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4 The Federal Republic of Germany: Much Ado About (Almost) Nothing

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Introduction

Complaints that West German foreign policy in general and national security policy in particular have more often than not taken place within a vacuum of societal attention, interest, information, and discussion are as old as the Federal Republic itself. Compared to the United States, it has indeed been difficult to identify, on the *elite level*, a national strategic community extending beyond the professional military, a few selected decision makers, and journalists who permanently and competently would have scrutinized ongoing security issues, from weapons procurement to Alliance strategy, with visible feedbacks into the decision process and with enlightening and mobilizing functions for the general public. This abstinence can be explained by the history of the FRG's defense contribution, by its position within the Western Alliance, and by the initial preoccupation of its political elites with economic growth and the division of Germany, but explanation obviously does not get rid of what is being explained.

Involvement of the *general public* in foreign policy and security issues has been seemingly unpredictable, paradoxical, and inconsistent. Sudden surges of attention to specific problems have been paralleled or followed by long lulls of concern with other issues. Rearmament and a possible nuclear role for the FRG were widely debated in the 1950s, but dramatic shifts in the superpower military balance and in NATO strategy were largely ignored in the 1960s. The new *Ostpolitik* after 1969 received considerable emotional support—quite unlike simultaneous arms control

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efforts like MFR and SALT, components of an American "Ostpolitik" that was a precondition for the German efforts to promote détente.

However, behind these "hiccups" of public opinion one can discern systematic patterns. For all practical purposes, national security and foreign affairs are fairly remote from most people's everyday knowledge, experience, and concerns. In view of the low personal salience of the issue area, people lack the incentives to collect, store, and analyze systematically information related to these areas. Under these conditions a temporary mobilization or polarization of public opinion over issues of national security will, almost invariably, be characterized by a series of distinctive features. First, it will focus on general, rather than on specific or technical, problems since the cognitive requirements for a sophisticated debate over details are lacking. Second, it takes highly motivated and knowledgeable minority groups of "opinion leaders" to catalyze mobilization. Third, as catalyzing a public discussion and bringing issues from the periphery of public opinion to the center of the political debate does not dramatically increase the general public's information or information-seeking behavior, public responses will be dominated by emotions, sympathies, and antipathies, rather than by well-informed judgment. A corollary is, of course, that which does not lend itself to emotional treatment never comes to the forefront of public opinion on foreign affairs and defense.

If these general notions of the role of international politics in public opinion are correct, then the German experience well into the late 1970s is not at all unusual, but conforms to expectations as well as to what we have seen in other nations. Judging from the presentation in the media, however, something dramatic has happened to the West German public's attitudes toward national security within the last few years. It is hard to give a specific date for this alleged change. The heat and style of discussions over the "immoral neutron bomb" certainly mark quite a departure from times when nuclear warheads could be deployed in the FRG or withdrawn without much public attention. Then came, of course, NATO's December 1979 decision that created the specter of new nuclear missiles in Europe for many residents of the continent. Thereafter, many observers and decision makers, European and particularly American, have expressed considerable concern over the development of public sentiments that they see as moving toward pacifism and neutralism, toward a potentially dangerous erosion of mass support for the Western Alliance in general and for nuclear deterrence and related military measures in particular. This concern carries with it deep implications regarding the process of legitimizing defense and military strategy in Western democracies. At the same time, it addresses the very practical necessity of designing and pursuing defense and security policies that promise to be effective according to established military and strategic criteria, while simultaneously taking into account new realities of the social context surrounding national security—provided there are such "new realities."

This precisely is the point where the analytic effort of this paper will be

focused. There is ample reason to doubt that we have a comprehensive and adequate understanding of the scope and extent of the alleged dramatic changes in West German public opinion. There can be no doubt that within small, but very active and vociferous, groups in the FRG a wholesale erosion of support for NATO and for established ways of providing for security has indeed taken place, that the United States, not the USSR, is seen as the primary threat to peace. There also can be no doubt that segments of the media, of the churches, of some unions, and of some parties have served as resounding "echo chambers" for the themes of these activist groups of the peace movement. The campaign for the March 1983 parliamentary elections was even dubbed the "missile campaign," as the appropriate position of the FRG on the implementation of the double-track decision had finally become an issue of partisan dispute. The final outcome of the election, together with some other considerations indicates, however, that the center of gravity of "new realities" in the FRG may thus far have remained confined to less numerous but very outspoken groups of opinion leaders.

The most important of these considerations is that the missile issue is not one that should lend itself easily to the mobilization of mass opinion, since it involves myriads of technological and strategic details. It is not a vital but simple problem like "should we join NATO?" or "should we have better relations with the East?" Because it is so complex, the emotional content of the issue does predominate. If the problem is personally very salient, rejection of new missiles may structure other attitudes; for example, it may lead to a rejection of NATO. If it is not, dissonance between endorsing NATO and disliking missiles may be tolerable or not even be perceived. The crucial dividing line, then, may not be between the ones liking or disliking missiles (most people dislike them, of course), but between the ones for whom this sentiment is highly salient or personally rather unimportant. The key problem before us in attempting to arrive at a comprehensive picture of recent developments and changes in public opinion on national security in the FRG, therefore, is to avoid jumping to far-reaching conclusions on the demise of the foreign policy consensus from some isolated survey results. Before lamenting or advocating drastic action, it is mandatory to try to ascertain to what extent and why decision makers actually have to deal with new realities in the field of defense-related mass political attitudes.

This chapter will do so in three steps. First, a descriptive overview of public opinion on various components of images of the Soviet Union, of national security, of deterrence, and of the Allies will be presented. It will stress developments over time and contain critical discussions of the available survey items, of what one can and cannot conclude from them. Included will also be an analysis of the consistency of attitudes between the various themes within each image cluster. This historical treatment of the trends in public opinion over the 1970s is required in order to put the current situation into perspective. The second main section will consist of

a modest attempt to evaluate the interrelationship of attitudes among the four main themes that have just been mentioned. In the third part, finally, the impact of a few potential determinants of national security attitudes will be examined, including individuals' positions in the social structure and their partisan affiliations.

It is critical to bear in mind certain theoretical and methodological caveats because their practical implications will be encountered again and again below. Unlike Schoessler and Weede in their impressive book on *West German Elite Views on National Security and Foreign Policy Issues* (1978), we will be dealing with mass opinion. What is everyday fare to the political and military elites they have surveyed can easily be enigmatic to most randomly selected individuals. A survey item that taps previous or ongoing reflection on familiar substance in an elite survey may easily overtax the average respondent. Personal salience of, and information on, the subject matter to be surveyed, therefore, are of vital importance for a reasonable assessment of public opinion on security. Unfortunately, both these dimensions are often included when surveys are made or reported. People are asked whether they welcome President Reagan's decision to build Enhanced Radiation Weapons (ERWs), they are not asked before whether they know what ERWs are. People get asked which part of the double-track decision they prefer; they are not asked in advance to what extent they care about which part is implemented. Because of these omissions we know less than we should on the personal importance of various components of security policy and almost nothing on the degree of knowledge or ignorance of these matters in the mass public. Furthermore, reactive measurement applied in this way is bound to produce "nonattitudes," responses that sound and look like judgments, evaluations, expectations but that have not been there before the survey and, most likely, will not be there afterwards. What is worse, if these dimensions are not ascertained in the original interviews, it is extremely hard *post festum* to separate random responses from meaningful ones.

In order to realize the magnitude of these difficulties, it is necessary to have a look at the types of items on security and defense that are typically surveyed. Generally speaking, they fall into five broad classes. First, there are questions designed to measure individuals' evaluations of the importance of political objectives, among them economic or social goals, national security, and many others, for themselves and for the FRG as a whole. General policy objectives tend to belong to the class of so-called valence issues: most people agree they are acceptable ones, that unemployment and inflation should be reduced, economic growth furthered, old-age-pensions guaranteed, the environment should be protected, crime reduced, peace preserved, and national security and independence protected. These issues become politically relevant when people disagree on the rank order of their salience and on which parties, coalitions, or candidates are most capable to implement them.

The second and third groups of defense-related attitudes fall into the

class of "position issues." People disagree on what should be done. The second class of security attitudes deals with second-order goals, with the implications of the usually consensual feeling that national security, survival, and independence are good things. Does this imply defense within NATO, European defense collaboration, purely national defense or deterrence, neutralism, or attempts to substitute military security by negotiations and political détente; or does it require a stronger emphasis on nuclear deterrence as opposed to conventional capabilities? In the third class, we have dispute on the appropriate strategies to realize these second-order goals. Do we need more or less military manpower or weapons; what is the adequate level of defense spending, should there be a draft; do we require particular weapon systems like Pershing IIs or ERWs, what should be the guidelines for arms control negotiations, and so on?

The fourth class of defense opinions contains judgments of facts, present, future, or hypothetical. Who is or is going to be militarily superior? What are the size of the threat and the likelihood of war? What is war going to look like? Who is likely to win? Is the United States going to honor her commitments?

The fifth class, finally, comprises affective orientations toward actors, both internally and internationally; toward the armed forces or the peace movement; toward NATO, the Allies, or the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact countries. Are these actors evaluated as necessary, friendly, reliable, compromising, peaceful, and so on? If other nations are the objects of such evaluations we find ourselves in the realm of national stereotypes and prejudices.

The extent to which reactive measurement can produce valid and reliable findings on opinions on security varies sharply across these five classes. The smallest problems are probably encountered with evaluations of actors. National stereotypes are widespread, and even without extensive previous reasoning many respondents are in a position to state whether a given stimulus evokes positive, indifferent, or negative feelings in them. Difficulties become somewhat larger with the first class of judgments on salience. Most people are able to rank-order very general political objectives according to their personal importance, but most people will also be unable to differentiate between personal importance and salience for the nation as a whole. If national security, compared to others, is perceived as a less pressing problem for oneself and for society, this has far-reaching implications for the assessment of attitudes in the other three classes.

If salience is comparatively low, information will be so, too. Asking people with little interest and little knowledge for their opinions on what national security policy should look like, what steps would be appropriate to pursue it, and what are the basic parameters of the security environment, is likely to evoke "non-attitudes" (Converse 1970, Achen 1975). Specifically this means that we have to expect high proportions of refusals and "don't knows" and concentration of responses in ambiguous categories, if they are provided. Moreover, sizeable effects of instruments,

notably question wording, will be likely. It makes a lot of difference for respondents who don't think a lot about these things whether you ask them about "strategic systems" or about "nuclear missiles." Finally, blatant contradictions between responses to different items will occur if we survey issue areas sufficiently remote from the respondents. People will, for example, opt for the necessity of a strong conventional defense but name military spending as the field in which government expenditures should be cut first; or they will simultaneously agree with the double-track decision and with the demand not to deploy any new missiles in Europe. It is only exaggerating slightly to say that adding high complexity of issues to respondents' low concern and information enables pollsters to project a wide variety of attitudes onto large indifferent segments of the population.

This, of course, is a potentially very dangerous situation, in which everyone can pick—or even produce—the evidence in support of a position. To ascertain, with a reasonable degree of confidence, whether what we are currently witnessing is a surge of interest and information or of alienation and emotion in regard to national security affairs, therefore, is of crucial importance for an adequate assessment of the fundamental societal conditions under which decision makers will have to act in the future. As should have become obvious, such an enterprise has to be a critique of methods at least as much as a narrative of findings. As yet no systematic and rigorous study of the development and the dynamics of the cognitive and affective dimensions of defense-related mass opinion in the FRG is available. Summarizing empirical data for the FRG can thus only be a first step toward evaluating the type and range of conclusions they permit.

Lest this be misunderstood, existing public opinion data can and must be taken seriously. It must, however, be examined less cavalierly than is frequently the case. Only then can meaningful conclusions be reached concerning what can be said and above all what cannot be said about the evolution of public attitudes on national security policy. To this effort we now turn.

Salience of National Security

According to the theoretical considerations presented in the introduction, salience of national security issues should be a crucial variable for an adequate assessment of public opinion on these matters. Three aspects of salience must be differentiated: importance of the issue for the FRG as a whole, personal importance, and level of personal interest and information.

In a multitude of surveys respondents have been asked what they believe to be the most important political problems for the FRG. There are two basic question formats. In the first, people can name as many problems as they want to. In the second, they are to name the most important problem, then the one they rank second in importance, then the

one they rank third (sometimes this is continued beyond third rank). The first format allows multiple responses, the second format invites them. Therefore, the data in Table 4.1 are not strictly comparable, because the second format evokes less salient nominations from respondents who, with the first format, would come up with just one problem.

Table 4.1 nevertheless conveys a clear and consistent picture. As in most modern democracies, economic and domestic issues are seen as most important tasks for the political system. Their preponderance was less notable in the late 1960s and early 1970s, when the economic situation of the FRG was still rather rosy, but after 1973 economic and domestic policies regularly received more than 80 percent of the nominations for most important problems.

Furthermore, it would be mistaken to conclude from Table 4.1 that the West German public during the earlier years devoted its "surplus" attention (that not absorbed by economic matters) to foreign affairs. Ostpolitik, reunification, problems of Berlin, and FRG-GDR relations are very peculiar aspects of West German politics, highly interrelated with internal politics and not a normal component of foreign policy—according to official doctrine and also to mass perceptions. The high importance ascribed to this issue area well into the early 1970s is no indication at all that public opinion was looking "outward." It is rather a particular component of preoccupation with German politics.

Nominations of foreign policy issues in the strict sense as most important problems for the FRG have declined steadily over the 1970s. Among them maintaining peace has always played the most prominent role, but with the same downward trend over the 1970s. After the first term of Willy Brandt as chancellor, preservation of peace seems to have been taken for granted by many of those who a few years earlier had thought this to be a very pressing problem. Only in the early 1980s has the salience of the preservation of peace increased somewhat in surveys, but not dramatically (nine percent of overall responses in 1982). Matters relating to defense, national security, NATO, the Bundeswehr, or to European integration or foreign policy in general, have never been selected as most important problems for the FRG by more than very small fractions of the population. Unfortunately, the cross-national poll done for the Atlantic Institute in September 1982 (frequently referred to in other chapters of this book) is not directly comparable to Table 4.1. In that study, salience of issues was surveyed in a close-ended format, and the ten stimuli provided for choice seem to have caused responses to deviate from what is usually observed with open-ended questions. "Nuclear weapons" and "excessive government spending," for example, received ten and 12 percent of overall responses, respectively, but both items are seldom volunteered if no list to choose from is provided.

An overwhelming majority of West Germans thus views "bread and butter" issues as the most important ones for the country: a strong, stable, and growing economy; low unemployment and inflation; functioning

Table 4.1 What are the most important political problems for the FRG today?

	IfD 1/68[a]	IfD 1/69[a]	ZA 426-7 9/69[b]	IfD 1/70[a]	IfD 1/71[a]	SFK 1/72[b]	SFK 3/72[b]	IfD 5/72[a]	SFK 10/72[b]	SFK 1/73[b]	IfD 6/73[a]	SFK 10/73[b]	SFK 11/75[b]	ZA 823 10/76[b]	SFK 11/76[b]	FGW 11/80[b]	CC 2/82[b]
Economic situation	43	25	44	38	45	45	51	37	51	47	47	55	73	58	61	54	54
German politics	7	11	23	14	20	36	33	23	36	37	15	31	21	34	32	29	26
Ostpolitik, Berlin, reunification, GDR	29	33	15	25	15	10	9	26	6	8	27	4	3	2	4	6	2
Maintaining peace	13	15	7	11	8	3	3	5	4	4	3	4	0	2	1	3	9
Foreign policy in general	0	1	3	2	3	3	2	1	2	3	2	3	1	2	1	6	5
European community	3	2	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	1
Defense, national security, NATO, Bundeswehr	0	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Others	5	10	5	7	7	1	2	9	1	1	3	3	2	2	1	2	3

[a]Multiple responses; percentages of overall responses
[b]Percentages of responses for up to three problems per respondent

social services and social security, and so forth. In the "German politics" category that ranks second we also find concerns such as law and order, liberalization of laws, transportation, housing, education, and environment. The "German problem" has lost very much of its importance as perceived by the mass public, and foreign policy in general, peace, security, and defense in particular, are comparatively marginal problems for the nation in the views of most people. The events of late 1979, however, have led to some increase of concern with national security (Figure 4.1).

Regarding personal salience, things look very much the same. In contrast to the open-ended measurement of importance for the FRG, personal salience is usually ascertained by presenting respondents with a list of items they have to scale according to importance for themselves. As the lists of items and the forms of scales differ from survey to survey, strict longitudinal comparisons are hard to perform.

In spite of this methodological caveat, Table 4.2 shows with sufficient clarity that defense and national security by no means top the list of personal concerns. With some variations over time in rank (that are easily accounted for by macroeconomic developments and political events in the FRG), inflation, unemployment, and old-age pensions are the personally most salient issues with very high percentages of "very important" ratings and very high average scale scores. A somewhat less important cluster of items comprises law and order, style of government, education, protection of the environment, and taxation.

Foreign policy problems generally rank lowest for most respondents; they are described as personally "very important" by 20 to 40 percent of the samples—as opposed to usually well above 70 percent for the top group of economic issues. There are no discernible systematic longitudinal fluctuations in the personal salience of these items. There is, however, a major instrument effect on the importance ascribed to military security (bottom row of Table 4.2). In September 1969 and in September 1980 the item was "protection against Russian attack"; in January 1972, it was "strengthening NATO"; in September 1972, "military security." "Military security" without any specific reference to the Western Alliance or to the threat from the East obviously is personally least important, whereas a reminder by the wording of the stimulus that it is about protection against an attack significantly increases its personal salience. This implies two things. First, most respondents cannot have a very solid and cognitively well-founded and differentiated image of national security if variations in the wording of stimuli have such a sizeable effect on the evaluation of personal salience. Second, it is probably possible to manipulate the ranking of policy goals according to personal importance to a considerable extent by appropriately choosing stimuli.

This point can be further illustrated by another strong effect of question wording on ratings of personal salience that can be observed if "national

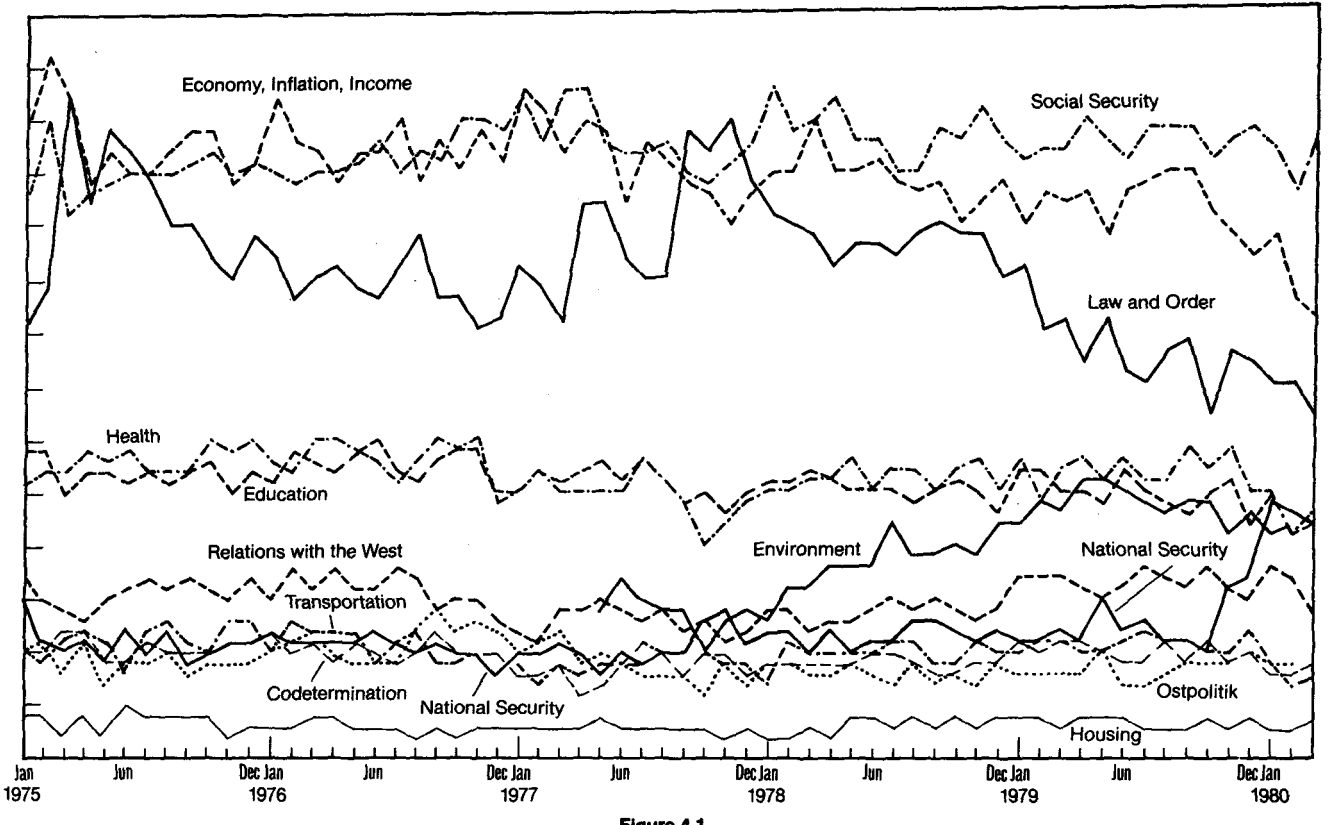

Figure 4.1
Most important problems for the FRG, 1975-1980
(BMV: Verteidigungsklima 1979)

security," "defense," and so on, are replaced by "peace" in close-ended questions. Infas (Monatsberichte) monthly has respondents choose the three personally most important aspects of life from a list containing six items: social security, law and order, peace, local living conditions, economic prosperity, and industrial democracy. Already in 1976, peace received about one-sixth of nominations as being among the personally most important aspects, a rating that the more military items related to the preservation of peace never did receive in open-ended question formats (see, for example, Table 4.2). Whereas for four of these items almost no changes occurred from the mid-1970s to early 1983 (industrial democracy about five percent, economic prosperity about 20 percent, local living conditions about ten percent, and social security about 25 percent), the percentage of nominations of peace rose to around 25 percent; those of law and order fell by almost ten percentage points to about 12 percent. Because of the fixed set of stimuli, the personal salience of peace is certainly exaggerated in these data, but peace is obviously nevertheless evaluated as personally much more salient than concrete military measures to preserve it, and it has come to be rated as personally far more salient than it was several years ago. This corresponds, of course, to the recent trend that can be observed in the final column of Table 4.1 on the importance of the preservation of peace for the country as a whole.

Our finding of rather low personal salience of foreign policy in general and national security in particular for the mass public in the FRG from the early 1970s to the present is corroborated by a number of scattered survey items that are not directly comparable in a longitudinal fashion. In a 1974 survey (ZA 757) people were required to select the personally most and least important political goals out of a list of eight items. "Strong defense" was most important for the smallest group (six percent) and was most frequently picked as least important (21 percent). In 1976 IfD presented respondents with a long list of problems, asking them to indicate about which they were personally "very worried." The most frightening items were unemployment (90 percent), inflation (84 percent), terrorism (48 percent), and crime (39 percent). National security ranked very low as a personal concern: too many Western compromises vis-à-vis the East (rank 9, 23 percent), Russian military superiority (rank 10, 22 percent), the Bundeswehr not being strong enough (rank 31, six percent); Europe and the United Stated drifting apart (rank 32, five percent). One year later IfD made respondents pick three "wishes" out of a list of ten goals according to personal satisfaction with their attainment. Although reducing unemployment and stopping inflation were selected by 71 and 61 percent, respectively, only 16 percent of the "wishes" referred to "better relations with the East," 15 percent to "more security against the Russians."

In another 1976 survey (ZA 823) people were asked what they were most afraid of concerning the future of the FRG and their personal future. On the future of the FRG, 34 percent said they had no fears; of those who had fears, 44 percent named economic difficulties, 27 percent parties and

Table 4.2 Personal importance of problems (Rank Order)

	ZA 426-7 9/69	SFK 1/72	ZA 839-42 9/72	ZA 823 9/76	FGW 2/80	FGW 6/80	FGW 9/80	FGW 2/83
Number of Ranks	15[b]	12[c]	16[d]	7[d]	7[d]	11[d]	11[b]	9[d]
Inflation	1(9.0)	1(2.8)	1(83)	2(81)	2(75)	2(70)	3(8.8)	4(53)
Unemployment, job security	a	2(2.8)	a	1(82)	1(81)	1(76)	1(9.0)	1(88)
Old-age pensions	2(8.5)	a	3(64)	a	3(70)	3(69)	2(8.8)	2(64)
Taxes	4(7.6)	a	6(52)	a	a	a	6(7.8)	a
Law and order	a	a	2(64)	3(59)	4(56)	5(56)	a	6(41)
Moral government	3(8.2)	a	a	a	a	a	4(8.2)	a
Environmental protection	a	a	7(45)	a	5(51)	6(51)	7(7.6)	5(48)
Education	6(7.2)	a	8(37)	4(50)	a	7(43)	8(7.5)	a
Reunification	7(7.1)	10(1.3)	a	a	a	a	10(7.1)	a
Relations with the West, US	8(7.0)	a	10(29)	a	6(41)	8(37)	9(7.4)	7(27)
Relations with the East, USSR	9(6.4)	5(2.1)	9(29)	7(23)	7(33)	10(29)	11(6.6)	9(23)
Military security, strengthening NATO, protection against USSR attack	5(7.3)	8(1.8)	13(19)	a	a	a	5(8.0)	a

[a] Not surveyed
[b] In brackets: average score on scale from 0 (no personal importance) to 10 (highest personal importance).
[c] In brackets: average score on scale from −3 (unimportant) to +3 (important).
[d] In brackets: percentage "very important"

ideologies, 24 percent a foreign threat, and seven percent other fears. Forty percent had no fears regarding their personal future; of the other respondents, 53 percent were most afraid of personal economic trouble, insufficient old-age pensions, and poverty; 31 percent of illness, aging, and dying; ten percent of war; and four percent each were most afraid of communism, radicalism, and other threats. What is remarkable about these data is the extent to which foreign threat is seen as personally very remote. One-quarter of respondents who have fears about the future of the

Table 4.3 *What political events from the past twelve months do you remember (SFK)?*

	3/72	10/72	10/73	11/75	11/76
Economic policy	12	2	10	30	15
German politics	22	59	20	27	37
Ostpolitik	52	31	13	20	22
International affairs in general, UN	11	7	7	12	17
Middle East	1	0	30	4	1
Energy problems	0	0	7	1	0
Vietnam	1	0	3	1	1
Watergate	0	0	7	3	2
NATO, national security, Bundeswehr	0	0	1	0	0
Others	1	0	1	2	4

Note: Open-ended questions; percentages of responses for collapsed issue areas from up to three events per respondent

FRG do so because of foreign threat, but that fear for the FRG as a whole does not affect private fears; only one-tenth of private fears are due to the threat of war. In other words, there is some threat of war, but that is for the state, not the individual, to worry about.

Data on the level of information on national security and on the extent to which individuals follow these issues in the media would be very helpful as indicators of personal salience. Unfortunately, little recent material is available. During 1972 to 1976, SFK inquired five times what political events respondents remembered from the past twelve months. As is evident from Table 4.3, economics, German politics, and Ostpolitik commanded most attention (with 80 percent of responses or more). Problems of NATO, of national security, and of the Bundeswehr were outside people's attention screen. Events in international affairs in general were remembered to a limited extent, but it took dramatic things such as the Middle East war and the oil embargo to push them to the foreground. Once these events were past, they soon disappeared from people's consciousness.

In the October 1979 "Verteidigungsklima" survey for the Federal Ministry of Defense, respondents were presented with eight items tapping their information on security affairs. What is NATO; what is the Warsaw Pact; who is secretary of defense; what are the three services of the Bundeswehr and how many soldiers does it have; what do *SALT II* and *enlisted soldier* mean; who would decide on the use of nuclear weapons on FRG territory in case of war? Although the multiple choices presented to the sample were almost ridiculously biased in favor of correct responses (e.g., Is NATO the economic council of the European Community, the Atomic Energy Commission, or the Western defense alliance?), only 15

percent could be classified as very well-informed (seven or more correct answers), 14 percent as well-informed (five or six correct answers). NATO and the Warsaw Pact were correctly identified by 91 percent and 89 percent, respectively, the secretary of defense by 87 percent, the three services by 76 percent, SALT II by 59 percent. Seventy-two percent knew the meaning of *enlisted soldier*, 38 percent the size of the Bundeswehr, and only 35 percent chose the United States president as the authority for nuclear use. It is not hard to imagine what results would have looked like with open-ended questions!

In the same survey, people were also asked whether they were interested in TV or newspaper reporting on defense issues or the Bundeswehr. Forty-eight percent said so for TV, 43 percent for newspaper reporting. If these figures appear high, indicating the widespread desire to collect relevant information, it must be remembered that experience shows people will claim interest in anything, unless they are forced to set priorities—just as any political problem is at least "important" to many people. One has to set these figures against the actual level of information that has just been described and against the frequency of conversations about defense issues that was also surveyed. Only eight percent of respondents indicated them to be "permanent" or "frequent" topics for themselves, 26 percent reported "occasional" conversations on security, 38 percent said they talked "seldom"; 26 percent "never" about these things. These figures seem to mirror much more closely actual personal concerns, and they are corroborated by PIB data from May 1981, when 22 percent said they held "strong" interest in national security affairs, 43 percent claimed "average" interest (whatever that may mean), and 32 percent openly admitted little or no interest at all.

This information is not very recent, of course, so one might argue that things would look much different today with all the debates on the NATO double-track decision and strategy. This does not seem to be so, as we will see later in connection with the deployment of new missiles. Times that feel turbulent while you live through them often look quiet in retrospect.

Table 4.4 Which side is militarily superior in your opinion, NATO (West) or Warsaw Pact (East)?

	IfD 3/73	SOWI 12/77	SOWI 10/79	SOWI 2/80	FGW 5/81	FGW 5/82	FGW 5/83
NATO	7 (9)	13 (17)	11 (13)	10 (12)	10 (10)	9 (9)	11
Both equal	24 (30)	30 (39)	31 (37)	36 (42)	38 (38)	36 (36)	42
Warsaw Pact	48 (61)	34 (44)	42 (50)	39 (46)	51 (52)	54 (55)	47
DK, NA	21	23	16	15	1	1	–

Note: In brackets: percentages without DK (don't know), NA (not applicable)

The years from 1972 to 1979 have not been all that dull in terms of NATO problems, arms control, and so on. Very many people did not notice these things then, and, judging from the salience readings in Tables 4.1 and 4.2, very many people may nowadays be only marginally aware of current discussions over security and defense and may attribute only limited importance to them, both personally and for the FRG as a whole. This will have to be remembered throughout the remainder of this report, as we may frequently be talking about judgments and attitudes that have little cognitive foundation and about which most respondents themselves do not feel very strongly.

Images of the Soviet Union

PERCEPTIONS OF THE MILITARY BALANCE

Perceptions of the military balance between East and West have not undergone substantial changes over the 1970s. In May 1983, almost one-half of West Germans saw the Warsaw Pact as militarily superior, about 40 percent perceived both blocs as equally powerful, and only one-tenth of respondents ascribed military predominance to NATO (Table 4.4).

This overall picture has been broken down by Zoll (1982,53) for 1979/1980 evaluations of various components of the total balance. Most respondents saw the Warsaw Pact as superior in regard to numbers of military personnel and of weapons. A majority of Germans viewed both sides to be equal in terms of morale and combat readiness of soldiers, defense willingness of the populations, and training of troops. NATO was judged superior only in quality of weapons. Zoll's analysis demonstrates beyond reasonable doubt that the global evaluations of the East-West military balance in Table 4.4 mirror perceptions of numerical conventional force ratios.

The pessimistic assessment of Western military strength vis-à-vis the East in the FRG is, moreover, strongly associated with a secular trend of decreasing belief in the long-run predominance of the United States against the USSR (see Table 4.5). When asked in 1953, which of the two superpowers would be more powerful "in 50 years" (for all practical purposes a survey synonym for "in the long-range future"), almost one-half of West Germans gave no response; of those who did, almost two-thirds opted for the United States. By the end of the 1960s, the level of no response had gone down considerably, and responses divided evenly between "United States," "both equal," and "USSR." By the mid-1970s, uncertainty on this issue had dropped further, the USSR being predicted as more powerful by half of those giving meaningful responses, the United States being chosen by less than one-fifth. One cannot but conclude that Western military inferiority is perceived in the FRG as an existing condition of national security that will remain and probably become even more accentuated over the years because of a continuing realignment in the superpower military balance.

This "fatalistic" projection of the future does not imply, however, that Eastern military superiority is regarded as harmless or as easily acceptable. In the September 1982 Atlantic Institute survey, the "Soviet military buildup" was chosen as being among the factors contributing to current international tensions by 55 percent of West Germans (21 percent of total choices). In May 1981 (according to a PIB survey), only eight percent of West Germans found it acceptable to live with Eastern military superiority, 71 percent advocated military equilibrium, and 16 percent called for Western superiority. On the other hand, in the Atlantic Institute study, the salience of the East-West balance was not rated outstandingly high. When asked which of seven issues were most important to the future security of Western countries, 53 percent of Germans chose U.S.-European cooperation; the East-West military balance, European economic cooperation, continued dialogue with the USSR, and arms control negotiations each were mentioned by percentages in the mid-30s; Western European defense collaboration and better relations with the Third World were referred to by only 26 percent and 21 percent, respectively.

Even if it may appear so at first glance, there really is little contradiction between these findings. The PIB question evokes notions of some kind of ideal world in which parity naturally would prevail, as it does not require respondents to endorse specific efforts or sacrifices for parity. Who would like to accept inferiority in an abstract sense? But who would like to do something about it? Inferiority of the West is perceived as a fact of life, it is perceived as here to stay, it is perceived as increasing international tension. But reducing the Eastern military edge in order to provide greater security is not more important than détente and arms control; it is less important than good transatlantic relations. The extent to which military inferiority is regarded as unpleasant, but not as of vital importance, certainly is related to the extent to which it is seen to constitute an imminent threat—to which we next turn.

THE MILITARY THREAT

Assessments of the military threat to the FRG over the 1970s appear to have changed as little as perceptions of the military balance. If one compares the 1981 to the 1969 or 1971 data in Table 4.6, each shows that about one-third of West Germans have considered the USSR and the Warsaw Pact as a military threat, and about two-thirds have not. Dramatic changes, however, have taken place over the 1950s and 1960s. In 1952, more than 80 percent thought the East to constitute a threat, a figure that was down to one half by the mid-1960s and then increased sizeably after the 1968 Warsaw Pact intervention in Czechoslovakia. This event did not have lasting effects, and the subsequent "détente level" of relatively low threat perception only recently seems to have increased somewhat, as is shown by data from Forschungsgruppe Wahlen (FGW) of May 1982 and May 1983. This appears to conform to the increase in perceptions of Warsaw Pact superiority in the early 1980s (Table 4.4) and has been

Table 4.5 Who is going to be more powerful in 50 years, United States or USSR (IfD)?

	8/53	5/66	1/69	3/73	5/75
US	32 (62)	25 (43)	21 (34)	14 (21)	13 (18)
Both equal	9 (17)	16 (25)	21 (34)	21 (31)	22 (31)
USSR	11 (21)	21 (32)	20 (32)	32 (48)	37 (51)
DK, NA	48	35	38	33	28

Note: *In brackets: percentages without DK, NA*

foreshadowed by FGW data from September 1980 on respondents' evaluations of the change in threat over the past five years. At that time, 48 percent said the military threat to the FRG had grown, 43 percent said it had remained the same, and only eight percent believed it had decreased.

Table 4.6 illustrates another feature, however, that should be a very strong warning against careless interpretation of survey findings on threat perceptions. The SOWI data from 1979 and 1980 clearly demonstrate an impressive effect of survey instruments, of question wording. Unlike IfD and FGW, SOWI provided an intermediate category of "not so *serious* threat" and accentuated the extreme category by calling it "serious threat." The consequences are obvious: the level of no response goes down just as the extreme categories of "serious threat" and "no threat" do; the ambiguous category "not so serious threat" at the same time contains almost one half of meaningful responses. If this category is omitted, these respondents are scattered all over the other three categories. If it is included, on the other hand, it is most likely a very attractive response with which many people feel comfortable, especially if they don't think or know a lot about a threat from the East. This sizeable instrument effect in security-related items indicates the difficulty of assessing precisely the extent to which Germans currently feel threatened by the East. The perception of threat is, however, anything but overwhelming.

Another reasonable measure of comparatively low threat perception in the FRG is available from the October 1979 Verteidigungsklima survey performed for the Federal Ministry of Defense. Respondents were presented with four explanations of Soviet armaments and required to indicate agreement or disagreement. The most popular explanation (80 percent agreement) was that Soviet military power was necessary to hold the Warsaw Pact together: 76 percent agreed that the Soviet Union wanted to be prepared against attacks, 46 percent agreed that Soviet armaments were caused by the feeling of being threatened by the West. The lowest share of respondents (42 percent) accepted the view that the Soviet military buildup is due to aggressive intentions. The public obviously does not infer intentions from the capabilities it perceives.

Table 4.6: Do you think that the USSR (East) is a threat to us or don't you think so?

	IfD 7/52	IfD 3/58	IfD 11/64	IfD 11/68	IfD 9/69	IfD 4/71	SOWI 2/80	SOWI 5/81	FGW 5/81	FGW 5/82	FGW 5/83
Serious threat	66(81)	51(65)	39(51)	54(63)	32(37)	28(38)	10(12)	14(16)	36(37)	44(44)	44(47)
Not so serious threat							41(48)	42(47)			
No threat	15(19)	27(35)	37(49)	32(37)	55(63)	46(62)	35(44)	33(37)	62(63)	55(56)	49(53)
DK, NA	19	22	24	14	13	26	14	11	2	1	8

Note: In brackets: percentages without DK, NA

RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION

Comparatively little recent survey evidence is available on perceptions of general East-West relations. According to an FGW survey of October 1981, 46 percent of West Germans considered relations between the FRG and the USSR to be good, and 54 percent described them as bad. This conforms closely to previous expectations. In December 1977, October 1979, and February 1980, SOWI surveyed expectations of possible future changes in East-West relations. In 1977, 60 percent of respondents expected no change, the remaining responses were divided equally between improvement and deterioration. In October 1979, 52 percent expected no change, 32 percent saw future improvements, and only 16 percent predicted worse relations. In early 1980, however, after the December 1979 decision of NATO and after Afghanistan and the Iranian hostage crisis, 47 percent expected no change, 41 percent, deterioration; and only 12 percent, improvements of relations.

This is, of course, consistent with the data presented above. In the beginning of the 1980s, the strains in East-West relations show up in West German public opinion. General relations with the East are evaluated as bad and as getting worse, there are more references to military threat and to Warsaw Pact superiority. A large majority of Germans in fact agrees as to what should be done about this. In October 1981, 56 percent were in favor of extending relations between the FRG and the USSR, 29 percent believed they should stay the same, and only 16 percent said they should be reduced. For a plurality of Germans the most important aspect of relations with the East is the preservation of peace (41 percent, according to a FGW survey of October 1981). Economic collaboration follows closely as the most important aspect for 36 percent of respondents. Human rights in the Eastern countries (16 percent), sports (five percent), and cultural exchange (two percent) are the most important aspects for minorities only. With this list of priorities, extending and improving relations with the USSR is a strategy that seems obvious to many Germans. Their détente-mindedness vis-à-vis the East also clearly shows in CC data from February 1982, when 67 percent—and 28 percent partially—agreed that détente should be continued in spite of some setbacks. In the same study, only 21 percent agreed (42 percent partially) that as a result of the events in Poland economic aid to the East should be discontinued; agreement with the notion that increasing economic ties to the East could be dangerous was even lower.

GOODWILL AND COOPERATION

It is significant to note that this desire is not paralleled by a very optimistic view of the Soviet Union. The USSR is seen as militarily superior by a majority of Germans who also doubt her goodwill to come to acceptable terms with the West. This judgment has become less frequent over the

Table 4.7 Does the USSR have the goodwill to come to terms with the West (IfD)?

	4/59	4/65	4/66	4/70	6/71	7/74	2/77	1/80	7/81
Yes	17(23)	23(29)	26(33)	33(42)	34(40)	29(35)	27(31)	16(19)	36(43)
No	57(77)	56(71)	54(67)	46(58)	50(60)	55(65)	60(69)	70(81)	48(57)
DK, NA	26	21	20	21	16	16	13	14	16

Note: In brackets: percentages without DK, NA

1960s, but over the 1970s still more than 60 percent of respondents have regularly expressed such doubts (Table 4.7). In January 1980, confidence in Soviet goodwill even reached an extremely low point with 19 percent of respondents. By July 1981, considerable recovery seems to have taken place, even though two-thirds of respondents in an October 1981 FGW survey said they would not expect Soviet reliability as a business partner in case of political crisis.

Considerable suspicion vis-à-vis the USSR is also obvious in CC and PIB surveys from February 1982 and May 1982, respectively. In the first study, 50 percent of respondents agreed (41 percent partially) that Soviet policies are a threat to peace. In the second survey, 73 percent attributed the motive of striving for military superiority to the USSR (50 percent to the United States); 18 percent said the Soviet Union was aiming at equilibrium (42 percent for the United States); and only tiny fractions held that either superpower was ready to accept inferiority. Sixty-five percent agreed that the USSR was trying to split the FRG apart from the West, and 77 percent said the Soviet Union had not forsaken her goal of worldwide revolution. At the same time, however, the image of the Soviet Union was not all black and white: 64 percent attributed to the USSR some concern about international reputation and cooperation, and even 80 percent held her to be interested in good economic relations with the West. This is by no means a contradiction: The USSR is seen as willing to

Table 4.8 Relations between the FRG and the USSR and Soviet reliability (FGW 10/81)

Relations should be	Relations are Good	Relations are Bad	Soviets are reliable as business partners in case of political crisis Yes	Soviets are reliable as business partners in case of political crisis No
Extended	63	50	75	46
Kept the same	30	27	17	34
Reduced	7	23	7	20

cooperate for purely selfish (economic) reasons, but her underlying long-range motives and policies are essentially judged as rather sinister by sizeable majorities.

It is probably not overstretching the available data if one concludes that most out of the majority of West Germans who think East-West relations to be bad would blame the East for this state of affairs. Likewise it seems possible to summarize that images of the Soviet Union held in the FRG have been fairly stable since the early 1970s, but subject to some rapid shifts due to spectacular international events such as the invasions in Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan, the effects of which have tended to fade away after some time.

INTERRELATIONS BETWEEN ITEMS

One would expect perception of a Soviet military threat to be a function of the perception of the military balance, and this is indeed the case to a significant degree. In May 1981 (FGW) 37 percent of those surveyed felt the East to be militarily threatening. Among those who viewed both sides as equally strong, the figure was 25 percent, only 20 percent among those who perceived Western military superiority, but 49 percent of those who evaluated the East as stronger. Similarly, in October 1979 (BMV) 20 percent of those who said the Warsaw Pact had increased its armaments evaluated the military threat to the FRG as high, whereas only seven percent of those who viewed Warsaw Pact armaments as having remained the same shared this judgment. In the same survey, 17 percent (23 percent) of those who attributed defensive (offensive) intentions to Eastern armament increases evaluated the military threat as high. These latter two associations are clearly visible but not very strong.

Threat perception has marked effects on the perceptions of East-West relations. Also in October 1979, of those who saw the military threat as high 77 percent evaluated East-West relations as rather hostile, 16 percent as in between, and only five percent as rather friendly. Among those with low threat perceptions the figures were 20, 61, and 16 percent, respectively. In addition, 41 percent of respondents in the first group expected relations to deteriorate, 37 percent expected them to stay the same, and only 11 percent projected improvements. In the latter group these percentages were 12, 54, and 18 percent.

Judgments on East-West relations also are strongly influenced by perceptions of Soviet reliability. In October 1981 (FGW) 64 percent of those respondents who said one could rely on the Soviet Union as a business partner in case of political crisis evaluated relations between the FRG and the Soviet Union as good, the same percentage of those disagreeing on Soviet reliability said relations were bad. Evaluations of East-West relations and of Soviet reliability, in turn, are both associated with attitudes on whether FRG-USSR relations should be extended or reduced (Table 4.8).

Table 4.9 Do you think we have to expect another World War or do you think nobody will take that risk (IfD)?

	9/61	1/63	2/64	2/65	6/67	12/75	9/83
Have to expect World War	46(51)	42(46)	35(38)	41(46)	38(41)	29(32)	24(36)
No	45(49)	49(54)	56(62)	48(54)	54(59)	63(68)	42(64)
DK, NA	9	9	9	11	8	8	34

Note: In brackets: percentages without DK, NA

In sum, separate indicators of images of the Soviet Union are consistently interrelated without any apparent contradictions in overall public opinion. However, associations are not sufficiently strong to claim a very tight pattern of attitudes at the individual level where numerous nonobvious combinations of judgments occur. In May 1981, for example, roughly one-fourth of total respondents recorded a military edge in favor of the East and, at the same time, said they saw no military threat.

Images of Security

FEAR OF WAR

The fear of another World War in the FRG shows a secular downward trend from the early 1960s to the mid-1970s. In December 1975 more than two-thirds of respondents agreed that nobody would take the risk of another World War (Table 4.9). This time series by IfD is continued by SOWI data from 1977 to 1980, in which more than 80 percent said that the threat of East-West war in Europe was "rather limited" (Table 4.10). These two sets of data are, of course, not directly comparable. SOWI by its choice of response categories invited respondents to select "rather limited threat of war" as a highly ambiguous reply. The stimuli of "World War" vs. "East-West war in Europe" also may have evoked very different fears. In view of the different question wording, it is virtually impossible to judge whether the discrepancies between Tables 4.9 and 4.10 are due to instrument effects or whether there is, in fact, a paradox in public opinion in the FRG: where military conflict in Europe is seen as less likely than World War, in other words where the global situation is perceived as more dangerous but, surprisingly, largely decoupled from the threat of war in Europe.

Consistent with what has been said on perceptions of threat and of the military balance, the perception of the threat of war also seems to have grown in the early 1980s. Direct measurements are not available, but in

Table 4.10 Is the threat of war between East and West in Europe rather great or rather limited (SOWI)?

	12/77	10/79	2/80
Rather great	11(13)	9(11)	14(16)
Rather limited	74(87)	73(89)	72(84)
DK, NA	15	18	14

Note: In brackets: percentages without DK, NA

October 1981 and May 1982 and 1983 FGW asked whether peace in Europe had become more or less secure over the past year (Table 4.11). In the first survey, 27 percent of the sample replied that nothing had changed, and 67 percent said that peace had become less secure. In the second and third surveys, the corresponding figures were 39 percent (56) and 57 percent (38), respectively. There is no straightforward interpretation of the sizeable increase of "no change" responses from 1981 to 1983, the parallel decline of perceptions of peace having become less secure over the past year. Maybe many people in 1983 believed that the stability of peace had not changed because they thought it had deteriorated so much previously. On the other hand, this item may have tapped judgments of the current situation rather than of the dynamics of the threat, indicating that more alarmist threat perceptions of 1981 and 1982 had given way to more optimistic attitudes.

However this may be, if one sees peace as more in jeopardy than earlier then logically war is more threatening. Interestingly, this seems to result from a rather general impression of the overall international situation and does not stem from a belief that particular crises would escalate into war. In January 1980, when FGW asked whether respondents believed the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan would lead to superpower war, 78 percent said they did not think so.

Table 4.11 Has peace in Europe over the past year become more or less secure, or has nothing changed (FGW)?

	10/81	5/82	5/83
More secure	6	3	6
Nothing changed	27	39	56
Less secure	67	57	38
DK, NA	0	1	0

Table 4.12 **In case of aggression by the East, do you think defense – together with the allies – would be possible or not?**

	IfD 9/60	IfD 9/71	IfD 3/76	SOWI 12/77	IfD 9/79	SOWI 10/79	SOWI 2/80	BMV 6/80	IfD 5/81
Defense possible	19(34)	27(42)	26(48)	38(40)	27(47)	33(41)	33(38)	28(35)	25(39)
Defense questionable				46(48)		34(42)	40(47)	36(46)	
Defense impossible	37(66)	37(58)	28(52)	12(13)	31(53)	14(17)	13(15)	14(18)	41(61)
DK, NA	44	36	46	5	42	19	14	21	34

Note: In brackets: percentages without DK, NA

FEASIBILITY OF DEFENSE

Judgments whether the West could defend itself against aggression by the East illustrate some of the points that have been made in the section on salience of national security (Table 4.12). How are people to know? If one looks at the IfD data one gets the impression that between one-third and almost one-half of respondents believe they cannot evaluate this, and among the others there is a solid majority rejecting the feasibility of defense all over the 1970s. The SOWI data tell a much different story. "No responses" are much less frequent, just as are responses in the two unambiguous categories. Does this mean that most people think they can say anything meaningful on this question, and that most view the feasibility of defense as somewhere between absolute certainty and absolute impossibility? Probably not. The ambiguous "defense is questionable" category attracts respondents who either feel uncomfortable with the two extreme positions or who do not know for sure but do not want to say so (maybe to please the interviewer).

This is not to argue that there may be a better or "correct" instrument, but only to point out again the problem of instrument effects. Even more than with threat perception, these seem to occur when one polls images of hypothetical futures in issue areas that are not very salient to respondents and on which their information is not terribly good. From a substantive point of view, it does not make sense to have, at almost the same time, an absolute majority or only between 10 percent and 20 percent of meaningful responses claiming impossibility of defense, especially if we have no yardstick by which to assess what is "correct."

Evaluation of defensive capability seems to be particularly subject to such effects of question wording, as is illustrated by another interesting

Table 4.13 What is more important, defending democracy – even if this involves a *nuclear war* – *or avoiding war* – *even if this means living under a communist government* (IfD)?

	5/55	4/56	3/59	7/60	12/75	3/76	2/79	5/81	7/81
Defending democracy	33(48)	35(51)	32(49)	30(44)	25(34)	28(35)	23(31)	27(36)	30(40)
Avoiding war	36(52)	34(49)	33(51)	38(56)	49(66)	52(65)	52(69)	48(64)	45(60)
DK, NA	31	31	35	32	26	20	25	25	25

Note: In brackets: percentages without DK, NA

example from the early 1970s. In April 1971, IfD inquired whether respondents thought the fighting power of the Bundeswehr to have decreased over the past couple of years. In a split-half sample design, the time-horizon for comparison for half of the respondents was defined as "since Helmut Schmidt has been Secretary of Defense." Without mention of Schmidt, 47 percent said the fighting power of the Bundeswehr had gone down, in the other subsample only 22 percent agreed. If an issue is so elusive, remote, and hypothetical, respondents will jump to the clues they are given.

ACCEPTANCE OF DEFENSE

Since the 1950s, IfD has been intermittently posing a "red or dead" question, asking respondents to choose between defending democracy (even if this would involve nuclear war) and avoiding war (even if this would mean living under a communist regime) (Table 4.13). From 20 to 35 percent of samples have always refused this choice. Among nonrefusers both alternatives were about equally popular in the 1950s, but over the 1970s, the scales were permanently in favor of avoiding war (60 percent and more). As both options are heavily "loaded" with affective content ("nuclear war" vs. "communist regime"), it is very hard to interpret this item in terms of the degree to which different modes of a national security policy based upon military defense are accepted or tolerated in West German public opinion. All one can tell with some confidence is that there have been no major changes in recent years in the degree to which war avoidance dominates preferences, although military defense—at the price of nuclear war—seems to be considered somewhat more inevitable in the early 1980s, conforming to perceptions of threat, the military balance, and the danger of war.

A far better insight into the complexities of the acceptance of military defense in public opinion is gained from three survey items employed by

SOWI in 1977, 1979, and 1980. Respondents were asked to indicate whether or not the FRG should militarily resist an attack on its territory, whether or not the FRG should be militarily defended against attack if war would be primarily fought on her territory, whether or not she should be militarily defended against attack if this would involve using nuclear weapons on her territory. Findings from all three points in time do not differ much. About one-fifth of respondents gave no reply. Of the others, about three quarters advocated military defense by the FRG against attack. This dropped to around 60 percent if fighting would occur mainly on FRG territory, and only about one-fifth supported defense if it involved nuclear war on FRG territory.

This poses the question of what the "red or dead" item or the SOWI instruments actually measure. There seems to be an enormous effect of question wording. Resisting foreign attack, if isolated from specific scenarios, appears as something many people can agree upon as a necessary course of action. This consensus falters if military resistance is to take place predominantly "at home." If it would involve nuclear war, the majority opts *against* military defense, and if nuclear war would occur "at home," the majority against military defense is even slightly stronger than the majority *for* military resistance as a general principle.

There are various possible interpretations of this pattern of public opinion. A majority of people, for instance, may accept conventional military forces in a defensive role—with very little enthusiasm for fighting on FRG territory, of course—but might refuse to conceive of a war-fighting role for nuclear weapons, which would be exclusively seen as deterrent devices. Their use in case of conflict, a breakdown of deterrence, would make military resistance unattractive and unacceptable.

This interpretation may, however, assume too much sophistication on the part of the mass public. There may in fact be no elaborate thinking on the acceptability of various types of defensive military action. Survey stimuli alone may create the observed complexity. People may in general agree with "defense" against attack, because the term carries positive connotations. Their agreement may dwindle simply to the extent that "defense" is connected to more and more unpleasant additional information. There may be other interpretations as well, but the two outlined here suffice to demonstrate the possibility for wildly diverging conclusions. The first interpretation would tell us that West German public opinion accepts conventional defense and nuclear deterrence but not nuclear war as a means of defense. The latter interpretation would tell us that we simply know very little about the acceptance of military defense in the FRG and that what we elicit from respondents to a significant degree depends on the stimuli used. As realistic scenarios for employing military force for countering aggression against the FRG all involve sufficiently unappealing details, military defense is thus likely to be rejected as soon as one provides those details. Without them it will be endorsed.

It is not possible here to demonstrate which interpretation is closer to

reality. What this clearly does demonstrate is the difficulty one has in arriving at any meaningful conclusions on the acceptance of defense in the FRG from available survey data. A further question that cannot be pursued here is the extent to which acceptance of military defense by public opinion actually would even matter in case of conflict.

Another illustration of the complexity of public acceptance of military defense comes from PIB and CC data from May 1981 and February 1982. CC surveyed agreement with various strategies to preserve peace. For the sake of this goal, only five percent of respondents were willing to terminate German membership in NATO "under all circumstances" (16 percent, "maybe," 78 percent, "never"). Also a mere five percent (15, "maybe") said they would accept living in a socialist country, 33 percent (51, "maybe") would tolerate a lower standard of living; and 39 percent (38, "maybe") claimed to be willing to accept efforts to maintain the military balance, even by Western buildup if it had to be. This reads like rather solid support for military defense. However, in the same study, only ten percent (26 "maybe") accepted risks to their own lives in order to preserve peace, and 57 preferred unilateral disarmament or arms control negotiations without Western INF deployment over increases of Western military power. The May 1981 PIB study shows, moreover, that détente was evaluated as far more important (90 percent) than concrete measures to increase Western defensive capacity, like the issue of INF deployment (56 percent, "important"). Again, the conclusion is that military defense is endorsed by public opinion much more easily as an abstract principle than in its burdensome practice, and that it has no chance if it is up against more "civilized" concepts such as negotiations and détente.

DEFENSE SPENDING

Believing that the FRG should be defended militarily against foreign attack does not make people fond of military spending. In an October 1980 FGW survey, one-fifth of respondents avoided commenting on the size of the defense budget; of the remainder, 46 percent said it was just right, ten percent said it was too low, and 44 percent too high. Two more recent surveys from February and November 1982 yielded even less support for defense spending (Table 4.14), with far more than half of responses in favor of moderate to strong reductions.

In an October 1979 survey by SOWI only one-tenth of the sample showed a willingness to pay a special tax for maintaining the fighting power of the Bundeswehr. When asked in the same study where the government could make expenditure cuts for that purpose, only foreign aid appeared as a tolerable source of additional revenues to more than 50 percent of respondents. These results were confirmed by an FGW survey of April 1981 in which respondents were asked for their opinion about where government spending should be reduced: 61 percent called for cuts in government salaries, 54 percent in defense, 53 percent in foreign aid, 31

Table 4.14 Self-placement on seven-point scale on size of defense budget

		Defense budget should be							
		strongly reduced						strongly increased	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	DK, NA
ZA 1160	2/82	18(20)	14(15)	18(20)	26(28)	10(11)	4(4)	2(2)	6
ABI*	12/82	33(34)	13(14)	16(17)	23(24)	6 (6)	3(3)	2(2)	4

Note: In brackets: percentages without DK, NA

*Survey conducted for Arnold-Bergstraesser-Institut, Freiburg im Breisgau

percent in subsidies to agriculture, 23 percent in social services and security, 19 percent in science and research. This ranking was very closely reproduced by a February 1982 CC study, and it obviously corresponds to evaluations of the salience of national security for individuals and for the country. It is not among the top priorities, so the volume of military outlays is viewed very critically.

THE BUNDESWEHR

Curiously, there are few recent survey findings on mass attitudes vis-à-vis the Bundeswehr. What is available supports what has just been said on the connection between the low salience of national security and the desire to see military spending reduced.

In three SOWI surveys from 1977 to 1980 people were required to evaluate the importance of the Bundeswehr for the FRG (Table 4.15). That fewer than ten percent described it as "unimportant" in all three studies should not be read as an indication of widespread enthusiasm about the armed forces. The question wording is a good example of the point made earlier: if people are asked for judgments on importance, almost everything tends to be important or even very important to large majorities, as they do not have to make trade-offs. As soon as they are forced to do so (e.g. via spending alternatives), more meaningful ranking according to salience emerges, as could be seen in the previous section.

Careful analysis of the data in Table 4.15 also leads to a confirmation of our earlier analysis. When one compares the percentages of "very important" responses to top priority items in Table 4.2, the differences are striking; the latter received percentages of 70 percent up to 90 percent or more. One can thus assume that the concentration in Table 4.15 of responses in the "important" category shows that the importance of the Bundeswehr for the FRG was in fact *not* evaluated as particularly high by respondents in these studies. Had there been a whole battery of items for comparison, this would have been immediately obvious. But even so this

Table 4.15 How important do you consider the Bundeswehr to be for our country?

	SOWI 12/77	SOWI 10/79	SOWI 2/80	BMV 6/80
Very important	22(22)	25(27)	34(36)	32(36)
Important	52(53)	45(49)	45(47)	43(48)
Neither/nor	18(18)	14(15)	11(12)	9(10)
Unimportant	7 (7)	8 (9)	6 (6)	6 (7)
DK, NA	2	8	5	10

Note: In brackets: percentages without DK, NA

interpretation is clearly in line with previous comments: the armed forces are not seen as extremely important for the country, so it is logical to perceive part of the financial burden they constitute as dispensable.

On the surface, one can suspect a paradox in the juxtaposition of these attitudes toward the Bundeswehr with the high endorsement of military defense against foreign attack. Various explanations can be offered. First, if the threat is perceived as low, the Bundeswehr can be less important in spite of the necessity to resist militarily when attacked. Second, plausible scenarios for military defense in which the Bundeswehr could play a meaningful role may not be perceived. Finally, the whole issue of security, defense, and of the role of the Bundeswehr in it may simply be so remote and low in salience that attitudinal inconsistencies do not matter.

THE PEACE MOVEMENT

There are not very many data on attitudes toward the peace movement in the Federal Republic. A May 1983 survey by FGW does provide, however, some recent data. It was evaluated as "necessary" by 47 percent of the sample, as "superfluous" by 24 percent, and as "detrimental" by seven percent. Twenty-three percent said they did not care about it. Interviewed one month later by FGW on what actions out of a list of five they would participate if new missiles were to be deployed in the area where they lived, petitions were chosen by 60 percent, demonstrations by 28 percent, blockades of military installations by seven percent, illegal demonstrations by six percent, and, finally, damaging military facilities by one percent of respondents. When asked about the proximity of the peace movement to political parties in October 1981 (FGW), nine percent of respondents avoided any judgment and 38 percent saw no linkages between parties and the peace movement. Fourteen percent said it was closest to the Social Democrats, 12 percent to the Greens, and four percent saw it equally close to both these parties. Four percent regarded the peace movement as

closest to the Christian Democrats, three percent to the Communists, and one percent to the Liberals. Three percent responded that the peace movement was equally affiliated with all parties, and 11 percent saw it closest to other than the listed parties (there are no other parties).

These numbers are hard to interpret. One can say with some confidence, however, that the figures on the necessity of the peace movement and on possible participation in demonstrations are greatly inflated. The goal of the movement implied by its name draws excess sympathies—just as with environmentalists—and the indication of a general willingness to become active does not commit respondents in any way. On the partisan proximity of the movement there is considerable insecurity: fewer than 40 percent of respondents identify it with existing parties. This corresponds, of course, to the very heterogeneous nature of the peace movement in the FRG.

INTERRELATIONS BETWEEN ITEMS

In the second section of this chapter, salience of national security items in the FRG has been dealt with separately, because of the critical role of this variable. For the sake of convenience, we will from now on treat salience as a component of images of security, as it logically is. Therefore, within this subsection we will first look at the interrelations among indicators of interest, information, and salience of national security, then at their associations with other measurements pertinent to this cluster. In October 1979 (BMV), 24 percent of those who named national security as a top-priority political goal evaluated the Bundeswehr as "very important," 62 percent as "important." Among the overwhelming majority (86 percent), who gave low salience to national security, the corresponding numbers were 17 and 60 percent. This is not much of a difference, so judgments on the importance of the armed forces are not to a significant degree determined by the perceived salience of security affairs.

The association between interest in media reports on national security and the level of knowledge of these matters is somewhat closer. In the same survey, 22 percent of those who said they were interested in such reports were very well-informed and 15 percent well informed. For those without interest these figures were only ten and 12 percent; 61 as opposed to 78 percent had a low level of information. Table 4.16 reveals quite clearly, moreover, that perceived salience of national security is much more closely related to interest than to level of information. Those who view national security and the armed forces as more important tend to be only somewhat better informed, but they are much more interested and have a lot more conversations on security issues. The causal structure seems to be like this: personal salience of national security has a strong direct effect on interest and little direct effect upon information. Only if high personal salience *and* personal interest coincide is the level of information increased significantly.

Table 4.16 Salience of national security, level of information, and interest (BMV 10/79)

	Top priority of *national security*		Armed forces		
	Yes	No	Very Important	Important	Less Important
Information on defense					
Very good	18	12	18	14	16
Good	17	13	13	15	11
Deficient	66	73	67	73	71
Correct responses on who is to authorize use of nuclear weapons	33	35	40	34	35
Interest in media reports on defense					
Yes	50	34	54	36	20
No	50	66	46	64	80
Conversations on defense					
Often	14	8	19	7	5
Occasionally	34	24	30	28	18
Seldom	31	40	33	41	37
Never	21	28	18	24	40

Unlike the fear of war, for which no systematic relations could be detected, evaluations of the feasibility and acceptability of military defense are in fact associated with attitudes toward the armed forces and with information and interest. This is not the case, however, for the perceived salience of national security. Table 4.17 shows what these associations look like: those who hold the Bundeswehr to be very important, or have more information, or are more interested in security issues tend to entertain stronger beliefs that the FRG could be defended militarily and tend to be somewhat more willing actually to defend the country, even if presented with very unattractive scenarios. Most of these intergroup differences are by no means dramatic, however.

As to defense spending, there is some evidence from February 1982 (ZA 1160) that high perceived salience of national security leads to more favorable attitudes vis-à-vis military expenditures. For those respondents who said that strong defense was their personally most important political concern, the average position on a seven-point scale on military expenditures ranging from "strong reduction" (1) to "strong increases" (7) was 4.1 (i.e., almost exactly in the center indeterminate category). All other respondents had an average score of 3.1, which illustrates the widespread desire to reduce military expenditures that has been described above.

Table 4.17 Importance of armed forces, information, interest, and feasibility and acceptance of military defense (BMV 10/79)

	FRG could be defended militarily	FRG should be defended militarily		
		in general	if war on FRG soil	if nuclear war on FRG soil
Bundeswehr is				
Very important	47	79	77	41
Important	38	58	58	22
Less important	21	27	25	11
Information on defense				
Very good	41	67	62	27
Good	32	54	60	21
Deficient	36	53	52	22
Interest in media reports on defense				
Yes	42	68	62	27
No	33	48	50	21

Note: Percentages of agreement with column stimulus within row categories

Finally, there are some recent data (FGW 5/83) on the relationship between perceptions of the stability of peace and attitudes toward the peace movement. It is less popular (41 percent, "necessary") among those who see no recent change in the security of peace. These respondents also are most "indifferent" (28 percent, 25 percent "superfluous", six percent, "detrimental") about the peace movement. If peace is seen as having become less secure (almost no respondents called it more secure), the peace movement tends to be evaluated far more positively (57 percent, "necessary"); "indifference" (17 percent) and mild or strong rejections (20 and six percent, respectively) are less frequent. Perceptions of the stability of peace also have some impact on the inclination to participate in peace movement activities that is higher for those who see less security.

Images of Deterrence

ACCEPTANCE OF DETERRENCE AND OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

We have seen that attitudes toward military defense in the FRG are very ambiguous. It is endorsed in principle, but not in practice. Therefore it does not come as a surprise that preventing foreign attack by deterrence receives solid support (Table 4.18). From the mid-1970s to the early 1980s about 70 percent of those who replied considered deterrence to be the best

Table 4.18 Do you agree that an attack by the East can best be prevented by deterrence, if the West has sufficient armaments (IfD)?

	2/76	1/78	9/79	3/81	7/81	12/81
Agree	58(72)	58(73)	55(72)	50(67)	53(71)	50(68)
Disagree	23(28)	22(27)	21(28)	25(33)	22(29)	24(32)
DK, NA	19	20	24	25	25	26

Note: In brackets: percentages without DK, NA

way to prevent aggression. Unfortunately, however, the IfD instrument is both insufficiently differentiated and actually confusing. The reference to "sufficient armaments" makes it hard to decide whether nuclear deterrence ("by punishment") or deterrence by conventional parity or sufficiency ("by denial") is being evaluated by respondents. However, if one bears in mind our earlier findings, it seems plausible that for most respondents the key term here will be "deterrence," and not "sufficient armaments."

The support by the majority of West Germans for preventing war through deterrence is for "pure deterrence," however, and does not include acceptance of the complex notion that one must have a capability of fighting a war in order actually to prevent fighting. This is the conclusion one must draw from comparing Table 4.18 with the previously demonstrated absence of widespread support for actually defending the FRG. It would require very sophisticated measuring devices—that may easily overtax most respondents' level of information—to assess more precisely the degree of acceptance of various competing deterrent strategies.

What one can say, however, is that in spite of the great abstract endorsement of deterrence, nuclear weapons are viewed rather critically in the FRG. In April 1983 (FGW), two-thirds of respondents said they felt threatened by nuclear weapons in general, that is more than usually say so about the Soviet Union (see Table 4.6). In the same survey, people were interviewed about whether they believed nuclear armaments to be acceptable for Christians. Only nine percent agreed unconditionally, 44 percent held nuclear arms to be acceptable for defensive purposes only, and 47 percent entirely ruled out any compatibility between nuclear weaponry and Christianity. Interestingly, this latter view was most strongly shared by people without any religion (62 percent) and Christians with lowest church attendance (57 percent). These findings, again, leave one wondering what conclusions public opinion surveys on these matters really do permit. Nuclear weapons, after all, are the key instrument of deterrence. Still, the latter is accepted much more readily if it is not related to the "ugly" term *nuclear weapons*. One is tempted to speculate how low

Table 4.19 Do you think the double-track decision to be a good one (IfD)?

	5/81	7/81	8/81	9/81	1/82	12/82	8/83
Yes	53(73)	52(71)	49(65)	50(69)	52(70)	51(67)	49(68)
No	20(27)	21(29)	26(35)	22(31)	22(30)	25(33)	23(32)
DK, NA	27	27	25	28	26	24	28

Note: In brackets: percentages without DK, NA

support for deterrence could drop if some more "ugly" information were tied to it in survey stimuli.

NEW MISSILES IN EUROPE

Data on the West German public's level of information about NATO's double-track decision are not very recent, but they still must be reported in order to put the subsequent description of attitudes into perspective. In May (July) 1981, 63 percent (77) had heard or read about the NATO decision, according to PIB. From the same source we learn, however, that awareness did not imply precise knowledge of the substance of this decision. Faced with an open-ended question on what it is about, in May (July) 1981, 48 percent (41) said they could not tell. Only nine percent in May (11 in July) correctly described the December 1979 decision. Most of the wrong responses (almost one-third of the total) characterized this decision as aiming for unilateral Western armaments buildup. Most likely the level of information will have increased somewhat in the meantime, but as this information was polled more than a year and a half after the initial decision had set off the public debate there is reason to doubt that such changes could be dramatic.

In the past several years quite a number of survey studies on the public's reaction to the NATO decision have been performed. Since 1981, IfD has repeatedly polled attitudes toward this decision after presenting its contents to respondents in a simplified version. While about one-quarter of samples consistently refused any judgment, more than two-thirds of evaluations were in favor of the double-track decision, indicating widespread support of parallel negotiations and missile deployments (Table 4.19).

Similar results from PIB are available for May and July 1981. Adjusting for the level of no responses, 68 percent agreed that the NATO decision was the right thing to do, since the USSR would not be willing to negotiate without threats of Western INF deployment, 57 percent did not endorse the view that the West was strong enough and INF deployment, therefore,

was unnecessary. At the same time, there was majority opposition (55 percent) against INF without parallel negotiations, and a rather favorable response toward Eastern moratorium initiatives (63 percent in favor). All these distributions, however, should be seen in the light of 62 percent agreement that these defense issues are so complex they should be left to experts because the average citizen could not judge them.

In the same survey, agreement with the double-track decision was significantly lower if the stimulus did not tie the prospect of deployment to the need to force the USSR to the negotiating table. A narrow majority (52 percent) believed that the greater part of the German population expected INF deployment to be inevitable. Regarding the perceived preferences of a series of political actors, some selected results deserve being mentioned: The United States was perceived as extremely favorable toward INF, Chancellor Schmidt only slightly less so; Schmidt's party, the SPD, was seen as rejecting them by a clear majority.

August 1983 data from IfD show even more clearly how an appropriate choice of question wording can reduce—or even reverse—anti-INF majorities. Respondents were asked whether they were in favor of or opposed to Pershing II deployment, if "Soviet SS-20s would continue to be targeted on Western Europe". With 23 percent undecided, 37 percent favored, and 40 percent opposed deployment. When presented with a choice between deployment and the FRG's leaving NATO, 46 percent chose missiles, 22 percent would abandon the Alliance, and 32 percent did not respond. In the same survey, 50 percent said that currently there was no INF balance between East and West (only 13 percent believed this to be the case), and 59 percent (24 percent) replied that such an INF balance is (not) necessary. At the same time, however, 46 percent advocated unilateralism in arms control; 37 percent were opposed (in July 1981 figures had been 33 and 47 percent, respectively).

Findings by FGW stand in stark opposition to what has just been reported. Inquiring how the West should proceed with the double-track decision, FGW found in May 1981 that 67 percent of its sample favored immediate negotiations without any Western deployments, 25 percent favored immediate negotiations with simultaneous Western arming to achieve parity, and only six percent favored NATO INF deployments without negotiations.

These are obvious effects of question wording. If you ask for attitudes on the NATO decision or mention SS-20s, as IfD did, positive sentiments vis-à-vis NATO or fear of Soviet missiles produce positive evaluations of United States INF, as a direct choice between the two tracks implied by this decision is not required. If it is required, an overwhelming majority emerges for the negotiating track and against deployment, which logically implies comparatively low support for the NATO decision as it was taken. This is also evident from a February (May) 1983 survey by FGW, in which 55 percent (50) of respondents agreed with the demand not to deploy any

new missiles in the FRG, no matter what the East would do. The smaller majority against deployment (compared to the 67 percent in May 1981) is most likely again due to an instrument effect, as the side condition "regardless of Eastern behavior" loads the stimulus in favor of disagreement. Without its inclusion, resistance to new missiles would have scored much higher, according to the FGW instrument. It does not come as a big surprise that in a very recent study by FGW (June 1983) opposition against new missiles *in the respondent's area* ran at 79 percent.

Let us now have a look at the perceptions of motivations of the superpowers to pursue INF arms control and at expectations and preferences of the German public regarding the future of these talks. In July 1981 (PIB), about 30 percent of respondents felt unable to evaluate superpower interest in INF limitations; of those who passed a judgment, about 70 percent held each superpower to be interested in such accords. In the same study the largest part of the sample (46 percent, with eight percent giving no response) expected failure of arms control negotiations over INF and a subsequent arms race; 37 percent predicted an agreement between the United States and the USSR that would be coupled with some Western INF deployment. Only nine percent expected reductions of Soviet missiles to an extent that would allow the United States to refrain from stationing INF in Europe. Recent data by FGW (July 1983) is not directly comparable, as here respondents were asked whether they expected deployment of new missiles in the FRG *this year*. Sixty-two percent answered that they expect this to happen, and 37 percent replied in the negative—suggesting a remarkably high proportion of optimists still believing in timely success of negotiations.

We have already seen that recent FGW data showed substantial opposition against new missiles in the FRG in summer 1983. This opposition emerged even stronger when people were asked what course of action they would prefer if the Geneva talks would fail to produce agreement until fall 1983. In July 1983 (September 1983, after the downing of the Korean airliner by the Soviets), 76 (65) percent of the sample preferred continuing negotiations without INF deployment; 20 (31) percent opted for continuing negotiations with parallel deployment; while only three percent called for discontinuing talks and stationing missiles. This information is to be interpreted with great caution, however. The three alternatives presented to respondents do not embrace the possibility that negotiations not only do not lead to agreement but prove entirely futile and are aborted, so there would be no arena for continuing talks. One can be very sure that under such conditions the pattern of responses would look totally different.

ENHANCED RADIATION WARHEADS

Two other recent survey items concerning enhanced radiation weapons (ERWs) confirm the above pattern of attitudes toward Western nuclear capabilities. In August 1981, FGW polled attitudes toward President

Reagan's decision to build ERWs and on whether the FRG should consent to the stationing of ERWs on her territory. With very few refusals, 62 percent of the sample disapproved of the decision to proceed with ERWs, and 69 percent said the FRG should refuse to have them deployed here. This is not at all surprising: defense and deterrence are accepted as general principles, but when it comes to specific scenarios, sacrifices, measures to increase military capabilities, or to particular weapon systems, enthusiasm is very low, especially with nuclear weapons that have been the object of mainly critical and highly publicized debates.

INTERRELATIONS BETWEEN ITEMS

Some of the interrelations between items that have been descriptively analyzed in this section appear as moderately strong and substantively interesting. Feeling threatened by nuclear weapons and evaluating them as acceptable for Christians "hang together" as follows (FGW 4/83): almost two-thirds of those who feel threatened by these arms reject them as incompatible with Christian standards, whereas more than 80 percent of those who feel no such threat judge them as either unconditionally (19 percent) acceptable for Christians or at least in a defensive framework (62 percent).

Among items on INF talks or deployment, several patterns deserve being mentioned: Of those who supported the demand by no means to station Western INF, 88 percent favored continuing negotiations without deployment in case no timely agreement should be achieved. Of those who rejected the first position, only 54 percent favored the same approach toward possible failure of the Geneva talks (FGW 5/83). Not surprisingly, among those who would not agree to missile deployment in their area, 86 percent favored continuing negotiations without deployment, 78 percent of those who would bear with stationing new missiles close to their residence opted for introducing Western INF should negotiations not be satisfactorily completed by the end of 1983 (FGW 6/83). It also conforms to expectations that those who resist INF deployment even if no agreement should be completed by a large majority (82 percent) call for a referendum on stationing these missiles; whereas all others reject this introduction of direct democracy into national security policy by an almost equally strong margin (FGW 7/83).

A final association that can be reported here is between agreement with the decision to build ERW and with possible ERW deployment in the FRG (FGW 8/81). The figures show such a high correlation that one could almost talk about multiple measurement of the same underlying attitude. Seventy percent of those who agree with the ERW decision would also go along with deployment in the FRG. Ninety-four percent of those who disapprove of the ERW decision would oppose deployment here. Only 15 percent of the total sample have held inconsistent views.

Images of Allies

RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES

The last of the four main themes of this descriptive overview begins with evaluations of the relations between the FRG and the United States. According to Table 4.20, there was no decrease during the 1970s in the extent to which collaboration with the United States was regarded as more important than with the USSR. Quite the contrary: although in 1973 there was an absolute majority for equally close relations with both superpowers, through the late 1970s and until 1981 supporters of closer ties with the United States outnumbered those in favor of equally close relations. Moreover, in February 1982 (CC), 43 percent fully and 41 percent partially agreed that cooperation and friendship with the United States should play a bigger role in German foreign policy.

By 1983, however, something had clearly transpired. The majority of meaningful responses had shifted back to favoring an equally close relationship with both superpowers. When one compares the recent IfD data with those of May 1981, the change is in fact quite significant. This decline in the importance attached to closer collaboration with the United States is confirmed by the most recent Atlantic Institute survey (11/83). In response to the question on what was most important for future Western security, a full 19 percent drop occurred since the autumn 1982 (from 53 to 34 percent) in those who chose effective cooperation between Europe and the United States. Ranking first in the 1983 survey was continued dialogue with the Soviets (up from 33 to 42 percent of respondents). It is difficult to determine how temporary or permanent a shift this is and what its causes are. But given the consistent negative image of the Soviet Union described earlier, the origin of the shift must lie in a German loss of confidence in the United States and probably in current American policies. The magnitude of the shift should not be overdrawn, but it is nevertheless real.

In July 1980 the most important aspect of relations between the FRG and the United States for West Germans was the economic one, according to FGW (50 percent). Mutual support and military cooperation followed behind (27 and 17 percent, respectively). Sports (four percent) and recognition of United States leadership (three percent) were considered of minor importance. What makes collaboration with the United States desirable for West Germans is predominantly cooperation in the fields of economy and security.

Relations between the United States and the FRG were evaluated as good by 67 percent of respondents in August 1981 and by 75 percent (59) in May (August) 1982, according to FGW. Evaluations of this kind are really hard to make for average respondents, so the high volatility of this data and their susceptibility to short-term fluctuations are not unusual.

Table 4.20 Should we, in the future, strive for closer collaboration with the United States or the USSR (IfD)?

	5/73	10/77	9/78	1/80	5/81	7/81	12/81	1/83	3/83	4/83	6/83
US	36(39)	49(55)	51(58)	49(53)	56(63)	50(56)	45(52)	39(43)	40(44)	42(47)	42(46)
Equally close	54(58)	38(43)	36(41)	41(45)	32(36)	37(42)	41(47)	51(56)	49(54)	46(52)	47(52)
USSR	3 (3)	2 (2)	1 (1)	2 (2)	1 (1)	2 (2)	1 (1)	1 (1)	1 (1)	1 (1)	2 (2)
DK, NA	7	11	12	8	11	11	13	9	10	11	9

Note: In brackets: percentages without DK, NA

Table 4.21 In what direction have relations between the FRG and the US changed "recently" (IfD)/"since Reagan took office" (FGW)?

	IfD 3/73	FGW 8/81	FGW 5/82
Improved	10(11)	9	5 (5)
Remained the same	50(57)	49	51(52)
Deteriorated	27(31)	42	43(43)
DK, NA	13	0	1

Note: In brackets: percentages without DK, NA

People probably make such judgments in reaction to current news, so most likely the low August 1982 rating was produced by U.S. action against European firms involved in the pipeline deal with the USSR. All in all, however, this degree of satisfaction with bilateral relations may to some extent explain why the personal and "national" salience of good relations with the United States ranks so low in Tables 4.1 and 4.2.

Many more people have perceived a deterioration rather than an improvement in U.S.-FRG relations at various points during the past decade (see Table 4.21) but this is not contradictory with two-thirds of respondents describing relations as "good." First, there seems to be some kind of "negativity bias" in this instrument, as is shown by the IfD measurements from 1973, because difficulties and strains in transatlantic relations naturally receive far more media attention than smooth cooperation. Second, reference to President Reagan in the FGW question probably reinforced that bias. In February 1982, the U.S. president's foreign policy vis-à-vis the East was regarded as too hard-line and as a danger to détente by 43 percent of a CC sample; 39 percent partially agreed to this view. Thus, it is probable that the perception of deterioration is exagger-

Table 4.22 Generally speaking, do you like the Americans (IfD)?

	12/57	4/61	7/62	5/65	1/67	5/73	3/75
Yes	39(47)	51(61)	54(61)	58(64)	47(54)	48(54)	42(49)
In between	20(24)	17(20)	17(19)	13(14)	16(18)	17(19)	21(25)
No	24(29)	16(19)	18(20)	19(21)	24(28)	24(27)	21(25)
DK, NA	17	16	11	10	13	11	16

Note: In brackets: percentages without DK, NA

ated in Table 4.21. This suspicion is supported by SOWI data from October 1979 and February 1980, in which more than two-thirds of those expressing an opinion expected U.S.-FRG relations to stay the same, about one-fifth expected improvements, and one-tenth deterioration. The former two expectations were disappointed, but not to the degree apparently indicated by Table 4.21.

On the actual and desired style of relations between the FRG and the United States little survey information is available. In 1972 SFK presented a sample with the statement that the freedom of action for the FRG was so little one could almost describe her as a U.S. satellite and asked for the extent of agreement or disagreement on a scale (from +3 to −3). For the 87 percent of respondents who made a judgment the mean scale score was exactly zero (agreement was exactly balanced by disagreement). In August 1981, and again in May 1982, FGW presented samples with the choice whether in case of disagreement the FRG should adopt United States views or decide according to her own interests. Only about one-quarter of respondents were in favor of adopting United States policies, whereas three-quarters thought the FRG should follow her own interests. This, by the way, stands in remarkable contrast to Schoessler and Weede's (1978,60) findings for West German elites, in which, 63 percent of the sample endorsed the notion that "minors" within alliances should accept superpower guidance. In summary, close relations with the United States are seen as very desirable by a large majority of West Germans who also view relations as quite satisfactory, although levels of confidence appear to have dropped. Above all, and this may be related to the drop in confidence, there is a decided rejection of any political subordination of the FRG—as people of almost any nation would.

ATTITUDES TOWARD THE UNITED STATES

Underlying the desire for close cooperation are favorable attitudes vis-à-vis the United States and widespread convictions about her indispensability for the security of Europe. Table 4.22, which unfortunately only runs through 1975, shows the longitudinally stable positive stereotype of America in West Germany. This series is continued by a PIB thermometer of feelings (from −5 to +5) about the United States The mean score in 1979 was 1.9, in April 1980 it was 2.0, and in February 1982 it was 1.6; so there really was no significant change in images of the United States since the mid-1970s. Table 4.23 clearly demonstrates that the support for the presence of American troops in Europe has not faltered since the Berlin crises. In the early years of NATO a withdrawal of United States troops would have been quite popular; nowadays it would be regretted by four out of five people who comment on the issue. For the past twenty years, little disagreement over the importance of American security guarantees and of their symbolic representation by troops in Europe has been discernible in survey data.

Table 4.23 If the United States were to pull their troops out of Europe, would you welcome or regret this (IfD)?

	7/56	1/57	12/57	6/62	4/69	5/70	5/73	6/76	8/78	9/79	9/81
Welcome	51(71)	33(49)	34(50)	12(17)	17(23)	22(30)	23(34)	15(22)	17(23)	11(15)	17(22)
Regret	22(30)	34(51)	34(50)	59(83)	56(77)	51(70)	45(66)	54(78)	57(77)	60(85)	59(78)
DK, NA	27	33	32	29	27	27	32	31	26	29	24

Note: In brackets: percentages without DK, NA

Table 4.24 Does NATO have more advantages or more disadvantages for the FRG (IfD)?

	11/55	4/59	8/63	9/71	9/79	5/81	12/81
More advantages	20(71)	35(88)	33(87)	47(82)	48(87)	55(80)	50(82)
More disadvantages	8(29)	5(12)	5(13)	10(18)	7(13)	14(20)	11(18)
DK, NA	72	60	62	43	45	31	39

Note: In brackets: percentages without DK, NA

ATTITUDES TOWARD NATO

Up to the 1980s, NATO has always been evaluated by large majorities as having more advantages than disadvantages for the FRG (Table 4.24), even though insecurity of judgment has been rather high, mainly due to low (but growing) information on what NATO is. That an alliance is seen as yielding more advantages than disadvantages does not necessarily imply, however, that one prefers this alliance to other (e.g., nonaligned) security policies. Unfortunately, the IfD series on neutralism vs. the Western Alliance only extends up to 1975 (Table 4.25). It contains far lower levels of no response than Table 4.24 and shows considerably smaller enthusiasm for NATO than for American troops in Europe, with no obvious longitudinal trend. This discrepancy between regret about hypothetical American troop withdrawal and comparatively high popularity of neutralism could to some extent be explained by question wording, as in Table 4.25 German ties to NATO and the United States are juxtaposed to "neutrality," a concept that does not exclusively bear negative connotations. If withdrawal of American troops from Europe

Table 4.25 Should the FRG continue its alliance with the West (America) or try to be neutral (IfD)?

	12/55	9/61	9/65	5/69	5/73	9/74	2/75
Western Alliance	43(60)	40(49)	46(55)	44(54)	41(49)	51(57)	48(57)
Neutral	29(40)	42(51)	37(45)	38(46)	42(51)	38(43)	36(43)
DK, NA	28	18	17	18	17	11	16

Note: In brackets: percentages without DK, NA

Table 4.26 Agreement with statements on NATO (IfD)

	1/69	9/71	3/76
NATO has brought Western countries closer together	51	51	53
NATO is not strong enough to defend Europe against agression	39	28	31
NATO nations disagree too much	33	24	31
Without NATO we would have been attacked already	32	32	35
Russians are afraid of NATO defense	28	29	28
NATO has too little influence over member nations	25	15	21
NATO's main benefits go to US	19	18	18

were linked to some positive alternative, regret would probably also be much lower.

Even though the IfD series stops in 1975, some more recent evidence is available, although not directly comparable. Data reported by Just and Muelhens (1981) on the FRG trying to maintain good relations with the United States vs. the USSR vs. aspiring for neutrality show very clearly that in 1980 and 1981 somewhat lower proportions of respondents opted for neutrality than throughout the 1950s and 1960s. A report for the United States International Communications Agency (Shaffer 1981) demonstrated that—faced with a direct choice between staying in NATO and the FRG becoming neutral—in February 1982; 70 percent were in favor of continued NATO membership, 13 percent in favor of neutrality, and 17 percent did not reply. Even though they do not contain explicit references to neutrality, the following data also corroborate NATO's outstanding acceptance in the FRG until now. In May 1981 (PIB), 69 percent advocated continuing membership in the present form, only 13 percent called for reducing German ties to NATO, and 18 percent refused to commit themselves. Two years later, in May 1983, 89 percent said that NATO is necessary to preserve peace in Europe; only ten percent disagreed (FGW). The same survey shows that 83 percent of respondents held German membership in NATO to be a "good thing," seven percent did not think so, and ten percent did not care. In August 1983 (IfD), with 19 percent undecided, 72 percent favored continuing FRG membership in NATO; only nine percent wanted to get out. The prevalent motivations for endorsing NATO can be clearly read from Table 4.26. NATO is accepted for the FRG because it serves to promote collaboration among Western nations and because of its peace-keeping and deterrent roles. It was mainly criticized for a lack of strength. Yet as we have seen earlier, there is very little willingness to support activities by the FRG to do anything about this. There also was some criticism of NATO members disagreeing too much and of the alliance's inability to reduce dissonance. On the whole, however, agreement with positive statements on NATO was

Table 4.27 To what extent could we rely upon the United States in case of conflict (SOWI)?

	12/77	10/79	2/80
Totally	24(25)	20(22)	21(23)
Very much	43(45)	36(39)	38(41)
Somewhat	27(28)	32(34)	32(34)
Not at all	3 (3)	5 (5)	3 (3)
DK, NA	4	7	7

Note: In brackets: percentages without DK, NA

stronger and has increased, and acceptance of negative statements has decreased over the period covered in Table 4.26.

RELIABILITY OF NATO AND THE UNITED STATES

Predominantly positive evaluations of NATO and of the United States among sizeable majorities of West Germans would logically be very implausible if they were not backed by a belief in the reliability of the allies in critical situations. In 1977 through 1980, SOWI three times surveyed mass opinion on the extent to which the FRG could rely upon NATO and the United States in case of conflict (Tables 4.27 and 4.28). These data show that virtually no distinction was being made between NATO as a whole and the United States; the reliability of the latter was obviously seen as the key necessary and sufficient ingredient in the reliability of the former. There were surprisingly few refusals to make this judgment, and complete treachery was expected only by negligible portions of samples. Expectations of rather low ("somewhat") reliability of the allies increased slightly between 1977 and 1980, up to around one-third of respondents, with all remaining persons believing that the FRG in case of conflict could rely on NATO and the United States "totally" or at least "very much."

According to PIB, in March 1981, 72 percent said they believed the United States would come to the assistance of the FRG and West Berlin in times of crisis; only 12 percent disagreed; and 16 percent refused to answer. Three out of four of those who believed in United States assistance said the United States would behave that way in any case, the others believed the United States would do so only if threatened themselves. In February 1982, again according to PIB, belief in the reliability of United States guarantees in crisis was even higher, at 78 percent. In August 1983 (IfD) 62 percent expected the United States to resist Soviet aggression against the FRG, 19 percent did not believe so, and the remainder were undecided.

Table 4.28 To what extent could we rely upon NATO in case of conflict (SOWI)?

	12/77	10/79	2/80
Totally	27(28)	20(22)	18(20)
Very much	43(44)	39(42)	39(42)
Somewhat	24(25)	30(32)	30(33)
Not at all	4 (4)	4 (4)	4 (4)
DK, NA	3	7	8

Note: In brackets: percentages without DK, NA

DECISION MAKING IN NATO

We have already seen above that positive evaluations of and favorable attitudes vis-à-vis the United States have gone along with a clear rejection of subordination. Similarly, majority endorsement of NATO does not involve widespread acceptance of United States leadership in the alliance. This is amply demonstrated by two items from FGW surveys. In the context of the decision to build ERWs respondents were interviewed in August 1981 as to whether this type of decision should be taken by NATO or by the United States alone. With almost everyone responding, 83 percent opted for a NATO decision. One might assume this implies that part of the resistance to the decision taken by President Reagan was due to its perceived unilateral character and that opposition would have been smaller if the federal government had been obliged internally to defend an alliance decision like the one of December 1979. This point should not be exaggerated, however. Much of the support for a decision by NATO probably stems from the hope that it would have looked different. It is indeed very hard to disentangle pro-NATO and antinuclear sentiments in these responses.

In February 1980, respondents were asked what relations between Western Europe and the United States should look like. Not surprisingly, 65 percent demanded equal rights for both sides, only 13 percent preferred U.S. leadership, and 22 percent advocated political independence of Western Europe from the United States. Mass support for NATO in the FRG thus is intimately linked to the general notion that the alliance has to accommodate the interests of all participating nations.

INTERRELATIONS AMONG ITEMS

Most of the patterns that can be reported here refer to evaluations of the relations between the United States and the FRG. In May 1982, 83 percent of those who judged these relations as bad said they had deteriorated since President Reagan took office; among those who evaluated them

as good, 63 percent said they had registered no changes since then (FGW). The percentage of those describing U.S.-FRG relations as good declined from 86 percent to 68 percent as one moved from a very positive to a very negative evaluation of the U.S. president; the percentage reporting a recent deterioration in relations rose in parallel from 25 to 65 percent. Obviously the highly abstract judgment on bilateral relations in general and their dynamics is heavily colored by sentiments about people that are easier to evaluate.

This relationship seems to be even stronger for people's position on the issue of whether in case of disagreement the FRG should pursue her own interests or adopt U.S. views. People who evaluated Reagan very positively favored adopting U.S. policies by a 71 to 28 percent majority, whereas very negative ratings for Reagan produced 87 percent in favor of following FRG interests. Another set of cross-tabulations from an August 1981 FGW survey does not yield any additional insight, as its emphasis was on the issue of who should make decisions such as the one on ERW in the future. As an overwhelming majority of respondents (85 percent) was in favor of NATO, rather than U.S. decisions, there logically can be only little variation within the categories of other variables subsumed under this theme.

Patterns of Public Opinion on National Security

INTRODUCTION

After describing the development of public opinion on national security in the Federal Republic in recent years, we now want to look at some structures that can be detected within these attitudes. In this section we will investigate the interrelations of opinions on individual items among the four general themes addressed in this study. In the subsequent final section the attitudes that have been described will be broken down according to respondents' position in the social structure and their partisan affiliations.

In this enterprise we have to be aware of some methodological and substantive limitations. First, the number of associations that could be reported is potentially enormous, so we have to be selective, occasionally choosing just one or two indicators from each of the four major themes for assessing interrelations. Second, for quite a number of combinations of items no data at all are available, as the two items have never appeared together in one survey. Third, for the same reason, it is not possible to construct indices for various dimensions of public opinion on defense—for example, information, salience, consistency of attitudes, or optimism—that could then be related to each other, to possible causal variables, or to individual national security items.

For such a hierarchical causal analysis to be feasible, all relevant measurements would have to be available for one and the same sample of respondents instead of being scattered over a multitude of surveys. The

most recent major single survey covering a great number of relevant aspects of national security attitudes is from October 1979. Its results have been analyzed with a reasonable degree of sophistication by Raeder (1982). This study is too old, however, to evaluate developments over the past few years, its original data set was not accessible (only cross-tabulations were available), and national security attitudes since 1979 had to be collected from two dozen or so separate surveys. The above, combined with what follows, might thus be the most extensive review of patterns of public opinion on national security in the FRG, but it must fall short of perfection. Only bivariate relationships are presented (e.g., whether perception of a foreign threat increases the willingness to accept new nuclear weapons in Europe), but no controls could be performed. It is impossible, therefore, to ascertain whether this association between threat perception and acceptance of new missiles is stronger with men or women, with the better or the less educated, with CDU/CSU or SPD followers, with those for whom national security is more or less salient, and so on.

IMAGES OF SECURITY AND OF THE SOVIET UNION

We will first examine the associations between perceptions of the military balance and the military threat on the one hand and evaluations of the stability of peace, the danger of war, and salience of national security, information, and interest on the other. For those who perceived military parity in May 1982 (FGW), evaluations of the stability of peace were almost equally divided between "no change" and "less stability." Interestingly, those who judged either the East or the West as superior had rather similar response patterns, with roughly one third reporting "no change" and two-thirds reporting less stability of peace.

Between perceived military threat and danger of war we find a very close association. Fifty-three percent of respondents with perceptions of high threat perceived a high danger of war (BMV 10/79), 39 percent saw this danger to be low, eight percent did not know or did not answer. Respondents who evaluated the military threat as low predominantly also held the danger of war to be small (71 percent); only seven percent reported high danger of war, and 22 percent did not commit themselves.

In the same survey, there was no relationship at all between threat perception and judgments on the importance of national security as a political goal for the FRG. Remaining associations with indicators of salience, information, and interest are summarized in Table 4.29. High threat perceptions went along with somewhat higher evaluations of the importance of the armed forces and with more interest in national security affairs but were unrelated to the level of information. Of course, it is impossible here to say anything definitive on the direction of causality: Do people regard the Bundeswehr as more important and devote some attention to these questions because they feel the military threat to be high, or vice versa?

For October 1980 we have some evidence on the impact of threat

Table 4.29 The military threat and the importance of armed forces, information, and interest (BMV 10/79)

	Military threat	
	High	Low
Budeswehr is		
Very important	33	15
Important	52	64
Less important	15	20
Information on defense		
Very good	17	17
Good	13	14
Deficient	69	69
Correct responses on who is to authorize use of nuclear weapons	32	36
Interest in media reports on defense		
Yes	51	43
No	49	57

perception on attitudes toward the defense budget (FGW). For those respondents who said the threat had decreased, a large majority (77 percent) evaluated defense spending as excessive, 16 percent said it was just right, and only seven percent regarded it as too small. Among those who perceived the threat as having remained unchanged, 49 percent rejected military spending as too high. 46 percent were content, and six percent pleaded for more. Of those who thought the military threat to have grown, 35 percent regarded defense spending as exaggerated, 51 percent were satisfied, and 14 percent said it was too low.

In the October 1979 BMV survey, threat perception had a nonobvious relationship with opinions on the feasibility and acceptability of military defense. Those who regarded the military threat as high had a stronger tendency to advocate military defense against attack, even if this would involve nuclear war on FRG territory. On the other hand, these respondents at the same time were more sceptical of the chances for success of Western defense against Eastern attack. Thirty-two percent said such an attack could not be repelled, a view that was shared by only 10 percent of those who perceived the military threat as low. One possible interpretation for this pattern is that high threat perception may be more an outgrowth of a "pessimistic" attitude toward national security (just like scepticism about the feasibility of defense) than the product of gathering and analyzing relevant information. This is supported by the zero relationship between threat perception and the level of information.

Perceptions of the military balance in this survey were only weakly

Table 4.30 Soviet armaments and the salience of national security, information, and interest (BMV 10/79)

	Soviet armaments have		Soviet armaments are due to	
	grown	not grown	offensive motives	defensive motives
Bundeswehr is				
Very important	21	7	24	18
Important	63	50	61	65
Less important	16	24	16	17
National security is a top political priority				
Yes	15	11	14	14
No	85	89	86	86
Information on defense				
Very good	19	7	14	16
Good	14	13	16	16
Deficient	67	80	70	68
Interest in media reports on defense				
Yes	41	24	40	39
No	59	76	60	61

related to measures of salience and of interest; there was no relationship at all with the level of information. Those who regarded the East as militarily superior held the Bundeswehr to be somewhat more important and gave slightly higher priority to national security as a political objective for the FRG. Those who saw rough military parity had the lowest level of interest in defense matters. Table 4.30 reveals that perceptions of whether Soviet military capabilities have grown or not were much more important, but that the motivations ascribed to the Soviet military buildup were virtually unrelated to images of security. If Soviet capability was seen to have increased over the past years, the Bundeswehr was judged as more important, and these respondents were significantly more interested in defense and had more knowledge of these things.

Associations between perceptions of East-West relations and images of security are available from several surveys. From an October 1981 FGW survey we learn that people who evaluated bilateral USSR-FRG relations as bad were much more likely to see peace in Europe as having become less secure. Surprisingly, this latter perception was not associated with a stronger desire to extend bilateral relations; people obviously did not believe this to be an appropriate strategy for increasing the stability of peace. This finding is similar to those in Table 4.28: there does not seem to

Table 4.31 Perceptions of the military balance and of the military threat and positions toward INF deployment (FGW 5/83)

	Who is superior?			Military threat?	
	East	Both equal	West	Yes	No
Continue negotiations, no INF deployment	66	76	78	70	74
Continue negotiations and deploy INF	29	22	19	27	24
Deploy INF, discontinue negotiations	4	3	2	3	1

be an instrumental concept of East-West relations; rather there are optimists and pessimists. The former think relations are good and should be improved, the latter view them as bad and are not enthusiastic about improvements.

In the October 1979 BMV survey, all associations between perceptions and expectations of East-West relations and the indicators of salience, interest and information were practically zero, the only exception being that people who expected these relations to deteriorate more often than others felt the Bundeswehr to be very important. Finally, there is a report from FGW of October 1981 indicating that attitudes vis-à-vis the peace movement had very little to do with perceptions of East-West relations.

IMAGES OF DETERRENCE AND OF THE SOVIET UNION

In this section, there are some interesting findings from a May 1983 study that are described in Table 4.31. When faced with alternatives on how to proceed if the Geneva talks failed to produce agreement, only a negligible share of the sample opted for INF deployments without continuing arms control negotiations. The other two alternatives, continuing negotiations without deployment or a parallel approach, were chosen in systematic covariation with perceptions of the military balance and of the military threat, the direction of patterns being as expected. As in the previous subsection, perception of the military balance again emerges as a more potent predictor of other defense-related attitudes than threat perception.

However, even among those who perceived Eastern superiority and a military threat, we find two-thirds majorities in favor of negotiations only. As almost half of respondents saw the East to be superior, more than 30 percent of the total sample at the same time said the East was ahead in military power and that there should be no Western deployment of INF. It would require the assumption that we do not want to make—that NATO deployment is indispensable in order to compensate for Eastern

superiority to describe these respondents' attitudes as contradictory or illogical. We prefer the interpretation that here we have the typical situation of more general and more specific defense attitudes falling apart for people for whom these things are not terribly important. When asked generally about the military threat or the military balance, people respond on the basis of very general feelings, whatever their factual or cognitive foundation might be. When asked specifically about new missiles, most people reject them, many probably not even being aware that the two issues may be related. Only with a minority do attitudes on the one dimension have an impact on those on the other, and this minority produces the aggregate relationship visible in Table 4.31. Such a pattern clearly would be inconceivable with very salient items. One could never observe large majorities of those who think unemployment to be a major evil opposing concrete measures to cope with it.

IMAGES OF THE SOVIET UNION AND OF THE ALLIES

On the relationship between images of the Soviet Union and of the allies little evidence is available. In the October 1979 BMV survey, threat perception had no effect at all on evaluations of the reliability of NATO and of the United States. In May 1983 (FGW), on the other hand, perceptions of the military balance and of the necessity of NATO clearly were related. If the East was viewed as superior, NATO was rated as indispensable by 95 percent; if both sides were viewed as equally strong, this percentage was 87 percent—still high, but definitely lower.

Data by FGW from June 1980 suggest that evaluations of the importance of good relations with the West or with the East run highly parallel. As the bulk of responses falls into the "very important" or "important" category there can hardly be any widespread pattern of stressing relations with one side at the expense of the other. Rather there are those for whom good external relations of the FRG, whether with the East or with the allies, are very important, and those for whom all international relations are personally of minor concern. Finally, in July 1980 (also FGW) respondents who named the preservation of peace as the most important aspect of East-West relations were somewhat more likely to identify military cooperation or mutual support as the most important aspect of relations with the United States than those who selected other areas of East-West relations (economic, cultural, or sports exchange, or human rights) as most salient (52 percent as against 36 percent).

IMAGES OF SECURITY AND OF DETERRENCE

From a survey performed by FGW in May 1983, we can learn how images of security and of deterrence are currently associated in the FRG. Among those for whom the stability of peace in Europe was perceived as having remained the same over the past year, only 46 percent agreed with the position not to deploy any new missiles in the country, no matter what the

East would do; however among those who believed that peace had become less secure, this percentage was 60 percent. Similarly, only 70 percent in the first group and 77 percent in the second group preferred to continue negotiations without missile deployment if the Geneva negotiations should fail to succeed before the end of 1983. This clearly shows that, apart from possible instrumental considerations, all these attitudes on peace and new missiles to a certain extent reflect a dimension of public anxiety that increases resistance to nuclear weapons as peace is perceived as being endangered. Data from the same study also show quite clearly that the peace movement in the FRG was evaluated far more positively by respondents who wanted arms control negotiations to be continued without INF deployment than by those who were willing to station these weapons should no timely agreement be found.

IMAGES OF SECURITY AND OF THE ALLIES

A similar pattern to that in the previous section can be observed between perceptions of peace and evaluations of the Western Alliance. Ninety-three percent of those people who believed that nothing had changed as to the stability of peace, and only 83 percent of those who said peace had become less secure, held NATO to be necessary (FGW 5/83). Again, this is not a paradox, as it may seem at first glance, but the product of a minority strongly believing at the same time that war is imminent and that our familiar way of trying to prevent it in the framework of military alliance should be abandoned.

In an October 1979 BMV survey, the data on perceived reliability of the United States and of NATO and on trust in the United States are almost identical, so only figures on reliability of NATO are reproduced in Table 4.32. Obviously, the level of information on defense matters and the evaluation of the priority of national security were virtually unrelated to judgments on the reliability of the Western alliance. People with higher interest in national security, on the other hand, rated the reliability of NATO slightly above average. Finally, the higher respondents judged the importance of the armed forces, the more likely they were to have confidence in NATO.

IMAGES OF DETERRENCE AND OF THE ALLIES

Not surprisingly, evaluations of NATO are to a considerable degree related to opinions as to what the West should do if there would be no agreement in Geneva. As in May 1983 (FGW) almost three out of four respondents were in favor of continuing talks without missile deployment, there can be no dramatic associations, but what can be observed is strong enough: 70 percent of supporters of NATO preferred continuing negotiations over alternatives that would imply stationing missiles in the FRG; among those who thought NATO to be unnecessary this proportion was 91 percent.

Table 4.32 Salience of national security, information, and interest and reliability of NATO (BMV 10/79)

	In case of conflict we could rely upon NATO			
	completely	to a large extent	to a limited extent	not at all
Bundeswehr is				
Very important	48	36	14	2
Important	23	56	20	1
Less important	7	37	46	9
National security is a top political priority				
Yes	29	47	21	3
No	24	48	25	3
Information on defense				
Very good	27	46	24	3
Good	23	48	24	4
Deficient	25	48	24	3
Interest in media reports on defense				
Yes	33	44	21	2
No	21	49	26	3

Attitudes on ERWs in a study by FGW in August 1981 were in a remarkable way connected to perceptions of bilateral relations between the FRG and the United States. In general, agreement with the decision to build ERWs was about ten percent above agreement with their possible deployment in the FRG. Both these approval rates were unrelated to the perception of the current quality of bilateral relations as such. If people were asked about the development of bilateral relations since President Reagan was elected, however, the connection with their responses on ERWs was very close. Respondents who saw recent improvements of relations were considerably more favorable of these weapons in general and of their deployment in the FRG than those who saw no change or a deterioration. This pattern was even more dramatic with respect to direct evaluations of the U.S. president. It is therefore probably fair to say that these attitudes on specific weapon systems reflect general pro- and anti-American sentiments fueled by opinions about the current U.S. leadership rather than calculations of these systems' relative merits or disadvantages.

Opinions on ERWs furthermore were linked to attitudes on what relations between the partners of the Western alliance should look like. Table 4.33 documents that if the United States, rather than NATO, was regarded as being in charge of decisions of this kind, approval of ERWs tended to be higher. Similarly, in the same survey 66 percent of those

Table 4.33 Evaluations of FRG-US relations and attitudes on ERW (FGW 8/81)

	FRG-US relations		FRG-US relations since President Reagan was elected			Evaluation of President Reagan					Who should decide on ERW	
	Bad	Good	Deteriorated	Remained	Improved	−2	−1	±1	+1	+2	NATO	US alone
Building ERW												
Agreement	36	40	32	40	61	9	14	25	53	76	35	57
Disagreement	64	60	68	60	39	91	86	75	47	24	65	43
ERW deployment in FRG												
Agreement	30	31	22	26	49	10	12	21	41	60	25	34
Disagreement	70	69	78	74	51	90	88	79	59	40	75	66

respondents who said that in case of disagreement the FRG should adopt U.S. views agreed to the stationing of ERWs, opposition to these warheads among those who wanted the Federal Republic to pursue her own interests ran at 81 percent. Summarily this could be interpreted as follows: general acceptance of the Western alliance is very high but support erodes quickly if conflicts of interest are presented to respondents. If this conflict takes the form of announcing the possibility of introducing additional nuclear weapons not very much of this support survives.

SUMMARY OF PATTERNS OF PUBLIC OPINION ON NATIONAL SECURITY

As has been stated in the introduction to this section, the multitude of associations between individual survey items presented here could not be selected according to substantive criteria but had to be accepted according to availability. What conclusions do they allow?

First, most of the non-zero relationships that could be reported are as one would expect. However, in many cases measures that should or could be related in fact are unrelated. Even if there is covariation, it often is rather weak in the aggregate. This can mean only one thing, of course: that in some people's attitudes there is a clear-cut structure, although in many others' there is none. In many cross-tabulations off-diagonal responses prevail. Consistency among defense-related attitudes at the individual level is not particularly high, which, in turn, is another indicator of low personal salience.

Second, even though we have not been able—because of the particularities of the available data base—to simplify the complex picture of numerous indicators by reducing them to a smaller number of dimensions, one can probably claim that such a solution still would have to be multidimensional. Raeder's (1982) optimism-pessimism dimension, which is derived from threat perception, expectations of East-West relations, and personal salience of national security, appears as too simple. Salience and cognitions should be kept apart, and affective components, such as pro- or antimilitary or American feelings, seem to be important, as is indicated by the effect of evaluations of the current American president. Let us now turn to the question of whether the associations between defense attitudes and nondefense variables may be stronger than the ones among national security items themselves.

Nondefense Correlates of Public Opinion on National Security

IMAGES OF THE SOVIET UNION

Table 4.34 reveals that there is some variation of images of the Soviet Union among the categories of various variables indicating people's posi-

Table 4.34 Images of the Soviet Union and social structure (FGW 5/83)

	Who is superior			Military threat	
	East	Both equal	West	Yes	No
Sex					
Men	44	44	11	45	55
Women	49	40	10	51	49
Age					
18-24	40	46	13	47	53
25-29	35	55	8	47	53
30-39	42	44	14	51	49
40-49	52	36	11	44	56
50-59	46	44	10	49	51
60-	52	39	9	49	51
Education[a]					
Low	54	38	7	45	55
Medium	48	42	10	45	55
High	41	44	14	53	47
Size of city					
- 5,000	52	36	12	44	56
5,000- 20,000	44	46	10	49	51
20,000-100,000	50	42	8	47	53
100,000-	43	42	14	49	51
Church attendance					
Often	54	38	7	53	47
Now and then	47	42	11	45	55
Seldom, never	44	45	11	48	52
Total	47	42	11	48	52

[a] Low: Hauptschule only; high: at least Mittlere Reife

tion in the social structure, but that this variation is not dramatic. Women in the May 1983 FGW survey were somewhat more "pessimistic" in evaluating the military balance and the military threat than men. Those with better education more often regarded the West as militarily superior and the military threat as high. Frequent church attendance, as a measure of intensity of religious feeling, was related to higher perception of threat and of Eastern superiority.

Perceptions of the military balance differed somewhat with the size of the place of residence; in rural towns and villages the East was judged superior by more respondents than in major cities. With respect to the age of respondents, there was little variation in perceptions of the military

Table 4.35 Images of the Soviet Union and party preference (FGW 5/83)

	Who is superior			Military threat	
	East	Both equal	West	Yes	No
SPD	41	49	10	44	56
CDU/CSU	52	37	10	46	54
FDP	41	47	12	58	42
Green party	24	52	24	77	23

threat. Those between 25 and 29 held the most "optimistic" views of the military balance. Respondents younger than 30 were below average in perceiving Eastern superiority but at the same time held "normal" threat perceptions. The former observation may be a function of "political generations" (these people went through their politically formative years between the late 1960s and the mid-1970s, the era of détente), but this concept fails to explain why the youngest age groups tended to evaluate Eastern military superiority less than others while having average threat perception. Some light can be shed on this result, however, by looking at the distributions according to party preference.

From Table 4.35 we learn that perceptions of threat and of the military balance are much more closely related to party preference than to social structure. Adherents of the CDU/CSU were most "pessimistic" about Soviet superiority, followers of the SPD and the FDP were below average in reporting Eastern superiority, and three out of four sympathizers of the Green party denied Eastern military superiority. The ranking of followers of the three established parties on threat perception was not the same, potential SPD voters feeling roughly the same threat as potential CDU/CSU voters. Adherents of the Green party, on the other hand, had by far the strongest perception of threat. For these people the measure of military threat was not—as with all other respondents—almost exclusively related to the power of the East. They were very likely to see a military threat, but not necessarily one attached to Eastern military superiority and rather reflecting a more general fear of war in spite of the predominant perception of parity. The high percentage of followers of the Green party in the youngest age groups thus explains the discrepancy between perceptions of the military balance and of threat recorded in Table 4.34.

IMAGES OF SECURITY

The survey results that have been incorporated in to Table 4.36 indicate that men and women did not differ in their perceptions of the stability of peace in Europe or in the personal importance attached to protection against an Eastern attack. Women, however, viewed good relations of the

Table 4.36 Images of security and social structure

	Peace in Europe in past year		Personal importance of protection against Russian attack (FGW 9/80)[a]	Percentage good relations with the East very important (FGW 2/83)	Position toward defense spending (ABI 12/82)[b]	The peace movement is			
	Less secure (FGW 5/83)	More secure, no change (FGW 5/83)				necessary	superfluous (FGW 5/83)	detrimental (FGW 5/83)	don't care
Sex									
Men	36	64	7.6	21	3.0	48	23	9	20
Women	39	61	7.7	26	2.5	46	24	5	26
Age									
18–24	41	59	7.0	20	2.3	61	18	3	19
29–29	43	57	6.2	22	2.7	69	11	6	14
30–39	45	55	7.5	22	2.6	52	17	7	23
40–49	34	66	7.8	23	2.8	45	25	8	22
50–59	29	72	7.7	26	2.9	40	26	8	27
60–	37	63	8.4	25	2.8	35	32	7	27
Education									
Low	34	65	8.3	26	2.6	36	24	7	33
Medium	37	64	7.8	23	2.8	44	26	7	24
High	41	58	7.2	23	2.7	57	21	6	16
Size of city									
– 5,000	35	65	7.9	12	2.9	48	24	4	25
5,000– 20,000	31	69	8.0	21	2.3	40	28	7	26
20,000–100,000	39	61	7.5	24	2.9	49	25	4	22
100,000–	42	58	7.4	29	2.6	49	19	11	21
Church attendance									
Often	32	68	8.0	21	2.8	36	30	8	26
Now and then	36	63	7.7	23	2.7	44	25	6	26
Seldom, never	40	60	7.6	23	2.7	54	19	7	19
Total	38	62	7.7	23	2.7	47	24	7	23

[a]Average score on scale from 0 (no personal importance) to 10 (highest personal importance)
[b]Average score on scale from 1 (should be strongly reduced) to 7 (should be strongly increased)

FRG with the East as somewhat more important, were more in favor of reducing military spending, and were more indifferent toward the peace movement.

In the various age groups we again see the youngest two groupings as deviating from average attitudes. The youngest respondents expressed stronger feelings that peace in Europe had become less stable recently, a finding that supports what has been said above on their level of anxiety and fear that did not stem from widespread perceptions of an Eastern threat but from more general notions of the political and military insecurity of the current world. At the same time, the younger respondents were the ones most "optimistic" about the Eastern bloc. Conforming to perceptions of the military balance (Table 4.34), protection against Eastern attack was least important to people between 18 and 29 years of age. The personal salience of good relations with the East increases only slightly with age. The same trend is visible in attitudes toward defense spending, but here the youngest age bracket set itself apart more clearly from the others by advocating, on the average, rather sizeable reductions. Not surprisingly, the youngest were fondest of the peace movement; two thirds rated it as "necessary," and only one-third of the oldest respondents did so. Indifference increased somewhat, while rejections of the peace movement rose with age from 21 to 39 percent.

Correlates of education can be detected in attitudes toward the peace movement and toward the importance of protection against Russian attack. Respondents with low formal education attributed much more importance to military protection and were far less convinced of the necessity of the peace movement. If one combines high education with youth—a combination typical of sympathizers of the Green party—this is the group of people to whom the peace movement appeals most. The same two indicators of images of security also co-vary with urbanization and religious practice; in addition, good relations with the East are deemed much more important by respondents from cities than from villages. People from the countryside and/or with close ties to their church are far more worried about protection against a Russian attack than city dwellers and/or less religious respondents; support for the peace movement is highest among people with weak ties to their church.

Again, the relationship between images of security and party preference is much closer than the one between these images and positions in the social structure. On most indicators in Table 4.37 the followers of the Green party deviate even more strongly from adherents of the three established parties than on the images of the Soviet Union in Table 4.35. An overwhelming majority of Green voters viewed peace in Europe as having become less secure. At this point we can also demonstrate the reason for the strong aggregate decline of perceptions of peace having become less secure from May 1982 to May 1983 that has been reported in Table 4.11. Most of this change is due to the attitudes of CDU/SCU followers, 58 percent of whom in spring 1982 believed peace to have

Table 4.37 Images of security and party preference

	Peace in Europe in past year (FGW 5/83)		Personal importance of protection against Russian attack (FGW 9/80)[a]	Percentage good relations with the East very important (FGW 2/83)	Position toward defense spending (ABI 12/82)[b]	The peace movement is (FGW 5/83)			
	Less secure	More secure, no change				necessary	superfluous	detrimental	don't care
SPD	45	55	7.3	26	2.3	58	17	2	23
CDU/CSU	27	73	8.3	21	3.1	35	30	11	25
FDP	42	58	7.4	18	3.0	57	18	7	18
Green Party	73	27	4.8	18	1.6	93	4	0	3

[a,b]Compare Table 4.36.

become less secure; in spring 1983, this figure had dropped to 27 percent. Obviously, threat perception is a function of whether the composition of government conforms to one's wishes at least as much as it is a function of what is going on in international politics.

Sympathizers of the Green party also gave very low priority to military protection, which was evaluated as most important by sympathizers of the Christian parties. The salience of good relations with the East was not a very partisan issue, even though it ranked highest, as one should expect, for Social Democratic voters. Positions toward defense spending, on the other hand, varied widely even between adherents of the three established parties. Those who intended to vote for either of the current government parties on the average were in favor of small reductions. Followers of the Green party desired very deep cuts in the military budget, of course, and Social Democratic voters ranked in between. Finally, attitudes vis-à-vis the peace movement are distributed roughly as one should expect, Green voters being enthusiastic, CDU/CSU voters being very sceptical, with FDP and SPD leaners being in between.

IMAGES OF DETERRENCE

From Table 4.38 some associations between images of deterrence and respondents' position in the social structure emerge. Opposition against ERWs, either in general or on FRG territory, was strongest in the youngest age group and weakest in the middle-aged group (30 to 39 years). Women were significantly less willing than men to accept new nuclear weapons in the FRG, either in the framework of NATO's December 1979 decision or in the context of the modernization of TNF. An absolute majority among men refused to support the demand to deploy no new missiles in the FRG regardless of Soviet behavior, although almost two-thirds of the women endorsed that position. Nearly half of the surveyed men agreed with the American president's decision to build ERWs, but more than two-thirds of the women disapproved of this decision.

Women in spring and summer of 1983 also were less inclined than men to concede compatibility between Christian values and nuclear arms, to accept new missiles in the area where they lived, or to deploy INF in case of failure of the Geneva negotiations, in these attitudes women were closest to the youngest respondents. Acceptance of nuclear weapons increased somewhat with education and with intensity of religious practice. As has already been mentioned, those with little tie to their church most strongly believed nuclear weaponry to be incompatible with Christian faith.

If one separately examines these attitudes for the adherents of the various parties, however, one finds far more significant discrepancies than between the two sexes (Table 4.39). Naturally, very few of those who intended to vote for the Green party agreed to any new nuclear weapons. But even among those leaning toward the SPD and the FDP there were

Table 4.38 Images of deterrence and social structure (FGW)

	Agreement with demand not to deploy any new missiles in FRG 2/83	Agreement with decision to build ERW 8/81	Agreement with ERW deployment in FRG 8/81	For Christians nuclear weapons are: Acceptable	Acceptable for defense only 4/83	Not acceptable	Acceptance of deployment of new missiles in respondent's area 6/83	What to do if no agreement in Geneva? Continue negotiations, no deployment of INF	Continue negotiations, deployment of INF 7/83	Deploy INF, discontinue negotiations
Sex										
Men	47	46	36	12	46	42	31	72	25	3
Women	62	32	26	7	42	51	14	80	17	3
Age										
18–24	59	29	26	6	36	58	18	85	13	2
25–29	57	37	34	7	27	65	21	86	12	2
30–39	57	45	36	5	47	48	28	74	20	6
40–49	51	36	31	14	47	39	23	72	24	4
50–59	53	34	27	13	49	38	21	74	25	1
60–	57	42	30	8	47	45	19	73	23	4
Education										
Low	61	35	24	4	46	50	12	80	16	4
Medium	53	43	34	11	46	42	25	75	22	3
High	54	34	29	10	39	51	22	75	21	3
Size of city										
– 5,000	51	42	32	5	57	38	20	76	20	4
5,000– 20,000	59	46	35	8	46	46	22	71	25	4
20,000–100,000	58	32	27	10	48	42	29	78	18	4
100,000–	53	34	28	11	36	53	17	79	19	2
Church attendance										
Often	48	43	36	9	52	39	23	66	30	4
Now and then	56	38	29	10	50	40	20	76	21	3
Seldom, never	59	38	31	9	34	57	23	82	15	3
Total	55	38	31	9	44	47	21	76	21	3

Table 4.39 Images of deterrence and party preference (FGW)

	Agreement with demand not to deploy any new missiles in FRG 2/83	Agreement with decision to build ERW 8/81	Agreement with ERW deployment in FRG 8/81	For Christians nuclear weapons are: Acceptable 4/83	Acceptable for defense only 4/83	Not acceptable 4/83	Acceptance of deployment of new missiles in respondent's area 6/83	What to do if no agreement in Geneva? Continue negotiations, no deployment of INF	Continue negotiations, deployment of INF 7/83	Deploy INF, discontinue negotiations
SPD	66	28	21	7	37	56	10	87	11	1
CDU/CSU	40	54	42	14	54	33	35	62	33	5
FDP	66	20	21	12	53	35	23	71	22	7
Green party	73	13	10	1	14	85	3	96	4	0

two-thirds—or even larger—majorities against new nuclear missiles in the FRG, against building ERWs, or against deploying them in the Federal Republic. Surprisingly, followers of these two parties were rather similar in these attitudes both in fall 1981 and in 1983. The electorate of the liberal party in the 1983 election without any doubt had been very much different from previous elections and had become most similar to that part of the electorate leaning toward the CDU/CSU, as also was evident in Table 4.37 with regard to positions on the defense budget. Considering the rejection of missile deployment in the FRG, however, the old SPD-FDP coalition was still visible in 1983, at least on the part of the electorate. Those who said they intended to vote for the CDU/CSU, on the other hand, by their very different opinions seemed to justify the "missile party" (*Raketenpartei*) charge brought against these parties by the SPD during the recent campaign: 60 percent would not endorse the demand to refuse any new missiles in the FRG under all circumstances, 54 percent agreed to the building of ERWs, 42 percent said they would even agree to their deployment in the FRG, 35 percent stated support for stationing new missiles in the area where they live, and 38 percent advocated INF deployment if the Geneva negotiations should fail.

IMAGES OF ALLIES

In 1982 and 1983, women were very close to men in their attitudes on NATO and on U.S.-German relations. While urbanization likewise had little to do with evaluations of NATO and the United States, some consistent patterns can be observed in Table 4.40 of positive images of U.S.-FRG relations and the Western Alliance becoming more frequent with age and strength of respondents' religious convictions and less frequent with better education. These associations are clearly visible but far from being dramatic.

Compared to previous tables, most interrelations between images of the allies and party preference (Table 4.41) are not very strong; still they are much stronger than with social structure. Followers of the two parties then supporting the government of Helmut Schmidt and those who leaned toward the CDU/CSU in August 1982 rated bilateral U.S.-FRG relations almost equally, sympathizers of the Green party most frequently perceived them to be bad. CDU/CSU voters most likely regarded strained relations with the United States as an indication of the German government's failure to avoid frictions and thus were most inclined to have the Federal Republic follow U.S. leadership. Green voters, on the other hand, probably saw problems in bilateral relations predominantly as the outcome of U.S. foreign policy, so they joined supporters of the government coalition in rejecting the adoption of U.S. positions by the FRG in case of disagreement. For the supporters of the coalition parties SPD and FDP this rejection did not follow from similar perceptions of a bad climate of relations for which the United States was to blame, but from the judgment

Table 4.40 Images of the allies and social structure (FGW)

	Relations between US and FRG are		In case of disagreement FRG should		NATO is	
	Good	Bad	adopt US positions	decide according to own interests	necessary	not necessary
	8/82		5/82		5/83	
Sex						
Men	58	42	31	69	91	9
Women	59	41	27	73	89	11
Age						
18-24	49	51	30	70	82	18
25-29	57	43	26	74	85	15
30-39	60	40	26	74	90	10
40-49	61	39	27	73	92	8
50-59	58	42	35	65	90	10
60-	62	38	31	69	93	7
Education						
Low	60	40	28	72	92	8
Medium	61	39	33	67	92	8
High	55	45	26	74	86	14
Size of city						
- 5,000	64	36	24	76	90	10
5,000- 20,000	59	41	42	58	93	7
20,000-100,000	55	45	25	75	89	11
100,000-	59	41	26	74	88	12
Church attendance						
Often	61	39	35	65	96	4
Now and then	59	41	32	68	91	9
Seldom, never	57	43	24	76	87	13
Total	59	41	29	71	90	10

that bilateral affairs were quite satisfactory, so there was no need for subordination in order to improve them.

Attitudes on NATO, finally, were most polarized along partisan lines in spring 1983. While almost identical overwhelming majorities of CDU/CSU and FDP adherents regarded NATO as necessary for the FRG, SPD followers were significantly less enthusiastic, and Green voters were least convinced of the alliance's indispensability. It should be stressed, however, that even in this latter group, which was most critical of NATO, a majority of respondents judged the alliance as necessary. Rejection of new nuclear weapons (see Table 4.39) for more than half of the sympathizers of the Green party was *not* equivalent to rejection of the Western Alliance.

Table 4.41 Images of the allies and party preference (FGW)

	Relations between US and FRG are		In case of disagreement FRG should		NATO is	
	Good	Bad	adopt US positions	decide according to own interests	necessary	not necessary
	8/82		5/82		5/83	
SPD	59	41	24	76	86	14
CDU/CSU	61	39	39	61	96	4
FDP	66	34	18	82	95	6
Green party	44	56	21	79	56	43

Conclusion

After presenting such a multitude of descriptive findings and associations among attitudes, an extended critical summary and final evaluation of results is required. Let us begin by repeating that the data base was far from satisfactory. Available survey items on security issues have turned out to be scattered over a multitude of studies, and on several relevant topics we have no measurements at all from the past couple of years. The lack of comprehensive recent investigations of the subject stands in strange contrast to frequent allegations of dramatic changes in the mass support for Western defense in the FRG. National security issues still are marginal in most public opinion surveys in this country. Our evidence would suggest that this may somehow correspond to respondents' evaluations.

In the descriptive portions of this chapter, much contradictory and inconclusive evidence was presented but we have not been able to identify major dramatic shifts in national security attitudes in the early 1980s. In their affective orientations toward the actors of security policy, large majorities of West Germans are still sceptical and critical of the USSR and friendly toward the Western Alliance and the United States. The latter are both evaluated as reliable and as necessary for security. This sympathy is restricted to a defensive and peaceful alliance that does not constitute a dangerous commitment. As long as this perception prevails, tendencies toward neutralism are blocked off by fears of losing American friendship and support. This has already been described as the fundamental situation in the FRG in the 1950s by Deutsch and Edinger (1959,23f.). Their analysis appears to remain valid.

Perceptions of the factual framework of national security and expectations of hypothetical futures seem to follow closely spectacular and well publicized events in the international arena, again with no really dramatic changes over the past few years. Dissent within the Western Alliance and the deterioration of East-West relations, proclaimed by many as the ultimate failure of détente, have had very predictable effects on public

opinion in the FRG. The relations of the FRG with both superpowers are seen as somewhat worse than they used to be. The East is perceived as somewhat more superior and threatening, war as somewhat more likely, and defense as more difficult. In view of the information input into public opinion all other trends would be very surprising indeed.

These changes in perceptions have not been sufficiently strong, however, to effect any realignment in the importance ascribed to national security issues for the FRG as a whole and for individuals. Assessments of salience are hardly straightforward, but generally speaking there seem to be many more pressing concerns. This, of course, is a function of discontent. If things within an issue area are going satisfactorily it will be considered less important than others. National security issues are less salient than others partly because they are so remote to individuals, but partly also because many people are willing to tolerate security policy as it is and tend to view it as sufficiently successful. Unfortunately, we have not been able to present very much longitudinal evidence on the general public's level of information on these matters. The data we have indicate it is rather low.

The key contradictions among the attitudes we have reviewed occur between higher order and lower order national security instruments. Defense and deterrence are widely accepted as very general principles, especially if deterrence is conceptually related to the prevention of war and thus benefits from the universal desire for peace. As soon as it comes to the operational implications of these principles, however, opposition exceeds support. The feasibility of defense and specific scenarios are evaluated critically, and there is little enthusiasm about defense preparations, military expenditures, or nuclear weapons.

If contemplated in isolation, these measurements of public opinion could be construed as supporting the notion of a wholesale erosion of the national security consensus in the FRG. Anyone who would jump to this conclusion, however, must first consider what else one should expect. One can argue for a number of reasons that the apparent contradiction between levels of support is only normal. As matters of national security are not very salient concerns, it is cognitively very easy to judge stimuli according to the emotional associations they evoke without recognizing or considering contradictions. Deterrence and defense are sufficiently abstract notions to be endorsed in the framework of positive feelings about national sovereignty, independence, and self-determination. The specifics of these notions are rejected, however, as these global objectives are perceived as existing, which in turn allows people to rate national security low in salience. Thus, if deterrence is seen as useful and as working satisfactorily, support for measures to maintain this state of affairs can be very low. Psychological repression seems to work that way.

The decrease in support for defense that one might be tempted to read into our data of the past few years is probably more apparent than real, but comparable earlier data simply is not available as there was no political

incentive to poll such attitudes. The rise of the peace movement and the extensive reflection of its concerns in the media have introduced items on the apparent issues of the day into surveys on which there is no strictly comparable evidence from earlier years. This is a universal feature of commercial surveys, and it can lead to dramatic exaggerations of changes in public opinion, if, for example, current rejection of INF is compared to the general acceptance of NATO in the 1960s or 1970s. In the past few years survey items have tended to go beyond the very general national security attitudes polled earlier and to focus on specific issues of budgets and weapons. It is very likely that responses to those specific stimuli would not have been much different had they been presented to respondents in the past. Nuclear weapons, or more particularly nuclear weapons in the FRG or to be exploded on her territory, have always been very unpopular in this country if one asked the appropriate questions (cf. Deutsch and Edinger 1959,27).

As there are no directly comparable longitudinal data we cannot tell for sure whether attitudes on specific issues of Western strategy have in fact become somewhat less favorable in recent years or not. If this should have been the case, however, there could be a very plausible explanation. As is well known, nuclear strategy as the key element of Western deterrence for a long time has received diverging interpretations in Western Europe and in the United States. The version presented to the public in the FRG by leading political figures and the media usually has been one extending the basic notion of "massive retaliation," stressing the key role of American strategic nuclear weapons and downplaying the importance of conventional forces. Conventional strength even tended to get interpreted as dysfunctional, as weakening the linkage of American central systems to the security of Europe. Escalation into the general nuclear exchange was described as the primary vehicle to guarantee security: "Either they (the East) leave us alone or we all perish"—so they will leave us alone. As threatening mutual annihilation is the business of the United States, rejecting improvements or increases of the West German defense contribution is consistent with this image of security. Accepting deterrence in this version meant that one could stop thinking or worrying about war and was not oneself primarily responsible for deterrence. In 1979 former Secretary of Defense Apel said in a radio interview, "Especially with respect to nuclear weapons we should kick the habit of imagining their (actual) use. Whatever we do militarily in general and in the field of nuclear armament in particular is but a part of a deterrence policy" (Yost and Glad 1982).

In recent years the interpretation of flexible response prevailing in the United States has gradually penetrated the West German debate. Its war-fighting components, "if they start a war they will with high probability lose," cannot easily be reconciled with the notions of deterrence cherished in the FRG. Dissonance can take various forms. A mild one is the feeling that endorsing deterrence as a general principle does *not* mean one is allowed to stop thinking about and preparing for war. The emotional

response can be increased rejection of concrete manifestations of military defense in general and of nuclear weapons in particular. The stronger form of dissonance confuses the war-fighting interpretation of deterrent strategy with the desire actually to prepare and fight conventional and/or nuclear wars under appropriate circumstances.

This is not the place to investigate what events, what type of rhetoric by whom, or whose mistakes in enlightening and educating the West German public are to blame. There can be little doubt, however, that the public in the FRG, as in other countries, has recently been exposed to information and debates on the security of the alliance that are at variance with previous beliefs. If underneath the continuing majority support for the general notions of deterrence and defense the attitudes toward their practical requirements and toward the peace movement should have changed, this is most likely primarily due to this exposure. For a small but vociferous minority, the reaction has not been confined to those less salient attitudes on how best to provide for deterrence and defense but has extended to rejection of the Western alliance as a whole and of established approaches to national security. This pattern is characteristic of part of the peace movement, to which these things are of central concern, and lends itself to broad media coverage producing exaggerated laments about the waning of the national security consensus. For the majority, the implications of war-fighting notions of deterrent strategy are equally unpleasant and may reduce support for military spending, nuclear weapons, etc. but are not salient enough to effect widespread and dramatic alterations in the general images of national security.

We have seen that public opinion on national security in West Germany co-varies quite strongly with individuals' party preference, much stronger than with their position in the social system. This immediately presents us with a puzzle, of course, that refers back to some of the questions raised in the introduction: what is the cause and what is the effect, attitudes on national security issues or party preference?

From all established knowledge of electoral research and sociology it is safe to conclude that opinions on national security determine political behavior only for a very small fraction of the electorate. Compared to long-lasting partisan identifications and candidate orientations, issue positions generally have the lowest impact on voter choice. This is particularly true for foreign policy issues in general, and in view of the low salience of national security that has been described above it must be so for the attitudes we have been examining. It is inconceivable that more than very small minorities behave politically as they do *because* of their insights, beliefs, or positions on national security. These, however, are people that require the party they have previously been associated with to conform to their preferences on national security; if it fails to do so they will turn to someone else. This pattern certainly is descriptive of the behavior of some Green voters, and some activities of the Social Democrats over the recent years can be interpreted as attempts to prevent this from happening.

But how about the overwhelming majority of those whose political

behavior is not determined by national security attitudes? Are their opinions on these matters simply products of their partisan attachment; do they only reproduce what their party tells them as they lack independent yardsticks to arrive at evaluations of their own? This is a plausible alternative interpretation of the co-variation between national security attitudes and party preferences, but not the only one. This co-variation also could be largely spurious if political behavior is determined by more or less consistent patterns of political cognitions and affective orientations vis-à-vis problems outside the area of national security that at the same time influence opinions on defense. Such patterns could be called "conservative," "liberal," "socialist," "progressive," "materialist," "nonconformist," "revolutionary," and so forth, each term denoting a specific combination of various dimensions of basic political orientations as well as its antecedents in social structure, socialization, and so on. These clusters can very likely be responsible for maintaining partisan affiliations, once acquired, but also for shaping attitudes on "new" issues that are brought in line with existing ones. For those people for whom this interpretation is valid, party preference and national security attitudes obviously have to co-vary, but there is no causal relationship. They vote for the party closest to their cluster of basic orientations and take opinions in the less salient field of national security that feel consistent with these orientations. Regarding these voters, parties to a certain extent have to follow public opinion, in order to avoid creating inconsistencies. On the other hand, they can utilize their publicized stand on particular issues to hold their supporters together by assuring them that they can feel "at home" with them even on issues other than the fundamental ones that constitute the initial allegiance.

Yet if one allows for the possibility of parties "educating" their clients on issues, particularly less salient ones, one has to take the other possibility seriously: that partisan preferences can influence issue positions. The boundary line to the second interpretation is rather ill-defined of course. There may be people who have derived their national security attitudes from their more general political convictions but are willing to be convinced by the party they feel comfortable with that these general convictions go along better with different positions on these particular matters. There might be others who derive no discernible original national security attitudes of their own and wait to be "educated." If the parties face this challenge and play their role in the formation of political will, as the West German Federal Constitution tells them to do, correlations between party loyalties and opinions on national security have to be found for these segments of the electorate as well, but they will be causal rather than spurious correlations. These individuals will not hold firmly based views on defense and security, but will tend to reproduce what the political elites they trust feed into the echo chamber of public opinion. Parties then would not be stimulated and guided by public opinion, but would direct it themselves.

Naturally, these three classes are ideal-types, and it is difficult to tell for

sure for a given individual or group of individuals to which they belong. Transition over time between these categories can occur, just as people, at the same time, might belong to one class with regard to one set of issues and to another class regarding other issues. One might, for example, find people who, for whatever reasons, have strong personal convictions about the necessity of close political and military cooperation between the United States and the FRG, but have never independently thought about the nuclear threshold. Even though the lines separating the three classes are obscure, it is evident that they have a lot to do with the personal salience of the issues at stake. This insight enables us to state with some confidence what the current situation in the FRG looks like, in spite of the virtual absence of any serious recent social-psychological research attempting to assess why and under what conditions particular defense related attitudes appear in which individuals, why and for whom they become more or less salient, what the preconditions for such processes are in terms of political socialization, and why particular issues shoot to the foreground of public opinion or are taken up by elites. Even preliminary answers to these questions would require considerable research efforts, but for now we have to do with the available evidence.

This evidence tells us that the salience of national security affairs for most people in the FRG has been low and still is low. Therefore, the portions falling into the first two classes, those for whom security is an overriding concern, and those who have at least some independent concepts and notions of their own to enter into a dialogue with the elites, even though they might not feel very strongly about these issues, are most likely rather small. This has two obvious consequences for a concluding judgment on what is going on today in the Federal Republic.

First, studies that survey highly specific attitudes in the field we are dealing with are bound to produce many findings that closely follow party lines, as only few people feel so strongly about the issues that they opt for the party closest to their views, while very many of the others know so little and/or have such a low level of concern that in their responses they rely on inputs supplied by sources they trust. Second, what we are currently witnessing to a large extent is an elite problem with two facets: those few for whom national security is of paramount importance either always were attached to the party they regarded as best according to these criteria or they have switched their allegiance, possibly to the Green party.

The great majority, for whom these matters are way down in a list of much more pressing priorities, does not face this problem of having to translate marginally important views into political action. This majority is exposed to debates going on between competing elites that are designed to stabilize and motivate the respective groups of followers and that receive extensive media coverage. These elite controversies so far have changed very little the salience of security policy for the mass public, but they have made people aware that national security is another additional dimension of the polarization between the parties. But this awareness does not have significant political effects. A large majority of people nowadays realize

that parties disagree on these issues, they realize the positions taken by the political elites they trust, and to a large extent they accept and reproduce these positions, so there is disagreement at the level of public opinion as well. But most of this disagreement would not take its current partisan shape, much of it would not even be there without the stimulation by debates among elites for whom these matters are of utmost importance. Ironically, these debates were initiated by the parties—responding to minority protest—because some mistakenly assumed that defense issues were sufficiently salient to be suitable for a profitable polarization of party images. The May 1983 elections have shattered this belief. In short, what we are witnessing is not mass protest against established national security policy but a combination of minority protest and the dynamics of political mass communication. As is generally the case for the social context of foreign policy, it is more important to study what is going on within activist groups—be they within or outside the established parties—than to stare at public opinion because the former shapes the latter much more strongly than vice versa.

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Appendix C Sources

In the tables months and years of surveys are generally given together with acronyms denoting sources. Sources of data reported in this study are as follows:

BMV: Data from surveys conducted for the Federal Ministry of Defense (*B*undes*m*inisterium der *V*erteidigung) within its "Verteidigungsklima" series. These data have been taken from reports supplied by BMV.

CC: Data from surveys conducted by Contest-Census, Frankfurt, directly provided by CC.

FGW: Data from the regular ZDF-Politbarometer surveys conducted by *F*orschungsgruppe *W*ahlen, Mannheim. These data have either been taken from tables supplied by FGW or (for 1980) computed from the original FGW-datasets.

IfD: Data from surveys conducted by *I*nstitut *f*uer *D*emoskopie, Allensbach. This data has been taken from IfD's *Jahrbuch der Oeffentlichen Meinung (later Allensbacher Jahrbuch der Demoskopie)*. Several more recent results have been directly provided by IfD.

PIB: Data from surveys conducted for the Federal Office for Press and Information (*P*resse-und *I*nformationsamt der *B*undesregierung). These data have been taken from reports supplied by PIB.

SFK: Data from surveys conducted for *S*ozialwissenschaftliches *F*orschungsinstitut der *K*onrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, St. Augustin. These data have been computed from the original SFK-datasets.

SOWI: Data from surveys conducted for *S*ozial*w*issenschaftliches Institut der Bundeswehr, Munich. Unless otherwise indicated, these data have been taken from tables in Zoll (1982).

ZA: Data from surveys conducted by various contractors for various customers, supplied through *Z*entral*a*rchiv fuer empirische Sozialforschung, Cologne. Surveys are identified by the studynumber assigned to them by the Central Archive. These data have been computed from the original data sets.