

THE DEVELOPMENT AND STRUCTURE OF WEST GERMAN PUBLIC OPINION ON SECURITY ISSUES SINCE THE LATE 1970s

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1. Introduction

This contribution serves two purposes: First, it examines the development of selected key indicators of public opinion on national security issues in West Germany over the last decade (1978-87). This period includes two years prior to NATO's dual-track decision, the debate over, and the final deployment of new U.S. INF; the road up to the INF Treaty of December 1987; and the ascent to power of General Secretary Gorbachev in the Soviet Union. If there ever have been major reorientations in West German public opinion on security after the rearmament debate of the 1950s, this is the period where they most likely must have occurred. Since it is a well-established fact that security-related attitudes in the Federal Republic covary quite strongly with partisan sympathies (Rattinger 1987), changes over time in these associations are also analyzed. The investigation focuses on the following aspects of security-related public opinion: perceptions of the Federal Republic's general national security environment (military balance and threat), attitudes toward nuclear weapons and deterrence, evaluations of the superpowers, attitudes toward NATO membership and U.S. forces deployed in West Germany, opinions about military expenditures, and evaluations of the Bundeswehr. Second, we attempt to present some insights on how current national security attitudes in the Federal Republic are associated with political preferences and social background variables, and to what extent they are interrelated among each other.

The data for this study come from a series of annual surveys conducted for the Federal Ministry of Defense (see Appendix 1 for a more detailed description of these surveys). At the time of writing, the original data sets were not yet accessible, so that only the extensive crosstabulations supplied by the polling institute could be used. This severely limits the sophistication of data analysis, of course, and accounts for many of the shortcomings of this effort.

2. Some trends of public opinion

Perceptions of the East-West *military balance* in the Federal Republic have remained quite stable over the past ten years (Figure 1). Judgments that NATO is superior have fluctuated between 10 and 20 percent, that the Warsaw Pact is superior between 30 and 40 percent, and that both blocs are equally strong between about 40 and 60 percent. If one looks for a substantively significant shift in these perceptions, the most likely candidate is the observation that since 1985 the view that both sides are equally strong has become more frequent than ever before in this ten-year interval, and the view that the Warsaw Pact is superior has correspondingly dropped below previous levels. This could be reversed, of course, as soon as the 1988 survey becomes available. This author would argue, however, that such a reversal is not likely. This shift in 1985 has coincided with the ascent of the new Soviet leadership, and probably reflects improvements in the general climate of East-West relations more than genuine assessments of the military balance.

This argument is supported by the fact that sizeable parts of the public have considerable difficulties in judging relative military strength - which in view of wildly diverging assessments by military "experts" is hardly surprising (e.g., Mearsheimer 1982 and Posen 1988, vs. Karber 1983 and Martin 1983). In the 1987 survey, respondents were asked four different questions about force comparisons: NATO vs. Warsaw Pact in general, regarding conventional forces, regarding nuclear forces, and U.S. vs. USSR in general (in this sequence). Few people had problems commenting on the general East vs. West and USSR vs. U.S. questions, but 21 percent did not give a judgment on the conventional or on the nuclear balance (Table 1). If one excludes these respondents, the resulting distributions still make some sense along the lines of the widespread notion that Eastern military superiority is particularly acute in conventional forces, while the West still has an edge in nuclear capabilities. The responses to the U.S. vs. USSR question, however, make little sense: With very few refusals, more respondents say that the U.S. alone is stronger than the USSR (or at least equally strong) than say so for NATO vs. the Warsaw Pact. In fact, the Soviet share of total Warsaw Pact forces is much higher, of course, than the American share of NATO forces, so that exactly the opposite pattern should be expected.

Figure 1: Which block is stronger?

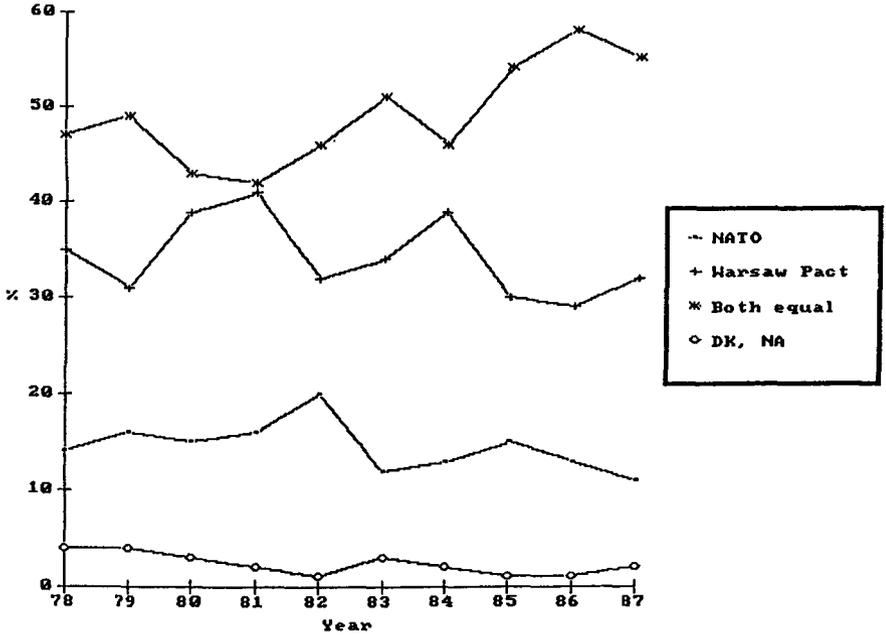


Figure 2: Which block is stronger (Warsaw Pact minus NATO), by Party preference

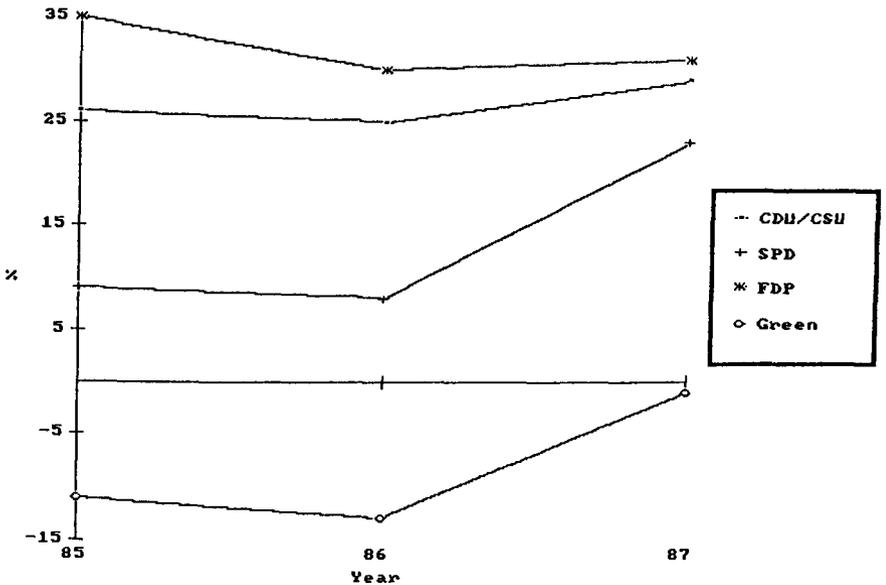


Table 1: Perceptions of the East-West military balance, 1987

	general	conventional	nuclear	U.S.-USSR
NATO (U.S.) superior	11	7 (9)	16 (20)	14
East (USSR) superior	32	41 (52)	26 (33)	23
Both equal	55	31 (39)	37 (47)	60
DK, NA	2	21	21	3

For complete question wording for this and all subsequent tables and figures see Appendix 2. Percentages in brackets are without DK, NA.

DK, NA: Don't know, no answer

Another interesting observation on perceptions of the military balance concerns their distribution by partisan sympathy. That one encounters significantly more people who claim that the West is superior, and less who say so about the East, as one traverses the political spectrum from right to left, has already been reported (e.g., Rattinger 1987, Table 1). However, this polarization along party lines has been reduced in 1987 when compared to earlier years (Figure 2). Adherents of the parties forming the current government have remained rather stable in their perceptions, but followers of the Social Democrats and of the Greens have become much less likely to claim Western, and much more likely to detect Eastern, superiority. In 1987, SPD voters had become very similar to adherents of the CDU/CSU and FDP in their perception of the military balance, and among Green voters, those believing in Western superiority were almost exactly balanced by those stating that the Warsaw Pact is stronger.

The trend in perceptions of a *communist threat* is quite similar to that described in evaluations of the overall military balance (Figure 3). For 1978 to 1984, the average of an index of threat perception (with minimum 0 and maximum 3) fluctuated between 1.4 and 1.5. In 1985 it fell to 1.3, and in 1987 it had dropped to below 1.2. Partisan polarization about the extent of a threat also went down in 1987 (Figure 4): Perception of a communist threat decreased especially among voters for the SPD and the FDP, whereas for Green sympathizers it did *not* decrease further, so that adherents of these three parties were not far apart in this judgment. Only among CDU/CSU voters did the group that sees a threat continue to be almost as large as the one that does not perceive such a threat.

Figure 3: Perception of communist threat (mean of index from 0 to 3)

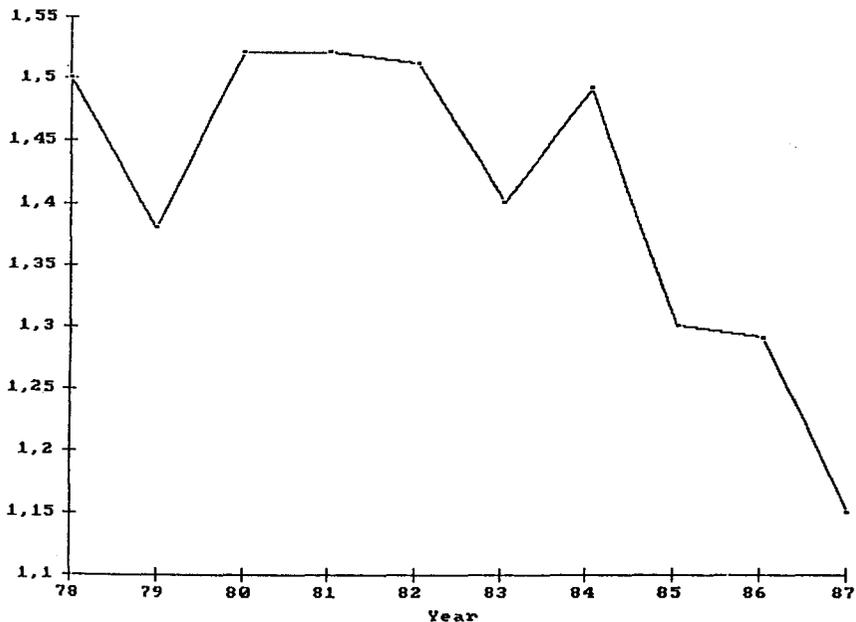
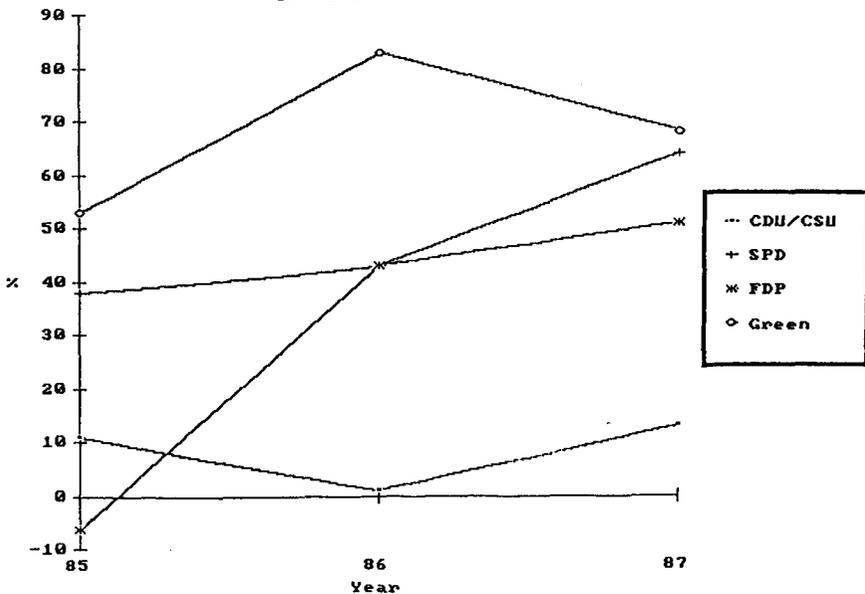


Figure 4: Perception of communist threat (percent no or low threat minus (very) strong threat), by party preference



Unfortunately, this series of studies only contains questions about *nuclear deterrence* since 1985. Over these three years, support for nuclear deterrence has fallen slightly to just over 50 percent (Figure 5). This decline has been strongest among Green and SPD voters, who also support immediate abolishment of nuclear weapons more frequently than maintenance of nuclear deterrence. It should be pointed out, however, that SPD voters still are much closer to voters for the government parties in these views than to adherents of the Greens. It also deserves mentioning that a substantial share of those who either want nuclear deterrence maintained or nuclear weapons eliminated make this choice under great insecurity over the effects of a nuclear-free world. When asked explicitly (in 1987) whether, without any nuclear weapons, war in Europe would become more likely or not, one-third of respondents said they did not know or refused to reply. Among the others, about 60 percent said it would *not* become more likely (Table 2). If one assumes that those who think that war would be more likely are fully contained among those who want to maintain nuclear weapons and deterrence, and that those who believe war would not be more likely are fully contained among those who would like to see nuclear weapons abolished, it is obvious that insecurity about the consequences of getting rid of nuclear weapons must be much higher among those who want to maintain nuclear deterrence.

There are several explanations for this observation. First, if one prefers to err on the safe side, insecurity about the effects of abolishing nuclear weapons is more compatible with maintaining nuclear deterrence than with its immediate abolishment. Second, those who want to denuclearize immediately might have a stronger desire to avoid cognitive dissonance. Third, the "normative" question about maintaining deterrence vs. eliminating nuclear weapons (which was asked later) is far more "radical" than the "cognitive" question about what difference these weapons make in terms of war prevention. One thus first finds widespread insecurity and skepticism over whether nuclear arms really make the decisive difference for war prevention, but when they are later set against the alternative of complete and quick denuclearization, beliefs that they actually do reduce the likelihood of war in Europe become much more frequent.

Figure 5: Support for nuclear deterrence (percent support minus rejection), total and by party preference

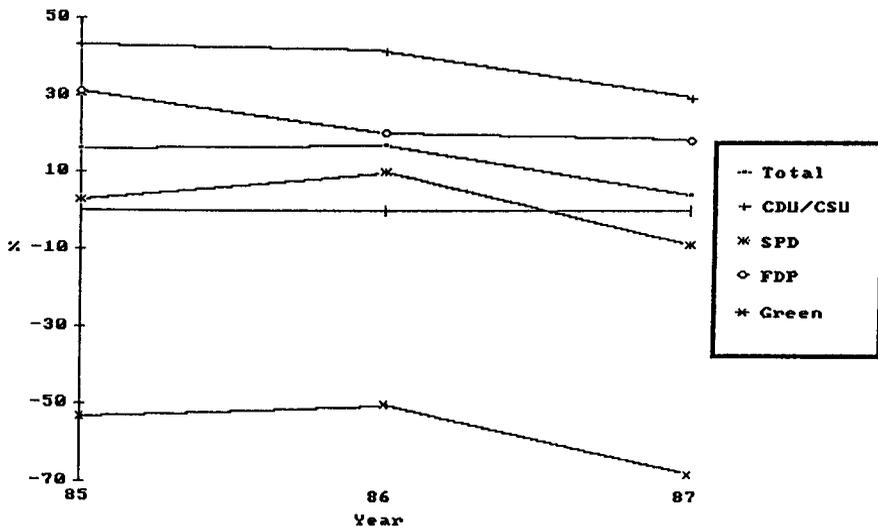


Figure 6: Attitudes toward the U.S. and the USSR

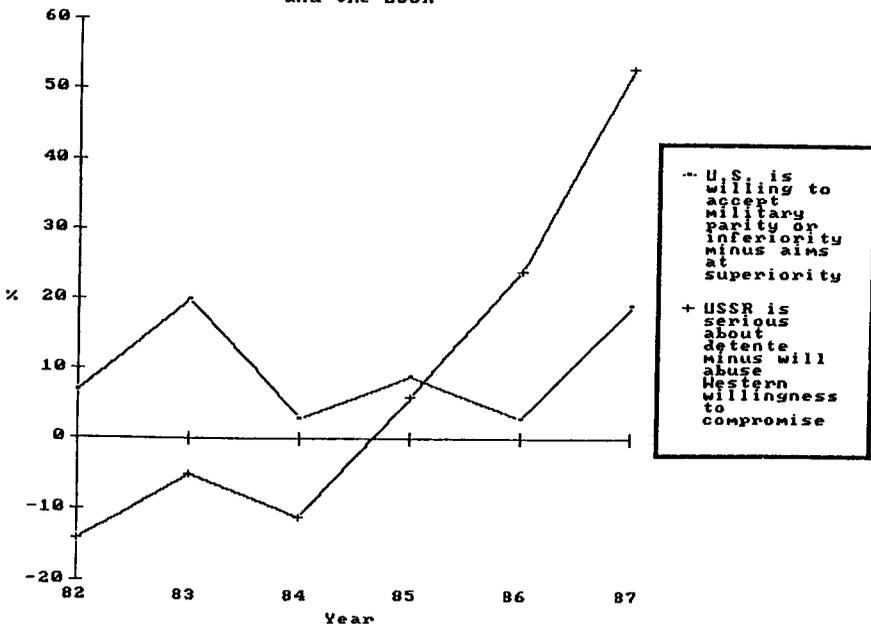


Table 2: Attitudes toward nuclear weapons and deterrence, 1987

	Total	CDU/CSU	SPD	FDP	Green
Support nuclear deterrence, because without nuclear weapons likelihood of conventional war in Europe would be higher	51	64	45	59	16
Support immediate abolishment of nuclear weapons	47	35	54	41	84
DK, NA	2	1	1	0	0
Without nuclear weapons and deterrence war in Europe would be more likely	26(39)	35(53)	20(30)	27(42)	11(13)
Without nuclear weapons and deterrence war in Europe would not be more likely	41(61)	31(47)	46(70)	38(58)	77(87)
DK, NA	33	34	34	35	12

Percentages in brackets are without DK, NA.

Not surprisingly, *evaluations of the Soviet Union* have changed much more in recent years than the attitudes discussed so far. Figure 6 shows how "Gorbimania" has brought suspicion vis-a-vis the Soviet Union down quite dramatically. Up to 1984, skeptical opinions about Soviet intentions outnumbered positive ones; in 1987, 75 percent were positive. In contrast, the popular *image of the U.S.* in the Federal Republic has not changed much, even though one can be tempted to detect a (much smaller) revival of positive evaluations in 1987, most likely due to the prospect of the INF agreement and of the resulting removal of the new nuclear weapons stationed in Europe after 1983. These evaluations of the superpowers have lost some of their polarization along party lines in recent years. From 1986 to 1987 the image of the U.S. improved most among Green voters (even though it still is quite negative), and the image of the Soviet Union improved most among voters for the governing parties (Figures 7 and 8).

Figure 7: Positive minus negative judgments on U.S. military intentions, by party preference

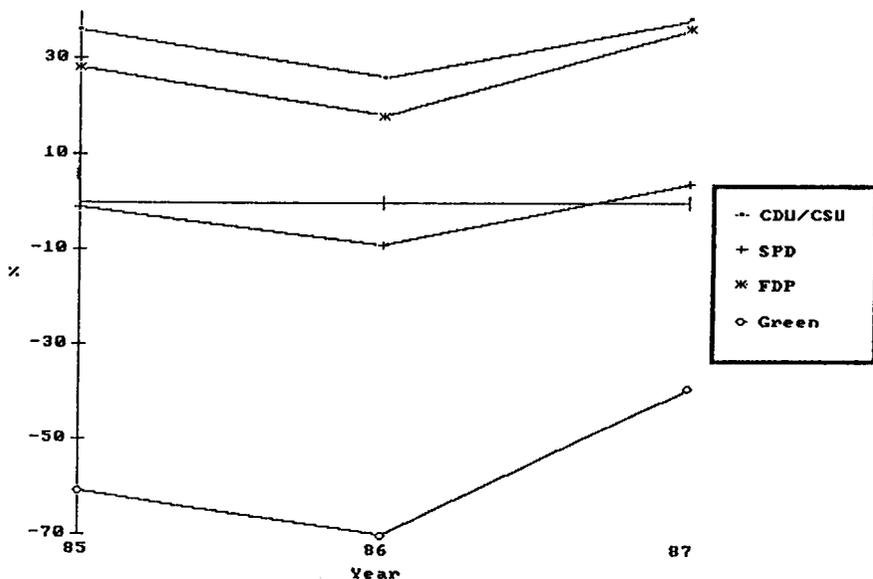
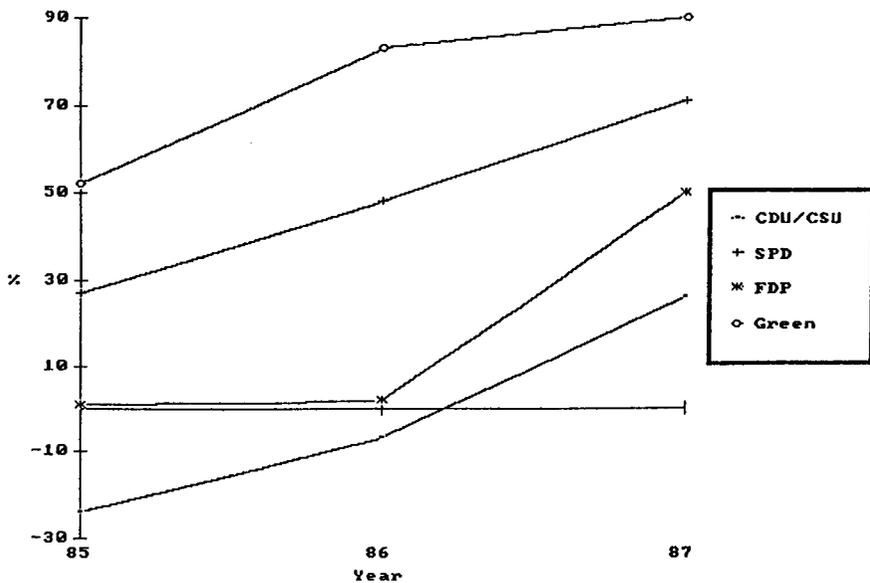


Figure 8: Positive minus negative judgments on USSR intentions, by party preference



Support for West German *membership in NATO* has fluctuated between 80 and 90 percent over the past ten years, with a clear but slow downward trend (Figure 9). Opposition against the *withdrawal of U.S. troops* from the Federal Republic has also declined somewhat over the early 1980s, but this has not continued since 1984; opposition now stands at about 75 percent, compared to about 80 percent in the late 1970s. These observations correspond, of course, to the decreased sense of Eastern military superiority and of threat, but it should be stressed that up to the mid-1960s, endorsement of NATO and of American troop deployment had been *much* lower in the Federal Republic than they are now. Partisan disagreement on these issues continues to be very strong and stable: In 1987, 94 percent of CDU/CSU voters favored continuing West German membership in NATO, and 89 percent were opposed to withdrawal of U.S. troops. Corresponding figures for FDP adherents were 98 and 79 percent, 85 and 74 percent among SPD sympathizers, and 41 and 24 percent, respectively, for Green partisans.

With the exception of a small "shock" in 1980 - probably due to the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan - attitudes toward West German *defense spending* confirm what we have seen so far (Figure 10). The view that the Federal Republic spends too little has declined somewhat, and clearly is held by a small minority. The opposite view has risen from below 30 to over 40 percent, and the notion that military expenditures are adequate has fallen from somewhat below 60 to under 50 percent. Partisan polarization over this matter is strong and stable (Figure 11). SPD adherents are about evenly split among the views that these outlays are insufficient or adequate, on the one hand, and exaggerated, on the other. Green voters overwhelmingly hold the latter opinion, and voters for the government parties are least opposed to current levels of defense spending. As can be seen in Figure 11, the shift in the aggregate distributions over the past three years toward more skepticism vis-a-vis West German military expenditures was mainly due to Green and FDP voters. The former have moved even further away from the sympathizers of the "established" parties over this issue, and the latter have now become more similar to SPD than to CDU/CSU voters.

But these judgments about the size of the West German military budget obviously are quite unstable ones for some respondents. When, in 1987, they were asked (immediately preceding the question about too high, too low, or adequate) whether - given the present international situation - the Federal Republic should spend less on defense, more, or as much per capita as other Western and Eastern nations, the latter response was chosen by more people than the view that defense spending is "about right," and the opinion that it

Figure 9: Attitudes toward NATO and U.S. troops

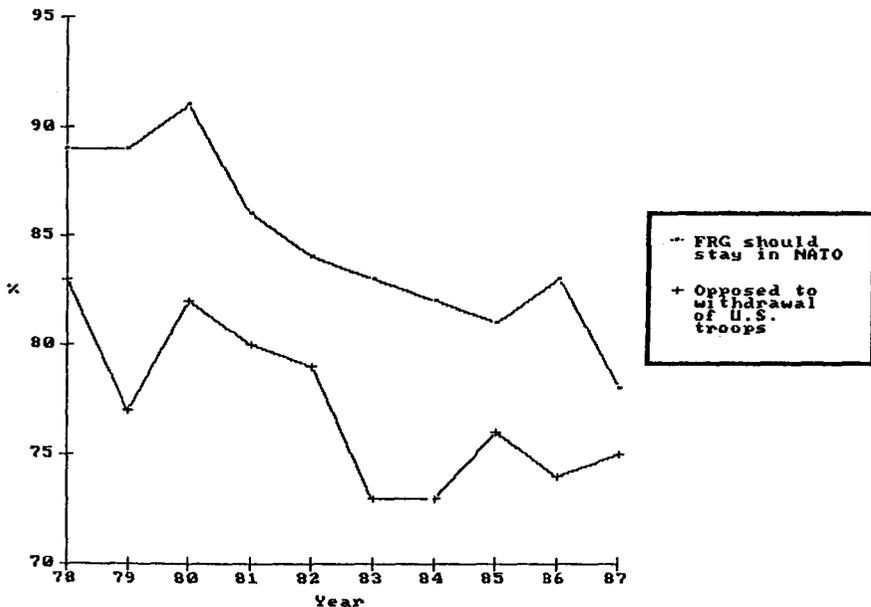
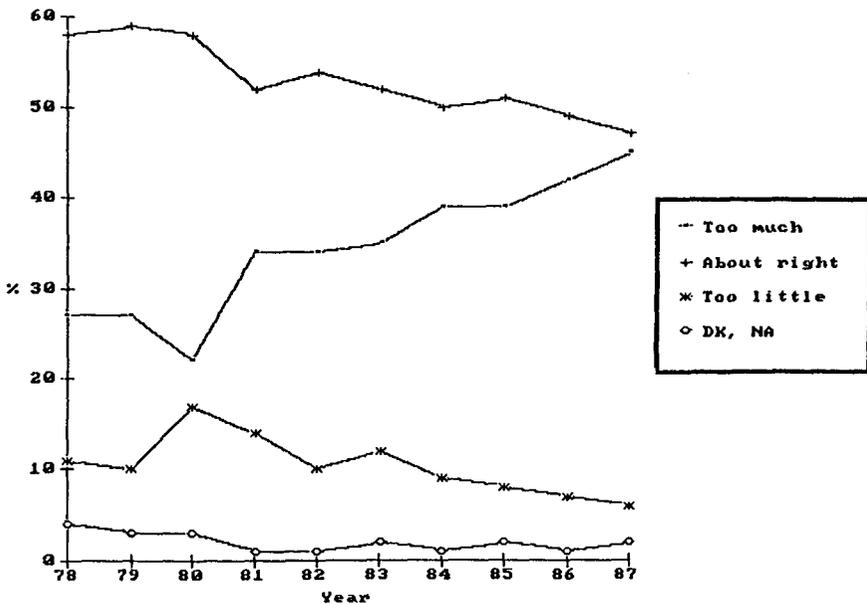


Figure 10: Attitudes toward West German defense spending



should be reduced was less frequent than that the Federal Republic was spending "too much" (Table 3). These discrepancies were weakest for CDU/CSU voters, and strongest for adherents of the Greens. Of course one could argue that this category of "as much as others" can be interpreted at will. Those who want reductions might think of Denmark or Luxembourg; those who want increases might use the superpowers as points of reference. However, such respondents could have simply and directly said that they favored reductions or increases, as these answers were also offered. Therefore, "as much as others" probably serves as an intermediate category equivalent to "about right." But if that is so, it is puzzling that it is chosen more often, and reductions are less frequently advocated, if people are reminded of the international situation and of others' behavior.

Another indication of how insecure people are in their views on military expenditures is found in the responses to a question also asked in 1987 (preceding the above two items), whether nuclear weapons and current levels of defense spending should be maintained, or whether nuclear weapons should be eliminated and defense spending be increased as compensation (Table 3). In contrast to the other two questions, there were some refusals and "don't knows," but the surprising fact is that almost two-thirds (even 70 percent of those with an opinion) preferred the combination of denuclearization of Western defense with increased military expenditures. The majority in favor of this combination was smallest among FDP voters, but SPD and Green voters, who otherwise have the most reservations about defense spending, were most willing to accept it. We thus have the striking fact that 90 percent of Green voters believe that West German military expenditures are too high, but 77 percent of them (94 percent of those with an opinion) at the same time want to spend even more, in order to see nuclear weapons eliminated. Even though 18 percent of the Green voters did not respond to this question (probably because they think that denuclearization and cuts of defense expenditures should both be achieved), the anti-nuclear affect seems to be much stronger than their opposition to the present level of West German defense outlays.

Attitudes toward the *Bundeswehr*, finally, have changed only little over the past decade (Figure 12). Between 85 and 90 percent of samples have consistently endorsed the view that its existence makes peace more secure, rather than being a threat to peace. Only a small realignment of about three percentage points seems to have occurred, if the earlier and later years within this ten-year interval are compared, and this is almost exclusively due to the growth of the Green electorate. Among CDU/CSU and FDP voters,

Figure 11: Attitudes toward West German defense spending (percent too little and about right minus too much), by party preference

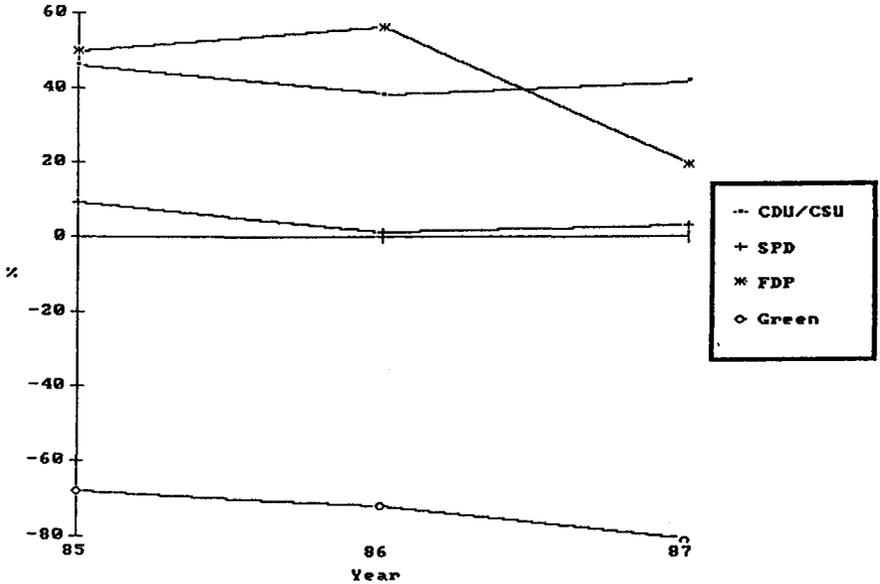


Figure 12: Attitudes toward the Bundeswehr

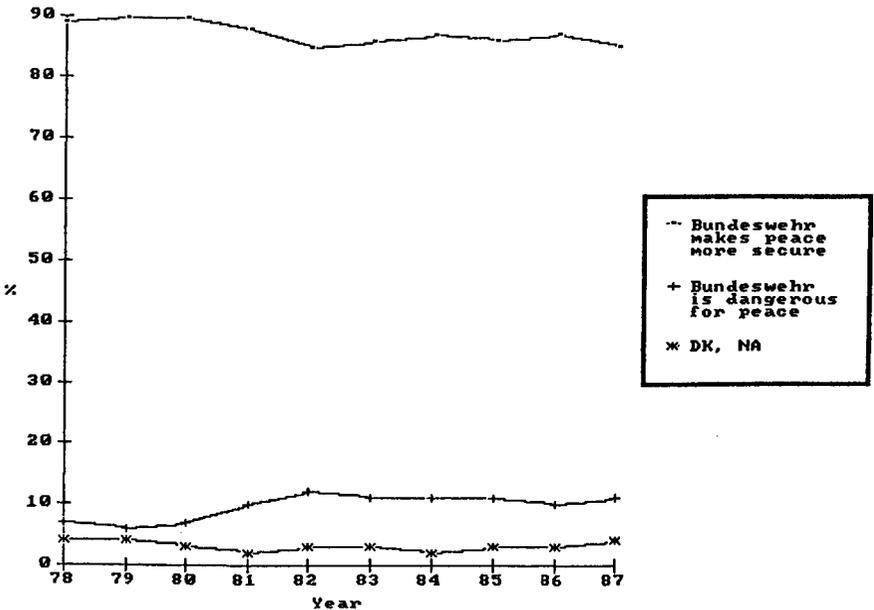


Table 3: Attitudes toward defense spending, 1987

	Total	CDU/CSU	SPD	FDP	Green

Defense spending of the Federal Republic is:					
Too much	45	29	48	40	90
About right	47	61	44	53	6
Too little	6	9	7	6	3
DK, NA	2	1	1	1	1

In view of the international situation the Federal Republic should:					
Reduce defense spending	39	24	45	34	77
Spend as much per capita as other nations in West and East	52	64	50	60	18
Increase defense spending	7	11	5	6	5
DK, NA	2	1	0	0	0

Support retaining nuclear weapons and current level of defense spending	28(30)	35(36)	23(26)	39(41)	5 (6)
Support abolishing nuclear weapons and increasing spend- ing for conventional defense	64(70)	63(64)	67(74)	56(59)	77(94)
DK, NA	8	2	10	5	18

Percentages in brackets are without DK, NA.

evaluations of the Bundeswehr as dangerous for peace are very rare, and only about 10 to 12 percent of SPD followers hold this opinion. Green voters, however, usually are about evenly split over this issue of whether the existence of the Bundeswehr is good or dangerous for the preservation of peace. Apart from this segment of the electorate, the Bundeswehr thus has come through the turmoil of the 1980s without any damage to its general acceptance in West German public opinion.

3. The structure of public opinion

3.1. Covariation with social background

We now turn to the second set of main questions of this contribution, i.e., how public opinion on national security issues in the Federal Republic is related to social background variables and to partisan preferences of respondents, and what interrelations among these attitudes can be observed. In contrast to the previous section, we will here draw on the full range of items asked in the 1987 survey. In addition, we will compare the findings for 1987 with those for 1986, whenever a question was included in both years. The strength of these associations (Tables 4 and 5) is measured by Pearson's contingency coefficient C , adjusted for degrees of freedom (see note to Table 4).

As social background variables, sex, age, education, occupation, and information about whether the respondent himself (or husband or son) currently is (or has been) in the Bundeswehr are available. With these five variables and 33 questions, a total of 165 associations are reported in Table 4 for 1987. One hundred twenty one out of these (i.e., almost three out of four) are significantly different from zero. With a sample size of almost 2,000, this is hardly surprising, of course, as sometimes (depending upon degrees of freedom) even adjusted C -values as low as .08 already qualify for statistical significance.

In terms of absolute magnitude, however, the associations reported in Table 4 between national security attitudes and the positions of respondents in the social structure generally are low to very low. Their overall absolute mean for 1987 is .14. Answers to these 33 questions about national security issues appear to be related most strongly to age and occupation (with average absolute C of .18 and .17, respectively). The older respondents are, the more they tend to be in favor of military defense, the Western alliance, the Bundeswehr, etc. (see the notes to Table 4 for the coding of the "direction" of variables). Self-employed respondents and public servants tend to be most skeptical vis-a-vis defense matters, and blue-collar and white-collar employees are least skeptical, with retired respondents usually in between. With $C=.14$, education follows next, skepticism and opposition growing with length of education. Direct or indirect experience with the Bundeswehr

Table 4: Associations between national security attitudes and social background variables, 1987 and 1986

	Sex	Age	Edu- cation	Occu- pation	Resp. or husb. or son in Bundesw.	Abs. mean
National security environment						
Military balance	-16 ^c	19 ^c	-12 ^b	-18 ^c	05	14
1986:	-14 ^c	16 ^c	-16 ^c	-12 ^a	04	12
U.S.-USSR mil. balance	-11 ^b	11	-11 ^a	-14 ^c	04	10
1986:	-13 ^c	07	-08	-14 ^c	04	09
Nuclear balance	-06	16 ^b	-10	-24 ^c	09 ^a	13
Conventional balance	-19 ^c	10	15 ^c	-18 ^c	02	13
Communist threat	-04 [#]	17 ^c	-20 ^c	-14 ^b	-05	12
1986:	18 ^c	13 ^b	-17 ^c	-13 ^a	07	14
Feasibility of defense	05	08	-13 ^b	-10 ^a	-04	08
1986:	02	09	-07	-08	-08 ^a	07
Abs. mean 1987	10	14	14	17	05	12
Comparable mean 1987	09	14	14	14	05	11
Abs. mean 1986	12	11	12	12	06	11
Nuclear weapons and deterrence						
Nuclear deterrence	-09 ^b	16 ^c	-04 [#]	-18 ^c	06	11
1986:	-07 ^a	18 ^c	-18 ^c	-13 ^b	06	12
Likelihood of war with- out nuclear weapons	00	12	-15 ^c	-08	04	08
Abs. mean 1987	05	14	10	13	05	09
Superpowers						
Relations FRG-USSR	-05	-10	10 ^a	09	-05	08
1986:	-10 ^b	-20 ^c	16 ^c	10	-04	12
USSR abuses cooperation	-04	19 ^{c*}	-12 ^b	-15 ^c	02 [#]	10
1986:	02	07	-21 ^c	-18 ^c	14 ^c	12
U.S. want mil. equilibr.	07	16 ^c	-11 ^a	-15 ^c	11 ^b	12
1986:	04	20 ^c	-19 ^c	-17 ^c	11 ^b	14
Abs. mean 1987	05	15	11	13	06	10
Abs. mean 1986	05	16	19	15	10	13

Table 4 (continued)

	Sex	Age	Edu- cation	Occu- pation	Resp. or husb. or son in Bundesw.	Abs. mean

NATO and U.S. troops						
NATO membership of FRG	10 ^a	26 ^C	-15 ^C	-17 ^C	17 ^C	17
1986:	06	20 ^C	-18 ^C	-10	19 ^C	15
Withdrawal U.S. troops	07 ^a	24 ^C	-15 ^C	-19 ^C	15 ^C	16
1986:	02	19 ^C	-15 ^C	-09	06	10
U.S. troops secure peace	-01	26 ^C	-10 ^a	-18 ^C	10 ^b	13
1986:	-04	21 ^C	-19 ^C	-08	12 ^C	13
U.S. troops improve security of FRG	-12 ^b	27 ^C	-18 ^C	-24 ^C	28 ^C	22
1986:	-17 ^C	24 ^C	-25 ^C	-15 ^b	25 ^C	21
Benefit from Am. troops	-10 ^a	27 ^C	-14 ^C	-22 ^C	15 ^C	18
1986:	-09 ^a	17 ^C	-20 ^C	-19 ^C	09 ^a	15
Feasibility of defense without U.S. troops	-03	14 ^C	-08 ^a	-11 ^a	09 ^a	09
1986:	01	13 ^b	-06	-07	01	06
Rel. Germans-U.S. troops	10 ^a	23 ^C	-18 ^C	-20 ^C	13 ^b	17
1986:	10 ^a	20 ^C	-27 ^C	-14 ^b	13 ^b	17
FRG-French brigade	00	11 ^a	07	18 ^C	10 ^b	09
Abs. mean 1987	07	22	13	19	15	15
Comparable mean 1987	08	24	14	19	16	16
Abs. mean 1986	07	19	19	12	12	14

Military expenditures and behavior in case of attack						
Keep nuclear weapons or rely on conventional	-03	08	-12 ^b	-12 ^a	03	08
International situation and military spending	-13 ^C	23 ^C	-17 ^C	-17 ^C	17 ^C	17
1986:	-12 ^b	19 ^C	-12 ^b	-14 ^C	20 ^C	15
Military spending	-15 ^C	28 ^C	-18 ^{C†}	-22 ^C	20 ^C	21
1986:	-19 ^C	22 ^C	-30 ^C	-13 ^a	23 ^C	21
Behavior if attacked	-50 ^C	-24 ^C	20 ^{C*}	18 ^C	29 ^C	28
1986:	-48 ^C	-25 ^C	08	24 ^C	32 ^C	27
Abs. mean 1987	20	21	17	17	17	18
Comparable mean 1987	26	25	19	19	22	22
Abs. mean 1986	26	22	17	17	25	21

Table 4 (continued)

	Sex	Age	Edu- cation	Occu- pation	Resp. or husb. or son in Bundesw.	Abs. mean
Bundeswehr						
Interest in Bundeswehr	-40 ^C	-10 ^a	21 ^C	11 ^a	15 ^C	19
1986:	-31 ^C	-19 ^C	19 ^C	14 ^b	15 ^C	20
Bundesw. good for peace	00	27 ^C	-14 ^C	19 ^C	20 ^C	16
1986:	-05	20 ^C	-21 ^C	09	21 ^C	15
Arms of Bundesw. suffic.	-06	07	-06	-10 ^a	-02	06
1986:	-07 ^a	09	-14 ^C	-05	07 ^a	08
Training and leadership of Bundesw. sufficient	07	22 ^C	-18 ^C	-17 ^C	06	14
1986:	11 ^a	13 ^a	-17 ^C	-11	12 ^b	13
Evaluation of voluntary military service	-14 ^C	34 ^C	-22 ^C	-26 ^{C*}	27 ^C	25
1986:	-10	27 ^C	-24 ^C	-15 ^b	30 ^C	21
Eval. of draft resisters	14 ^C	-29 ^C	15 ^{b†}	27 ^C	-29 ^C	23
1986:	17 ^C	-22 ^C	29 ^C	21 ^C	-21 ^C	22
Manpower problems of Bundeswehr are serious	05	26 ^C	-17 ^C	19 ^C	16 ^C	17
1986:	04	24 ^C	-21 ^C	13 ^a	17 ^C	18
Association of Bundes- wehr with parties	15 ^C	09	-15 ^{C†}	-13 ^b	04	11
1986:	16 ^C	19 ^C	-29 ^C	-22 ^C	12 ^b	20
Abs. mean 1987	13	21	16	18	15	17
Abs. mean 1986	13	19	22	14	17	17
Peace movement						
Estimated popular support	11 ^a	-15 ^b	07	08	11 ^a	10
1986:	13 ^b	-21 ^C	15 ^b	17 ^C	-13 ^b	16
Goals of peace movement ^d	12 ^a	16 ^C	14 ^a	19 ^C	10	14
1986:	17 ^C	22 ^C	16 ^C	15 ^a	16 ^C	17
Abs. mean 1987	12	16	11	14	11	12
Abs. mean 1986	15	22	16	16	15	17
Overall abs. mean 1987	10	18	14	17	12	14
Comp. overall mean 1987	11	19	14	17	13	15
Overall abs. mean 1986	12	18	18	14	14	15

Notes to Table 4

Cell entries are Pearson's contingency coefficients C, i.e.:

$$C = \left(\frac{\chi^2}{\chi^2 + N} \right)^{1/2}$$

corrected for degrees of freedom (so that the maximum value always is 1) by dividing by the theoretical maximum of C, i.e.

$$\left(\frac{\min(\text{rows}, \text{columns}) - 1}{\min(\text{rows}, \text{columns})} \right)^{1/2}$$

They have been multiplied by 100 to avoid the decimal point. Significances reported are those of the corresponding χ^2 values.

By convention, C is positive. However, in order to make the directions of associations visible, signs have been assigned here by assuming variables to be "ordinal". Their "positive" or "upper" ends have been assumed as follows:

Sex: female

Age: older

Education: longer

Occupation: white collar

Respondent or husband or son has been or is in Bundeswehr: yes

Military balance, U.S.-USSR military balance, Nuclear balance, Conventional balance: East superior

Communist threat: high

Feasibility of defense: unlikely

Nuclear deterrence: acceptance

Likelihood of war without nuclear weapons: higher

Relations FRG-USSR: will improve

USSR abuses cooperation: yes

U.S. want military equilibrium: yes

NATO membership of FRG: favor

Withdrawal of U.S. troops: opposed

U.S. troops secure peace: agreement

U.S. troops improve security of FRG: agreement

Benefit from U.S. troops: for FRG

Feasibility of defense without U.S. troops: unlikely

Relations Germans-U.S. troops: good

FRG-French brigade: favor

Keep nuclear weapons or rely on conventional: nuclear

Notes to Table 4 (continued)

International situation and military spending: higher spending

Military spending: higher spending

Behavior if attacked: resist

Interest in Bundeswehr: high

Bundeswehr good for peace: agreement

Arms of Bundeswehr sufficient: disagreement

Training and leadership of Bundeswehr sufficient: agreement

Evaluation of voluntary military service: positive

Evaluation of draft resisters: positive

Manpower problems of Bundeswehr are serious: agreement

Association of Bundeswehr with parties: Bundeswehr independent

Estimated support for peace movement in population: high

a: $p < .05$

b: $p < .01$

c: $p < .001$

d: No direction could be assumed for this variable

*: More than .1 stronger in 1987

#: More than .1 weaker in 1987

ranks fourth ($C = .12$); generally such contact is associated with more favorable views on military defense. The weakest relationship of these opinions exists with sex ($C = .10$); usually women can be seen to be a little more skeptical than men.

If one compares the strength of associations across groups of items, one finds that they are strongest for attitudes on military expenditures and on behavior in case of an attack (the mean absolute C is .18). In this group of questions, relations with all five background variables are about equally strong, whereas in all other groups of items the relations with age and occupation are strongest, and those with sex and experience with the Bundeswehr are weakest. It is also in this group that one finds one of the few really strong relationships documented in Table 4, i.e., between sex and responses to how one would personally behave in case of a military aggression against the Federal Republic. Not surprisingly, males are far more likely than females to say that they would fight or somehow resist.

Questions about the Bundeswehr follow second in the strength of their association with respondents' social background. Within this group two more remarkably strong coefficients occur. One is between sex and interest in matters relating to the Bundeswehr, where we find women (who are more critical of defense matters, as we have seen) substantially less interested ($C = .40$). The second is between age and evaluations of men who voluntarily join the Bundeswehr; here we discern that such evaluations get noticeably better the older respondents are ($C = .34$). In all other five categories of questions, not a single contingency coefficient above .30 can be found. By average strength of associations, their rank order is: attitudes on NATO and U.S. troops (.15), on the national security environment and on the peace movement (both .12), on the superpowers (.10), and, finally, on nuclear weapons and deterrence (.09).

Only a few of the coefficients reported in Table 4 do not conform to the general covariations summarized above, i.e., that men, older respondents, people with less education, blue-collar or white-collar employees, or respondents with experience with the Bundeswehr tend to hold more favorable views toward military defense. Most noteworthy among these "exceptions" are the following observations: better educated respondents, even though they are less likely to concede Eastern military superiority than others in general terms, are *more* prone than others to recognize Warsaw Pact *conventional* superiority. These better educated people also deviate from their otherwise predominant patterns of attitudes in that they are *more* willing than others to fight in case of an aggression against the Federal Republic; the same deviation occurs among self-employed respondents and public servants. Regarding interest in matters concerning the Bundeswehr, several relations with social background variables are reversed against the predominant patterns. Those who have experience with the Bundeswehr are more interested and are generally more favorably inclined toward security issues; women are much less interested than men and are less favorable in their views. But for the other three background variables we find that those groups of respondents with stronger pro-defense, etc., opinions tend to be less interested in these issues, and vice versa. Finally, women depart from their otherwise less positive attitudes toward the Bundeswehr by being more willing than men to describe it as independent from West German political parties.

For those questions that have been asked both in 1986 and in 1987, Table 4 shows that associations of national security opinions with social background variables have been rather *small*, but quite *stable*. The average absolute val-

ues of C in both years look very similar, regardless of whether one averages by survey question or by background variable. Changes of sign from one year to the next have occurred only for insignificant coefficients. Only in nine cases does the difference between 1987 and 1986 exceed .10. Five of these cases involve education, where once there was an increase of more than .10, and four coefficients decreased by more than that amount, which leaves the impression that a slight decline of the importance of education has been the major change between these two years in terms of how national security attitudes were associated with social background variables.

In summary, we can say that these opinions in the Federal Republic do in fact differ between socially defined groups, and that many of these associations correspond to widespread notions, particularly those involving age and education. We can also say that these covariations are quite stable, at least in the short run. However, apart from a few exceptions, their magnitude is not very impressive, even for age. It has been demonstrated various times that national security attitudes in West Germany, of all commonly used social characteristics, covary most strongly with age (Rattinger 1985, 1987; Rattinger and Heinlein 1986). The same finding has emerged here. But the moderate strength of these relationships does not support the notion that generational succession is the most important factor for aligning these opinions in the Federal Republic, at least not at the level of the mass public (for a contrary view see Szabo 1983, 1984).

3.2. Covariation with partisan preference

Turning now to the connection between security-related attitudes and partisan preferences (Table 5, last column), we discern the familiar fact that these are *much* stronger, with an absolute average contingency coefficient of .34. Without exception, these coefficients are significantly different from zero, and, without exception, their signs are as one would predict from the simple argument that views on military security get less and less favorable as one travels across the political spectrum from "right" to "left," which in the West German case means from the CDU/CSU via the FDP and the SPD to the Green party.

With an average absolute C of .47, attitudes on NATO and U.S. troops deployed in the Federal Republic covary most strongly with party preferences. Such associations are highest with respondents' positions on whether these

forces should be withdrawn, and on whether or not their deployment makes peace more secure. Opinions on nuclear weapons and deterrence rank second in partisan polarization. Evaluations of military expenditures and of the Bundeswehr come next (both with mean absolute C of .33). The strongest partisan disagreements here occur about the size of the West German defense budget, the evaluation of men who voluntarily serve in the armed forces, and about whether or not the existence of the Bundeswehr makes peace more secure. Opinions about the superpowers are polarized by party below average (mean absolute C of .29), but the trustworthiness of the Soviet Union is judged quite differently by the various partisan groups. Perceptions of the national security environment and attitudes toward the peace movement are least dissimilar between groups of partisans (with mean absolute C of .21 and .20, respectively). Within the first group of survey questions the strongest partisan disagreement exists over the extent of a communist threat for the Federal Republic (C = .36).

Changes between 1986 and 1987 are minimal; for comparable items the average absolute contingency coefficient was higher in 1987 than in 1986 by .02. Only for three variables does the difference of C between these two years exceed .10: polarization over whether U.S. forces in Europe make peace more or less secure and of interest in the Bundeswehr and related matters has increased more than this amount, and it has fallen by more than .10 over whether or not the Bundeswehr has a special affiliation with one of the West German parties.

3.3. Covariation among attitudes on security

The final step of this analysis is to look at some interrelations among national security attitudes. As the data is very limited here, no complete matrix of covariations can be presented, and nothing even resembling a standard factor analysis can be performed. Only crosstabulations of all survey questions with three selected items were available: the extent of communist threat, positions on U.S. withdrawal, and opinions about the effects of the existence of the Bundeswehr for peace. But even with this limited set of data some important observations can be recorded (Table 5, first four columns).

In the average, the results for the 1987 survey questions are as strongly associated with these three items as with partisan sympathies (mean absolute C of .34). The highest contingency coefficients again occur in the group of

Table 5: Associations among national security attitudes, and between national security attitudes and party preference, 1987 and 1986

	Comm. threat	U.S. withdr.	Peace more secure through Bundesw.	Abs. mean col. 1-3 ^e	Party
National security environment					
Military balance	29 ^C	21 ^C	24 ^C	25	19 ^C
1986:	34 ^C	29 ^C	20 ^C	28	23 ^C
U.S.-USSR military balance	23 ^C	09 ^{a†}	17 ^C	16	21 ^C
1986:	26 ^C	20 ^C	16 ^C	21	15 ^C
Nuclear balance	30 ^C	23 ^C	28 ^C	27	20 ^C
Conventional balance	27 ^C	19 ^C	23 ^C	23	17 ^C
Communist threat	100 ^C	33 ^C	18 ^C	26	36 ^C
1986:	100 ^C	29 ^C	27 ^C	28	35 ^C
Feasibility of defense	26 ^C	03	00	10	13 ^b
1986:	28 ^C	00	03	10	09 ^a
Abs. mean 1987 ^e	27	18	18	21	21
Comparable mean 1987 ^e	26	17	15	19	22
Abs. mean 1986 ^e	29	20	17	22	21
Nuclear weapons and deterrence					
Nuclear deterrence	39 ^{C*}	40 ^C	34 ^C	38	39 ^C
1986:	27 ^C	35 ^C	36 ^C	33	34 ^C
Likelihood of war without nuclear weapons	47 ^C	41 ^C	20 ^C	36	39 ^C
Abs. mean 1987	43	41	27	37	39
Superpowers					
Relations FRG-USSR	-34 ^{C*}	-14 ^C	-13 ^C	20	-20 ^C
1986:	-19 ^C	-18 ^C	-22 ^C	20	-14 ^b
USSR abuses cooperation	61 ^C	28 ^C	16 ^C	35	38 ^C
1986:	54 ^C	26 ^C	21 ^C	34	44 ^C
U.S. want milit. equilibrium	21 ^C	43 ^C	41 ^C	35	30 ^C
1986:	25 ^C	48 ^C	34 ^C	36	32 ^C
Abs. mean 1987	39	28	23	30	29
Abs. mean 1986	33	31	26	30	30

Table 5 (continued)

	Comm. threat	U.S. withdr.	Peace more secure through Bundesw.	Abs. mean col. 1-3 ^e	Party

NATO and U.S. troops					
NATO membership of FRG	25 ^C	71 ^C	71 ^C	56	50 ^C
1986:	31 ^C	66 ^C	71 ^C	56	49 ^C
Withdrawal of U.S. troops	34 ^C	100 ^C	58 ^C	46	56 ^C
1986:	28 ^C	100 ^C	53 ^C	41	48 ^C
U.S. troops secure peace	31 ^C	80 ^C	69 ^C	60	60 ^{C*}
1986:	33 ^C	76 ^C	64 ^C	58	49 ^C
U.S. troops improve security of FRG	39 ^C	85 ^C	70 ^C	65	52 ^C
1986:	41 ^C	83 ^C	73 ^C	66	50 ^C
Benefit from U.S. troops	32 ^C	80 ^C	61 ^C	58	44 ^C
1986:	30 ^C	81 ^C	60 ^C	57	42 ^C
Defense without U.S. troops	24 ^C	49 ^C	22 ^C	32	36 ^C
1986:	31 ^C	49 ^C	26 ^C	35	29 ^C
Relations Germans-U.S. troops	26 ^C	49 ^C	43 ^{C*}	39	37 ^C
1986:	22 ^C	53 ^C	32 ^C	36	29 ^C
FRG-French brigade	15 ^C	33 ^C	21 ^C	23	44 ^C
Abs. mean 1987 ^e	28	64	52	47	47
Comparable mean 1987 ^e	30	69	56	51	47
Abs. mean 1986 ^e	31	68	54	50	42

Military expenditures and behavior in case of attack					
Keep nuclear weapons or rely on conventional	26 ^C	26 ^C	17 ^C	23	27 ^C
International situation and military spending	50 ^{C*}	58 ^{C*}	43 ^C	50	38 ^C
1986:	38 ^C	47 ^C	40 ^C	42	44 ^C
Military spending	41 ^C	62 ^C	58 ^C	54	44 ^C
1986:	35 ^C	56 ^C	63 ^C	51	46 ^C
Behavior if attacked	27 ^C	40 ^{C*}	28 ^C	32	23 ^C
1986:	19 ^C	26 ^C	25 ^C	23	31 ^C
Abs. mean 1987	36	47	37	40	33
Comparable mean 1987	39	54	44	45	35
Abs. mean 1986	31	43	43	39	40

Table 5 (continued)

	Comm. threat	U.S. withdr.	Peace more secure through Bundesw.	Abs. mean col. 1-3 ^e	Party
<hr/>					
Bundeswehr					
Interest in Bundeswehr	25 ^{C*}	13 ^C	13 ^C	17	27 ^{C*}
1986:	14 ^C	15 ^C	14 ^C	14	11 ^a
Bundeswehr good for peace	17 ^C	58 ^C	100 ^C	38	47 ^C
1986:	26 ^C	54 ^C	100 ^C	40	52 ^C
Arms of Bundesw. sufficient	38 ^C	17 ^C	12 ^C	22	15 ^C
1986:	38 ^C	12 ^C	10 ^b	20	12 ^b
Training and leadership of Bundeswehr sufficient	-11 ^a	19 ^{C#}	27 ^C	19	19 ^C
1986:	-16 ^C	41 ^C	37 ^C	31	28 ^C
Evaluat. of military service	32 ^C	63 ^{C*}	58 ^C	51	51 ^C
1986:	28 ^C	49 ^C	51 ^C	43	45 ^C
Evaluat. of draft resisters	-31 ^C	-41 ^C	-45 ^C	39	-42 ^C
1986:	-30 ^C	-40 ^C	-40 ^C	37	-36 ^C
Manpower problems of Bundeswehr are serious	38 ^C	65 ^C	48 ^C	50	44 ^C
1986:	37 ^C	62 ^C	50 ^C	50	43 ^C
Association of Bundeswehr with parties	09	30 ^C	24 ^{C#}	21	21 ^{C#}
1986:	17 ^C	35 ^C	38 ^C	30	33 ^C
Abs. mean 1987 ^e	25	38	32	32	33
Abs. mean 1986 ^e	26	39	34	33	33
<hr/>					
Peace movement					
Estimated popular support	-18 ^C	-17 ^C	-18 ^C	18	-19 ^C
1986:	-15 ^C	-26 ^C	-20 ^C	20	-24 ^C
Goals of peace movement ^d	27 ^C	16 ^C	11 ^a	18	21 ^a
1986:	24 ^C	21 ^C	09 ^a	18	28 ^C
Abs. mean 1987	23	17	15	18	20
Abs. mean 1986	20	24	15	19	26
<hr/>					
Overall abs. mean 1987 ^e	30	39	33	34	34
Comp. overall mean 1987 ^e	30	41	35	35	35
Overall abs. mean 1986 ^e	28	41	35	35	33
<hr/>					

Notes to Table 5

Cell entries are defined as in Table 4. CDU/CSU-voters have been assumed to be at the "positive" or "upper" end of partisanship.

a to d: as for Table 4

e: "Main diagonal" associations ($C=100$) are excluded from means

*: More than .1 stronger in 1987

#: More than .1 weaker in 1987

questions about NATO and U.S. troops (.47 average). Not surprisingly, questions about West German membership in NATO, whether U.S. forces in Europe make peace more secure, whether they improve the security of the Federal Republic, and about who benefits from their presence, all are particularly strongly related to positions on the withdrawal of these forces (C -values over .70). Moreover, answers to these four questions also are strongly associated with judgments on whether or not the Bundeswehr makes peace more secure (C -values above .60). Opinions about the military budget and statements about respondents' behavior if the Federal Republic came under attack are also quite strongly related to attitudes toward these three items, with an average C of .40. Several coefficients exceed .50, and the covariation is highest with positions about U.S. withdrawal.

Next in intensity of relations with these three questions comes the group of items on nuclear weapons and deterrence (.37 average). Estimates about the likelihood of war without nuclear weapons are particularly strongly related to judgments about the extent of a communist threat ($C=.47$). With a mean absolute C of .32, attitudes toward the Bundeswehr are roughly average in terms of being associated with other items. The highest coefficients (all above .50) here occur between evaluations of voluntary military service and judgments of whether or not the Bundeswehr makes peace more secure, and between attitudes on the withdrawal of U.S. forces, on the one hand, and evaluations of the Bundeswehr, of its manpower problems, and of voluntary military service, on the other hand. Attitudes toward the superpowers, perceptions of the national security environment, and evaluations of the peace movement are related to these three items on communist threat, U.S. forces, and the Bundeswehr least strongly (average absolute C of .30, .21, and .18, respectively). The strongest single covariations here are between perception of communist threat and suspicion of Soviet motives (.61), between opinions

about U.S. withdrawal and suspicion of American motives (.43), between perception of communist threat and opinions about U.S. withdrawal (.33), and between perceptions of the nuclear balance and of communist threat (.30).

Again there are no major changes in these structures of attitudes between 1986 and 1987, as far as comparable data are available. Eight coefficients have grown by more than .10, and three have fallen by more than that amount between these two years. All four such changes involving perceptions of communist threat are upward, and the mean absolute covariation of this variable with all repeated survey questions has increased from .28 to .30, so that one could speculate that the role of such perceptions in shaping national security attitudes has become a *little* more important.

These findings, limited as they are, need to be interpreted in at least two interrelated respects: first, what do they tell us about any underlying attitudinal structure that can explain the responses to individual survey questions, and, second, do they reflect a high degree of attitudinal constraint in the mass public's views on these issues? Both of these questions cannot be answered quite satisfactorily, due to the limitations of the available data, so that only some preliminary speculations can be offered.

As to the first point, it is useful to conceive of the survey items, which in Tables 4 and 5 have been organized according to the objects of opinions, as being representative of a few hierarchically interrelated more general concepts (see Hurwitz and Peffley 1987, for an excellent analysis along these lines). Figure 13 represents such an attempt for the 1987 data. The attitudes included in this figure fall into four broad categories: perceptions of the security environment of the Federal Republic and of the superpowers (judgments about the military balance and about communist threat, suspicion of Soviet and trust in U.S. intentions); attitudes on deterrence and defense as very general approaches to provide security; evaluations of the concrete "organizational" implementation of deterrence and defense (NATO, the Bundeswehr, and the U.S. military presence); and opinions about the operational implications of this organizational setup (military service and defense expenditures). The criterion for selecting individual survey items for inclusion in this diagram is whether they stand in a particularly strong relationship with other items, or whether there is a noteworthy absence of associations.

The assumption in setting up this hierarchy, of course, is that of a certain degree of causal dependence as one proceeds across its levels. Opinions about the operational consequences of specific security arrangements are expected to be influenced by the evaluations of these arrangements themselves. These evaluations, in turn, are considered to be affected by more abstract attitudes on deterrence and defense and by perceptions of the security environment. The hierarchical ordering in Figure 13 suggests that attitudes on deterrence and defense are viewed as also being dependent upon perceptions of the security environment, so that the effect of the latter on evaluations of security arrangements would be both direct and indirect. One could argue otherwise, of course, that perceptions of the security environment are not antecedents of attitudes on deterrence and defense, but that both are independent predictors of evaluations of concrete security arrangements, at the same level in a causal hierarchy. Which view is more correct evidently is an empirical question.

Unfortunately, this question cannot be decided on the basis of a rigorous causal analysis, as Figure 13 only represents bivariate covariations (from Table 5). Similarly, this grouping together of items into broader concepts does not reflect the results of any empirical data analysis, such as factor analysis, but is solely derived from theoretical considerations about how different bundles of security opinions might be related to each other. In spite of these shortcomings, a number of interesting observations can be made in Figure 13 that can serve as hypotheses for future and more rigorous studies.

First, within the items grouped under perceptions of the security environment, it is striking that perceptions of communist threat are only weakly related to judgments about the East-West military balance, but covary strongly with suspicions of Soviet intentions. General images of the Soviet Union appear to be much more important than the military balance for shaping threat perceptions - which implies that even if one would succeed in convincing a much higher proportion of the West German population of Eastern superiority this would not necessarily raise threat perceptions a great deal. Even though we are dealing with cross-sectional data here, not with longitudinal data, it appears plausible that this decoupling of perceptions of threat and of the military balance has allowed the sense of a communist threat to decline considerably as distrust of Soviet intentions has fallen since the ascent of the new Soviet leadership, even though the military balance definitely has not shifted in favor of the West over these years.

The second important observation is that at the level of concrete security arrangements, attitudes on continuing NATO membership of the Federal Republic, on the presence of U.S. troops, and on the utility of the Bundeswehr covary quite strongly. People who regard favorably the role of the Bundeswehr for the preservation of peace also tend to endorse membership in NATO and to oppose withdrawal of U.S. forces. There is no logical necessity for this pattern, as within a concept of "armed neutrality" people could regard the Bundeswehr as useful, but at the same time disapprove of belonging to NATO and of the American military presence. Empirically, however, this view is a rare exception: Only three percent of those who agree that the existence of the Bundeswehr makes peace more secure would like to see West Germany's NATO membership terminated, and only 15 percent of these respondents would prefer to see U.S. forces withdrawn. In factor analytic terms it therefore appears as if empirically there is only one Bundeswehr *and* Western alliance factor at work in shaping responses to single opinion items, rather than two separate factors, a Bundeswehr and national defense dimension, and a NATO and alliance with the U.S. dimension. Predominantly the Bundeswehr is either endorsed as contributing to peace *within* the alliance framework, or it is rejected *together* with this framework.

Whereas these first two findings were on "horizontal" consistency - i.e., on items assumed to fall under one and the same broader concept - the next two observations relate to "vertical" consistency - i.e., to the covariations between items representing different levels in this hierarchy. Here we have to note, first, that perceptions of the security environment and attitudes on deterrence and defense have only moderate effects on the positions people take on the organizational arrangements to provide military security for the Federal Republic, and that attitudes on deterrence and defense also are only moderately influenced by perceptions of the security environment. Our data show only weak evidence for the expectation that the Bundeswehr and the alliance with the U.S. within NATO would be endorsed more strongly as people perceive a communist threat and accept deterrence and military defense as abstract foundations of security. The associations we find all are in the *direction* predicted by such an expectation, to be sure, but their *strength* is not impressive. The strongest link of all (.43) exists between trust in U.S. intentions and opposition to withdrawal of American troops.

We therefore have to conceive of support for the Bundeswehr and the alliance as, to a considerable degree, independent or decoupled from perceptions of the security environment (the average of pertinent C coefficients in

Figure 13 is .30), as well as from general attitudes on deterrence and defense, with the latter having a somewhat stronger effect (average C of .36). Similarly, these attitudes on deterrence and defense are not very strongly shaped by threat perceptions (average C of .33). In other words, sizeable proportions of the West German population do not hold positive views on deterrence and military defense *because* of their perception of communist threat, and do not agree with the country's security arrangements *because* of perception of threat and abstract endorsement of deterrence and defense. Judgments that the Bundeswehr contributes toward peace, and that NATO membership and the presence of American forces should be maintained, for many people, do not seem to require preceding threat perceptions and general beliefs in deterrence and defense. Even though one has to be careful with such interpretations, because we are analyzing cross-sectional data, one could suspect that this absence of stronger vertical linkages has been a very important factor in preventing the strong decline of suspicion of the Soviet Union and of perceptions of communist threat over the past years (Figures 3 and 6) from translating into a similarly marked drop of support for the Bundeswehr or for the Western alliance (Figures 9 and 12). It should be noted that this finding of an only moderate effect of threat perceptions on support for institutional security arrangements does not contradict earlier results: when the crosstabulation of threat perceptions with judgments about the importance of the Bundeswehr from the 1979 survey in this series (Rattinger 1985, Table 4.29) is recomputed into the adjusted C contingency coefficient used here to measure covariations, a value of .29 is obtained, which is of the same order of magnitude as reported for 1986 and 1987 in Table 5.

The second set of "vertical" associations in Figure 13 link judgments about concrete security arrangements for the Federal Republic to opinions on specific implications of these arrangements, i.e., on military service and defense outlays. Not surprisingly, these associations are quite strong (average C of .60). Respondents who feel that the Bundeswehr contributes to making peace more secure and wish American troops to stay in West Germany are far more likely than others to evaluate service in the military more positively and to be less skeptical about military expenditures. That these relationships are not even stronger, however, is also not surprising. Support for a policy does not *necessarily* imply support for the spending it involves or readiness for personal behavior in accordance with this policy. Many people *do* want a variety of societal goals to be realized, but they *do not* want government to spend a lot of "their" money on them. This is true for many policy arenas, like social security, environmental protection, or foreign aid, and there is no reason why it should be different for defense matters. But nevertheless we

observe this second "instrumental" aspect of vertical attitude constraint or consistency to be much stronger than the first one. Perceptions of the security environment and general attitudes on deterrence and defense do not assist a great deal in predicting whether people will be in favor of the Bundeswehr and of NATO. But if they are, the likelihood that they also support the specific consequences of these security arrangements is quite high, and vice versa.

These findings also facilitate a partial answer to the second question posed above for the degree of attitudinal constraint - which is a little like requesting a determination whether a glass of water is half full or half empty, of course. We have seen (in Table 5 and Figure 13) some strong or even very strong indications of attitude constraint. However, many of these have occurred when the two survey items were substantively very close together, or almost even multiple measurements (e.g., should U.S. forces be withdrawn, and do they enhance West German security). In many *other* instances there is an ominous *lack* of consistency: perception of a communist threat has very little to do with perceptions of the military balance, endorsement of the Bundeswehr and of NATO membership is only weakly related to threat perception, judgments about whether the Federal Republic could be defended without U.S. troops covary only moderately with positions on the withdrawal of these forces, etc. Often respondents' positions on one isolated question could be predicted more reliably from their party preference than from their views on another question. This has repeatedly been documented and explained before (see, e.g., Rattinger 1985). The data used for this study so far do not suggest that attitude constraint of defense opinions in the West German mass public has become any stronger in the late than in the early 1980s, all public debate over these issues notwithstanding. The crucial follow-on questions then are, of course, whether, how and why respondents are differentiated in terms of the existence of reasonably coherent views on these matters. It is highly plausible to suspect that behind the aggregate picture of some moderate but substantively uneven attitude consistency that has been described here, we will find a continuum from people with almost random responses to those with very elaborate opinions. The groups along this continuum should be clearly identifiable by their substantive views and by the extent to which they belong to the attentive "issue public" (for a recent analysis of information levels about security issues see Graham 1988). But without access to the complete original data sets of these (and other) studies, this required differentiation cannot be performed, and speculation can be endless.

4. Conclusion

Public opinion and appeals directed at public opinion have played a major role in the defense debate of the early 1980s in West Germany, but the structure and dynamics of security-related mass attitudes still are far from being fully understood. In spite of its methodological limitations, this contribution has been able to clearly confirm several earlier results and to yield some novel findings on trends, correlates, and the structure of defense opinions in the Federal Republic.

As to trends, the longitudinal perspective adopted in the first part of the article demonstrates that - contrary to contemporary allegations - really impressive changes in the distributions of mass opinions have not occurred during the INF deployment debate, and not in attitudes on the framework of Western defense, but rather in evaluations of the Soviet Union after the most recent reshuffling of its leadership. In comparison to this reorientation, all the shifts in marginal opinion distributions about NATO or the U.S. that were assigned highest significance in the early 1980s appear as ridiculously small. This erosion of suspicion of Soviet intentions has made the threat from the East appear much smaller than previously. The Soviet Union is no longer regarded in Cold War terms as an evil empire. By many West Germans it has for quite some time now been seen as a very mighty opponent, but without posing an immediate military threat. The developments in the Soviet Union over the past years have brought its remaining "negatives" down substantially; it is evaluated as a far more trustworthy and much less intrinsically mischievous adversary. It seems as if it would take major spectacular events to reverse this.

This work confirms what has been reported earlier about how security-related opinions in West Germany are structured according to the social characteristics and partisan preferences of respondents. Age and, to a lesser extent, education do play a role in differentiating attitude patterns, but this is not an overriding role. Generational replacement explanations retain a certain relevance, but they are counteracted by life-cycle effects and overwhelmed by the strong polarization of these opinions along partisan lines. Generational replacement can account for the quite massive changes in the image of the Soviet Union only to a very small degree. Even the slight increase of skepticism over NATO, the Bundeswehr, and the presence of American forces in the course of the 1980s can better be explained by the gradual expansion of Green sympathizers (which is far from having involved *only* younger voters, of course) than by the influx of new cohorts into the

electorate. Party preference thus remains the one single variable along which security opinions are most visibly aligned, but there are some indications in the data presented here that this polarization is about to decline. If these indications should in fact be borne out by further developments, this will probably be due to reduced salience of the issues after the INF Treaty and to a corresponding tendency of the parties to move somewhat closer with their positions in the post-INF world.

Regarding the interrelations and structure of West German security opinions, this analysis has shown that a variety of attitudinal dimensions must be at work in shaping survey responses, and that there are striking examples of both the existence and the absence of attitude constraints. The most significant finding here is that endorsement of the Bundeswehr and of the Western alliance falls together in one joint "package," but that the acceptance of this "package" of security arrangements is only weakly related to threat perceptions. This can explain why since the change in the Soviet leadership the image of the Soviet Union could improve so greatly, and the sense of a communist threat could fall so much as a consequence, without any significant repercussions for the popular willingness to accept long-established security arrangements. There are at least two explanations for this failure of support for NATO, the U.S. military presence, and the Bundeswehr to follow perceptions of threat on their downward course: First, judgments on institutional security arrangements could in fact already have been largely decoupled from evaluations of threat for quite some time, because they have come to be regarded as normal elements of an insurance policy in a world that is neither necessarily benign nor fully predictable. Even though the threat might have receded, this insurance policy might be perceived to have worked, and since things have been done that way for quite some time now, it might make sense to people to leave them that way, just in case. An alternative explanation would be that there is a longer time-lag between waning perceptions of threat and a possible subsequent erosion of support for the conventional security framework, so that the long-term consequences of the improving image of the Soviet Union are yet to come. With the structural analysis in this contribution restricted to one cross-section, it is impossible here to decide once and for all which is the superior explanation. However, in view of the comparative data from the late 1970s that were reported earlier, this author would somewhat lean toward the first interpretation if forced to risk a prediction. Nevertheless, the confrontation of these rival explanations underlines the utility of further pursuing the approach taken here - i.e., to combine longitudinal with cross-sectional perspectives - and leaves

us with an intriguing question for the future. Whatever the final answer will be, the political implications should not be underestimated.

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Appendix 1: The surveys

In 1962 the Federal Ministry of Defense initiated an annual series of major opinion polls on national security issues, known as the "Verteidigungsklima" surveys. In later years their name was changed to "Meinungsbild zur wehrpolitischen Lage." For about the past two decades, these polls have always been conducted in August of each year. Close to 2,000 (personal) interviews of about 25 minutes duration are usually realized. In most years the surveys have not been designed as single-sample and single-theme studies, but have been included in two separate multi-theme (omnibus) polls of about one-hour duration, and with sample-sizes of around 1,000. EMNID (Bielefeld) has been responsible for these surveys from the outset. Many questions have received no or very little change since the series was begun. The assistance of the Ministry in making the complete reports for these studies available is greatly appreciated.

Appendix 2: Question wording

Questions appear here in the order they were asked.

Estimated support for peace movement in population: "Let us now talk about the peace movement. Leaving aside your own position towards the peace movement, what do you think, how many percent of the population support the peace movement?"

Goals of peace movement: "Here on this list there are some possible goals of the peace movement. What do you think is the main goal of the peace movement?"

List: Neutral status for the Federal Republic, unilateral disarmament of the West, balanced

arms control agreement between East and West, reduction of nuclear intermediate-range missiles in the Federal Republic, protection of the environment, protection against cuts in available social programs.

FRG-French brigade: "A few weeks ago parts of the Federal Government have come up with the idea to create a joint military unit (brigade) among the Bundeswehr and the French army. If you assume that such a brigade, in which German as well as French soldiers would serve, would be created, would you rather welcome or reject this?"

Manpower problems of Bundeswehr are serious: "In the foreseeable future it could be that the Bundeswehr will not be able to recruit as many men as necessary, due to declining birth rates, and that the Bundeswehr therefore will no longer be able to meet its commitments to NATO. Do you think this is very serious, serious, not so serious, or not at all serious?"

Likelihood of war without nuclear weapons: "Assume there were no nuclear weapons any more in East and West, only conventional weapons were left. Do you believe that a war in Europe would be more likely then, because the threat with nuclear weapons (nuclear deterrence) would be gone, or would it not be more likely?"

Military balance: "What do you believe, which bloc is presently militarily superior, NATO or the Eastern bloc (Warsaw Pact)?"

Nuclear balance: "And what do you think is the situation for nuclear weapons? Which military bloc do you believe is stronger in nuclear weapons?"

Conventional balance: "How is this constellation for conventional weapons? Which alliance do you believe has the stronger conventional armaments?"

Keep nuclear weapons or rely on conventional: "Increasing conventional weapons could compensate for abolishing nuclear weapons. This would probably mean higher costs. Which solution would you rather accept to guarantee our security: Abolishing nuclear weapons and increasing costs for expanding conventional armaments, or retaining the financial burden and nuclear weapons?"

NATO membership of FRG: "Frequently there are discussions in the Federal Republic about the Alliance. What do you think, should we continue as member of NATO, do you think it would be better to leave NATO, or what else do you think?"

U.S.-USSR military balance: "Are the armed forces of the U.S. - all in all - equally strong as those of the Russians, are they stronger than those of the Russians, or weaker?"

Feasibility of defense: "Assuming the Russians and the people's army of the GDR attack us, do you believe that NATO, including the Bundeswehr, is strong enough to protect us effectively, or do you believe that the Russians would overwhelm us?"

Communist threat: "Do you believe that the communist threat is very high, high, not that high, or is it not to be taken seriously?"

Behavior if attacked: "How would you behave in case of an armed attack on the Federal Republic? Would you fight, would you, if you have no military training, somehow fight and resist, or would you reject both?"

International situation and military spending: "Three men talk about the situation of our national security and about whether spending for the Bundeswehr should be changed. Their opinions are on this list. Which opinion do you think is most correct?"

List: The first says: I think the situation is dangerous, spending for the Bundeswehr should be increased. The second says: We have to spend as much for the Bundeswehr as other countries, I mean as much as those in West and East spend per capita on their defense. The third says: I think that in the present situation we can afford certain savings in spending for the Bundeswehr.

Military spending: "Do you think that the Federal Republic spends far too much, too much, about right, too little, or far too little on its defense?"

Arms of Bundeswehr sufficient: "Are the armaments of the Bundeswehr sufficiently strong for its objectives, or are its armaments too weak?"

Training and leadership of Bundeswehr sufficient: "And what do you think about training and leadership in the Bundeswehr? Are they good, sufficient, lacking, or insufficient?"

Association of Bundeswehr with parties: "In your opinion, is there a party among those represented in the Bundestag with which the Bundeswehr has better relations than with others, and which party is this? Or do you think that the Bundeswehr is neutral in terms of partisan politics?"

Bundeswehr good for peace: "Do you believe that the existence of the Bundeswehr is an obstacle for effective detente with the East, and thus rather a danger for peace, or do you believe that the existence of the Bundeswehr makes peace more secure?"

Relations FRG-USSR: "Will our relations with the Soviet Union rather improve in the nearer future, will they remain unchanged, or will they rather deteriorate?"

Relations Germans-U.S. troops: "How would you generally describe the relations between the Americans stationed here and German citizens, are they very good, good, in between, or bad?"

U.S. troops secure peace: "And does the fact that we have American soldiers in the Federal Republic improve the stability of peace, or is peace endangered by the presence of American soldiers?"

U.S. troops improve security of FRG: "What do you think, is the presence of American troops in the Federal Republic indispensable for our security, important, of low importance, unimportant, or hazardous?"

Benefit from American troops: "Who benefits most from the presence of American troops in the Federal Republic, mainly the Americans themselves, mainly ourselves, both equally, or nobody?"

Withdrawal of U.S. troops: "All in all, would you be in favor of withdrawal or partial withdrawal of the Americans from the Federal Republic, or would you oppose an American withdrawal?"

Feasibility of defense without U.S. troops: "Do you believe that the Federal Republic would be strong enough, after an American withdrawal, to protect us effectively, together with the European troops of NATO, against a surprise attack, or do you believe that the troops of the Eastern bloc would overwhelm us?"

USSR abuses cooperation: "Some people say that Moscow abuses our willingness to cooperate in order to extend its power. Others say that the Soviet Union is serious about detente. With which view would you agree?"

U.S. want military equilibrium: "What do you think, what do the USA want, a military equilibrium with the Soviet Union, superiority over the Soviet Union, or are the USA also ready to accept military inferiority?"

Nuclear deterrence: "Two men talk about nuclear armaments in Europe. With which of these two opinions do you agree more?"

List: First opinion: Since three decades nuclear weapons have been stationed in Europe, East and West. Since then we have been living on a powder-keg here. The use of nuclear weapons between East and West would be so terrible that one should immediately abolish nuclear weapons. Second opinion: Precisely because one knows how terrible the use of nuclear

weapons would be they have never been used in the past three decades. And because both sides are so afraid of their use, there also have been no major military conflicts between East and West. Without deterrence by nuclear weapons the danger of conventional war in Europe would be much higher.

Interest in Bundeswehr: "Are you generally rather interested in the Bundeswehr and in topics and problems concerning the Bundeswehr, or are you rather not interested?"

Evaluation of voluntary military service: "Would you please show on this scale (from 1 to 10) how positive (1) or negative (10) you evaluate a man who voluntarily has enlisted for service in the Bundeswehr?"

Evaluation of draft resisters: "Would you please also use this scale to show how positive or negative you evaluate a man who refuses to serve as a conscript?"