. From primary sources it can easily be ascertained that they did indeed occupy themselves with the Year of Europe on all fronts. Throughout the year officials had busied themselves with the project and tried to improve the relations with the United States and Europe on the basis of the speech by Kissinger. However, what they did, and how they tried to influence the other nations into participating in this project, was far from enough to make the Year of Europe a success.

Chapter 3: the Aftermath

Even during the Year of Europe it was already deemed a failed project. Not much had come from it declaration-wise, nor was foreign policy immediately affected by it. Instead of bringing the United States closer to Europe, Europe itself was becoming more united, needing less help from the United States, apart from military and nuclear guarantees.

Nixon, occupied by the Watergate scandal, did not visit Europe for the Year of Europe, contributing to the failure of the initiative. This visit, initially planned in the latter half of the year, should have been the culmination of the project, where a declaration would be presented and signed by the European leaders and Nixon. And while European leaders visited Washington, Brandt and Scheel even multiple times during 1973, Nixon refused to come to Europe.

For Willy Brandt, it had also been a personal failure. Stating in his memoirs that he had always been in favor of a good bond between the European Community and the United States, he was disappointed in the way Nixon and Kissinger had set it up and in the quarrels it had caused between the two regions. During the months after the speech, he confirms to have continuously urged his European colleagues to pay attention to the remarks Kissinger made and to adjust the European and American interest to each other as much as they could. In his memoirs, he did not show if the relations with the United States changed drastically, but he expressed his frustration with the European and American officials on a personal level.¹³⁸

¹³⁷ See introduction, Deutscher Bundestag – 7. Wahlperiode – 91. Sitzung. Bonn, Donnerstag den 28. März 1974.

¹³⁸ Willy Brandt, *Begegnungen und Einsichten, Die Jahre 1960-1975* (Hamburg, 1976) , 370 – 371.

Personal discord

In retrospect, it is clear how the Year of Europe became a failure not only due to irreconcilable differences between the various countries over priorities and other bilateral or multilateral involvements, but also because a number of the people involved did not take a liking to one another.¹³⁹ When they were all replaced in the course of 1974 their successors took on a more open position towards the transatlantic relationship.¹⁴⁰

Piers Ludlow argues that the Year of Europe led to a beginning of changing attitudes towards Transatlantic relations. From 1974 onwards bilateral contacts between Washington and the three biggest European capitals, London, Paris and Bonn, increased and became more balanced when it concerned the European countries.¹⁴¹ Thus it can be argued that the Year of Europe did affect German – American and European – American relations, but certainly not in the way Kissinger had originally intended it. The Year of Europe had dragged the Transatlantic relations to such a low point, that the only way it could go from there was up.

New faces

Ludlow also asserts that the years of the Ford administration that succeeded Nixon were of a bigger importance than the original Year of Europe. After the Year of Europe, a lot changed on the stage of international politics. One after another, the leading actors of the year vanished from the stage. Willy Brandt resigned after his secretary was exposed as an East German spy, Pompidou had passed away, having been ill with cancer, Heath lost the election in England and Nixon resigned due to the Watergate scandal and his prospective impeachment.¹⁴² This gave space for new governments and enterprises. Early on this meant the passing of foreign policy resolutions that had not been possible before. One of these was the Schloss Gymnich resolution. It also reinstated the communications between Great Britain and the United States, which were on hold because of a disagreement, to how they were in July 1973, making bilateral contacts easier.¹⁴³ This had previously been blocked by Jobert, but his successor Sauvagnargues was more open to relations with the United States. A similar development was visible with West Germany. Contrary to the Brandt years, Kissinger could get along quite good with Helmut Schmidt, the new chancellor. In August 1974, Kissinger

¹³⁹ Moon, “The Year of Europe: 1973/74, A Study in Alliance Diplomacy”, 68 – 69.

¹⁴⁰ Piers N. Ludlow “The real years of Europe?: US-West European relations during the Ford administration”, *Journal of Cold War Studies* (October 2012), 9.

¹⁴¹ *Ibidem*, 6 – 14.

¹⁴² *Ibidem*.

¹⁴³ Möckli, *European Foreign Policy*, 162; Moon, “The Year of Europe: 1973/74, A Study in Alliance Diplomacy”, 260.

said that the alliance stood a chance now Ford and Schmidt could work together and he celebrated the change from Scheel and Brandt. The new French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and British Prime Minister Harold Wilson were also easier to work with on Atlantic issues, which overhauled the attitudes that had existed a year earlier.¹⁴⁴

A Declaration in NATO

Another piece of legislation that only now found enough support was the Declaration on Atlantic Relations. On June 19th, NATO approved and published this declaration that would be signed by the Heads of NATO Government in Brussels a week later. This declaration can objectively be seen as a part of the legacy of Kissinger's Year of Europe. The document reaffirmed the Atlantic Alliance, which upheld the ideas of a common defense strategy, the pursuit of détente and harmony between nations and other defense policies. Because it was solely a NATO document it did not deal with economic or political issues, save for proclaiming that NATO is aimed at a free, democratic world.¹⁴⁵ Neither the Year of Europe, nor the new Atlantic Charter were mentioned in the document, but this was the document that the European members of NATO had already drafted up in the autumn of 1973.¹⁴⁶ This was only a minor achievement, because it was mostly ceremonial and did not live very long.¹⁴⁷ Though the declaration was heavily influenced by the Year of Europe, the declaration itself was not an influential piece of legislature, but Kissinger saw it as an accomplishment in achieving one of the practical goals of the Year of Europe.¹⁴⁸ For all it was, this declaration did not radically alter foreign politics. It only slightly contributed to the renewal of the Atlantic Alliance, but not to the West German – United States relation in particular.

Different from other periods?

The Year of Europe stuck out from regular foreign relations because the United States tried to turn the multilateral conversations with the European countries into a single bilateral one. While they had always communicated with other countries one by one, they tried to impose cooperation on the European countries, who had only begun organizing in the European Community and were far from a European Union as it would be founded in Maastricht in 1992. Indications for this were Kissinger's speech, that was aimed at Europe, instead of the separate countries, and the original plan to draft one document for both the EEC

¹⁴⁴ Ludlow, "The real years of Europe?", 6 – 10.

¹⁴⁵ Declaration on Atlantic Relations, June 19, 1974.

¹⁴⁶ Beers, "European Unity and the Transatlantic Gulf in 1973", 503.

¹⁴⁷ Hilfrich, "West Germany's Long Year of Europe", 254.

¹⁴⁸ Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, 194.

and NATO together. The desire for an organized Europe was a logical one. Kissinger was a diplomat who worked very diligently, keeping tabs on multiple cases at once, but who was also continuously occupied by the Vietnam conflict during his years as National Security Advisor.¹⁴⁹ But especially for him it was of great importance to unify Europe, because it was much easier to deal with a single block than with nine different countries. This desire also led to Kissinger's biggest logical fallacy: because he already perceived the European countries as small and regional, that could easily be formed into single block, he hugely underestimated the conflicts of interest that existed between the countries. West Germany seemed willing to engage but other countries were more reluctant. Especially France did not want a 'tenth member' of the European community, in which the United States could very easily communicate and possibly influence the European members.¹⁵⁰

Conclusion

Returning to the research questions, this conclusion will summarize how the relations between West Germany and the United States changed in 1973, if these relations changed because of and according to Kissinger's speech, West Germany's own reaction and their reaction through the EEC and NATO. The sub questions will be treated first.

Were the relations affected by the Year of Europe as proposed in the speech by Kissinger? In 1973 West Germany was still implementing *Ostpolitik*, when Kissinger declared it the Year of Europe. From the primary sources it can be concluded that the project affected United States – West German relations. In West Germany, the initiative, though not embraced, was often present in foreign policy meetings and papers. Throughout the year, they kept a positive attitude towards the project and it can be seen that they tried to develop a new Atlantic Charter, or Declaration of Principles. This actually went fairly good, with Scheel presenting Nixon and Kissinger with an initial German proposal in July. The proposal was very well received by the Americans, but it was not yet a totally worked-out, nor a European declaration. Shortly hereafter however, the development of a declaration devolved into chaos. Instead of one, two declarations were being drafted, neither of which the United States were particularly keen on. This did not discourage the West Germans and they kept on drafting a Declaration of Principles until 1974. Even though West Germany tried to engage with the project, they were unable to do this. The possibility existed, certainly during the first part of

¹⁴⁹ Hahniamiki, *The Flawed Architect*, 260 – 290.

¹⁵⁰ Moon, "The Year of Europe: 1973/74, A Study in Alliance Diplomacy", 262; Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, 731 – 735.

the year, to change the relations with United States and to improve them. However, West Germany was not alone in the Year of Europe and regardless of their efforts, they did not succeed in revitalizing the relations between themselves, Europe, and the United States as proposed by Kissinger.

How did West Germany react to the Year of Europe project? The West German reaction to the Year of Europe cannot be seen apart from the already existing relationship between West Germany and the United States. After being defeated and split up after the war, West Germany developed a good connection with the United States. This can partially be attributed to the aid the United States provided, but it was also thanks to the chancellors that were in charge. For most of the time, this role was in the hands of Konrad Adenauer who, certainly in his early years as chancellor, was very pro-American. His successors Erhard and Kiesinger retained a friendly bond with the United States too.

The same cannot be said for Brandt's government, that never tried to thwart the American administration, but did have conflicts of interest and personal differences. But in public these differences seemed to be put aside. Brandt and Scheel met with Nixon and Kissinger just a week after the speech, though this visit had been planned earlier. Regardless, they still discussed the speech and seemed to take it seriously. West Germany then engaged with the project in 1973 and this can be seen in a lot of correspondence with United States officials. In primary sources it can be seen that the project was being worked on throughout the year, with numerous proposals being drafted and discussed. Scheel oversaw all of this and throughout the year met up with his European colleagues and Kissinger to discuss the initiative. However, there was no big public West German reaction. This also had to do with the fact that it was a European project, and not just between Germany and the United States.

In that case, how did West Germany react through the EEC and NATO? For this it is important to see how the Year of Europe fits into the chronology of the EEC and NATO. In 1973, the EEC was extended to nine members, including Great Britain and France. France was not a member of NATO at this moment. The EEC was still in a nascent form and not used to discussing international relations multilaterally. This led to a situation in which no European nation wholeheartedly took it upon itself to start drafting a declaration, or even to get all countries on the same page. France and its foreign minister, Jobert, in particular did not want to acquiesce to the wishes of the United States and executed a different policy, which tried to ostracize the United States in favor of a more united Europe. And because France was

not part of NATO they did not want to link issues related to safety, so two documents had to be drafted. The EEC worked tediously slow and France also tried to block the project. All these issues did not stop West Germany from still trying to make a success out of the Year of Europe, with Scheel even defending the fact that the project needed to be a success in NATO. However, they needed to juggle both the relations with the European countries and the United States. Therefore they were not able to act powerfully and a strong reaction through NATO or the EEC was not visible or transmitted. This left them open for criticism from both their own countrymen and that of the United States. They saw a politically weak West Germany, that was more interested in its own *Ostpolitik* than a strong Atlantic alliance and détente. Though a NATO-declaration was signed in 1974 in the spirit of the Year of Europe, it was not an important one, nor did it have any actual influence in the long run.

Arriving at the main question: how did the United States – West German relations change in 1973 and 1974 during the Year of Europe? Partially this can be seen as a continuation of the relations as they were from 1969 up to 1973. Though there was no conflict, the relation was not at an apex. Nonetheless, in 1973 and 1974 the relations between West Germany and the United States did worsen. This was because of the failure of the Year of Europe and West Germany's failure to engage with it in a way that the United States could notice. West Germany did not manage to comfort the United States, because of their weak position between the European nations and the United States. Lacking the authority to force France and other countries to engage with the project in a way that Kissinger wanted and unable to tell the United States that they couldn't meet their requirements, they found themselves between a rock and a hard place. This led to a deterioration of the relation from where it already was, combined with the factors already described in this conclusion.

However, the blame cannot only be put on West Germany. West Germany, together with the other European nations, had from day one requested Nixon's participation in the project to make it a success. The reluctance with which the president engaged, or rather failed to engage, in making the plan a success can be understood in retrospect, because of the Watergate scandal. Yet, by postponing his visit to Europe instead of cancelling it, it contributed to dragging out the project and its eventual failure. Instead of offering a different solution, Nixon's visit was promised until far in the year, only agitating the other participants when it was delayed yet again. This certainly cooled of the relationship between the two countries from the West German side. Next to the Year of Europe, the Yom Kippur War left its mark on the relationship in 1973. Though the war was fought in the Middle-East without

European combatants, it put a lot of strain on the European countries, who did not support the war, nor the way in which the Israelis and Arab countries were supplied. For example, the United States flew supply flights for the Israelis out of West Germany, which was heavily condemned by Scheel. Together with already existing frictions concerning the fighting of wars, such as Vietnam, acts like this were judged negatively by West Germany. An incidental result of the Yom Kippur War was the Energy Crisis. While it did not hit West Germany very hard, it still disturbed the country. These issues took the wind out of the sails of the Year of Europe even more, as resources were needed to respond elsewhere.¹⁵¹

Taking all of this into consideration, it can be concluded that the relationship between the United States and West Germany got worse than it already was. The failure of the project, together with West Germany's seemingly weak engagement in it, the involvement of the other European countries and external factors like Watergate and the Yom Kippur War can all be counted as reasons that this happened.

Concerning the subject of the Year of Europe in West Germany, and in general, there are still other important things to notice: the abundance of information far surpasses the commonly held view of Germany's role in the Year of Europe. Most authors put little value in the role of the Bundesrepublik and scan over the Year of Europe as just a ripple in the pond of international politics. Either to Europe as a whole or to individual countries they only dedicate a little attention in a few sentences, but this has led to an incomplete history. Though the project itself was not a success, it did have an influence in international politics, because of when it was organized. 1973 ended up being a year in the middle of global changes. The ties with China and the Soviet Union had become better, a more united Europe was slowly forming. *Détente* provided a climate in which there was less tension between the nuclear powerhouses, but still proxy-wars such as in Vietnam and Israel were fought. But concerning politics, the Year of Europe, the new Atlantic Charter and the European Declaration of Principles continuously played a role during discussions, which were not 'business as usual', but driven by the speech Kissinger had given and how the European countries had engaged it. During 1973 and leading into 1974, the three key phrases regarding the project, Year of Europe, New Atlantic Charter and Declaration of Principles, were continuously present in both West German and American sources. This is with such a frequency that it cannot be ignored. No written account yet summarizes the West German side of the Year of Europe

¹⁵¹ Beers, "European Unity and the Transatlantic Gulf in 1973", 505.

month-by-month, which has led to the lack of an analysis of the entire year. What has been written in this thesis has not yet been described as such and the relation between West Germany, its connection to the Year of Europe, the United States and other geopolitical developments was not yet entirely clear. However, next to the already utilized sources, there is still a vast amount of sources that remain to be studied. One reason for this is that some of these sources have only recently been unsealed or made available to the greater public. For instance, the diplomatic cables of the United States regarding this period have only been released in 2005 and the *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1973* have only been made available in 2004, though only in certain libraries and archives. Because of the speed at which these archives are being unlocked, there is now more than ever the possibility to do research on projects like the Year of Europe, next to subjects that have already gotten a lot of attention, such as *Ostpolitik* and the war in the Middle East.

It cannot be said with any certainty that the Year of Europe would have been a success if it had not suffered from setbacks such as the Middle East-crisis or Nixon's involvement in Watergate. Even then it would still have been a very tough issue to get the European countries to cooperate without getting hung-up on technicalities, or getting the Europeans together to discuss the project, let alone reconcile their differences about working together with the United States. What is left to the reader's own interpretation is an excerpt from Willy Brandt regarding the year 1973: "Ich möchte hier meine Meinung und die Meinung meiner politischen Freunde zum Ausdruck bringen – ich sage es in einer Paraphrase –: Nach meiner festen Überzeugung werden Historiker des nächsten Jahrzehnts oder der nächsten Generationen mit höchster Wahrscheinlichkeit das Jahr 1973 als einen tiefgreifenden Einschnitt in der Nachkriegsgeschichte, als eine historische Zäsur bewerten."¹⁵²

¹⁵² Deutscher Bundestag – 7. Wahlperiode – 91. Sitzung. Bonn, Donnerstag den 28. März 1974.

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